

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **SLEDMERE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Buffery Road, Dudley

LEA area: Dudley

Unique reference number: 103772

Headteacher: Mr C Danks

Reporting inspector: Mrs A Coyle  
20603

Dates of inspection: 27<sup>th</sup> – 30<sup>th</sup> November 2000

Inspection number: 224898

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

© Crown copyright 2001

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	School Drive Off Buffery Road Dudley West Midlands
Postcode:	DY2 8EH
Telephone number:	01384 818425
Fax number:	01384 818426
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs J Snow
Date of previous inspection:	July 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Angela Coyle 20603	Registered inspector	Art Music	How high are the standards?  How well the school is led and managed
Anthony Comer 9880	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development  How well does the school care for its pupils?  How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Frankie Gaywood 22352	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History	How well are the pupils taught?
Graham Carter 4720	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Special educational needs Equal opportunities	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
Sally Hanford 21171	Team inspector	English Physical education English as an additional language	
Margaret Leah 22740	Team inspector	Design and technology Religious education Under fives	

The inspection contractor was:

PPI Group Ltd  
7 Hill Street  
Bristol  
BS1 5RW

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Registrar  
Inspection Quality Division  
The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London  
WC2B 6SE

## **REPORT CONTENTS**

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>4 - 7</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>8 - 10</b>
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>10 - 12</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>12 - 13</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>13 - 14</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>15 - 17</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>18 - 21</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>22 - 35</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Sledmere Primary School is situated two miles from the centre of Dudley, West Midlands in an education action zone. It serves the surrounding catchment area, which consists of owner-occupied and local authority rented properties. The school is much bigger than other primary schools and the number of pupils on roll has risen steadily over the past few years. There are currently 406 girls and boys in the school. Children are admitted to the nursery when they are three years old and they transfer to one of the reception classes at the beginning of the term in which they are five. Attainment on entry varies, but is well below average, overall, because children's language, literacy, personal and social skills are limited. Nineteen per cent of pupils are from ethnic minority backgrounds; the main languages spoken at home are Urdu and Punjabi and twelve per cent of pupils receive support for learning English as an additional language. Thirty-three per cent of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, which is higher than the national average and an above average proportion of 31 per cent have been identified on the register of special educational needs. Two pupils have statements for their needs.

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

This is a rapidly improving school in which the teaching and learning is good, overall, and pupils make good progress. The high quality leadership of the headteacher and good management by the senior managers and governors help to ensure good value for money.

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

- Pupils achieve very high standards in art and good standards in religious education, singing and swimming.
- They have very good attitudes to school, relate very well to each other and show good behaviour in lessons and at play.
- The quality of teaching is good, overall, with a significant amount of very good and, sometimes, excellent teaching. Teachers and learning support staff work in excellent partnership, as a team.
- The school provides a well balanced, broad curriculum for its pupils and has very good procedures for assessing pupils' work.
- The leadership of the school is very good indeed with excellent features. The headteacher is a highly committed professional and has an excellent vision for raising standards and the future development of the school.
- The governors and senior managers provide strong support to the headteacher.
- The school takes very good care of its pupils.
- An excellent range of extra-curricular activities enables pupils to enrich their education.

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

- Standards are below the national average in English, mathematics and science by the end of Key Stage 2.
- The very good assessment procedures are not used sufficiently well to plan precise targets for individual pupils.
- Pupils are not given enough opportunities to develop their independence.
- Parents are not fully involved in children's learning.

*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 good improvements to its provision since the last inspection in 1996. Standards are continuing to rise steadily and the quality of teaching is much improved, partly due to the organisation of pupils into ability sets for English and mathematics at Key Stage 2, the re-organisation of staff and the introduction of specialist teaching assistants. In addition, the provision for, and standards in, design and technology have been improved and the school now has a satisfactory policy for pupils' spiritual development.

### **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	D	E	C
Mathematics	E	E	E	B
Science	E	E	E	C

  

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

The above table shows that, although pupils attained well below the national averages in English, mathematics and science by the time they left the school in 2000, they achieved results that were in line with similar schools in English and science and above average results in mathematics. The inspection evidence concurs with these results and finds that standards have risen further and are now just below the national average. This continuing trend of rising standards is because the quality of teaching is good and the pupils are keen to learn. In addition, the school has devised realistic targets for improving pupils' attainment still further, which it is on line to achieve. From a low starting point, children in the Foundation Stage progress rapidly, so that, by the time they reach the end of the reception year, they achieve most of the stepping stones set out in the early learning goals. At Key Stages 1 and 2, the pupils continue to progress well, overall. They make very good progress in art and achieve very high standards.

#### **PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES**

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very good attitudes to school. They enjoy their work and are keen to do their best.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Standards of behaviour are good.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils show good relationships with each other and are tolerant. Their personal development is satisfactory but there are too few opportunities for them to develop their independence.
Attendance	Levels of attendance are currently satisfactory.

Pupils' very good attitudes to their work are a strength of the school.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 6 years	aged 6-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Good

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

The quality of teaching is good, overall, throughout the school. Of the 99 lessons observed, 100 per cent were satisfactory, or better. Of this, 51 per cent of teaching was good, 27 per cent was very good and two per cent was excellent. Teachers are very committed to the pupils they teach and they work in excellent partnership with the learning support staff.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The school provides a well-balanced and broad curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage and the pupils at Key Stages 1 and 2.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils are guided well by the co-ordinator and learning support assistants.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Sound with good features. Staff support pupils well and make sure that they are included in all activities.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good provision is made for pupils' moral and social development. Good provision for cultural development and satisfactory provision for spiritual development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The school takes very good care of its pupils.

The school provides an excellent range of extra-curricular activities. However, parents are not fully involved with their children's learning.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership of the school is very good indeed with excellent features. The headteacher is highly committed to raising standards and is supported well by senior managers.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governing body takes its responsibilities very seriously and acts a critical friend to the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The school evaluates its work very well and clearly targets areas for improvement in the school development plan.
The strategic use of resources	Good. All of the resources are used efficiently and the school provides good value for money.

The headteacher, staff and governors work hard to secure best value for the school and ensure that good value for money is maintained.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL



What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents feel that their children like school and are keen to attend.</li> <li>• Many parents think that their children make good progress.</li> <li>• The quality of teaching is perceived to be good.</li> <li>• The school expects pupils to work hard and do their best.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents would like more information about the curriculum and their children's progress.</li> <li>• They feel that the school provides an inconsistent amount of homework.</li> <li>• They would like a greater range of extra-curricular activities.</li> <li>• Parents would like the school to work more closely with them.</li> </ul>

The inspectors agree with most of the comments above, but find that the school provides a suitable amount of homework for pupils and an excellent range of extra-curricular activities. There are regular newsletters, meetings and annual reports, but parents are not fully involved in pupils' learning.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Many children start nursery with very poorly developed skills in personal independence, speaking, listening and mathematics. This is confirmed by the teachers' assessments in the first weeks in the nursery. Entry assessments, conducted when children first enter the reception classes, indicate that standards in these areas are still below those of most four-year-olds. However, by the end of the reception year, re-testing indicates that most children have made good progress. From low beginnings, the majority achieve well and reach most of the early learning goals in all areas of learning by the time they start Year 1. In some aspects of language, mathematics, creative and physical development, some children achieve well. This is due to consistently good teaching throughout the Foundation Stage and to some very good teaching in language, literacy and mathematical development in the reception classes.
2. Standards in English are steadily improving so that, in the tests for eleven year olds in 2000, the standards achieved were average compared with those of similar schools. Against national test results, the results are well below those achieved, because pupils are not yet reaching a high enough standard in writing. Results for seven-year-olds show that, for writing, pupils achieve results well above those in similar schools and reading results are comparable to those of similar schools. Compared to national test results, reading is just below the national average. However, in writing, pupils do better than the national average. This shows an improvement over the last four year's results. The inspection findings concur with these results and show that the improving standards at both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 reflect the school's commitment to raising standards.
3. In mathematics, at Key Stage 2, the results in the National Curriculum tests in 2000 were well below the national average. However, in comparison with schools in similar circumstances, standards were above average. At Key Stage 1, in the National Curriculum tests in 2000, pupils attained average standards, which were above average in comparison to similar schools. These results reflect steadily rising standards the last four years, mirroring the national trend. The inspection findings closely reflect this pattern of continuing improvement. Whilst the standards are still below the national average, many year groups are stepping up the rate of progress and the overall picture is positive. This is due to the consistently high quality of teaching in both key stages and the setting of pupils according to prior attainment. Realistic, but challenging targets have been set for 2001, based on accurate analysis of statistics.
4. In the standardised assessment tests for science in 2000, pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 attained well below the national average, although, compared with similar schools, standards were average. At Key Stage 1, standards were broadly in line. Over the last four years, there has been a steady improvement in the results at both key stages. This is as a result of the high quality of teaching as seen during the inspection.
5. Standards in information and communication technology are broadly in line with the national expectation by the end both key stages. By the time pupils are eleven years old, they show confidence in using the internet as a research tool and have enhanced their geographical knowledge by using the CD ROMs to research topics such as the Himalayan mountains. However, pupils have limited experience in handling data and control technology, although the use of a spreadsheet is planned for next term.

6. Overall, the standards achieved by pupils in religious education, singing and swimming are good. Standards in art are very good indeed. The school works hard to promote pupils' learning in art and music and the subjects are used well to link other subjects in cross-curricular themes. Standards in design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education are in line with those expected for pupils' age by the time they leave the school.<sup>1</sup>
7. Progress is good, overall. From the time children enter the nursery, they are taught to build well on their skills. Pupils' academic progress is maintained as they move through Key Stages 1 and 2. It is notably good in art, religious education, singing and swimming. Pupils make sound progress in all other subjects of the curriculum. There is no significant variation in attainment or progress between pupils of different gender or background and the pupils who learn English as an additional language are effectively supported to do well.
8. The school works hard to raise the achievements of lower attaining pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are appropriately identified at an early stage in the nursery. They have well written and detailed individual education plans which clearly focus on areas for improvement and targets to be achieved. Teachers and specialist teaching assistants often provide pupils with good support which enables them to make sound, and often good, progress during lessons. Since the previous inspection, the school has reorganised its support, particularly in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 and there is evidence to show that improvements are more sustained than previously.

