

ERRATUM

St Albans Road Infant School, Dartford

Unique Reference Number: 118249, Inspection Number 225135

Please replace the table on Page 24 of the Inspection Report, headed ‘Summary of teaching observed during the inspection’ with the table shown below.

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	6%	40%	43%	11%	0	0

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

INSPECTION REPORT

ST ALBANS ROAD INFANT SCHOOL

Dartford

LEA area: Kent

Unique reference number: 118249

Headteacher: Mrs Angela Bevan

Reporting inspector: Mrs Barbara Parker
22261

Dates of inspection: 11th – 14th September 2000

Inspection number: 225135

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	St Albans Road Dartford Kent
Postcode:	DA1 1TE
Telephone number:	01322 223751
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr John Phillips
Date of previous inspection:	January 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs Barbara Parker Registered inspector 22261	The provision for children under five Geography History	What sort of school it is and what it should do to improve further The school's results and achievements How well the pupils are taught How well the school is led and managed
Mrs Margaret Morrissey Lay inspector 9769		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well the school cares for its pupils How well the school works in partnership with parents
Mrs Beryl Rimmer Team inspector 20655	English Music Physical education	How good the curricular and other opportunities offered to the pupils are The effectiveness of assessment
Mrs Ann Shaw Team inspector 18524	Mathematics Information and communication technology Art Design and technology Special educational needs Equal opportunities English as an additional language	
Mr John Linstead Team inspector 20948	Science Religious education	The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Albans is a large infant school for boys and girls aged three to seven. It has 248 pupils on roll, including 44 children in the nursery part time. Although there is an average percentage of pupils taking free school meals (13 per cent) pupils' attainment on entry is below that found nationally, particularly in communication, language and literacy skills and knowledge and understanding of the world. There is an above average number of pupils with special educational needs - 24 per cent - and an average number with Statements. Most of the pupils come from white English-speaking families, but there are 27 pupils who speak English as an additional language; a figure higher than in most other schools.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

St Albans Infant School is a sound school overall, but with weaknesses in some aspects of teaching and learning. Teaching in mathematics is good and standards are above average. Although teaching and learning are unsatisfactory overall in Year 1, pupils reach standards that broadly reflect their attainment on entry in speaking and listening, reading, and science because most of the teaching is effective or better in the other year groups. The teaching of writing is unsatisfactory and standards are below the expected level. Teachers throughout the school do not always adapt work suitably for the less able pupils and those with special educational needs and English as an additional language. The head teacher, governors and staff know about these weaknesses, however, and have put in place procedures to deal with them. Because of this, and recent changes to the senior management of the school, they have the capacity to improve. Taking into account the circumstances of the school and what it achieves, the school provides sound value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils achieve above average standards in mathematics.
- The work in the nursery is stimulating and inspirational and the teaching in reception and two of Year 2 classes is good.
- Pupils enjoy school and want to learn.
- Because good behaviour is promoted effectively, pupils work and play together well.
- Visits and visitors add to the quality of the curriculum.
- The school takes good care of pupils.
- Parents are kept well informed about their children's learning and what is going on in school.

What could be improved

- The school does not teach writing well enough. Pupils' learning is unsatisfactory and standards are too low.
- Pupils' achievements in science are below average.
- Teaching in Year 1 is unsatisfactory overall and does not promote high enough standards.
- Teachers do not always set the right sort of work for the least able pupils and those who not speak fluent English.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made satisfactory improvement overall since the last inspection in 1997. Most of the key issues from the last report have been successfully dealt with. Provision for the brighter pupils has improved, with more pupils reaching the higher level than before in mathematics, reading and science. The school has built effective links with the community, which successfully enrich the curriculum and enhance the educational provision for the pupils. Standards in information and communication technology are better than they were; because of pupils' restricted access to them, the use of computers to promote learning in other subjects is limited. Standards in mathematics are higher than in most other schools. Although fewer pupils than before reach the expected level in writing and science, there has been an increasingly high percentage of pupils in Year 2 on the special educational need register over the last three years, depressing standards overall.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
Reading	B	C	D	D	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Writing	B	C	D	E	
Mathematics	B	C	B	B	

