

INSPECTION REPORT

WALTER INFANT SCHOOL AND NURSERY

Wokingham

LEA area: Wokingham

Unique reference number: 109869

Headteacher: Vanessa Mitura

Reporting inspector: Barrie Mahoney
18175

Dates of inspection: 9th to 12th October 2000

Inspection number: 224977

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 – 7 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Murray Road Wokingham Berkshire
Postcode:	RG41 2TA
Telephone number:	0118 9780825
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Wendy Hayward
Date of previous inspection:	November 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Barrie Mahoney	Registered inspector	Science Information technology Music Foundation stage	What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements. How well are the pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
William Twiss	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Jeannie Underwood	Team inspector	English History Geography Religious education	How well does the school care for its pupils?
John Iles	Team inspector	Mathematics Design and technology Physical education Art Equal opportunities Pupils with special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Walter Infant School is situated on the outskirts of Wokingham. It is for children between the ages of three and seven years. The school includes a nursery class for children between three and four years. There are 214 pupils on roll, which is about the same size as similar schools nationally, including 49 children who attend part-time in the nursery. The majority of pupils in the main school come from the immediate area. The school is arranged in eight mixed ability classes representing pupils aged three to seven. There are 11 pupils (five per cent) on the school's register of special educational needs, with 6 pupils on stages 3 to 5, and three pupils (one per cent) with statements of special educational needs, which is well below the national average. There are broadly similar numbers of boys and girls on the school roll. There are two per cent of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and ten pupils (five per cent) from homes where English is an additional language, which is higher than in most schools. Pupils' attainment upon entry to the nursery is broadly above expectations. The majority of pupils come from economically advantaged backgrounds and their socio-economic circumstance is very favourable, with 5 pupils (two per cent) known to be eligible for free school meals, which is well below the national average. There have been significant changes in staffing since the previous inspection, including a newly appointed headteacher and acting deputy headteacher, pending a new appointment. The nursery is a new addition to the school since the previous inspection.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Walter Infant School is an effective school with many good and very good features. It is in a period of change, with a newly appointed headteacher, and many recently appointed governors. The leadership and management of the school is satisfactory overall. The quality of teaching is good overall. Inspection findings indicate that pupils achieve standards that are above expectations in English, mathematics and science. Taking into account the broadly above average standards of attainment of pupils upon entry to the school, the good progress overall that they make and the overall effectiveness, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Nursery provision is very good.
- The quality of teaching is good.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to school and their learning, and their behaviour is very good.
- There are effective strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy.
- Art and design and technology are strengths of the school.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good.
- Relationships with parents are very good.

What could be improved

- Provision for pupils with special educational needs and clarification of the role of learning support assistants.
- Provision for information technology.
- Opportunities for co-ordinators to lead their subjects more effectively.
- The monitoring role of governors.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the previous inspection in November 1996, the above average standards overall in English and science identified in the previous inspection have been maintained. However, there has been an improvement in standards in mathematics and music, but a decline in standards in information technology. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented successfully throughout the school, and there has been an improvement in the provision for pupils' spiritual and moral development. Weaknesses in provision for the higher attainers identified in the previous report have now been successfully addressed. However, weaknesses in the role and responsibilities of subject co-ordinators in monitoring the curriculum identified in the previous inspection have not been addressed, particularly in the foundation subjects. Weaknesses in long term strategic financial planning have also not been addressed.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
reading	B	A	A	C
writing	D	B	A	C
mathematics	B	A	B	C

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

Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is broadly above average. In the national tests in 1999 at the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' performance was well above the national average in reading, writing and above in mathematics. Teachers' assessment for science shows standards to be above the national average. The percentage of pupils achieving at the higher levels (level 3) was broadly in line with the national average in speaking and listening, above in writing and well above the national average in reading and mathematics. When compared with similar schools, standards were average in reading, writing and mathematics. Trends over time indicate that standards have remained well above the national average in reading and mathematics, and above in writing. The National Curriculum test results for 2000 indicate that these high standards have been maintained, although national comparative data has yet to be published. The small number of pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress when matched against the targets set out in pupils' individual education plans.

Inspection findings indicate that pupils achieve standards that are above national expectations in English, mathematics and science. Standards of attainment of the oldest pupils are in line with expectations in information technology, religious education, history and geography. Standards in music and physical education are above expectations and well above in art and design and technology. The headteacher, staff and governors are aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and set sufficiently challenging targets in order to raise standards further and is making good progress towards meeting these. There are no significant variations between girls and boys and different ethnic groups.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils display mature and responsible attitudes and these have a positive impact upon their learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. The school achieves consistently high standards of behaviour, and pupils respond well to their teachers.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. The school provides very good opportunities for pupils to develop into mature and confident individuals.
Attendance	Good, and consistently above the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

All lessons observed throughout the school were at least satisfactory, with 76 per cent of them good or better. Twenty six per cent of lessons were very good or excellent. There were no unsatisfactory lessons observed. Examples of good and very good teaching were observed throughout the school. The good quality teaching has been maintained since the previous inspection and is having a good impact upon learning and raising standards. The quality of teaching for children in the foundation stage is very good overall. Teachers working with these children have a very good knowledge and understanding of the needs of children in the early years, and of the curriculum to meet those needs. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is good in English, mathematics, science, music and physical education. It is very good in design and technology and art. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement concerning the quality of teaching in information technology, history, geography and religious education, due to the planned cycle of topics. There is a weakness in teachers' knowledge and confidence in teaching information technology, and the school has plans to address this shortly. The overall good quality of teaching supports all pupils' learning well throughout the school, and pupils make satisfactory progress overall. Most pupils show interest in their work, and they respond well to the challenges set by teachers. However, there are insufficient opportunities provided for pupils to use information and communication technology in their lessons. The quality of support given by learning support assistants in some lessons is inconsistent, and varies widely across the school. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is good.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The school provides a good, balanced curriculum and meets the needs of all pupils.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is inconsistent, and the role of the co-ordinator and learning support assistants is insufficiently developed.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. Staff know pupils well and are alert to their needs.

The school has developed very good links with parents. Provision for information technology is under developed throughout the school. However, the school has appropriate plans for the development of this subject with the creation of a computer suite. The quality of marking throughout the school is inconsistent and sometimes does not include clear targets of what pupils need to do to improve their work.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The newly appointed headteacher, ably supported by the deputy, has rapidly assessed what needs to be done to move the school forward.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. The recently appointed governors conscientiously support the school. However, their monitoring role is presently underdeveloped.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. There is insufficient analysis of the results of National Curriculum tests.
The strategic use of resources	Good overall.

There are effective procedures to review and evaluate the effects of financial decisions, and governors are aware of best value principles. The deployment of some staff supporting pupils in classrooms is not always effective. The accommodation is good and resources for learning are good overall and used well.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like coming to school. • The school helps children to become mature and responsible. • Behaviour in the school is good. • The teaching is good. • Parents feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems. • The school expects children to work hard and achieve their best. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extra-curricular activities

Inspectors agree with parents' positive comments. However, inspectors also agree with parents that there are insufficient extra-curricular activities for pupils.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Children enter the nursery with broadly above expected levels of attainment in all areas of learning. A significant number of children in the nursery demonstrate confident speech and language development. The range of attainment measured by baseline assessment shows that children's attainment on entry to the infant classes is above average. Children make good progress in the nursery, and broaden and consolidate their knowledge in all areas of learning. By the time children enter Key Stage 1, their attainment is above expectations in all areas of learning.
2. In the national tests in 1999 at the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' performance was well above the national average in reading, writing and above in mathematics. Teachers' assessment for science shows standards to be above the national average. The percentage of pupils achieving at the higher levels (level 3) was broadly in line with the national average in speaking and listening, above in writing and well above the national average in reading and mathematics. When compared with similar schools, standards were average in reading, writing and mathematics.
3. Trends over time indicate that standards have remained well above the national average in reading and mathematics, and above in writing. The National Curriculum test results for 2000 indicate that these good standards have been maintained, although national comparative data has yet to be published.
4. The small number of pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress when matched against the targets set out in pupils' individual education plans. The school uses a range of methods and plans work that is appropriate to the needs of pupils. Teachers have high expectations of pupils. The structure of the literacy and numeracy strategies, together with classroom support, presents pupils with appropriately challenging work.
5. In English, inspection findings conclude that standards of attainment of the oldest pupils are above average in both reading and writing. The standards of speaking and listening are also above average across the school, and the oldest pupils are becoming confident, articulate speakers. Overall, there has been good improvement since the previous inspection.
6. In mathematics, standards of work of the oldest pupils in Key Stage 1 are above that expected nationally. This is partly due to teachers improving the match of work to pupils, and giving them individual mathematics plans. The impact of the National Numeracy Strategy has had a strong influence on improving standards of work. The benefits of improved mental recall and systematic development of mathematical knowledge and understanding can be seen in pupils' approaches to the subject.
7. Standards of the oldest pupils' work in science are above national expectations. This judgement is similar to the findings of the school's previous inspection. Good opportunities exist for the development of knowledge and understanding of the higher attaining pupils in most science lessons, as teachers plan for the necessary extension activities. Pupils show a sound understanding of how to undertake experiments and investigations.
8. In information technology, standards of attainment of the oldest pupils at the time of the inspection are in line with national expectations. This represents a decline in standards since the previous

inspection where standards were judged to be good. In the scrutiny of pupils' books, little evidence was found of information communication technology (ICT) being used regularly in all classes and across the curriculum.