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

9. The pupils' attitudes to school are very good. They enjoy coming to school and the interest they show in lessons and in the wide range of activities outside the classroom is excellent.
10. Parents believe that their children like coming to school and that they make good progress. They also believe that the teaching is good and that the children are encouraged to work hard and do their best.
11. Behaviour is good and there have been no exclusions during the last school year. There is no evidence of oppressive behaviour. Pupils' respect each other's feelings and play happily together in the playground. They move around the school in a sensible manner and are very polite. Relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults are very good throughout the school.
12. The appointment of class monitors, covering a variety of responsibilities, and the help and supervision that older pupils provide for younger ones during break times and when the weather is wet all contribute to their personal development. There is also a good range of educational visits and visitors, such as the residential activities trip to Duporth and the recent visit of the Glug Roadshow on drugs, which also contributes to personal development. However, the opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for, and to develop independence in, their own learning are unsatisfactory.
13. Overall, the attitudes, behaviour and personal development of pupils make a significant contribution to effective learning. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.
14. Currently, pupils' attendance, overall, is satisfactory, but the punctuality of pupils still provides cause for concern. Although the most recent attendance figures are still marginally below the national average, the impact of absence for cultural reasons and because of the long-term absence of two year five pupils have a disproportionate effect on the overall attendance rate. The school and the educational social worker regularly monitor attendance and punctuality. The school's appointment of a new learning link worker

---

<sup>1</sup> **ON LEVELS**

By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils are expected to attain Level 2 in all National Curriculum subjects. Those who achieve Level 3 are, therefore, attaining above nationally expected levels.

By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are expected to attain Level 4 in all National Curriculum subjects. Those who achieve Level 5 are, therefore, attaining above nationally expected levels.

under the education action zone programme is to ensure that sufficient focus is given to raising attendance and improving punctuality in the future.

15. The school has an inclusive approach to pupils with special educational needs and sees these pupils, like all its pupils, as an integral part of the community. Pupils take a positive approach to all subject activities and often work with commitment. They are capable of working both independently, with their classroom assistants, and in a collaborative manner with other members of the class. This was seen particularly in subjects such as information and communication technology and science. In these lessons, there are regular examples of good support given to pupils with special educational needs by their higher attaining peers.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

16. Overall, teaching throughout the school is good. Twenty-seven per cent of the teaching is very good, two per cent is excellent and a further 51 per cent is good, whilst the rest meet the required standard. The consistently good quality of teaching is now a significant strength of the school. This represents a considerable improvement since the last inspection and the school has worked very hard to eliminate all unsatisfactory teaching. The teachers' willingness to be self-critical has helped the school to move forward well.
17. The teaching of English, mathematics and science is good throughout the school and the teaching of mathematics, particularly at Key Stage 2, is of a very high standard. Generally, teachers are lively and enthusiastic in their delivery of lessons. This rubs off on the pupils, who want to learn and are eager to develop their skills. They sustain concentration, because the lessons move at a brisk pace and, so, they are kept actively engaged. As well as the recent emphasis on literacy and numeracy, the quality of teaching in other subjects has remained of a good standard, overall - an improvement since the last inspection. This is partly due to some of the useful features of the new initiatives being generally applied. For example, some introductions are shorter and more focused, the teachers use a good mix of whole-class, group and individual work and ask searching questions to make the pupils think, for instance in a Year 4 history lesson about famous Tudor men.
18. Teaching is good, overall, for the children in the nursery and reception classes, with some very good features. Teachers have a good knowledge of the children's' needs. They plan very well, carefully matching activities to the six areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage. This means that there is a clear focus on what children are to learn in each session, so that activities are designed to enable children to practise and consolidate skills. Lessons are well organised, very well managed and lively. Teachers have very good relationships with the children and high expectations of good behaviour. When two boys were in dispute over a particular toy, for instance, the teacher took them aside calmly, resolving the issue sympathetically, thus reinforcing expected standards. Relationships are also very good between all the practitioners. This enables them to work together as an effective teaching team and greatly enhances the pupils' learning. The classrooms are stimulating and attractive and there is a reasonable balance of free choice and teacher-assisted activities. However, some opportunities to foster more independence are lost. Assessment is thorough and teachers' good use of focused questions means that children's knowledge and understanding are always under review, in order to promote learning.
19. At Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching is good. It is good or better in more than three quarters of the lessons. Teachers plan and teach basic skills well. They have good subject knowledge, effective management and organisation of their classrooms. Generally, they have appropriately high expectations of pupils' capacity to learn, work at a brisk pace and question pupils well. Relationships are a significant factor in their consistently good lessons. Because they understand and know their pupils so well, they have a clear idea of what they want them to learn and why, so they set tasks which are well designed to achieve their objectives. A good example of this was seen in a numeracy lesson where the pupils helped the teacher fill in a calendar for December, noting that the first day was not on a Monday. The questions were well put to interest and involve the pupils, already getting excited at the thought of Christmas in so few short days. Support staff and resources are also very well used to enhance all pupils' learning. This helps pupils with difficulties, including those with special educational needs or who speak English as an additional language, to make similar progress as their peers.

20. At Key Stage 2, teaching is also good, overall, and almost two fifths of lessons seen were very good or better. This is a significant improvement from the last report, where teaching was deemed unsatisfactory in half of the lessons observed in the key stage. The quality of teaching in Year 3 and Year 4 is now of a consistently high standard with few lessons falling below good. Teachers throughout the key stage have good subject knowledge and plan their work well. There is a clear focus of what pupils should learn and teachers usually maintain a lively and brisk pace, which ensures that pupils concentrate well and keep up a high level of intellectual and creative effort. A good example of this was seen in a literacy lesson about instructions, where the very good choice of text enthused and challenged pupils very well, to build up their knowledge of verbs from instructional texts.
21. Enthusiasm is a particular characteristic of the staff at the school and, when the teaching is most effective, teachers carry pupils along with their own good humour, energy and enjoyment. This ensures that pupils always strive to achieve well, according to their capabilities. Well-planned lessons, matched to all levels of attainment, ensure that all subjects interest pupils. Staff have a very good rapport with their pupils and humour is used well to encourage, support and give confidence to pupils so that they can make a contribution and enjoy their lessons, no matter which group they are in, for instance in literacy and numeracy. The positive ways in which the staff deal with the pupils is reflected in the good behaviour noted during the inspection..
22. These elements were evident in two outstanding mathematics lessons, one in a Year 3 class and one with Year 6 pupils. Both groups contained higher attaining pupils. In the previous report, the school was criticised for lack of challenge for able pupils. One lesson, for older pupils, entailed plotting points on four quadrants and the very skilful questioning and rapid pace of learning was an excellent promotion of high standards. The lesson with younger pupils involved them in quick fire answers as well as careful consideration of equivalent fractions. The challenging questions to promote and check understanding, as well as the reinforcement of methods and techniques, built remarkably well upon the pupils' knowledge and skills.
23. Teachers collect assessment information assiduously at both key stages and they often use their day-to-day evaluations to modify planning for future lessons. However, this is inconsistent and insufficiently focused. The school development plan shows they will work on these areas, but, until they do, the use of assessment remains the weakest element of the teaching. This has a clear impact on standards achieved. Facility with the literacy and numeracy frameworks is growing, but teachers realise that they sometimes adhere to them too closely, especially in some literacy lessons. This means that some pupils' learning is slower, even though teaching is never less than satisfactory. Although the lessons are usually taught at a brisk pace, it sometimes flags in specific lessons, most often in English. Whilst teachers' planning is good throughout the school, opportunities are often missed to enhance pupils' independence in learning. They have too few chances to consider what they know, assess their own work and decide how they might improve. This is because teachers do not always share the learning objectives with the pupils. In the cases where this was happening during the inspection, pupils were capable of thinking and deciding for themselves appropriately. All pupils' work is marked regularly and accurately, with good use of encouraging and helpful comments. Homework is used appropriately, usually linked well to class work.
24. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is organised well to allow them to benefit fully from the support available. The work is generally well planned and focused on pupils' needs, offering the same experiences at an appropriate level. The individual education plans are invariably of high quality. They clearly outline the way the curriculum is to be adapted to meet the identified needs of the pupils. Teachers usually brief special teaching assistants and other adults skilfully and, as a result, the effective support provided by these dedicated assistants makes a significant contribution to the pupils' learning.
25. Class teachers are mainly aware of the needs of the pupils with English as an additional language. The good practice characterised in all teaching helps the pupils develop their understanding and deepen their knowledge. The majority of pupils are working at the same level as their peers and learn effectively. Teachers have a satisfactory awareness of the linguistic diversity within the school and there is evidence that pupils are encouraged to use their mother tongue, but this is still an area that is under-developed. Two teachers and two bilingual assistants give a satisfactory level of support to the school on a part-time basis.

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

26. The school's curricular provision is good. It is broadly based and provides all subjects of the national curriculum and religious education. An appropriate allocation of time has been given to all subjects, including additional time to English and mathematics to meet the requirements of the national literacy and numeracy projects, both of which have been successfully implemented. The statutory requirements of all subjects are met. The school has a well-written policy for sex education, but no discrete policy on education about drugs misuse or personal and social health education. Many aspects of health education are taught through science, physical education and food technology. Sex education is also taught through science, as, for example when pupils learn about the life cycle of plants, animals, and humans. A special programme is designed for Year 6 pupils to teach them about changes in their bodies which occur at the onset of puberty and parents are appropriately informed in advance so that they have full information about materials being used. In Year 5, pupils are taught the dangers of drugs, such as alcohol, by a visiting speaker. Although many aspects of personal, social and health education are addressed through school assemblies, form time at the start and finish of the day, there is no clear programme of study for this important area and, therefore, no guarantee that all pupils build effectively on their prior knowledge and skills through a common curricular experience. The school recognises this and plans to develop an agreed programme of study to cover this shortcoming in the near future.
27. Except for personal, social, and health education, there is satisfactory provision for equality of access and opportunity for all pupils. In Years 5 and 6, classes are carefully organised into ability groups in order to match work more closely to the needs of pupils in English and mathematics and pupils receive additional support in these subjects through the work of specialist support teachers. In Years 3 and 4, additional support teaching in smaller groups is provided to those pupils on the special educational needs register in English and mathematics.
28. Pupils with special educational needs and those who learn English as an additional language have equality of access to all areas of the curriculum, including extra curricular activities, and the provision is good. Pupils with special educational needs are usually well supported by teachers and specialist teaching assistants and the curriculum is made particularly accessible to their needs. The number of pupils in the school who are identified as coming from minority ethnic backgrounds has not changed significantly from the time of the previous inspection. Currently, these pupils receive support from the teachers and support assistants provided from the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant. There are only 14 pupils identified as being in the early stages of acquiring English, of which around half are in the nursery or reception classes. The staff provide additional support once a week before school for Year 1 pupils to play literacy and numeracy games and they run a lunchtime activities club for Year 3 pupils. In addition, one of the assistants runs a club for pupils to learn to read and write Punjabi, which is well attended and includes pupils learning Punjabi as a foreign language.
29. The provision of extra-curricular activities is excellent and remains a great strength of the school. It includes expert coaching in basketball, cricket, football and Judo. Team sports include football, for girls and boys, cricket and rugby. Musical interest is nurtured through the junior and senior choirs, three recorder groups and school band, Asian music and Giddha dance groups. After school and lunch time computer clubs, a Fun Club for younger pupils to enjoy board and other types of games and a Sign Language Club are also regular events. Annual drama productions such as this year's 'Ali Baba', are very popular summer events with parents and involve many pupils at Key Stage 2. An annual residential week is organised in Cornwall, where pupils in Years 5 and 6 are taught outdoor and environmental skills and undertake a range of visits of social and geographical interest. Links with the local community and local schools are good. Additional opportunities for pupils include camping weekends, two gymnastics clubs, cross country running and athletics in the summer.
30. The overall provision for pupil's personal development is satisfactory. The provision for spiritual development is effective. Since the last inspection, the school has made progress in this area through the production of guidelines which identify ways in which the spiritual dimension can be promoted in all subjects across the curriculum. However, more consistent application of these guidelines is required to ensure further improvements. During collective worship, pupils are given some time to reflect through prayers, stories and themes. At the time of the inspection, pupils were given good opportunities to reflect on the way we use words and the value to others of the things we say and how we say them. During the best lessons, teachers provide occasions for pupils to experience awe and excitement in their learning. Such was the case in a reception class, as pupils observed the teacher revealing for the first time one

Russian doll hidden inside another. In a Year 2 lesson in information technology, many pupils showed similar excitement at the way they could use colour graphics to produce a wintery scene for a Christmas card. In a Year 5 science lesson, pupils were captivated by their ability to switch on and off an electric circuit containing bulb and buzzer.