The above table shows that in the 1999 national tests for seven-year-olds, more pupils attained the expected Level 2 in mathematics than in most other schools. One per cent fewer pupils reached the expected level in reading, and in writing the percentage was below the national average. In comparison with schools with a similar number of pupils taking free school meals, the school does well in mathematics, but is below them in reading and well below them in writing. Test results have fallen in reading and writing since 1997 because there has been an increase in the number of pupils with special educational needs in Year 2, doubling to 40 per cent in 2000. Nevertheless, standards in speaking and listening, reading, and science reflect pupils' below average attainment on entry and pupils do as well as can be expected in all these subjects, and particularly well in mathematics. Standards in writing are below what they should be and, although the school met its numeracy and literacy targets in 1999, it did not reach its literacy targets in 2000. Many children enter the nursery and reception classes with under-developed communication, language and literacy skills and insecure knowledge and understanding of the world. By the end of the foundation stage, most children attain the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional, reading, speaking and listening, mathematical, physical and creative development. Their knowledge and understanding of the world is better than it was, but still below expected levels, and their writing skills are under-developed. By the time the pupils leave the school, their achievements are above average in mathematics. They are average in speaking and listening and reading, but below average in writing and science. Attainment in all other subjects is broadly as expected. Pupils are particularly good at counting and ordering numbers and the recognition of number patterns. They remember historical facts and events well. Handwriting is untidy, with letters incorrectly formed and little regard for presentation. Spelling is poor, upper and lower case letters are mixed within words and sentences, and full stops and capital letters are often used incorrectly.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have good attitudes to school and show interest in their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils are polite and helpful to others and show respect for property.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory. Pupils work co-operatively in pairs and small groups.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Although slightly below the national average, this is because of two families who have now left the school.

Pupils are keen and eager to come to school and they show interest in school life. Behaviour in lessons is mostly good, but where teaching is less effective, some pupils - particularly those with severe learning difficulties - lose interest and their behaviour deteriorates. There are some opportunities for pupils to become involved in the daily routine of the school and they respond well to these.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	good	unsatisfactory	

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

Teaching is satisfactory overall. Teaching was satisfactory or better in 89 per cent of the lessons seen, very good in six per cent and unsatisfactory in 11 per cent. All of the very good and most of the good lessons were in nursery, reception and Year 2. All of the unsatisfactory lessons were in Year 1, where the teachers are inexperienced in teaching this particular age group. Most teachers manage pupils well. They make effective use of learning resources and prepare lessons carefully. They plan effectively and know what they want the pupils to achieve by the end of the lesson. Numeracy is taught well. Teachers are confident using the National Numeracy Strategy scheme of work and adapt work suitably to meet the needs of the different attaining pupils. Teaching in literacy is satisfactory overall, but unsatisfactory in writing. Teaching does not promote the importance of good handwriting skills and pupils do not learn to use upper and lower case letters correctly. Pupils' spelling is poor and their sentence structure is weak. Teaching does not promote high enough standards of presentation across all subjects and untidy work is too readily accepted. Teaching does not always pay sufficient attention to the assessed needs of the least able pupils and those who do not speak English fluently. Although learning support assistants help these pupils with their work, because the tasks are too often inappropriate, their help is sometimes ineffective and learning is unsatisfactory.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good in the nursery and reception classes. Satisfactory overall in Key Stage 1.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Unsatisfactory because teachers do not always pay sufficient regard to pupils' individual learning targets and do not set work that accurately matches their assessed needs often enough.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Unsatisfactory overall. Teachers struggle to know what to do with pupils who do not speak English fluently. These pupils are usually set the same work as the lower attaining and those with special educational needs, regardless of their ability.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory overall. Good provision for moral and social development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good overall. This is a very caring school. There is a suitable range of effective assessment procedures, but teachers do not always use what they do know about pupils' previous learning to adapt work appropriately for the least able pupils.