9. In religious education, the attainment of the oldest pupils at the time of the inspection is in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. Pupils are beginning to understand the beliefs and practices of a number of religious traditions and, in particular, Christianity and Judaism.
10. Standards of attainment of the oldest pupils are in line with expectations in history and geography. Standards in music and physical education are above expectations and well above in art and design and technology.
11. The headteacher, staff and governors are aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and set sufficiently challenging targets in order to raise standards further. There are no significant variations between girls and boys and different ethnic groups.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. Pupils' attitudes to their work, their behaviour and the relationships within the school are very good. Their personal development is also very good. The school works successfully to maintain an orderly community and, consequently, parents, pupils and staff have high expectations of the standards of behaviour that is acceptable within the school.
13. Pupils' attitudes towards their learning are very good. The vast majority consistently demonstrates positive attitudes to their work. They are well motivated and confident individuals who feel valued by their teachers. Pupils are enthusiastic and are eager to learn. They are not afraid of asking challenging questions; for example, in a Year 1 religious education lesson, pupils wanted to know how the treatment of Moses compared with that of Jesus. In lessons, pupils settle quickly into their routines. They frequently work diligently and are capable of sustaining concentration; for example, Year 2 pupils persevered with their number work even when working independently of adult supervision. As a result, their self-esteem grew and, by the end of the lesson, they were confidently adding and subtracting numbers in units of 20. Pupils enjoy their lessons and are keen to talk about what they have learnt.
14. Pupils' behaviour is very good. They display mature and responsible characteristics and behave very well in and around the school; for example, pupils change to different lessons in a smooth and efficient manner and no time is lost. Pupils move around the school in an orderly and responsible manner. Pupils' conduct in lessons is very good and there is no significant disruption to classes. Staff have the necessary skills needed to maintain good order. When necessary, they apply them sensitively and to good effect. The same orderly picture of behaviour was seen at breaktimes and at lunchtimes. There were no signs of isolation of individual pupils nor of bullying. There have been no incidents of exclusions over the previous year.
15. Relationships in the school are very good. Pupils are courteous, polite and welcoming to visitors. They relate well to each other and to staff. In lessons, they take turns and often share equipment. Pupils collaborate well and often discuss their ideas; for example, in a Year 1 literacy lesson pupils talked confidently about how many words they could find ending in "an". During assemblies, whilst a few pupils become restless, most show appropriate respect for the occasion. When pupils learned about the plight of children in Romania, they showed sensitive concern and were keen to send them presents. Pupils show an appropriate respect for property. Even the

youngest pupils understand that they need to take care of their books. They keenly demonstrated how to select them and put them away in their correct places.

16. Pupils' personal development is very good. As they move up through the classes, pupils gain confidence and maturity. They become good ambassadors for the school and respond well to opportunities for taking responsibility. They have routine jobs in all of the classes and assist at lunch times. Suitable rotas ensure that all pupils have turns at doing jobs, such as lunchtime queue leaders and litter monitors. Pupils are keen to support their local community. They raise money for worthy causes and provide performances for the elderly.
17. Levels of attendance are good and are constantly above the national average. Unauthorised absence is insignificant and pupils enjoy coming to school. This was particularly noticeable with the nursery children. Pupils come to school on time and their lessons start and end promptly.
18. The previous inspection highlighted very good attitudes and standards of behaviour. The school has worked hard to maintain these and it enjoys the confidence of parents on these aspects of its work. Overall, the high standards of behaviour, very good attitudes to work and good attendance make a positive contribution to pupils' learning.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

19. All lessons observed throughout the school were at least satisfactory, with 76 per cent of all lessons observed that were good or better. Twenty six per cent of lessons were very good or excellent. There were no unsatisfactory lessons observed. Examples of good and very good teaching were observed throughout the school. The good quality teaching has been maintained since the previous inspection and is having a positive impact upon learning and raising standards.
20. The quality of teaching for children in the foundation stage is very good overall. Staff working with these children have a very good knowledge and understanding of the needs of children in the early years, and of the curriculum to meet those needs. There is an appropriate emphasis upon activities that will promote speaking and listening; for example, through the introduction to the literacy and numeracy sessions. There are good opportunities provided for children to take responsibility for their own learning and children are well supported by teaching and support staff. Planning is good overall, and includes appropriate references to the Desirable Learning Outcomes and the Early Learning Goals for children of this age, together with the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Expectations of children's behaviour are high and relationships are secure, and this has a positive impact upon children's learning.
21. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is good in English, mathematics, science, music and physical education. It is very good in design and technology and art. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement concerning the quality of teaching in information technology, history, geography and religious education due to the planned cycle of topics.
22. Good, very good and excellent teaching in a significant number of lessons is characterised by well-planned activities that are well matched to the needs of all pupils and a brisk pace. In the very best lessons, planning is thorough, expectations of work and behaviour are high, teachers have good knowledge of the subject, resources are well prepared and used, and learning support staff are effectively deployed. This has a significant impact upon pupils' learning. However, there is a weakness in teachers' knowledge and confidence in teaching information technology, and the school has plans to address this shortly.
23. The overall high quality of teaching supports pupils' learning well throughout the school, and pupils make satisfactory progress overall. Most pupils show interest in their work, and they respond well

to the challenges set by teachers. However, there are insufficient opportunities provided for pupils to use information and communication technology in their lessons.

24. The quality of teaching of pupils with special educational needs in classes is good. The special educational needs co-ordinator provides satisfactory support for pupils in their literacy and numeracy lessons. Work is suitably matched to the individual needs of pupils and addresses the targets on individual education plans (IEPs). Although pupils receive satisfactory support from the classroom support assistants, most learning support assistants have a passive role until pupils begin their group work.
25. The quality of support given by learning support assistants in lessons is inconsistent, and varies widely across the school. In two excellent art/design and technology lessons there were examples of very effective support, where the expertise and support given by learning support assistants promoted very effective learning. However, less successful examples of classroom support indicate that the role of learning support assistants is insufficiently defined. In several lessons observed, learning support assistants spent much of their time preparing materials and displays rather than supporting pupils' learning. Lunchtime supervisors do not always arrive promptly at the end of the morning sessions.
26. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the subjects that they teach. Lessons are well planned, and include what pupils are expected to learn. Teachers' planning clearly indicates what is to be taught to pupils of different ages and ability. However, teachers lack confidence in their use of information technology throughout the curriculum.
27. The management of pupils in lessons is good throughout the school, and pupils respond positively to the tasks they are given. Teachers make their expectations of behaviour clear, and the standard of discipline is good and often very good. Good behaviour is noticed and praised, and effective strategies are in place to manage pupils' behaviour and to raise their self-esteem.
28. Teachers use learning resources effectively. The pace of lessons is good, and in the best lessons teachers make clear to pupils how much time they have to complete an activity, and effective intervention encourages them to persevere with the task.
29. The teaching of literacy is good and teachers are using the National Literacy Strategy successfully in their classes, with good opportunities being given to guided reading and writing. Whole class text, sentence and word level work is good and plenary sessions are effective. Satisfactory opportunities are taken for pupils to develop their literacy skills in other subjects; for example, in science, history and geography. There are good opportunities given to hearing pupils read throughout the school. The teaching of numeracy is also good, and the school is developing numeracy skills satisfactorily in other subjects across the curriculum.
30. Throughout the school, teachers assess pupils well during lessons through discussion and observation. In the best lessons, teachers use their assessments to plan tasks that are well matched to the needs of all pupils. Teachers talk to pupils about their work and some use positive comments in their marking to help them improve. However, the quality of marking throughout the school is inconsistent, and sometimes does not include clear targets of what pupils need to do to improve.
31. Homework is used satisfactorily to extend and enrich pupils' learning throughout the school. Pupils regularly take books home to read and teachers and parents complete reading diaries appropriately.