31. The provision for moral development is very good. The school's behaviour policy is well understood by pupils and consistently and thoughtfully applied by teachers. Teachers provide excellent role models for pupils, using praise and encouragement very well in a many lessons and when marking pupils 'work. In a variety of contexts, pupils are taught to respect others and to take care of property and equipment and they frequently display such attitudes throughout the school. For example, pupils showed great respect for one of their peers by applauding him after he had finished playing the piano very skilfully at the end of the whole school collective worship.
32. Pupils' social development is very good. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to work collaboratively in such subjects as physical education, music, science, art and information technology. Through a very good range of extra curricular activities and visits pupils learn how to respond to others in different social settings and to make worthwhile contributions to the collective effort. In this respect, the school's annual residential visit provides many opportunities for pupils to develop their social skills and to work as members of various teams in different settings. Many pupils respond very well to opportunities to act as class monitors for registration and lunch times. Pupils behave very courteously towards visitors and show great respect to teachers and other adults employed in the school.
33. The provision for cultural development is good. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to develop a good understanding of their local and national heritage through regular visits to museums and places of local interest. A number of visitors such as musicians, sports coaches and senior citizens provide pupils with concrete opportunities to raise their awareness and understanding of our musical and sporting heritage and the contrasts between life now and half a century ago. In history, pupils' knowledge is enhanced by the use of 'Tudor' and 'Viking' days, during which they can learn about the lifestyles and customs of people living during these famous periods. Knowledge and awareness of other cultures is promoted in a number of ways. The school organises annual 'multicultural evenings', in which pupils and local adult groups perform various types of Punjabi and southern Indian dance programmes. An enthusiastic Sikh member of staff also runs regular classes for pupils in Punjabi and Giddha dancing, and organises regular visits to local places of worship, including a Sikh temple and Islamic mosque.

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

34. The support and guidance which pupils receive, both formal and informal, are very good. The teaching and non-teaching staff know the children and their families well and respond to their needs. There is a home school liaison programme that includes induction into the nursery and home visits. The ethnic minority achievement support programme includes an early starters reading club, a half day visit to Faith City, Punjabi and Urdu lessons, in which some English pupils participate and sessions where parents and children can work together to improve support for learning at home. The two bilingual assistants work mainly in the foundation stage where they give good support to the young children and help them to settle into school. They help to establish good communication with the parents and inform parents of ways to help their children learn. This is extended so that one of the assistants provides for a regular drop-in consultation session for parents. In addition, one of the assistants provides mother tongue support for children in Year 2, to help them understand and participate in class activities. A good example of this was seen during a Year 2 science lesson, where groups of pupils were smelling different materials. The assistant had introduced a wider selection of materials, such as spices and herbs, which were more familiar to the children of Asian background. All the pupils in the mixed groups enjoyed this stimulus and remembered when these spices had been used previously in cooking.
35. The monitoring of academic performance and personal development is satisfactory, overall. However, the school does not have a personal, social and health education policy and the monitoring and recording of pupils' personal development is informal. Work has started on formulating such a policy, in parallel with similar work being done by the local education authority and the school plans to implement the policy in the spring term of next year.

36. The school policies and procedures successfully promote discipline, good behaviour and health and safety. Procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are good and meet all requirements. Procedures for recording, monitoring and improving attendance are also good.
37. The school has very good, thorough procedures to assess and track the pupils' attainment and progress in the core subjects of English and mathematics. There is a clear policy and consistent approach, which provides accurate information in all year groups and provides for continuity as pupils move from class to class. School based assessments are carried out when children start in the nursery and standardised tests measure attainment at the beginning and end of the reception year. National tests in English and mathematics are administered annually from Year 2. In science, tests devised by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority are used well to measure attainment at the end of each unit of work. The school has clear plans to extend this system to the rest of the subjects where formal assessments are currently not fully in place.
38. The results of all the annual tests are carefully analysed by the assessment co-ordinator, headteacher and senior staff to provide an accurate overview of attainment in each year group and of the standards reached by the school over time. The performance of different groups, for instance, boys and girls, pupils with special educational needs and pupils whose first language is not English, is evaluated to ensure that all have equal access to the curriculum. For example, since the previous inspection, the identification, through assessment, of weaknesses in speaking and listening of nursery and reception children has led to the development of the curriculum. This is reflected in the recent improvement in test results. The progress of individual pupils is tracked from year to year as they move through the school. This information is used to identify pupils who need extra help, to group pupils within classes, and to set older pupils by prior attainment in English and mathematics in Key Stage 2. The school has made a promising start in using these assessment data to set targets for pupils' learning in all classes. However, as yet, these targets are not sufficiently refined to promote consistently good progress. Clearer focus on exactly what pupils are to learn and on the development of skills and knowledge, through systematic small steps, is needed to ensure that all pupils are fully challenged to achieve as well as they can.
39. The school has effective procedures in place to identify, assess, support and monitor the needs of pupils with special educational needs, including those with physical, behavioural or learning difficulties. Help given to pupils is usually timely and appropriate. The school responds to requirements, as outlined in pupils' statements for their needs and fully implements the Code of Practice.
40. The teachers and assistants for pupils who learn English as an additional language work well as a team. They assess the pupils' levels of English and keep records of their achievement in the standard assessment tests and other tests. Targets for individual pupils are set in consultation with class teachers. These give a good broad indication of need, but are not always specific enough, especially to identify where the more able pupils might need additional support, for example, in constructing sentences, using wider vocabulary. The main focus of support is in the foundation stage and at Key Stage 1 and the lower end of Key Stage 2. The teachers are mainly deployed to provide support to small groups in English and mathematics lessons. This provides satisfactory support for pupils, but could be more effective if the teachers had a greater role in the class, such as in the one lesson where the class teacher and support teacher shared the delivery of the literacy hour. This would also enable the support teachers to use their experience and maintain their professional development.



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

41. Overall, the effectiveness of the school's partnership with parents is satisfactory. The great majority of parents are happy with what the school provides and achieves. Parents believe that children like coming to school and that they make good progress. They also believe that teaching is good and the teachers have high expectations of pupils. The inspection findings support these views, but the concerns expressed by some parents about the amount of homework, the information received on pupils' progress and the range of activities outside lessons, are not supported by the evidence.
42. There is good communication between the school and parents, with information provided through regular newsletters, parents' meetings and annual reports. Parents also know that they can discuss issues informally with staff. The annual pupil reports give parents a clear indication of what pupils know, understand and can do and meet all requirements. Although specific targets and strategies for improvement are discussed at parents' evenings, these are not documented.
43. Written information is provided and support is provided for the few parents who do not have any English. The school's partnership with parents is appropriately supported through the help of the two bilingual assistants. Members of staff are present at parents' evenings for consultation and there is some translated information for parents, but this is an area that is not well developed. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are regularly informed of their children's progress and are involved in the review process, where appropriate.
44. Although the school makes significant efforts to encourage parents to participate in the life of the school, this aspect is under-developed. The impact that parents have on the work of the school is, therefore, limited. The parents and friends association raises significant funds that have been used to enhance school facilities and resources. A few parents help with activities outside the classroom and provide support in lessons. Some have subsequently become qualified as classroom assistants. Additional resources are available from the education action zone programme, specifically targeted at improving the relationship with parents, but these are not yet used to full effect.

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

45. The leadership and management of the school are very good, with excellent features. The headteacher is a highly committed leading professional who has an excellent vision for raising standards and the future developments of the school. Management responsibilities are delegated exceedingly well to the subject and phase co-ordinators, as well as to the senior management team. Since the previous inspection, subject co-ordinators have been increasingly empowered to lead and manage their subject areas and to take responsibility for monitoring teaching and learning. Their subject reviews and input to the school development plan demonstrate their high level of responsibility and accountability. The well-planned introduction of the national literacy and numeracy strategies has been very effectively led. The roles and responsibilities of the co-ordinators for special educational needs, ethnic minority achievement and the education action zone programme are clear and understood by all staff within the school. Good support is provided for pupils and staff, including the specialist teaching assistants and bi-lingual teachers. The headteacher and governors all recognise the importance of these aspects of the school's work.
46. The overall provision for pupils with special educational needs is managed well by the co-ordinator who has good support from her two teaching colleagues. Liaison and co-operation between the staff is good. Effective organisation and implementation of the school's identification, support and monitoring procedures means that support is generally well balanced between in-class support and withdrawal in appropriately small groups. There is discrete accommodation for withdrawn pupils with special educational needs and the resources for these pupils are good. However, there are too few information technology programs for literacy and numeracy in use. The use of tracking procedures is now well established, but the use of assessment information is not rigorously applied to identify and target pupils' learning of specific technical language in curriculum areas such as science.
47. The school is well-staffed by a team of qualified and experienced teachers who are supported exceedingly well by specialist teaching assistants, bi-lingual teachers and learning support staff. All adults in the school are highly dedicated and committed to the education of the children in their care. The excellent teamwork, evident in daily activities, helps to provide outstanding role models to pupils and enables the school to

function as an effective learning environment in which standards are rising steadily. Teachers have had the opportunity to attend a range of courses run by the local education service; for example, on the needs of different racial groups, refugees and asylum seekers. The two newly qualified teachers are well supported by their colleagues; they each have a mentor and are given an appropriate amount of free time for their professional development, both within the school and at local courses. Regular annual staff reviews enable the headteacher and members of staff to identify areas for their professional development together. Performance management procedures are in the early stages of development. The administrative, care-taking, cleaning and catering staff all make a very good contribution to the life of the school and take their responsibilities seriously; they provide prompt and cheerful help whenever a need arises and help to keep the school running smoothly.