The school works well with parents and the information it gives them is of good quality. Health education is good. The learning opportunities for children under five are particularly good. Very good use is made of the outdoor learning areas in the nursery and reception classes and children learn appropriately through observation and exploration. There are good procedures in place for monitoring and promoting good attendance and behaviour. Marking is unsatisfactory and does little to help pupils to improve. Pupils have their English targets taped to their desks to help them know what they need to focus on in their work but, because pupils sometimes sit in different desks, this system does not work as well as it should.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory overall. The head teacher is clear about what needs to be done to improve teaching and learning. Because foundation subject co-ordinators do not evaluate teaching and learning in their subjects, they cannot effectively influence improvement.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors understand the school's strengths and weaknesses. They analyse results and hold the head teacher accountable for them. They and the head teacher are fully committed to raising standards.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Unsatisfactory overall. The school has a clear idea about where it is and what its priorities for development are. However, the monitoring of teaching and learning is restricted to literacy and numeracy and not enough is known about the strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning in other subjects.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Financial management is effective and efficient.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory overall, but the impact of the learning support assistants on pupils' learning is lessened because pupils are not always set appropriate work to meet their assessed needs. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is closely checked and evaluated and this leads to whole school developments in these subjects. Teachers, however, are unsure about what does and does not work in their teaching in other subjects, on which strengths to build and how to remedy their weaknesses. The school applies the principles of best value for money satisfactorily.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The excellent nursery provision and the way the staff look after their children. • The progress their children make and the fact that the school expects pupils to work hard. • The provision for developing pupils' maturity and responsible behaviour. • The approachability of the staff. • The good teaching and the school's effective leadership and management. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The provision for lunchtime and after school activities. • The information they receive about how well their children are doing. • The way the school works with parents.

The inspection team agrees with most of the parents' positive comments. Whilst the teaching is satisfactory overall and the greatest majority of pupils make appropriate progress, many of the less able pupils and some of those with English as an additional language do not because teaching takes insufficient account of their assessed needs. Pupils' progress reports are satisfactory and the school provides adequate information for parents about its work. Lunchtime and after school clubs are limited compared with all schools, but the provision is reasonable for pupils of this age.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The school's results in the 1999 national tests for seven-year olds were above average in mathematics, just one per cent below average in reading, and below average overall in writing. In 1999, the results were above those schools with a similar percentage of free school meals in mathematics, below in reading, and well below in writing. Test results have fallen since because there has been an increasing number of pupils with special educational needs in Year 2 since 1997, doubling to 40 per cent in 2000. Fewer pupils reached Level 2 in reading and writing in 2000 than in 1997 when the results were above average in all three subjects. However, the average number of pupils claiming free school meals does not accurately reflect the pupils' below average attainment on entry. In addition, in 1999 and 2000, Year 2 had a high percentage of boys who, in line with boys nationally, performed less well than the girls, and a high percentage of younger, summer-born pupils who were only six years old when they took the tests.
2. In 1999 and 2000, standards at the end of the key stage broadly reflected pupils' attainment on entry, but with the brighter pupils doing better than expected in reading and mathematics and as expected in writing. For example, in the 1997 entrance assessments in reading, out of the 90 pupils taking the tests, 59 per cent were predicted to reach at least Level 2b and 17 per cent Level 3 by the end of Year 2. When they left the school in July 2000, 68 per cent had attained Level 2b and 24 per cent had attained the higher level. It was a similar picture in mathematics. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when higher attaining pupils were under-achieving.
3. However, in writing, whilst the more able pupils reach their predicted levels, not all of the less able make sufficient progress and their learning is unsatisfactory. Fewer of the lower-average attaining pupils reach Level 2c than predicted. Because the teaching of writing is weak throughout the school, pupils' learning is unsatisfactory over time and standards are lower than expected. Work is not always suitably adapted for the lower attaining and those with special educational needs and English as an additional language. These pupils are not always paid sufficient regard to and, although support assistants help them with their work, because the work does not always meet their assessed needs, too often pupils make insufficient progress during lessons and over time.
4. The school sets non-compulsory targets for literacy and mathematics. These are based on pupils' attainment on entry and too little is done to extend pupils beyond their predicted levels. Nevertheless, these targets were exceeded in 1997 and 1998 and met in 1999. Although the targets for mathematics were met in 2000, the school did not reach its literacy targets. Many of the lower-average pupils failed to reach the predicted Level 2c in writing. Consequently, the school had more pupils attaining the lower Level 1 than expected.
5. Standards of work seen in lessons and pupils' past work show that standards are average in speaking and listening and reading, but below expected levels in writing by the time the pupils leave the school. In speaking and listening, pupils make better progress in Year 2 where the teaching is more successful because teachers listen to pupils more attentively and value their responses more effectively. Consequently, by the time they leave the school, most pupils are confident in expressing their views and opinions and are keen to answer questions and share their thoughts. They speak confidently, although sometimes the brighter pupils dominate the discussions and the less able lose interest in the conversation. In reading, pupils enjoy looking at information and storybooks. They are enthusiastic about stories and are disappointed when the story ends. They are very keen to know what is going to happen next and predict sensibly, and often accurately, what might happen. Pupils do not