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

32. The quality and range of learning opportunities for pupils is very good in the foundation stage and good in Key Stage 1. The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant to the ages, needs and interests of pupils. It includes all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education and meets statutory requirements. Standards have improved since the previous report. Schemes of work are based on national guidance and successfully guide progression in learning across the breadth of subjects. Policies are under review again in line with the new requirements for the foundation stage and Curriculum 2000. Sex education and personal relationships are now integrated within subjects and questions are dealt with sensitively fulfilling the school's aims and agreed policy. In addition, the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been successfully implemented and are having positive impact upon teaching and learning. Consequently, standards have risen. The provision for art, design and technology and physical education has improved. Pupils are introduced to techniques and styles of artwork from different cultures; for example, in Year 2, pupils created pictures using earth colours in the style of the ancient aborigines of Australia.
33. Planning continues to be of good quality and the curriculum for each year group defines clearly the specific areas of the curriculum that have to be taught. The identification of the knowledge and skills to be taught supports continuity and progression in learning and enables pupils to move forward to the next stage of their learning. Assessment opportunities are built into planning and enable teachers to judge the effectiveness of the curriculum and to make adjustments to enhance learning and provide appropriate challenge.
34. Good progress has been made in monitoring the effectiveness of the numeracy strategy on standards. The co-ordinator identified areas of weakness and adapted the curriculum to address the specific needs of groups of pupils. This has led to improving the proportion of pupils who attain higher levels. This good practice has yet to be applied to other subjects.
35. Literacy and numeracy skills are well linked to other subjects and there are good opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking and listening skills in a wide variety of situations. In one mathematics lesson; for example, there were good opportunities for explaining calculations and making predictions, and expressing opinions about the quality of sequences of movement in physical education. These strategies make a good contribution to pupils' learning across all age groups. Consequently, pupils express their knowledge using appropriate and correct technical vocabulary.
36. The school has identified information technology (IT) as a current priority for development, and the new computer suite is planned, although not yet functional. However, plans and funds are appropriately targeted to ensure staff receive appropriate training to extend the current provision. As yet, information technology is insufficiently used to enhance subjects across the curriculum.
37. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health development is sound. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning. Time is provided for pupils to discuss how they can contribute to improving society through consideration of how their attitudes, beliefs and actions affect the lives of others. The school arranges for community groups such as the police and ambulance services to visit the school and talk to pupils about road safety and the emergency services. Appropriate opportunities are in place to heighten pupils' awareness to the misuse of medicines and drugs and the importance of relationships.

38. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good in the foundation stage and satisfactory in Key Stage 1. The policy for special educational needs meets the requirements of the Code of Practice. A register of pupils with special educational needs is in place. Children's needs are identified at an early stage in the nursery and provision is well managed for this stage of learning. However, there is some delay in identifying the needs of pupils in Year 1 who have not attended the nursery and this is a minor weakness. Information is reviewed and shared regularly with parents to ensure that all pupils in need of additional support are identified. The special educational needs co-ordinator provides classroom support to pupils to achieve targets in numeracy and literacy lessons. Specialist outside agencies provide additional support when necessary. The school works successfully to remove pupils from the register.
39. Inspection evidence confirms the parents' concern that there are few extra-curricular activities. Pupils pay to attend a French and recorder club. Visitors to the school are welcomed and provide additional opportunities to develop pupils' social and cultural awareness; for example, a local farmer and drama groups enhance learning opportunities.
40. The school has been successful in establishing links with the community. Representatives from the police and health services visit the school. Links with industry have provided the school with card, and a computer company has donated resources to support information technology.
41. Good relationships are being developed with local schools. However, links with the adjacent junior school are under-developed; for example, there are no curriculum links between the two schools. Pupils from the secondary school on work placement contribute to the community ethos and learning partnership. The school also has good links with the nearby university and supports the training of teachers and placement of nursery nurses.
42. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social education is very good, and provision for pupils' cultural development is good. There has been an improvement in the provision for the spiritual and moral development of pupils since the previous inspection.
43. The very good provision for spiritual development is promoted through the school and joint class assemblies. These are well planned, with appropriate content and time for reflection and prayer. In some assemblies a candle is lit as a focus during the quiet period before prayers. Pupils are encouraged to think about how they treat others, how they are treated and how to be kind. In religious education lessons, pupils learn about their own and other faiths. Circle time allows pupils to explore their feelings and thoughts, and to consider those of others in their class. A celebration of pupils' talents, effort or good work is a regular feature of assembly. Pupils are well known to the adults, who are dedicated to promoting their confidence in themselves as individuals and an awareness of the impact of their attitudes and behaviour upon others. Displays of artwork around the school, and music heard in assemblies and lessons are another way of encouraging pupils to appreciate the beauty of the world around them.
44. Moral education is promoted very well through stories told in assembly, the production of class rules, discussed by pupils and displayed in every classroom, and the underlying ethos of the school. A system of rewards encourages pupils to behave in an acceptable manner, to be kind and thoughtful to others and to work hard to achieve success, knowing that effort and talent will be recognised. All staff provide good role models and take every opportunity to teach the principles that distinguish right from wrong, and circle time reinforces this.

45. The provision for pupils' social development is very good. Pupils are expected to look after the school and to take on responsibilities in the classroom. Each class has a monitor for the day and a "buddy" who accompanies them. In Year 2, each class has a special responsibility for either, ringing the bell at the end lessons, litter picking or adding up the dinner numbers and these duties are rotated regularly. The implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies means that pupils are expected to work independently with little or no adult supervision. Also, because of the grouping system, pupils meet and relate to a variety of teachers, not just their own. Pupils can be observed helping each other, especially when working in pairs or small groups. Pupils are given the opportunity to perform in Christmas productions, class assemblies, the Year 2 leavers' concert and for the senior citizens in the nearby nursing home. Pupils are encouraged to think of those less fortunate than themselves and for the last two years the school has sent filled shoeboxes to Romania. A similar activity is planned for this year.
46. Although pupils have a good introduction to their own culture through looking at the local area, theatre visits, visit to the National Gallery and a visiting author, there is less emphasis on other cultures. Pupils visit a synagogue and are aware of festivals such as Sukkat and Diwali. Aboriginal art is prominently displayed and, occasionally, non-western music is listened to in music lessons, but these experiences are limited.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

47. The school effectively supports its pupils and strives hard to promote their welfare, and this is a strength of the school, and the headteacher places a high priority on pastoral care. The teaching staff are very approachable and supportive. The support staff are mostly dedicated, committed and often provide good support for both teachers and pupils, although this is sometimes inconsistent. All members of staff have a good understanding of the school's pastoral and welfare procedures, and implement them conscientiously and consistently. Appropriate systems are in place for dealing with minor accidents.
48. The school has an appropriate child protection policy, and all staff have been briefed and are therefore aware of the necessary procedures. Similarly, the school's health and safety policy provides helpful guidance to promote safety in the school. These are well known and understood by the staff who consistently demonstrate safe working practices, such as ensuring mats used in physical education lessons are carried correctly and that personal hygiene and cleanliness in the kitchen is adhered to. Health and safety matters are a feature of every staff meeting. Risk assessment is carried out regularly. The school makes very good use of outside agencies. There are also termly meetings at school where all the agencies concerned contribute to the school's reviews for pupils with special educational needs.
49. The school has very effective procedures in place to promote and monitor discipline and good behaviour. All staff have high expectations of behaviour, and discipline is administered consistently and well; for example, a reward system encourages good behaviour. This has a positive impact on the high standards of behaviour maintained in the school. Each class has discussed the need for classroom rules, and the results of their discussions are displayed on the wall. Circle time is used effectively for pupils to explore issues of behaviour, feelings, attitudes and problems that arise. The headteacher has initiated training in coping with behaviour issues specifically for the lunchtime supervisors.