48. The good accommodation has been developed well since the last inspection, with the addition of a new community room. An area previously used as a dining hall has also been converted to form a classroom and the staff work hard to ensure that the building provides a warm, welcoming and stimulating environment for the pupils. The good outside area has a newly resurfaced hard area and there is a separate, secure play area for children in the Foundation Stage. A good number of resources supplement the teaching of English, mathematics and science and the resources for information and communication technology are good, the central facility being well equipped, linked to the Internet and with a variety of appropriate software. The school has still not found a space in which to set up a central library in which pupils, particularly in Key Stage 2, can develop their independent research skills. A small and attractive book area is provided for the use of pupils at Key Stage 1, but book areas at Key Stage 2 are not satisfactory in providing the same facilities that would be found in a library. All of the school's accommodation is kept very clean and tidy and there are excellent displays of pupils' work. This has a very positive effect on pupils' attitudes, because they are aware of the need to care for their surroundings and they enjoy looking at the high quality artwork.
49. The governors contribute substantially to the effectiveness of the school. They share with the headteacher a clear vision for future developments. Reports, given by the headteacher and staff at governors' meetings, keep them well informed about curriculum development and help them to monitor the standards and quality of education the school achieves. School developments are discussed carefully and prioritised very well. The governors are keen to develop their roles even further and are currently undertaking training to increase their understanding of performance management procedures.
50. The school is effective in the evaluation and development of its work. The literacy and numeracy co-ordinators have observed lessons to monitor the quality of teaching and discussed performance with individual teachers. Any overall strengths and weaknesses are shared with staff and any individual areas for development are highlighted. Staff work and plan very well together across year groups and throughout the school, recognising and sharing individual teaching strengths. For example, teachers at Key Stage 2 share classes for subjects, such as music and physical education, in order to give pupils the benefit of their expertise. The school effectively promotes and monitors the effectiveness of specialist teaching arrangements for pupils with special educational needs.
51. The school has an extremely comprehensive school development plan, which is very good indeed, with an excellent focus on raising standards. It reflects shared concerns arising from the analyses of test results and sets clear targets for action. The plan outlines development for three years, giving details for the year ahead. It is carefully costed, sets time for the completion of targets and the action taken is monitored and evaluated. The plan sets out a realistic and relevant way for the school to develop and improve and is acted upon effectively. For example, when a lower than expected achievement of more able pupils was identified, action was clearly taken when literacy and numeracy target groups in Years 5 and 6 were re-organised by ability. This action has been very successful in raising standards at Key Stage 2.
52. Very careful budgeting and the efficient use of grants, such as those received for the introduction of the national literacy and numeracy strategies, have enabled the school to achieve its priorities and provide good value for money. The principles of best value are applied to all spending decisions. For example, the funding received by the school for special educational needs is used well to provide useful resources for teaching and pleasant environments in which individual and small group learning activities take place. Further grants have been allocated to develop the more effective use of information technology. Systems for financial administration are very efficient. A recent audit made some minor recommendations which have all been acted upon. The finance and premises committees of the governing body meet regularly and

receive a full update on the budget; co-ordinators have an agreed budget to spend within their areas which has to be carefully accounted.

53. Educational priorities contained in the school development plan are well supported through the school's financial planning and effective controls. Governors have good procedures to ensure that principles of best value are applied throughout their decision-making processes. The management and financial information that governors receive from the school is good. The strategic use of resources, including grants and other funding is good, overall. However, the school has not been able to maximise the use of the funding available to promote parental involvement under the education action zone programme, as the learning link worker has not been in post for much of the year. The school makes good use of new technology in managing and administering its affairs.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

54. The headteacher, staff and governors should:

(a) further raise the standards attained by the end of Key Stage 2 in English, mathematics and science by:

- providing more opportunities for pupils to use their language, literacy, numeracy and computer skills across the curriculum;
- sharing the learning objectives for lessons with the pupils;

*(paragraphs, 69, 76, 78, 79, 90 and 97)*

(b) extend the use of the very good assessment procedures by:

- setting clearly focused targets for individual pupils to help them improve;
- involving pupils in the assessment of their own work;
- devising manageable ways of assessing pupil's work in the foundation subjects.

*(paragraphs 23, 37, 38, 46, 71 and 76)*

(c) increase the opportunities for pupils to develop their independence;

*(paragraphs 12, 18, 23, 61, 68, 75 and 82)*

(d) further involve parents in pupils' learning, according to the priorities set out in the education action zone programme.

*(paragraphs 44 and 53)*

In addition to the key issues above, there are a few minor areas for improvement. These are noted in paragraphs 26, 35 and 71 and relate to writing a policy and scheme of work for pupils' personal, social and health education, including drugs misuse; providing translations of information to parents who do not speak English; and making better use of reading diaries to identify what pupils need to do to improve.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	99
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	28

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	28	51	19	0	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*

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	30	376
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	121

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

<b>Special educational needs</b>	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	9	111

<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	70

<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	34
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	39

### *Attendance*

#### **Authorised absence**

	%
School data	6.9
National comparative data	5.4

#### **Unauthorised absence**

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	33	27

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	26	27	28
	Girls	24	25	24
	Total	50	52	52
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (81)	87 (84)	87 (81)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	25	27	25
	Girls	24	23	24
	Total	49	50	49
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (77)	83 (79)	82 (76)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

### *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	30	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	18	18	22
	Girls	20	20	23
	Total	38	38	45
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	63 (67)	63 (57)	75 (69)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	18	20
	Girls	19	17	22
	Total	33	35	42
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	55 (65)	58 (49)	70 (71)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	5
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	9
Indian	11
Pakistani	41
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	282
Any other minority ethnic group	2

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### ***Teachers and classes***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	18.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Average class size	27

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

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

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25

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

Number of pupils per FTE adult	9
--------------------------------	---

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999/2000
----------------	-----------

	£
Total income	857,763
Total expenditure	842,560
Expenditure per pupil	1,902
Balance brought forward from previous year	3,478
Balance carried forward to next year	18,681

## ***Results of the survey of parents and carers***

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	438
Number of questionnaires returned	205

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	68	28	1	0	2
My child is making good progress in school.	51	41	3	1	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	44	42	8	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	36	38	13	3	7
The teaching is good.	61	29	5	1	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	44	37	14	3	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	63	25	7	2	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	58	32	3	0	6
The school works closely with parents.	41	35	15	3	7
The school is well led and managed.	50	32	7	2	8
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	47	41	4	1	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	39	31	14	3	13

**(NB: Totals may not add up to 100, due to rounding)**

### **Other issues raised by parents**

Twelve parents attended a meeting and 18 wrote to the Registered Inspector. The majority of comments made were positive and parents expressed their satisfaction with the quality of education provided by the school. Several parents indicated that they would like more information about the curriculum and their children's progress and a greater range of extra-curricular activities. A few parents also expressed the view that an inconsistent amount of homework is given to pupils and the school does not work closely with parents.

## **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**

55. The school makes good provision for children in the nursery and reception classes. The school has worked hard and successfully to establish the Foundation Stage in line with national guidance. Planning has been carefully reviewed by staff so that the curriculum takes into account the recently implemented early learning goals in all six areas of learning. Planning in the reception class is particularly good and gives appropriate priority to personal, social and emotional development, language and literacy, and mathematical development. In the nursery, planning overall is good, but not enough emphasis is placed in daily plans for the systematic development of personal, social and emotional skills across the curriculum. Focus is not sufficiently clear on exactly what is to be taught in lessons to enable teachers to assess how much progress has been made and so highlight the next steps in learning. Nevertheless, the curriculum, overall, in the nursery and reception classes is rich, broad and well-balanced. A range of interesting and lively activities based on well-planned practical experiences meets the children's needs well. The quality of the curriculum reflects the high level of the teachers' knowledge and understanding of the six areas of learning and of how young children learn. The use of excellent classroom displays to promote learning in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development is very effective in the reception classes, but not so well developed in the nursery.
56. There are 60 children on roll in the nursery. All children attend for either five morning or five afternoon sessions each week. They transfer to full time attendance in the reception classes in the September or January of the school year in which they are five. Currently, there are in total 33 children between the two reception classes. They will be joined by another 27 children from the nursery in January.
57. There is a wide variety of attainment, but many children start nursery with very poorly developed skills in personal independence, speaking, listening and mathematics. This is confirmed by the teachers' assessments in the first weeks in the nursery. Entry assessments, conducted when children first enter the reception classes, indicate that standards in these areas are still below those of most four-year-olds. However, by the end of the reception year, re-testing indicates that most children have made good progress. From low beginnings, the majority achieve well and reach most of the early learning goals in all areas of learning by the time they start Year 1. In some aspects of language, mathematics, creative and physical development, some children achieve particularly well. This is due to consistently good teaching throughout the Foundation Stage and to some very good teaching in language, literacy and mathematical development in the reception classes.

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

58. The majority of the children are keen to come to school and are eager to learn. Teachers quickly establish a feeling of security through daily routines and through their consistent attitudes. Each session starts with a quiet group time which sets a purposeful working atmosphere. In the nursery, almost all children leave their carers happily and are already beginning to show a sense of belonging when joining in the daily welcoming song. In the reception class, children are encouraged to become increasingly independent in finding and ticking their name to self-register. A good range of opportunities are planned well for children to work together in small and large groups. For example, in the nursery, with adult support the children co-operate and share when making pizza. In the reception class, children work together in two's in physical education. Staff frequently intervene in role-play in the nursery to model the positive attitudes of co-operative behaviour. Some children, however, find it difficult to wait their turn when the pretend bus is full. Snack time is used effectively in both nursery and reception class to promote co-operation and sharing. Good manners are insisted upon. All staff are consistent in their high expectations of the children's behaviour. They set clear boundaries and take every opportunity to reinforce high standards. Children are taught to respect and care for each other. For instance, when a child rides his bike too fast and bumps another, the teacher intervenes quickly with patience and encouragement to ensure he is aware of the consequences of his actions and apologises sincerely. Children's ideas and work are valued and positive feedback given which enhances the children's confidence and self-esteem. Children in the reception class are proud to bring their parents in to view their carefully displayed work. Celebrations, for instance of Diwali, develop the children's awareness of cultural and religious differences. Strong caring



relationships support children and develop their confidence in exploring the range of activities provided. In general, however, children are directed to specific activities and opportunities to promote their independence in initiating an investigation or selecting tools for a task are missed.

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

59. Particular attention is given to promoting speaking and listening skills. Planning is clearly focused on the small steps of learning and lesson objectives are very clear. This good teaching is enabling the children to achieve well over the foundation stage. Some very good teaching and learning was observed in the reception year. Basic skills are taught thoroughly. Tasks are carefully chosen to meet the needs of different ability groups in the class and teachers give clear advice on how to improve. Careful choice of attractive storybooks enthuse the children and motivate them to learn. All children enjoy listening to stories, although nursery children concentrate only for a short spell. They show good recall and understanding of the story of Red Riding Hood when sequencing pictures. With adult support, they are confident to tell the story with puppets, using the pictures as prompts. Their vocabulary is poor. They listen attentively to their teacher, but less well to each other. Reception children are enthusiastic to join in repeated refrains and enjoy exploring alliterative and rhyming words. In the nursery, the teachers use practical activities to introduce children to the sounds of letters. Children do not always have the appropriate vocabulary or experience to make the link significantly. For instance, when sorting toys to reinforce teaching of the sound of 'o', several children think the toy octopus is a spider. Elements of the National Literacy Strategy are used effectively in the reception classes to promote learning of letters and their sounds in lively and interesting word and text level work. The majority of the children recognise many letters by sound and can build up words orally. When writing, they make good attempts at writing the initial letter of words. A few higher attainers recognise many letters by sound and shape and can build up regular words such as 'nest'. They recognise two or three high frequency words and the characters from the first readers. They are on course to exceed the expectations of the early learning goals.