50. Pupils' attendance and lateness are monitored well and parents are aware of their responsibilities should their child be absent. Good attendance is encouraged and the general ethos of the school and the positive attitudes of the staff ensure that pupils are happy to come to school.

51. The staff know their pupils well and have a very good understanding of their personal needs. All teachers maintain comprehensive records of pupils' personal development. Similarly, the formal assessment records for monitoring pupils' academic progress are good. Pupils are regularly assessed after a mathematics topic to highlight difficulties and their comprehension skills are checked periodically throughout the reading scheme. In mathematics, pupils are specifically targeted to raise their standard of attainment. However, there is little target setting in English. Teachers' comments through marking are sometimes inconsistent in helping pupils to know what they need to do to improve their work. Teachers record information about pupil's performance in the foundation subjects noting strengths and weaknesses, which are then summarised in the annual reports to parents. However, although the National Curriculum test results are analysed, there is insufficient depth in the analysis and the use of the data.
52. Overall, the school provides a caring, safe and secure environment in which pupils learn in a purposeful and productive manner.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

53. Relationships between the school and parents are very good. The school enjoys the confidence and support of the vast majority of parents. They express a high level of satisfaction with all aspects of the school's work. The headteacher and staff are accessible and parents feel comfortable in making formal and informal approaches with any concerns. A significant number of parents help in classes, particularly with reading. Parents are welcomed and valued for their contribution by teachers. Parental involvement in their children's learning is very good. There is strong support for homework to develop reading and spelling skills. An active parents' association succeeds in raising funds for the school; for example, it has recently provided funding for new computers and for an author to visit the school.
54. Communication between the school and parents are very good. The school provides clear information on what is taught each term. The school prospectus is informative, and regular newsletters and the use of notice boards keep parents up to date on what is happening in the school. The school listens to parents' views, and recently consulted them on a safe route to school project. The annual reports on pupils' progress give parents a clear picture of what their children have learnt and what they can do. However, these reports do not always indicate clearly what pupils need to do to improve further. Each year, parents have regular and well-supported opportunities to discuss their children's work with teachers.
55. A minority of parents expressed concerns over the lack of extra-curricular activities. Whilst there are some clubs for which parents are expected to pay, the inspection team agrees with parents' views.
56. Overall, the school's links with parents considerably enrich its work and have a positive impact on pupils' achievements and development, and standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

57. At the time of the inspection, the newly appointed headteacher had been in post for four weeks. The previous deputy headteacher was acting headteacher during the previous term, effectively supported by the present acting deputy headteacher.

58. The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory overall, and standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. However, opportunities for co-ordinators to work alongside colleagues, monitoring and evaluating the work of the school was a weakness identified in the previous inspection report, and this remains a weakness. The newly appointed headteacher is well supported by the acting deputy headteacher, and together they have quickly and accurately identified areas for development and are beginning to develop a range of appropriate strategies to continue to move the school forward. They have good support from staff, governors and parents.
59. The newly appointed headteacher is already providing a clear sense of direction and purpose. This vision is closely linked to the needs of pupils, with an appropriate emphasis upon raising standards and the quality of teaching and learning. The process of identification of the areas for improving the curriculum and the quality of teaching and learning further has begun.
60. A team approach is developing well. Although all teaching staff have responsibilities for co-ordinating areas of the curriculum, the roles of co-ordinators for the foundation subjects and special educational needs are underdeveloped. With the exception of English and mathematics, there have been too few opportunities for co-ordinators to monitor the quality of teaching and learning, or the quality of pupils' written work. However, the school recognises the need to provide opportunities for co-ordinators to directly monitor the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects. Equality of opportunity is promoted, and pupils with special educational needs are satisfactorily supported. The overall monitoring of teaching and learning and the curriculum provided is satisfactory, and good attention has been given to raising and maintaining standards in English and mathematics. The school has identified appropriate priorities and targets. The school's ethos is good, and an effective learning environment has been established.
61. The leadership and management of special educational needs is satisfactory overall. However, the role of the special educational needs co-ordinator within the school is insufficiently defined. Insufficient time and support has been given to allow the co-ordinator to fulfil this role satisfactorily. However, with the appointment of the new headteacher, the role of the special educational needs co-ordinator is being reviewed. More emphasis is being placed upon the co-ordinator's role in reviewing pupils' progress and meetings with parents.
62. The governing body is making a satisfactory contribution to the life of the school and is becoming aware of its strengths and weaknesses. However, many of the governors are newly appointed and have yet to fully develop their role in the monitoring the curriculum. A range of its responsibilities is delegated to committees that effectively support the work of the school. The governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities appropriately and are satisfactorily involved in the overall monitoring of the work of the school.
63. The school has clear aims that are supported by pupils, parents, staff and governors. These include creating an environment that effectively promotes learning and positive attitudes, together with the development of self-confidence, self-worth, and the skills and qualities required to be caring and fulfilled members of society. These aims are effectively incorporated into all aspects of the school. The school development plan is a satisfactory document that clearly identifies the areas for development over one year. The planning process is appropriate, the document is clearly laid out and identifies resource implications, key personnel and time scales, together with costings. However, as the school development plan only covers a one-year period, long term strategic planning is less secure.

64. Financial planning for the current year is good, and special grants, such as allocations for professional development are used appropriately. The governors are prudent in their budgeting, and strategic planning is satisfactory overall. The school budget is well managed, and financial control and administration are good overall. The full governing body agrees the budget allocations annually, and governors monitor expenditure regularly in order to check that actual expenditure is in line with the agreed budget. Sufficient financial information is made available to all governors. The governors make satisfactory use of resources and link spending decisions to educational priorities. There are appropriate procedures to review and evaluate the effects of financial decisions and governors have a good understanding of best value principles and apply them appropriately. In the previous financial year there was a planned carry forward that represents over nine per cent of the total budget. This figure represents unexpected savings arising from staff changes, substantial investment in the new computer suite and other building work.
65. The school is well staffed and there is an appropriate balance of experience and expertise. The co-ordination of the teaching of literacy and numeracy is well organised and efficient. The school recognises that it needs to ensure that all subjects are effectively led and the newly appointed headteacher has appropriate plans in place for this. Learning support staff make a satisfactory contribution to most lessons and to the maintenance of good order throughout the school. However, in a few lessons, their roles were not always clearly defined and, as a result, their contributions were less effective.
66. The school's approach to staff development has an appropriate emphasis upon literacy and numeracy. The school is making a considerable investment in information technology and recognises the need to improve staff skills in teaching this subject. Formal appraisal within the school has lapsed. However, the headteacher and governors have undertaken the relevant training and are prepared for the introduction of performance management.
67. The accommodation is in good order and meets the needs of the curriculum well. It provides a good atmosphere and facilities for learning. The nursery is attractive and welcoming and has been thoughtfully arranged. Throughout the school, attractive displays celebrate pupils' work. Many additional features such as a food technology area have been added to the accommodation. However, the external play areas are small for the number of pupils on roll. The quality, range and availability of learning resources are good overall.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to improve the standard of education further for the pupils, the headteacher, staff and governors should focus upon the following key issues:

- (1) improve provision for pupils with special educational needs by:
 - redefining the role of the co-ordinator for special educational needs; *(paragraph 61)*
 - improving the deployment of learning support staff; *(paragraphs 24, 25, 85)*
 - identifying and providing appropriate support for all pupils. *(paragraph 38)*

- (2) Raise standards in information technology by:
 - improving teachers' confidence and knowledge in the use of information technology; *(paragraphs 22, 26, 66, 116, 117)*
 - establishing continuity and progression through teaching key skills; *(paragraphs 36, 114, 115, 116, 117)*
 - sharing examples of best practice in teaching; *(paragraphs 114, 118)*
 - providing more opportunities for pupils to use information technology in subjects across the curriculum. *(paragraphs 8, 23, 36, 87, 93, 97, 114, 115, 117)*

- (3) Improve the overall structure and effectiveness of leadership and management by:
 - clearly defining the role and responsibilities of subject co-ordinators; *(paragraphs 58, 60, 65, 112)*
 - establishing a clear programme for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning in all subjects. *(paragraphs 58, 60, 98, 118)*
 - ensuring that the role of governors is more fully developed. *(paragraph 62)*
 - Ensuring that the school development plan identifies long-term strategic planning. *(paragraph 63)*