### **Mathematical development**

60. All teachers plan carefully for the systematic development of skills over time through an interesting range of first-hand practical activities. Effective teaching enables the majority of children to achieve well. In nursery and reception, children practise counting, matching and sorting in class groups and on their own. They join in a range of number rhymes and action songs, using their fingers to count up and down. In nursery, purposeful, practical play activities such as counting up to three pennies to pay for a ride on the pretend bus are well planned to support progress. With help, they count how many staff and children are present at the beginning of each session. They are beginning to recognise shapes, for example, circles, in the environment. Reception teachers make very good use of a number line to enable children to handle and position numbers practically. Most children are becoming confident in counting and ordering numerals to fifteen. The higher attainers can identify one more, or less, on the line and sequence the numerals carefully, using language like before, after and between, accurately. Teachers use questions effectively to extend and consolidate learning, for instance, when ordering objects from smallest to biggest or from shortest to tallest. Most children have a good grasp of the concepts of full and empty through structured activities in sand and water play. In the very good teaching, learning was fun. Lively, whole class activity was carefully followed up with a well-chosen set of group activities, which met the children's needs well and enabled them to make very good progress. In the reception classes, children are surrounded by numbers, which give them plenty of incidental opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills.

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

61. This area is taught well and children make good progress throughout the foundation stage. Staff make good use of the school environment and of visits and visitors to enhance the children's knowledge and understanding. Children are appropriately encouraged to learn through rich practical experiences and by direct use of their senses. The teachers use effective questioning techniques to extend the children's thinking and help them make sense of the world. In the nursery, children consider their journey to school. They are encouraged to use their eyes and ears when thinking about crossing the road. Good opportunities in role-play indoors with the pretend bus and outdoors with traffic lights and a 'crossing patrol' reinforce learning very effectively. The children use their senses of smell and taste when making pizza. In the reception class, the children learn to recognise change over time. They are becoming aware of the patterns

of nature when looking for signs of autumn in the school grounds. When observing tiny babies, they consider how they have already changed since their own babyhood. Celebrations this term of harvest, Halloween, Bonfire Night and Divali, introduce children to the wider world of their own and other traditions. Opportunities to investigate construction materials are appropriately provided throughout the foundation stage, but activities are sometimes too directed and there is not enough provision for children to select appropriate resources or initiate projects of their own. Information technology is used well to support learning. By the time they are six, most children are adept at using the mouse to move objects on screen, for instance, to copy a repeated pattern.

### **Physical development**

62. Progress in physical development is good, overall. The majority of children reach the early learning goals and exceed them in some respects by the time they start in Year 1. Nursery children take part enthusiastically in physical education lessons in the hall and in daily outdoor play sessions with large apparatus. Activities are carefully focused to develop skills over time. For instance, the children persevere and are gradually becoming confident in throwing and catching large and small balls. The children are learning to control wheeled vehicles successfully and negotiate space with an awareness of others. They respond to instructions, for instance, to stop and start from the 'crossing patrol'. Reception children do not have the opportunity to play regularly with large outdoor toys and this slows their progress in some aspects. Nevertheless, reception staff build carefully on what children can already do. In physical education lessons in the hall, children move freely with pleasure and confidence. They experiment with different ways of moving and control their bodies to hop, skip, jump and run in sequence. They show increasing co-ordination and respond quickly to the teachers' clear instructions and signals on the tambourine. They respond imaginatively to music. They develop their movements to represent Big, Middle and Little Billy Goats Gruff in time to music from *The Sorcerer's Apprentice*. All teachers manage the children effectively and show good awareness of safety aspects. They use praise to encourage the children to explore a range of movement and develop confidence. Opportunities to use children as exemplars to improve the standards of all are missed, but teachers do give clear instructions on how to improve. Plenary sessions are used well. Children are encouraged to think about what they have done and are becoming aware of their own progress.

### **Creative development**

63. This is another area where, by the end of the reception year, children exceed the expectations of the early learning goals in some aspects, particularly in their response to visual art and music. The teachers provide a broad curriculum supported by a range of interesting resources well directed to extending the children's creative development. Imaginative role-play is used extensively both informally in the nursery and in more formal settings, for instance, physical education lessons in the reception class. Staff intervene sensitively to support and extend children's ideas so that they make good progress. In the reception class in particular, the teachers develop the art curriculum imaginatively and prepare resources well so that children have access to a range of media to express their own ideas. In the nursery, however, all children often complete the same collage type task, for instance, making frogs, with little opportunity for their own creativity. Much relevant work is suitably based on learning, recognising and matching colours, although little evidence was seen of children mixing colours, e.g. in paint, for themselves. Careful teaching in both nursery and reception, based on good knowledge and understanding, also enables children to respond to the works of famous artists. A good example of this is when reception children compare very different images of the 'Mother and Child' by Picasso and Renoir. They show well-developed skills of critical analysis for their age and concentrate hard to compose their own pictures in the particular styles with pastel or paint. All children join enthusiastically in a good range of songs and rhymes. They sing from memory and use percussion to accompany themselves. In the reception class, many children can keep to the beat and provide suitable effects. When singing 'I Hear Thunder', they get gradually louder using their voices and instruments as the storm approaches. They are also beginning to explore contrasts in pitch and tempo in their singing.
64. A strength of the foundation stage is the way in which all staff work together to provide a dynamic and co-ordinated curriculum. Non-teaching staff are well informed and make a considerable positive contribution to learning in all areas. Day-to-day assessment is carried out efficiently through observation and is used to plan the next steps in learning. Children with special educational needs are identified early and are well supported so that they make good progress. High quality support is also provided for children whose first

language is not English. This is very beneficial to their progress. The good quality provision in the Foundation Stage gives the children a good start and prepares them well for Key Stage 1.

## ENGLISH

65. Standards are steadily improving so that in the standardised tests for eleven-year-olds in 2000, the standards achieved were average when compared with those of similar schools. The results were well below those achieved nationally, because pupils are not yet reaching a high enough standard in writing. The results for seven-year-olds show that pupils achieved standards well above those in similar schools for writing and average standards in reading. Compared to the national figures, reading standards were just below the national average, whilst, in writing, pupils did better than the national average. Overall, this shows an improvement over the last three year's results. The improving standards at both Key Stages 1 and 2 reflect the school's commitment to raising standards.
66. From a low starting point, pupils build on their knowledge of phonics, reading and writing and teachers provide a good environment for talk to develop. Achievement at Key Stage 2 is influenced by number of factors that have a negative impact on results. For example, there is a high number of pupils with special educational needs for whom literacy skills are weak, as well as a high number of pupils with English as an additional language, some of whom take longer to reach a satisfactory competency in English. In addition, throughout Key Stage 2, there is a significant number of new entrants who are not always at the same standard as those who have been in the school from the outset. However, improving standards at Key Stage 1 indicate that pupils' good progress is beginning to have a good impact on Key Stage 2 results. The inspection findings show that pupils make good progress, so that, by the time they reach the end of Key Stage 2, they achieve standards just below the national expectations overall.
67. The stories and texts that are the focus of the literacy hour are well selected to stimulate and interest pupils. Pupils enjoy the stories, such as in Year 2 where they are very eager to share their understanding of the story of "Funny Bones" and learn to use new vocabulary. They learn to express their opinions about stories and poetry and can say why they like different elements, as when Year 3 pupils discuss the different shape poems they have been studying, whilst remembering and using interesting vocabulary. Pupils in Year 4 learn to use specialised vocabulary when studying newspaper lay-out and language, so that they can begin to talk about alliteration and puns and describe the impact of the language on the reader.
68. Pupils do well to attain satisfactory standards in reading. Younger pupils have a good grasp of letter sounds which helps them to read unfamiliar words and also use the context and illustrations to help. These strategies also help the less able pupils and those with special educational needs. Average and above average readers generally read with confidence and fluency and have good sight vocabulary. More able younger readers are not yet confident to widen their reading away from scheme books to develop their independence. Older readers read with improving fluency and accuracy, and show that they can tackle challenging texts. They enjoy fantasy adventures, but also choose to read non-fiction texts. They are keen to explain why they have chosen the books and how these books fit into their current interests. They know how to find information from different sources, including the Internet and CD-ROM, although opportunities for independent research are limited by the lack of a school library.
69. Writing is sound and developing well for pupils in Key Stage 1. Older pupils are learning how to plan and structure stories, as in the rewriting of "Funny Bones", where pupils show that they can choose effective linking words to use to introduce each of the different stages in the story. Pupils regularly practise forming their letters correctly, but are not transferring these skills so successfully to their written work. By the age of eleven, pupils' work shows that they can successfully incorporate newly introduced grammar structures and vocabulary into their work. Drafting is used to help pupils to produce neat and well-presented finished work and punctuation is satisfactory. The amount of sustained writing is limited, but there is good evidence that pupils are learning to develop and build up these skills and this can be seen in more recent work, such as the creation of an alternative ending for 'The Tempest', which shows a good sense of character and plot. The work of the less able pupils and those with special educational needs shows that they have not yet acquired the skills to use more complex sentences and vocabulary. The writing of some of the pupils with English as an additional language indicates that the structure and patterns of their mother tongue influences the quality of their writing. Pupils use different forms of writing appropriately, for example, to report on scientific experiments or to write accounts of episodes in history.

They do not use information technology enough to draft and edit work, or to find different ways to produce finished work.

70. The good quality of teaching has a positive impact on pupils' achievement and is far better than that seen in the previous inspection. There are improvements in all areas of the curriculum. Teachers are carefully building on pupils' knowledge and skills, so that the right kind of support is given to pupils of all abilities and in particular to the less able and those pupils with special educational needs. Teaching and learning are good across the school. A third of the teaching seen was very good and there were no unsatisfactory lessons. Teachers across the school have a very good understanding of the National Literacy strategy. In Key Stage 1, there is an appropriate emphasis on developing phonic skills to assist pupils with their spelling and reading. The texts teachers choose to introduce lessons are very effective and stimulate pupils' interest and enjoyment. They link very well with the reading and writing objectives of the lesson, so that there is a smooth transition between the phases of the lesson. In Year 4, the teachers chose an amusing text to illustrate the layout of a popular newspaper, so that pupils could identify how humour is used to make an impact. This led to looking at the language of the text and the use of verbs in their past tense. Later in the week, pupils were able to identify the essential elements of a news item; the use of quotes and witness reports, alliteration and pun, catchy headlines, so that they could begin to draft their own reports and collaborate to edit for better effect. Teachers effectively promote pupils' interest in new words and how writing can be organised to create different effects. Teachers understand the importance of choosing texts that well illustrate the writing objectives. In Year 1, the repetitive patterns in the story of 'The Gingerbread Man' are very effective in helping pupils to structure their stories. They insist that proper terms for language are used and this encourages pupils to express their ideas accurately. In Year 3, pupils were building up their descriptive vocabulary through the medium of shape poems and enjoyed identifying alliteration and onomatopoeic words, such as 'subtle' and 'sensuous' in the 'snake' poem. The teacher in Year 6 read an extract from a short mystery story very effectively, so that pupils could afterwards identify how the author builds tension using vocabulary, imagery and through varying the lengths of sentences. The needs of different groups of pupils are provided for satisfactorily. In the majority of lessons, work is matched to meet the different needs of pupils. The support assistants are well deployed to help different groups of pupils achieve and are used to challenge the more able pupils as well as to support the less able and those with special educational needs. The additional literacy support is well targeted and effectively helps pupils consolidate their reading skills and phonic knowledge. Teachers and bilingual assistants are provided from the ethnic minority achievement grant to support pupils with English as an additional language and those from minority ethnic groups whose mother tongue is English, but who may be underachieving. They are deployed effectively. The bilingual assistants give good support in the foundation stage to help pupils develop their speaking and listening skills. The teachers give satisfactory support to groups of pupils, but their professional experience is not always elicited to help these pupils develop their reading and understanding, or vocabulary and writing skills. In a few lessons, teachers fail to build on the enthusiasm and interest of the pupils and to challenge the pupils, for example, to use the vocabulary items they have identified in sentences. Pupils withdrawn for targeted support are not always provided with the same challenge as their peers; this is so where pupils of all abilities in Year 5 share lessons with the target group.
71. Management of the subject is good. There has been a review of the organisation of the timetable so that, over the week, pupils' knowledge and understanding of the grammar and structure items can be developed to influence their writing. In order to improve standards, additional time has been allocated in Year 2 for the development of reading skills and, throughout the school, to develop pupils' writing. Throughout the school, the good assessment information is mainly used effectively, except in reading where it is not used sufficiently well to set accurate targets for improvement for all pupils, which can be shared with them. This leads, in particular, to pupils in Key Stage 1 not being challenged by their reading books and reading diaries are still not consistent in identifying what pupils need to do to improve their reading. In Key Stage 2, some pupils are not reading books well matched to their ability. In addition, the needs of pupils learning English as an additional language are not closely scrutinised to ensure that teachers and support staff have a clear idea of what these pupils need to do to improve their performance and to ensure that they are achieving to their ability.

## **MATHEMATICS**

72. At the end of Key Stage 2, the results in the National Curriculum tests in 2000 were well below the national average. However, in comparison with schools in similar circumstances, standards were above

average. Since the last inspection, standards of attainment have risen steadily, in line with national trends, in the last four years. The inspection findings closely reflect this pattern of continuing improvement. Whilst the standards are still below the national average, many year groups are stepping up the rate of progress and the overall picture is positive. This is due to the consistently good quality of teaching in both key stages. It is never less than good and is very good at Key Stage 2, where two outstanding lessons were observed in a Year 3 and a Year 6 set, both for more able learners. However, very good teaching takes place for pupils who experience difficulties with their learning, for instance in a Year 5 set, where pupils were working on tally charts and pictograms, or a Year 6 group making graphs from data about last year's test results. This setting of pupils according to prior attainment is also having a positive effect on the work in mathematics. Realistic, but challenging, targets have been set for 2001, based on accurate analysis of statistics. As the school has reached and exceeded its previous targets, there is no reason to expect that they will not continue to do so.

73. The oldest pupils in the school generally have a wide enough understanding of mathematical language and terminology to explain their reasoning and methods accurately. Consequently, they apply their knowledge well in practical situations. A good example of this was seen in lessons on perimeters, in Year 6 sets, where pupils designed formulae to use, or successfully investigated, several different methods for working out irregular shapes. Younger pupils work very well with equivalent fractions, or use division to find fractions of a number and extend this into money and length. Pupils with special educational needs and for whom English is an additional language work appropriately in their groups on work planned in the same context as the other sets, because the support is well focused. Most pupils understand and demonstrate the value of the various digits in a six or seven-figure number. Many have a good understanding of multiples, percentages and decimals and are able to use and interpret co-ordinates in the first quadrant. Most of the able pupils in Year 6 were able to interpret co-ordinates in all quadrants. Generally, pupils understand time zones, angles and square numbers. Most are accurate at their own ability level and present their work well.
74. At Key Stage 1, in the National Curriculum tests in 2000, pupils attained average standards, which were above average in comparison to similar schools. This reflects steadily rising standards, mirroring the national trend. It is also confirmed by inspection findings, which show that pupils' attainment is broadly what is expected nationally for pupils of this age group. This is due to the consistently good teaching throughout the key stage, as well as the use of some grouping according to prior attainment, which allows the gaps between pupils' understanding to be narrower within a set. Teachers make good use of this to prepare lessons and activities, which match the levels of ability in their classes, and so pupils achieve appropriately. By the end of the key stage, a good proportion of pupils count, add and subtract numbers up to 20, confidently, and many are beginning to understand the place values of the digits in numbers up to 100. They are developing good ways of working things out and demonstrate competent, confident mental agility, such as '10 less than 64', or doubling, or 'how many tens in 53?' They work at a brisk pace, but with time to reflect and consider answers, where appropriate. The majority of pupils know the names and properties of common two-dimensional shapes, although some are more hesitant about three-dimensional ones. They are developing a good sense of time for instance when they consider calendars and the conventions of the layout. They worked well in both groups observed in Year 2, as they analysed the rhyme for the months of the year, noticing the months that have fewer days than others and which months were in which seasons. They also see patterns and relationships in numbers, for instance when using a hundred square to find numbers. They quickly worked out various methods for moving around rapidly to get the answer. Because teachers make demands on all pupils, they are becoming confident and enjoying their mathematics lessons, making steady progress. Younger pupils are also attentive and respond well in their lessons because they are confident and happy to do mathematics. They see patterns and are beginning to understand that inversion and reversal of numbers can help them to get answers more quickly. They are accurate, know how they have arrived at their answers and explain their methods well to the class.
75. The quality of teaching is never less than good, overall, and is of a particularly high standard at Key Stage 2. The consistent, clear, caring and skilful teaching is reflected in the quality and quantity of work the pupils produce. It is not yet replicated in the standards achieved, especially in National Curriculum tests, but teachers are constantly considering their work and results are rising. Lessons are well planned, purposeful and carried out at an appropriate pace. This allows time for quick-fire sessions and times for reflection. Teachers use time and resources very well and so pupils' interest and enthusiasm are maintained. Skilful questioning ensures that pupils think hard and use appropriate technical, mathematical language. There is very good liaison between support staff and class teachers, which greatly enhances the

pupils' learning. Relationships are very good and that is self-evident in mathematics lessons, where teachers use humour well to boost confidence, to keep order unobtrusively, to deflate potentially difficult situations and simply for fun and enjoyment. In some older age-group classes, this is also reciprocated by the pupils, who have excellent rapport with their teachers. Teachers also plan good finishing sessions, which draw teaching points together successfully and consolidate the learning that has taken place. For example, in a Year 3 lesson, pupils were able to find further fractions by noting a pattern, skilfully orchestrated by the teacher. In the best lessons, teachers offer starting points and support pupils in order to reach higher standards at whatever level. In less inspiring lessons, some opportunities for independence are lost and pupils do not consider their own learning in light of the goal set for the session because teachers do not share it with them sufficiently often.

76. Although assessment information is carefully collected and analysed, insufficient detailed scrutiny takes place to pinpoint difficulties pupils might be having with particular concepts. This is a significant weakness in the work to raise standards. Growing facility in the use of the new framework for numeracy is improving but gains are offset against lack of flexibility, overall. Teachers are becoming aware of this and preparations are being made to plan slightly differently in the new term. The co-ordinators are knowledgeable and work very well together to lead the subject. They are very well informed and manage the provision very well. Their grasp of the subject is very helpful to the staff which, in turn, has a positive impact on pupils' learning. The inspection highlighted a willingness and capacity to succeed which bodes well for future development, in line with the school's recent award for the teaching of the skills of mathematics.

## SCIENCE

77. In the 2000 statutory assessments at Key Stage 1, the attainment of pupils was below the national average. In the Key Stage 2 assessments, the attainment of pupils was well below the national average. Over the last four years, there has been a steady improvement in the assessment scores at both key stages. When compared with similar schools, the attainment of pupils is in line with the national average. As a result of the high quality of teaching seen during the inspection, standards are higher than those reflected by the statutory assessments and are likely to continue to rise in the future. The inspection findings indicate that standards are broadly in line with national expectations at Key Stage 1, but they are below the national expectation at the end of Key Stage 2, despite the good teaching. There are no significant differences between the results of boys and girls.
78. By the age of 11, pupils understand what is meant by a fair test and can use their ideas to carry out investigations. For example, in a very good lesson concerned with forces, Year 6 pupils were asked to think about how they might investigate the way air resistance affected pieces of paper of different shapes and sizes when falling through the air. They used predictions well, identified which variable was to change and could time the rate of fall of various shapes of paper with reasonable accuracy to collect a range of data. They record their work in a variety of ways and use graphs effectively, such as line graphs, as in an investigation of the size of force required to move an object. Occasionally in lessons pupils' unsatisfactory and, sometimes, poor comprehension and reading skills combine to slow their progress and lower attainment. This was seen in a Year 6 lesson, where pupils were asked to classify the properties of different natural and man-made materials, using cards describing these properties. Unfortunately, some pupils could not understand the meanings of important words and, therefore, made relatively slow progress on this activity. Since the last inspection, when there was criticism of this aspect of pupils' work, there have been significant improvements. Pupils can design and construct simple electrical circuits, draw and label them using appropriate symbols and suggest faults in the circuit when it doesn't work. They have a sound knowledge of major organs of the body and can understand that various life forms depend on each other, as in a food chain. At Key Stage 1, pupils can make simple predictions and carry out investigations to test these, using appropriate observation and recording skills. They know about different senses of the body and can use these to sort and classify different substances and materials. In a well planned Year 2 set of activities, pupils used their senses on a range of different substances, such as foods, using smell, taste, touch and sight and could record these accurately using appropriate vocabulary and pictures. They know that there are many different sources of light and that sunlight and water are essential for the growth of plants. They can name objects which require electricity for power and understand many of the safety aspects associated with the use of electricity.