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

- Ensure that the marking policy is consistently applied throughout the school. *(paragraphs 30,51)*
- Identify clear targets of what pupils need to do to improve. *(paragraphs 30, 51, 54, 86)*
- Provide more extra-curricular activities for pupils. *(paragraphs 39, 55)*
- Work towards establishing curriculum and other links with the adjacent junior school. *(paragraph 41)*
- Provide further opportunities for pupils to learn about other cultural traditions. *(paragraph 46)*

- Ensure the analysis of pupils National Curriculum test results is used to inform future planning. (*paragraphs 51, 86*)
- Develop pupils’ investigative skills in science further by encouraging them to put forward their own ideas, and to communicate their findings in a scientific way. (*paragraph 96*)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

38

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

21

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
5%	21%	50%	24%	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

Pupils on the school’s roll

	Nursery	Y1 – Y2
Number of pupils on the school’s roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	29	167
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	Y1 – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school’s special educational needs register	5	6

English as an additional language

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	16
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

Attendance

Authorised absence

%

Unauthorised absence

%

School data	4.2%
National comparative data	5.4%

School data	0.1%
National comparative data	0.5%

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000 [1999]	38 [42]	33 [49]	71 [91]

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	36 [34]	35 [37]	36 [40]
	Girls	33 [48]	33 [49]	32 [48]
	Total	69 [82]	68 [86]	68 [88]
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	96 (90)	90 (95)	96 (97)
	National	* (82)	* (83)	* (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	34 [33]	36 [37]	37 [42]
	Girls	32 [48]	32 [46]	33 [49]
	Total	66 [81]	68 [83]	70 [91]
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (89)	86 (91)	87 (100)
	National	* (82)	* (86)	* (87)

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

*National comparative data not yet available.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	3
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	161
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y1 – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.7:1
Average class size	26

Education support staff: Y1 – Y2

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	124.5

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25:1

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

Number of pupils per FTE adult	12.5:1
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	398823
Total expenditure	388559
Expenditure per pupil	1896
Balance brought forward from previous year	27051
Balance carried forward to next year	37315

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	196
Number of questionnaires returned	70

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	60	37	1	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	44	47	6	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	37	57	1	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	37	49	7	1	6
The teaching is good.	49	44	3	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	26	54	14	3	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	60	33	2	0	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	63	30	1	0	6
The school works closely with parents.	32	54	10	0	4
The school is well led and managed.	38	47	1	0	13
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	49	47	0	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	20	34	26	3	17

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

68. The nursery class has been established since the previous inspection. It has a maximum of 52 part-time places and most children spend three terms in the nursery before entry to the infant classes. Judgements relating to standards at this time of the year are also based upon observations of pupils at the beginning of Key Stage 1. Children enter the nursery with broadly above expected levels of attainment in all areas of learning. The range of attainment measured by baseline assessment shows that children's attainment on entry to the infant classes is above average. Children make good progress in the nursery class, and broaden and consolidate their knowledge in all areas of learning. By the time children enter Key Stage 1, their attainment is above expectations in all areas of learning. Overall provision for children in the foundation stage is very good, and the nursery is strength of the school.

Personal, social and emotional development

69. Children achieve above what is expected for children of this age, and they make good progress through well planned opportunities to establish constructive relationships with other children and adults. Children happily settle in their new surroundings, show curiosity and explore the materials and equipment that are provided for them. They delight in exploring the "Police Station" and are fascinated with the opportunities provided for their fingerprints to be taken. Children show interest in exploring their new surroundings, and are successfully developing their independence. Planning for sessions provides good opportunities for children to work alone, in small groups or as a whole class. In one very successful session observed, children show sensitivity and care when helping adults to paint other children's faces. They are responsive, interested in what they are doing, concentrate well and persevere in their learning. Children listen thoughtfully, and are happy to contribute their own ideas during discussion; for example, when discussing letter sounds or when sharing a book together. The quality of teaching is good in this area of learning.

Communication, language and literacy

70. Children broaden and consolidate their use of language and achieve above what is expected for their age. Most children in the nursery use speech and language confidently. Children construct complex statements; for example one child declared "It's stopped raining". "Yes, but it is still wet" replied another child after a heavy rainstorm. In all sessions observed, staff provide good opportunities for children to communicate with each other and adults, and they have high expectations. Imaginative story telling encourages listening and speaking skills. In one very good lesson, the story of Noah's Ark was shared with children. They listened to the story carefully, and the teacher extended children's understanding of words such as flood. Children compared this to "a big puddle" and a "very big pond". Skilful story telling encouraged children to listen and contribute to the success of the story. Children listen very well to adults in the nursery and are becoming confident in their use of a growing vocabulary and range of expression. Good opportunities are provided for children to communicate their thoughts, ideas and feelings. Progress in communication, language and literacy is good, and is well matched to children's learning. There are good opportunities for children to experiment with writing. The classroom is thoughtfully planned to promote the importance of language through signs, notices, books, tape recorders, listening centre and computer. There are good opportunities for role-play and available resources

for children to use; for example, in the "Police Station. The quality of teaching is good in this area of learning.

Mathematical development

71. Children achieve above expectations in this area of learning. Mathematical development is effectively promoted through the use of number games and songs. Children show an interest in numbers and counting and join in enthusiastically in singing rhymes and songs. Staff create good opportunities to introduce children to mathematical language; for example, during story time and when giving out drinks and snacks at breaktimes. Children make good progress in colour, shape and number recognition. Numeracy skills are developing well. Many children identify and create patterns and compare, sort and count objects and count up to ten. The quality of teaching is good.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

72. Children achieve above expectations in this area of learning. They show appropriate curiosity in their new surroundings, and explore, investigate and ask questions. Staff provide a good range of attractive resources for children to use in the nursery. There are good opportunities for children to explore the nursery and school grounds as well as visits from outside visitors, including a number of farm animals for children to observe. Children talk about where they live, their families and their immediate environment, and they recall their experiences through a range and variety of role-play. Children effectively develop the skills of cutting, joining and building using a good range of materials. They have good access to a range of construction materials. There are good opportunities for children to use information technology to support literacy and numeracy. The quality of teaching is good, lessons are planned well, make good use of resources to stimulate children's enthusiasm, and teachers use good questioning skills to develop children's knowledge and understanding.

Physical development

73. Children achieve above what is expected their age. They begin to respond to rhythm when clapping. They show some skills when using large wheeled toys outside and stop when necessary. Children in the nursery have good opportunities to move freely, outdoors as well as in the school hall. There are good opportunities for children to develop their manipulative skills; for example, in cutting card and paper, using glue sticks, paintbrushes and carefully applying face paints, under careful adult supervision, to their friends. There are good opportunities for children to use large wheeled toys, climb and balance. In one good lesson observed, children participated well when helping to set out floor mats in the hall. Safety issues were discussed clearly with children and they responded well. They showed confidence, a good awareness of space and the needs of others in their movement. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is good.

Creative development

74. Children achieve above expectations in this area of learning. They differentiate and talk about colours and respond to the texture of materials that they use; for example, when painting. Children enjoy learning and joining in with songs and rhymes through well prepared opportunities provided by staff. In one lesson observed, children were given very good opportunities to use a selection of percussion instruments. They listened carefully and repeated the rhythm that the teacher had made. The nursery provides good opportunities for children to listen to music representing other cultures; for example, music from South Africa. Children enjoy role-play in the "Police Station" and demonstrate that they know that the police are there to help us as well as to deal with crime. They enjoyed making fingerprints to go on their identification cards. Their concentration during these activities is very good; as was observed when children were applying face paints to other children, under very close adult supervision. Children show an appropriate appreciation of the effects of different textures, colours, shapes and patterns. There are well-planned opportunities to promote creative development and good opportunities for children to

express their ideas. The classroom is a stimulating environment for children to work and are very well supported by the sensitive intervention of the class teacher and nursery nurse. The teaching in this area of learning is very good.

75. Overall, the quality of teaching for children in the foundation stage is at least good and often very good. Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the needs of children in the early years, and of the curriculum to meet those needs. The class teacher and nursery nurse work well together as a team and children benefit from this consistent approach to their learning. There is a good emphasis upon activities that will promote speaking and listening; for example, through the early introduction of elements of literacy and numeracy lessons. Planning is good overall, and includes appropriate references to both the Desirable Learning Outcomes for children of this age and the new Early Learning Goals. Considerable efforts are made to ensure that children attending during morning and afternoon sessions receive similar opportunities and experiences. Expectations of children's behaviour are high, and relationships are secure.
76. There is a very good range of resources available, including provision for children's physical development; for example, large wheeled toys and apparatus for climbing and balancing. The class teacher and nursery nurse have worked hard to provide an attractive and stimulating environment for children. Children's work is attractively displayed and valued. There is equality of learning opportunities for boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported.