79. The quality of teaching is good overall and ranged from satisfactory in Key Stage 1 to very good in Key Stage 2. A majority of lessons seen were good or very good. No unsatisfactory lessons were observed. This is a significant improvement since the time of the last inspection, particularly at Key Stage 2. In a majority of lessons, teachers plan their lessons to provide activities reflecting the programme of study and pupils' needs. Teachers set clear objectives and make good use of questioning to promote pupils' thinking and challenge them appropriately. In a very good Year 6 lesson on forces, pupils were asked to design a fair test to investigate the way air resistance affected different shapes of paper when falling through air. The teacher used clear explanation to link the activity with pupils' prior learning and set clear objectives. In response, pupils moved quickly into the investigation and could explain what they were doing and why. The teacher set a tone of urgency by reminding pupils what time remained for them to complete their task, with the result that pupils used their time well, working at a very productive pace. In the same lesson, the teacher made good use of a special teacher assistant to assist the progress of a pupil with significant hearing loss. In another very good Year 3 lesson, the teacher set a brisk pace at the start of a class investigation of the most effective way to use a tooth brush as part of a healthy living and eating topic. She also made good use of key vocabulary and, as a result, pupils' confidence in using scientific words increased. In response to the good teaching, pupils enjoy their work, particularly when working together during an investigation. They are generally confident and enthusiastic when discussing aspects of their work, show respect for each other and treat materials and equipment with care. They invariably behave well. During lessons, the progress of pupils is often good whereas, over the longer term, it is sound, often slowed by the significant turnover of pupils and language difficulties associated with interpreting and recording their investigations. The learning of pupils with special educational needs is similar to those of their peers. Progress for these pupils is particularly good when supported by an adult. The subject is well managed by a committed co-ordinator. She has contributed to the recent improvements in the subject through the development plan and has plans in hand for further revision of the scheme of work, so that it reflects the latest National Curriculum requirements. The use of assessment is not yet well developed but there are plans to improve this situation. Information and communication technology is not used effectively to enhance pupils' use of monitoring of events and data handling during investigations.

## ART

80. Overall, standards have improved since the last inspection and are now much higher than those expected for pupils' age by the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. Pupils achieve particularly good standards in painting and observational drawing. By the time they reach Year 6, pupils are confident in their use of colour, form and shape. They use their sketch books well to record observational studies, critically analyse the work of famous artists, such as Van Gogh, Mondrian, Picasso and Bacon, and explore a wide variety of techniques in their own work. Standards are exceptional in the recent three-dimensional studies of the ceramic works of Clarice Cliff. At Key Stage 1, pupils experiment successfully with colour when painting mini-beasts, fruit and vegetables. They have good observational skills, as shown in their studies of buildings and careful pencil drawings of plant life. Pupils achieve a good standard in drawing self-portraits and observational studies, giving good attention to tone and shade in their representations. They tackle collage work with confidence and are able to complete pieces for class displays to complement their studies of the environment in geographical activities. All pupils make very good progress, including those who learn English as an additional language and those who have special educational needs. Throughout the school, pupils' visual perception is improved very well through good focus on recording observations. Pupils' understanding of the methods and style of artists is increased rapidly throughout the school and good links are forged between art and other curriculum areas, which help to increase their knowledge. Cultural diversity is well represented, with focus from both European society and world-wide multi-cultural themes.
81. The quality of teaching and learning is very good and pupils respond well with enthusiasm and confidence. Pupils' attitudes to the subject are excellent. Teachers are enthusiastic and have very strong subject knowledge. They plan their lessons conscientiously to give pupils a very broad range of experiences. The enthusiastic co-ordinator who is currently on short-term leave promotes consistently high standards and excellent displays in classrooms and corridors. As a result, work is well mounted, clearly labelled, imaginative and very colourful. The co-ordinator's expertise has had a very positive effect on the high quality of teaching and learning. This contributes well to the high standards attained and the subject is an outstanding feature of the school.

## DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

82. Standards are average at the end of both key stages. They are better now than at the time of the last inspection. This is due to the staff's commitment in raising their own knowledge and understanding of the subject through in-service training and to the careful review and improvement of the curriculum, which supports their planning. There is still, however, some lack of confidence and this results in lowered expectations and insufficient opportunities, particularly for older pupils, to work independently to promote their skills at a higher level.
83. Almost all pupils at Key Stage 2 achieve at least satisfactorily over time and the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Pupils make steady progress in their learning. However, designing skills are less well taught than those of making. For instance, in Year 5, the pupils have had some experience of building moving toys with construction kits before setting out to make a 'Frantic Cat' with battens and card. They do not use their earlier experience directly to produce a design for their work. Not enough opportunity is provided by this activity for pupils to develop their own ideas. Whilst they are learning sound techniques in measuring, cutting, joining and strengthening, they are not well challenged to extend their skills in design. Similarly in Year 6, the pupils have designed and made electrically controlled vehicles. They have constructed the vehicles well, with good understanding of the way different parts such as the chassis and axles fit together. Their products are finished attractively. The labelled drawings of their designs, whilst satisfactory, are not well prepared in detail. Effective class management and the efficient organisation of groups enable the pupils to co-operate successfully in twos or threes to evaluate their work. They make sensible suggestions on how they can be improved. No evidence was seen of the use of information technology to model pupils' ideas and support their planning and assessment procedures are currently unsatisfactory. The curriculum co-ordinator has usefully identified the need to moderate standards now that the scheme of work is fully in place and to develop a system of assessment to ensure the systematic development of skills over time. The school is rightly consolidating its approach to this subject in which very recent improvement is evident.
84. Most pupils at Key Stage 1 make good progress. Pupils with special educational needs and with English as an additional language are fully involved in all lessons and effectively supported to achieve equally alongside their peers. The good progress at Key Stage 1 reflects good standards of teaching where interesting practical activities motivate pupils to learn. Lessons clearly build on earlier work and pupils are enthusiastic to take part. In Year 1, for instance, the pupils evaluated tinned fruit salad before setting out to make their own from fresh fruit. Carefully planned opportunities to chop and cut with good attention to safety aspects directly improve their skills. They all take pleasure in tasting and describing their product. The teacher uses questions effectively, so that the pupils make significant comparisons. In Year 2, good attention to designing and making aspects ensures that the pupils build up skills purposefully over time. They design and make glove puppets. The pupils keenly anticipate their weekly design and technology lesson and look forward to performing with the finished product. They produce labelled drawings to show their intentions and organise their ideas to provide sequential instructions. Group work is well organised so that the pupils consider a range of joining techniques and practise sewing before attempting to assemble their puppet. The non-teaching assistant is well briefed and efficiently deployed to support children, for instance, in making a template of their design. The good level of purposeful interaction between adults and pupils supports learning well, and perceptive questioning helps clarify their ideas.

## GEOGRAPHY

85. Pupils achieve standards at the level expected for their age by the end of both key stages. The school has maintained a suitable level of improvement since the last inspection, whilst implementing the literacy and numeracy strategies. Four lessons were seen during the inspection and other evidence is taken from an analysis of pupils' work and talking to them about the subject, as well as looking at teachers' planning.
86. The oldest pupils in the school make detailed studies and appropriate investigations of mountain ranges, competently comparing and contrasting conditions. They demonstrate good understanding of how these areas are different from their own environment, especially climate and physical features. Younger pupils at Key Stage 2 make a study of water uses around the world and brainstorm all their ideas under four main headings; 'at home', 'at school', 'on the farm' and 'for leisure'. They had very good ideas and tried, quite successfully, to consider uses world wide, rather than just what they knew first-hand, for instance 'in the paddy fields', as well as for washing and brushing their own teeth. Older pupils consider pollution and the



environment and make informed comments about pollution from water in the recent floods, noting how it had affected lives. In the lesson observed, they considered conservationist and by-pass builders' views, explored conflict of interest and expressed their own opinions on the situation. At Key Stage 1, pupils describe their local area competently and express ideas about why it is as it is. For example, when asked about litter and dirt in the street, two pupils decided that 'some people are untidy and don't think about how the rubbish blows about.' They have a good developing sense of where places are in relation to each other and realise places are linked by such things as time or weather, world wide. They use technical language well. For instance, they know about airports for travel and that they cannot have one on the doorstep. They use words like 'passport', 'abroad' and 'international' correctly and name several countries on the world map. They know that people speak different languages and have different food and money because their lives are different from their own. As they study Barnaby Bear's journey to America, they understand that he would use various means of transport and have good ideas about the length of time spent using each one. This was quite a mature skill, developing early.

87. Throughout the school, the use of world maps is outstanding. They serve different needs in different classes but, generally, they are used as a focus for news, events and places, or to indicate historical journeys. A good example of this was in Year 2, where pupils had considered the voyage of the Mayflower to the New World. Another was the immigration and emigration of population since 1948. Generally, pupils make good use of atlases, globes and plans; for instance, pupils know how to read maps and what the key is used for. They also have an increasingly well developed sense of the relationship of the globe and the world map.
88. The quality of teaching and learning is sound, overall, and often good. Teaching is lively, well informed and planned thoroughly. Some teachers are beginning to make good use of teaching styles learned from use of the literacy and numeracy strategies and question pupils well to make them think. The new co-ordinators have produced a good policy document and have considered well, advice given to them from a number of outside sources. They are evaluating what they do in light of how it works best for the school and the inspection found that this is not only helpful to staff, but has a positive impact on what and how the pupils learn. Trips also contribute positively to geographical experiences and the use of the technology of the Internet, for research and ideas, adds another dimension to the work. Assessment procedures are not yet used sufficiently well to promote standards.

## **HISTORY**

89. Pupils' attainment at the end of both key stages is similar to that expected for their age. The school has maintained a realistic level of improvement since the last inspection, given that two major Government initiatives have been implemented, in literacy and numeracy. Whilst few lessons were seen, judgements are based upon looking at pupils' work and talking about it with them, as well as at teachers' planning. The oldest pupils in the school have developed their knowledge and understanding of past times and people. During the inspection, Year 6 pupils had a very good opportunity to question, at first hand, several people who remember life since 1948. Many of these people brought in artefacts from their own lives. The whole process came alive for the pupils as they used their questions to find out how lives and times have changed and how they have stayed the same. By studying photographs, possessions and people, the pupils were piecing together social and cultural changes and were able to draw on their own experiences to judge outcomes. Social events included weddings, the school's own Silver Jubilee, as reported in the local newspaper of the time, and food preparation, as well as leisure. The pupils examined a home-made kite, a record player and a reel-to-reel tape recorder, as well as things made from Bakelite and early forms of plastic. They had very lively discussions with their guests about how different some materials and electrical goods are now. Younger pupils in the key stage demonstrate a good sense of time and dates when they use their timeline to fix where Tudors fit into the pattern of past events. They also utilise very good skills of research and demonstrate that they are beginning to understand bias and opinion in evidence, for instance as they find out how the lives of three prominent Tudor men could bring about significant changes in society, with resonance in our own times. At Key Stage 1, pupils have a suitable awareness of the differences between past and present, for instance in milking techniques. Pupils visited the farm, wrote and illustrated very enjoyable pieces of work about how things were done in past times and how life has changed. They have also considered the Pilgrim Fathers and understand well the way of life in that distant past, using information sources successfully, to interpret and record facts and events. Again, their illustrations show how their understanding of why people did things, is developing and add to

the lively nature of the work. They obviously enjoyed the study, from talking to them about it and noting what and how they wrote.