ENGLISH

77. In the National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds in 1999 attainment was above the national average for pupils reaching level 2 or above, and close to the average for similar schools. In writing, pupils' attainment was well above the national average and close to the average for similar schools.
78. An analysis of the results over the last four years shows a substantial rise in standards, following a dip in 1997. The performance of both boys and girls exceed the national average for their age. Data indicates that boys are not quite so far above average in reading and writing as girls. The results for 2000 indicate standards are similar to 1999, but as yet there is no national comparative data available.
79. Inspection evidence suggests that the oldest pupils are achieving above expectations in both reading and writing. Overall, there has been an improvement in English since the previous inspection as attainment in all aspects of English is above average.
80. The effective introduction of the National Literacy Strategy and the implementation of the literacy hour have been successful, with teachers having clear ideas of the most effective ways of teaching the various elements. There is an appropriate balance between guided writing and reading. The good quality teaching is helping to ensure good progress as reading and writing are further developed.
81. Standards of speaking and listening are above average across the school and the oldest pupils are becoming confident, articulate speakers. When given the opportunity, they readily respond to questions and volunteer information about the chosen text in the literacy hour, make predictions about what might happen in a story, or discuss why Moses was hidden in the bulrushes. Pupils' listen carefully to teachers reading stories or giving instructions, which they are able to follow. They also respect each other's views and ideas. Some pupils offer in-depth answers to teachers' questions and participate both in class and small group discussions. They are willing and keen to

express their opinions and views. This was clearly demonstrated during a geography lesson when pupils were discussing the traffic survey, and when the most traffic would be found. They listened to each other, even though they did not all agree.

82. Standards in reading across the school are above average. Books are handled with care and a variety of texts are read: some fluently and with understanding, others with less skill. Pupils are developing ways to read unfamiliar words, either by sounding out the word phonetically or by using other clues such as the pictures. Pupils recognise and understand punctuation such as question marks, exclamation marks and many read with the appropriate expression. They know how books are organised and understand the terms such as author and title. Many talk about their favourite books, stories or authors and explain their choice. Some do not recall an author, but can retell a story. Most pupils are beginning to develop research skills and use an index and contents page.
83. Writing is above average across the school with most of pupils achieving the expected level or above. Most pupils write interesting stories and use punctuation effectively, putting in full stops, capital letters and speech marks. Most pupils spell accurately and write in sentences, some of which are quite complex and show an imaginative use of words; for example, “gradually I got back my courage... a colossal wave ...fresh, thick grass ...deepest, darkest forest ...” Pupils are given good opportunities to write for different purposes, including retelling traditional stories, reporting about Sports day, giving instructions to make something, diaries, letters and poems. Teachers provide a good range of tasks to develop grammar, spelling, punctuation and comprehension. All pupils are encouraged to use a cursive script and by the end of the key stage most have developed well-formed neat handwriting, presentation is good with work that has a title and date. Planning ensures positive links with other areas of the curriculum, such as geography where pupils had to write the directions from one building to another.
84. Pupils’ learning is good and most make appropriate progress throughout the year. There are improvements in both the quality and quantity of writing and in presentation. They enjoy their literacy sessions and are keen to participate especially when a puppet delivers the focus of the class lesson. The use of puppets motivates and stimulates pupils. They listen intently, respond with enthusiasm and join in. They also enjoy the shared text, especially when it is well read by the teacher. Pupils are interested in the activities set and remain on task for the appropriate amount of time. They work sensibly on their own with little or no adult supervision, and share resources and often help each other if someone is unsure of the task. Many pupils are well behaved and take pride in their work writing neatly and putting both the date and title. The majority of pupils express enjoyment and pleasure in reading, with many reading regularly in school and at home.
85. The quality of teaching is at least satisfactory, with three-quarters of the lessons that are good or better. Where the teaching is good, the curriculum is taught with an enthusiasm that encourages pupils to succeed and has a positive effect on their learning. Teachers also use their skills to ensure the lessons are exciting and capture pupils’ interest; for example, teachers use puppets as a focus and this helps pupils to enjoy their learning of phonics. All teachers establish good relationships with their classes, giving them confidence by listening to and valuing their written and oral contributions. Teachers provide suitable activities well matched to pupils’ abilities. This ensures pupils make good progress adding significantly to their skills. The plenary sessions are used effectively to reinforce the learning objectives of the lessons and to share pupils’ work. Teachers make good use of questioning to increase pupils’ knowledge and extend their understanding. A weakness in some lessons is the involvement of support staff, who are not focused sufficiently in the support they give.
86. The school has provided staff with appropriate training and ensured a wide range of resources are available to teach the literacy strategy. Although national test results are analysed, insufficient

use is made of them to highlight weaknesses and to assist teachers in setting targets for their pupils.

87. Pupils have first hand experience of drama when they perform in the Christmas plays or for the senior citizens from a local nursing home. Visitors, who include an author and live theatre groups, enhance the curriculum, and a book fair is held regularly. Insufficient use is made of information technology to support pupils' learning in the subject.

MATHEMATICS

88. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests, the proportion of pupils who reached the expected level 2 was above average when compared nationally, and broadly in line with similar schools. The proportion of pupils who reached the higher levels was above the national average. In the most recent National Curriculum tests, the proportion of pupils who reached the expected level 2 was similar to 1999 results but the proportion of pupils who reached the higher levels is almost ten per cent higher, although national comparative data is not yet available. This represents a significant improvement in the results of the previous year and since the previous inspection when standards were described as good in numeracy but sound overall.
89. Inspection evidence confirms that standards achieved by the oldest pupils are now above expectations. This improvement is due to teachers targeting pupils and giving them individual mathematics plans. The impact of the National Numeracy Strategy has had a strong influence on standards of work. The benefits of improved mental recall and systematic development of mathematical knowledge and understanding can be seen in pupils' approaches to mathematics. The guidance provided by the National Numeracy Strategy has supported teachers in their planning and this has had a substantial impact on improving the quality of teaching and learning. Setting of pupils according to ability has also impacted positively on standards.
90. The good start to mathematics from which children benefit in the nursery is maintained when pupils enter Year 1. Higher achieving pupils confidently count to fifty and almost all pupils count forwards and backwards to twenty, and add and subtract numbers to ten. Pupils' needs are met well across the ability range. Higher achieving pupils are well challenged and lower achieving pupils receive the appropriate level of support to enable them to achieve their best. The quality of teaching is good, and teachers use an effective range of strategies and resources. These contribute successfully to motivating the pupils and promoting their enjoyment of mathematics and, as a result, pupils make good progress. Teachers' planning is of good quality and identifies precisely what is to be taught and the timescales for tasks. Plenaries at the end of lessons provide good opportunities for pupils to recognise what has been learned, enabling them to recognise their successes and to see how to improve their work. Pupils confidently apply their skills to a range of practical experiences; for example, five year olds add and subtract to ten using money and show a good capacity to solve simple problems. Pupils are enthusiastic about increasing their knowledge and skills, and mathematics is thoroughly enjoyed by all age groups.
91. The high quality of pupils' work is maintained in Year 2. Lower achieving pupils count forwards and backwards in twos, fives and tens, recognise triangles in a range of orientations and know that triangles have three sides and three angles. The very good quality of teaching ensured that individual pupils' needs were well met. Tasks were well matched and resources supported learning well; for example, the introduction of Harry Spider motivated pupils and encouraged them to count accurately and confidently in tens. They quickly recognised number patterns and through precisely focused questions posed by the teacher, pupils showed developing understanding of the relationships between numbers. The impact of learning about the structure of numbers was

evident as pupils applied these skills to problems. The teacher used her voice effectively and her personal motivation and enthusiasm inspired pupils to succeed.

92. The previous report criticised the provision for challenging higher achieving pupils. The school has made great efforts to ensure that the needs of all pupils are met and that they make good gains in knowledge. A commercial mathematics scheme is used to supplement the National Numeracy Strategy, and this is effective. The work of higher achieving pupils is extended through a range of mathematical topics. A feature of the quality of learning is the arrangements to assess understanding. Teacher assessments are built into the numeracy strategy and used on a regular basis to judge the progress pupils are making. Areas causing concern are repeated to ensure understanding. This secures continuity and progression in learning.
93. Staff training has been successful in order to implement the numeracy strategy. This has supported teachers well and enabled this initiative to be successfully introduced. There are also effective teaching strategies to support pupils' learning and this is applied to planning the mathematics programme and monitoring of teaching. This has heightened awareness of good practice with the staff. The subject is well resourced. However, insufficient use is made of information technology to support pupils' learning in the subject.

SCIENCE

94. Standards achieved in science by the oldest pupils at the time of the inspection are above expectations. This judgement is similar to the findings of the school's previous inspection, and standards have been maintained. In the 1999 end of key stage assessments made by teachers, standards in science were well above average at level 2 and above, and above the national average at level 3 and above. In comparison with the performance of pupils in similar schools, standards at level 2 and above were very high, whilst at level 3 and above standards were average. The results of the 2000 teacher assessments indicate that standards have been maintained since the 1999 results. Pupils with special educational needs receive appropriate support and achieve satisfactory standards, relative to their previous attainment. Appropriate opportunities exist for the development of the knowledge and understanding of higher attaining pupils in most science lessons as teachers plan for the necessary extension activities.
95. The oldest pupils show a good understanding of how to undertake experiments and investigations. They consider what living things need for survival, consider healthy eating and healthy diets, and grow seeds and investigate the conditions required for plant growth. Pupils test a range of balls made from different materials to find out which ball bounces the highest and consider what will happen to the shape of a ball of plasticene when dropped from a height. They know that animals can be grouped according to observable similarities and differences, such as those that can fly / can't fly and produce a record showing the animals they saw and where they were found. Pupils' understanding of materials is good. In their study of homes, they know how the properties of some materials such as glass, slate, brick and wood determine their particular use. They also know that some materials occur naturally and some are man made and sort everyday objects into groups on the basis of properties such as, flexibility and magnetic behaviour.
96. Pupils' understanding of physical processes is good. Pupils identify common appliances, which use electricity, recognise the potential dangers associated with electricity, construct a working circuit and represent the circuits in drawings. In Year 2, pupils' investigative skills are satisfactory. They make observations related to the tasks and record their findings through drawing, writing and in chart form. However, few pupils demonstrate the ability to put forward their own ideas and communicate in a scientific way what they have found out.

97. The quality of teaching and the quality of learning is good overall. Teachers give clear introductions to their lessons. This ensures that all pupils are aware of what is expected of them and understand how the present lesson is linked to their previous work. Teachers introduce and emphasise new vocabulary and concepts clearly and continually reinforce them during the lesson. Pupils are managed well and their interest and motivation are maintained by the careful use of questions and comments. This ensures that the progress pupils make is maximised. A successful lesson on the theme of “growth” illustrated several of these features and led to effective learning. Lesson planning overall is good and there is an appropriate match of tasks to the attainment levels of different pupils. Teachers encourage pupils to work independently and appropriate support is provided to pupils when necessary, as they carry out their tasks. Pupils work well together within groups and share resources sensibly. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to make sufficient use of information and communication technology in the subject.
98. Teachers are satisfactorily supported by a clear scheme of work, together with national guidance documents, linked to a series of topics that ensure full coverage of the National Curriculum. However, pupils’ work and teachers’ planning is monitored inconsistently and there is currently no programme to monitor the quality of teaching and learning. Learning resources for science are good and the school makes appropriate use of its grounds for pupils to use for environmental studies; for example, using the school's herb garden as part of pupils' work based upon senses.

ART AND DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

99. Standards in both art and design and technology of the oldest pupils at the time of the inspection are well above expectations. Standards have improved since the previous inspection when they were described as above average.
100. The good progress made by children in the nursery is extended in Year 1 with pupils having many opportunities to paint and draw pictures, create patterns and experience working with a range of materials. Pupils’ observational drawings show increasing detail as they progress through the school. As part of their work in design and technology, pupils looked carefully at sections of a range of fruit. Displays of their work show how pupils discovered that the arrangements of seeds in different fruit range in appearance, colour and texture. Pupils worked very carefully to produce pastel pictures, which reflected the detail, found in the fruits. A small group of pupils concentrated on a still life drawing of pineapples. Very sensitive questioning by the teacher focused pupils’ attention to parts of the fruit and they were encouraged to talk about what they observed.
101. Teachers prepare pupils thoroughly before they use tools in connection with food technology. Health and safety aspects of the work are stressed and pupils know that great care is needed when using tools for cutting and peeling. In one lesson, pupils mimed cutting, chopping and shredding movements to reinforce the need for care. Teachers stress the requirement for cleanliness and pupils know that they must not touch food until hands are washed thoroughly.
102. Lessons are of very good quality, characterised by a good range of activities taking place. These are supported very effectively by additional staff who have substantial skills in these curriculum areas; for example, the skills of the learning support assistant, a trained artist, were used to good advantage. She supports teachers by sharing her skills and guiding pupils to achieve work of exceptional quality. Other learning support staff work with small groups developing design and technology skills. Pupils are very enthusiastic about their food technology experiences. Year 1 pupils prepared a fruit salad while in another lesson in Year 2 pupils carefully prepared vegetables

to make soup. They demonstrated very good speaking and listening skills in their descriptions of the stages of preparation. The quality of teaching and learning was very good with pupils making very good progress.

103. A further example of very good quality work was observed with a group of pupils selecting suitable paper and fabric materials to create their own weaves. They had strong views on colour matching and blending different textures to ensure the best effect and drew on their previous experiences to make decisions. Yet another group demonstrated their skill in cutting and sticking techniques when making a fictitious character using a range of papers.
104. Pupils' very good progress is extended in Year 2. In another lesson of high quality, pupils used simple mark-making techniques to produce images in the style of ancient aborigines. This work was linked to a travel topic. Pupils very carefully drew their designs from very good source materials provided by teachers. Colours were chosen according to strict criteria. Pupils clearly explained that colours must be earth colours as the aborigines' only source of materials was their environment. A striking display of this work later enhanced an area of the school and was a source of very favourable comments from adults and pupils. This is a very good example of the way in which art contributes to pupils' cultural awareness. A further group of pupils reviewed car logos as source materials in their work to design a logo of their own which reflected their own interests. The quality of discussion was very good. Pupils were enthusiastic about expressing their opinions. The teacher used focused questioning to inspire further discussion and the very high quality of teaching was reflected by the intervention strategies the teacher used. The quality of learning was reflected in pupils' high level of behaviour, enthusiasm and commitment to their work.
105. Pupils have sketchbooks, which indicate a broad range of activities. They are given good opportunities to draw and paint in the style of famous artists; for example, art appreciation lessons encouraged pupils to work in the style of Monet, Lowry, Kandinsky and Mondrian. The school has a very good collection of source and reference books to support education in the visual arts. Their knowledge of art is extended through educational visits to art galleries.
106. The school benefits from a purpose built art room, and this provides good space for pupils to work, and is very well equipped with an excellent range of drawing and painting materials. Additionally, the parents funded a food technology area, fully equipped with oven, workbenches and storage equipment. These two areas make a powerful impact on the opportunities the school is able to provide for its pupils, and contribute to the high levels of achievement. Art and design and technology are strengths of the school.

HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY

107. In history, the attainment of the oldest pupils at the time of the inspection is in line with expectations. During the inspection there was no history timetabled, because the school plans topics in this curriculum area on a half termly basis, alternating with a geography topic. This half term the focus is on geography, therefore evidence of pupils' attainment in history, coverage and provision is judged by a scrutiny of previous work, teachers' planning and discussions with the pupils.
108. Pupils are well aware of the differences between past and present, particularly in respect of toys. They knew that over 100 years ago there were no computers, because they had not been invented, neither was there electricity. They also appreciated that old toys were made from different materials such as wood or tin and their colours were different. This term a topic on

journeys included a brief look at transport long ago and the pupils talked about sedan chairs, the Montgolfier's invention of a hot air balloon and the fact there were no cars. Teachers' planning shows that an appropriate range of topics is taught along with the relevant skills for this age group. The school does not have a wide range of artefacts, but often parents will provide interesting items.