90. The quality of teaching and learning is always at least sound and often good and, as a result, pupils enjoy history and are curious about events and people. All pupils tackle investigative work with enthusiasm and this makes a positive contribution to the standards they achieve. Teaching in the few lessons seen was lively and artefacts and other resource materials were used well to enhance learning. Planning shows good links to other subjects and an increasing contribution to the skills of literacy. The co-ordinators work well as a team to ensure the good coverage of historical skills and have considered the curriculum well, in light of new ideas and advice from official sources. They have made a good start in adjusting to the new requirements of the National Curriculum and improving the use of assessment. The school is in a strong position to maintain and improve standards.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

91. Standards are broadly in line with the national expectation by the end of both key stages. By the time they are eleven years old, pupils have made good progress over time and have added steadily to their understanding of the many facets of the subject. They show confidence using the Internet as a research tool, as when extracting detailed archive photographs and information in Year 5 about Victorian England from the 'Living Library' web site. In Year 6, pupils have enhanced their geographical knowledge by using the CD ROM to research the Himalayan mountains and a Canadian web site to learn more about the Rocky Mountain range. However, pupils have limited experience in data handling and manipulation, although the use of a spreadsheet is planned for next term. Pupils have also not yet developed their understanding of the applications of control sufficiently, although this is an area of future development which the school plans to address. At Key Stage 1, pupils can handle computers with much confidence. They can log on and off using their own user name and passwords; they use the mouse and keyboard well and know how to save and print their work. They use word processing to write simple stories and poems, such as those which were written with much feeling and in different font styles on 'Autumn'. They understand how to create geometric and other shapes and have used this skill to produce vibrant and colourful postcard designs based on the painters Mondrian and Kandinsky. During one exciting lesson, Year 2 pupils used colour modelling software to design a winter snowman scene, complete with falling snow and blue sky.
92. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall; it was very good in over half of the lessons seen. The teaching staff have worked hard to develop their own computing skills and show confidence and enjoyment teaching the subject. In the best lessons, teachers show a very good grasp of the computers and software; they use this knowledge well by setting clear objectives and explaining how pupils should proceed. In a very good Year 4 lesson, pupils were learning how to enhance their literacy skills through the use of editing skills on a school newspaper article. The teacher used her good knowledge of the software during the introduction to skilfully question pupils, making clear which editing skills they should be developing during the activity. These included the use of the 'spell checker', 'cutting and pasting' and 'overwriting' facilities. Pupils listened well to the instructions, which were well understood and helped them to make a good start to the activity. Although most pupils could use the spell checker function correctly, a significant minority of less able pupils had some difficulty deciding on the correct optional spelling to choose because of language weaknesses. Nevertheless, they were given good support and persevered, with sustained interest. In a successful Year 6 lesson, pupils were extending their skills on the Internet by interrogating various national newspaper web sites. Teachers invariably manage their pupils well. In a Year 2 lesson, the teacher made her pupils feel very proud of the colourful Christmas scenes which they had designed, but, at the same time, reminded pupils that the noise of their excitement was becoming too loud. This good teaching leads to pupils being highly motivated in lessons and they show this with a genuine buzz of excitement at what they can do on the computer. Often in the mixed ability lessons, more able and less confident pupils sit together and a high level of co-operation and mutual respect soon develops. This was observed in a Year 2 lesson when a pupil learning English as an additional language made sound progress in designing skills. Pupils' behaviour is invariably very good. They listen carefully, follow instructions well and treat computer equipment with due care and respect. Overall, all pupils make good progress in the subject.
93. The school has improved its resources since the last inspection and is making good use of its computers, including the new, well-equipped computer suite, although this latter facility is not yet extended to Year 1

pupils. When a class of 25 or more pupils is being taught in the rather confined space of the computer suite, monitoring by the teacher is physically demanding. Nevertheless, the facility is providing valuable learning opportunities for most pupils. The subject is effectively managed by an enthusiastic co-ordinator who has high expectations for the subject. She is aware that there is currently no adequate assessment procedure or application of assessment in the subject and plans to rectify this with support from the local authority in the next development cycle.

## **MUSIC**

94. Overall, standards have been maintained since the last inspection and are currently in line with those expected for pupils' age at the end of both key stages; standards are notably good in singing. Pupils in Year 6 understand the meaning of tempo and melody. They read simple graphic notation confidently when playing descant recorders and violins. Pupils are able to follow an ascending and descending tune in melodies and they play simple untuned percussion instruments and appraise their compositions effectively to improve their performances. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and the few who learn English as an additional language, make steady progress in their learning. Throughout the school, pupils develop their musical vocabulary well and most are keen to improve their performances through repeated practice.
95. Teaching and learning are good because the expertise of the co-ordinator has a very positive effect on the standards attained and good links are made with other subjects, such as English, science and history. In addition, art is used well to encourage pupils' knowledge of musical instruments through painting. Pupils are generally well managed and a great sense of fun is promoted within a structured ethos. For example, pupils in Year 6 achieved good standards in singing, because the lesson was well led. Lessons have a good structure and are of brisk pace. As a result, pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. They participate well in lessons, showing enjoyment, and listen with interest and sustained concentration. For example, pupils in Year 2 effectively improved their singing skills by responding well to changes in tempo when performing. Percussion instruments are used imaginatively to improve pupils' performances, but the pupils are not secure in their knowledge of using tuned and untuned percussion to maintain a rhythmic beat. However, good questioning skills are employed to assess pupils' knowledge and understanding of musical terms and tasks match the differing needs of all pupils. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to perform to an audience, such as in assemblies and in small group activities during lessons. Extra-curricular recorder groups and concerts enable pupils to take part in performances and so extend their skills.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

96. Standards are average overall, with good standards achieved in swimming. The school is proud of the standard pupils attain in swimming. By the time pupils are eleven, nearly all can swim the minimum of 25 metres and many do much more, gaining distance awards. Last year the school entered the National Primary Championships for the first time. All pupils in Key Stage 2 have regular weekly swimming lessons for half a year at the local swimming baths. The quality of instruction by the teachers and instructor is very high. The lesson observed of Year 3 pupils who have only been swimming for half a term shows that all pupils enjoy these sessions, are confident in the water and work very hard to improve their skills. There is no difference in standards attained between boys and girls. Since the last inspection, the increased provision of a wide range of extra-curricular sporting, gymnastics and dance activities has enhanced the curriculum and extended the range of knowledge and skills for a large number of pupils.
97. Teaching and learning are good at Key Stage 2. In games lessons, pupils work hard and follow instructions well. Lessons are well planned to develop and build up skills and the teachers help by demonstrating what is required. Pupils organise themselves independently and concentrate well on improving their skills, for example, in practising dribbling and goal scoring in hockey. They enjoy lessons outside and, despite the difficult conditions caused by the weather, behave well. In gymnastics, they learn to balance and counter-balance, working well in pairs to develop the sequence of movements. However, the opportunity to improve and refine their work is limited, because they do not concentrate sufficiently and, occasionally, the teacher does not control the level of noise sufficiently well. In general, this is a weakness at both key stages where pupils are not reminded of the need to work quietly. Additionally, teachers do not use assessment procedures sufficiently well; for example, they do not allow pupils the chance to reflect on, and evaluate, their own performance and that of others. Nevertheless, the pupils at Key Stage 1 work hard in gymnastics, for example, in developing a sequence of movements over

apparatus. They show increasing control when balancing and holding their position and great care to end the series of movements with a well-balanced final position. They work well in groups and co-operate and share the equipment well and understand the need for safety. Teachers pay good attention to the warm up session and encourage pupils to reflect on the effects that exercise has on their body and heart, so that pupils in Year 2 can describe which muscles they can feel working. Teachers effectively extend pupils' performance through demonstrating ways to improve their skills and use the good performance of individual pupils to encourage others. Teaching is mainly good. It was very good in one lesson, but less satisfactory in the other where too many activities were planned and the skills of ball control were mainly beyond the ability of the pupils. The co-ordinator is mainly responsible for teaching the subject in the upper part of Key Stage 2 and provides good advice and guidance to teachers throughout the rest of the school. The scheme of work is based on a very good scheme provided by the local authority, which has recently been updated.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

98. The high standards noted in the last inspection report have been maintained. Standards at the end of each key stage exceed those expected in the locally agreed syllabus. The good teaching enables all groups of pupils to achieve well. The teachers' good knowledge and understanding is further enhanced by the considerable first-hand experience of different world faiths present within the school community. This is used very successfully to extend the knowledge and understanding of all. Good use is made of the pupils' love of stories to learn about moral and spiritual issues and explore feelings. For instance, in Year 2, the pupils listen with bated breath to the story of Badger's Parting Gifts. They reflect quietly about people who have helped them, and realise the importance of other people in their lives. Through empathising with the characters in the story, they are beginning to realise that there is a time for sadness. Good relationships in all classes encourage pupils to be confident in considering new concepts and in expressing their own ideas in class discussion. Teachers are sensitive and respect the contributions pupils make. Topics are well planned to develop ideas over time and to consider concepts in depth. In Year 4, the pupils consider the Christmas Story from the points of view of all the characters. They are beginning to appreciate the motives and response of the different groups involved. They are very keen to contribute to the plenary session and are perceptive in explaining the symbolism evident in the appearance of the contrasting groups of shepherds and kings. In Year 6, very good use is made of some pupils' personal faith to extend the knowledge of all. Many pupils are proud and confident to talk about their religion. The teachers' high expectations of behaviour are reflected in the positive attitudes and respect shown by the pupils for other people's beliefs. Lessons are well organised with an appropriate balance of class discussion and of individual or group work. Questions are used effectively to enable pupils to extend their own ideas. In Year 6, the pupils show good knowledge of many of the beliefs, traditions and rituals associated with Islam. They use their knowledge to prepare for a visit to a mosque. Through carefully organised discussions, they co-operate enthusiastically in pairs to generate interesting, perceptive questions to ask the Imam. Several higher attainers make comparisons with Christian traditions and symbolism.
99. The school has recently implemented units of work from the Qualification and Curriculum Authority to supplement the locally agreed syllabus. This comprehensive scheme of work now provides the basis for good teaching about a range of world faiths and the exploration of spiritual and religious belief. By the end of Year 6, most of the pupils have wide knowledge of and thoughtful attitudes to religious, spiritual and moral dilemmas. Educational visits, for instance, to a Mosque, to a Sikh Temple and to a local Christian Mission, as well as to Faith City, support learning well. There are good links with literacy in the appreciation of a wide range of stories and literature. Whilst there are excellent opportunities for speaking and listening, the pupils' writing skills are not well promoted in the frequent use of worksheets and the lack of rigour in organising and presenting their ideas in written form.