109. In geography, the attainment of the oldest pupils at the time of the inspection is in line with expectations. Although this half term's emphasis is on geography only one lesson was observed during the inspection. Judgements are based upon scrutiny of pupils' work, teachers' planning and discussions with pupils and the subject co-ordinator. Scrutiny of work shows that pupils' skills in drawing maps are being developed satisfactorily, and they understand how to use simple co-ordinates to locate objects. Teachers' planning clearly shows the development of appropriate skills and the use of correct vocabulary.
110. The study of two contrasting locations is achieved through comparing the local area with the Isle of Struay. As the Isle of Struay is the fictitious setting for the Katie Morag stories, there are strong links with literacy. Wherever possible pupils participate in fieldwork, using the school grounds and the environment around the school. This is also used for history to compare older types of housing. The local supermarket is also visited. These visits enhance pupils' learning in both areas of the curriculum. As part of the topic on journeys, Year 2 pupils carried out a traffic survey. Before embarking on this they were encouraged to predict the busiest and quietest times of the day for traffic, to explain where traffic might be going in the afternoon and the type of vehicles they might see.
111. Pupils enjoy history and geography, although some found history less interesting as it was a "long time ago and I can't remember it!" They were particularly excited about the traffic survey and completed this task with enthusiasm.
112. There is no history co-ordinator at present. The schemes of work for both these areas of the curriculum are based on national documentation, which helps to ensure progression and development of appropriate skills.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

113. Little direct teaching was observed during the inspection. Therefore, inspection judgements are based on regular daily checks on the use of computers in each class, scrutiny of pupils' work, displays around the school and discussion with pupils and teachers.
114. Standards of attainment of the oldest pupils at the time of the inspection are in line with national expectations. This represents a decline in standards since the previous inspection. In the scrutiny of pupils' work, little evidence was found of information communication technology (ICT) being used regularly in all classes and across the curriculum. Little evidence was also found of wall displays to celebrate the use of information communication technology. In Year 1, pupils type and print their names and use the computer to play "Noah's game", as part of their work in religious education. In Year 2, there was little evidence of simple word processing. Pupils use a range of geometric shapes in their designs, and "flood fill" in the style of the artist Mondrian appropriately.
115. Pupils do not always show confidence with keyboard and mouse operations and few are prepared to experiment should anything go wrong. They are not familiar with the layout of the keyboard and many have difficulty finding the appropriate keys when word processing. One Year 2 pupil was observed typing his name, but he had to ask an adult where some letters were located

on the keyboard. He was unable to use higher order skills of changing font size and style, underlining, and deleting individual letters and words rather than deleting the whole sentence and starting again. When pupils make errors they experiment to rectify the mistake, but many use random trial and error rather than building on previous experiences. There was little evidence of control technology being used as part of lessons across the curriculum.

116. Little direct teaching was observed during the week, therefore it is not possible to make a judgement about teaching and learning. Those pupils observed using the computer remained on task and enjoyed using the computer. Record keeping of acquisition of skills is not established throughout the school and therefore is not an effective planning tool to meet the different ability ranges, or to ensure appropriate progress for all pupils. During the inspection, computer programs were rarely used to compliment other areas of the curriculum. Teachers' confidence and understanding varies widely. Where teachers are not confident, computers are not used as well or as often as in classrooms where teachers are confident. Pupils' response to information technology is good. They are well motivated, well behaved and co-operative with each other, and they remain on task. Many pupils indicate that opportunities for the development of skills and computer use take place mainly at home.
117. There are a satisfactory number of computers and printers for the number of pupils. Every class has one computer and printer, but their use is inconsistent. At present, the computers are not networked nor are they linked to the Internet. However, the school recognises these deficiencies and plans are well advanced to establish a computer suite, provide additional training for teachers and to raise the profile of the subject across the curriculum. Since the previous inspection, many computers have been updated. However, the systematic and regular use of computers in the majority of classes is underdeveloped and is dependent on the confidence and knowledge of the class teachers. Many pupils are not receiving the recommended time allocation for information technology. This is resulting in unsatisfactory progress for some pupils.
118. The school is using the nationally approved scheme of work, to ensure continuity and progression. However, there are few opportunities to work alongside colleagues, in order to support and monitor teaching and learning. Good use is made of listening stations in each class for taped stories, music and songs.

MUSIC

119. The standards achieved by the oldest pupils at the time of the inspection are above national expectations. Pupils sing songs and hymns that they know with enjoyment and expression in assemblies. They listen attentively and are aware of rhythm and beat. In one good lesson observed, Year 2 pupils learn about long and short sounds, and there are good opportunities provided for listening and appreciation of the efforts of others, as well as playing a good range of percussion instruments. Pupils enjoy singing songs in a round and show pleasure with the result. Pupils take turns to conduct singing and playing, and do this with confidence.
120. The quality of teaching is good and has a positive impact upon learning. Teachers plan carefully, asking thought provoking questions and are always appreciative of pupils' efforts. Management of pupils is good, and lessons are interesting and challenging and are well organised. Class teachers demonstrate a good level of confidence and expertise in the subject, and this represents an improvement since the previous inspection.
121. Planning indicates that the subject receives a satisfactory allocation of time. There is a good range of published resources and materials for class teachers to use. At present, the school uses its own scheme of work, together with the nationally produced guidance for the subject.
122. There are good opportunities provided for pupils to experience the joy and beauty of music for its own sake; for example, when listening and appraising recorded and live music, including string and brass instruments, representing a range of cultures. There is a good range and variety of

musical instruments available for pupils to use, including those representing other cultural traditions and these are used well. There are appropriate opportunities for children to experience performance by taking part in school in Christmas concerts, as well as singing to the residents of a local nursing home.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

123. Standards in physical education achieved by the oldest pupils at the time of the inspection are above expectations and are similar to those reported in the previous inspection. The curriculum includes gymnastics, games and dance. The school does not have a playing field of its own, but makes arrangements to use a nearby field in preparation for special activities; for example, sports day.
124. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Pupils understand the importance of warming up and cooling down before and after exercise. Pupils build on activities they have developed in the nursery. In Year 1, pupils refine ways of moving associated with sliding, spinning, pushing and pulling. Good consideration is given to the use of space with pupils demonstrating consideration for the safety of other pupils. They experiment with a variety of ways to move; for example, using sliding techniques. There is a good atmosphere of friendly rivalry as a range of sliding positions is tested, copied and improved and this impacts well on the quality of learning, with pupils making very good gains in progress. Pupils learned to use their legs to push their bodies across the hall floor. The work extended to rehearsing different ways of spinning. Pupils used their hands and arms as well as their legs to propel themselves across the floor. A strong feature of this lesson was the efficient and safe way in which the pupils set out the apparatus.
125. Pupils in Year 2 listened carefully to a movement broadcast. They responded very well to a series of instructions and demonstrated very good ability to interpret a range of moods and situations described in the story. The teacher gave the pupils very good support. Through focused questioning she made pupils consider their reactions to situations and encouraged them to translate their ideas into movement. She praised pupils for good work and identified good performers to demonstrate their skills to enable the rest of the class to benefit. The learning support assistant also gave good support and provided a very good role model for pupils through her personal enthusiasm and interpretation of mood and music.
126. Pupils enjoy physical education. They change quickly and are ready to begin work when they enter the hall. They move into position quietly and sensibly and wait for their teachers' instructions. The school has an appropriate scheme of work that follows national guidance. The quality of resources is good.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

127. Standards achieved by the oldest pupils at the time of the inspection are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. During the inspection it was only possible to observe one lesson. Consequently evidence has been collected from scrutiny of pupils' work, teachers' planning and discussions with pupils and the subject co-ordinator. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about the quality of teaching and learning.
128. The scrutiny of pupils' work shows an appropriate coverage and range of religions, including Christianity and Judaism. Discussions with pupils revealed that they are knowledgeable about Moses and the plagues of Egypt. They are also aware of various stories about the life of Jesus. They recall their visit to the church and the synagogue.

129. Harvest is celebrated and classroom displays feature harvest poems and prayers written by pupils, some of which are thoughtful and sensitive. In the lesson observed, appropriate use was made of the computer as a visual aid and later for generating questions. Pupils demonstrated a developing understanding of Moses as a leader and the way he was treated and, without prompting compared his treatment to that of Jesus. Pupils enjoy the subject, particularly the discussions and follow up activities. They sustain concentration, listen carefully to each other and respect each other's views and opinions.
130. The scheme of work is based on the locally agreed syllabus and national recommended documents. The subject is enhanced by visits to the local church and synagogue and there is a satisfactory range of resources.