know enough about letter sounds and how sounds change when particular letters are put together, however, and this hinders their reading progress. In writing, most pupils, particularly the more able, have good ideas and use their imaginations well to produce some lively descriptions of, for example, 'The Rainbow Fish', some using punctuation correctly and accurately. The majority, however, do not have a secure understanding of sentence construction, their letters are too often incorrectly formed, they pay undue attention to the correct use of full stops and capital letters, and their handwriting is poor.

6. Standards are above average in mathematics, with more pupils reaching the expected level and above than in most other schools. Pupils are very good at counting and ordering numbers, recalling addition, subtraction, multiplication and division, recognising number patterns and understanding place value. However, their number writing is under-developed and their work is often untidy.
7. Although pupils make satisfactory progress in science and their learning reflects their attainment on entry, standards are below average by the time the pupils leave the school at the end of Year 2. Although pupils have a secure grasp of some scientific ideas, such as healthy diets and the idea of fair testing, their recording of investigation findings and their drawing of appropriate conclusions are under-developed. Nevertheless, by the time they leave the school, most pupils name body and plant parts correctly and classify living things according to where they live or the number of legs they have. They know what plants need to live and grow and understand the dangers of electricity.
8. Standards in information and communication technology are as expected for pupils of this age by the time they leave the school, and pupils' attainment meets the requirements of the Agreed Syllabus in religious education. Standards in all other subjects are as expected by the age of seven.
9. The standards achieved overall by children under five are typical of those found in most other schools in personal, social and emotional, mathematical, physical, and creative development. Reception work from last summer shows that children's knowledge and understanding of the world are weak and, although some write in sentences and sometimes use full stops and capital letters, their writing skills are under-developed by the time they leave the foundation stage. Although these standards accurately reflect their attainment on entry, with good gains made in speaking and listening, physical, personal, social and emotional development in particular, the teaching of writing is unsatisfactory and not enough is done to develop children's writing skills during the reception year. By the end of the year, many children do not form letters correctly and their handwriting is untidy. They do not practise story writing often enough and too often work on scrap paper or the back of wallpaper sample sheets. This does little to value children's work or to encourage them to take pride in what they do. Although there are weekly guided writing opportunities during which children are taught the techniques of writing, such as the use of full stops and capital letters, these are too few and children do not transfer the skills learnt in these sessions to their independent writing. Teachers accept low standards from children and too little is done to encourage children to improve their work.
10. Whilst the learning of the brighter-average and higher attaining pupils is at least sound and sometimes good, and the level of demand made of them is appropriate, the least able pupils and those with English as an additional language make unsatisfactory progress overall. In too many lessons, the level of demand that teachers make on lower attaining pupils is pitched either too high or too low. Insufficient regard is taken of the individual learning targets of pupils with special educational needs to adapt work suitably for these pupils. Pupils who do not speak fluent English, are usually set the same work as the lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs regardless of their assessed learning needs. Support assistants do what they are asked to do properly. However, their effectiveness is limited because they often only help pupils to complete work rather than increase their learning, for example, when drawing pictures of the seaside in geography.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Pupils' attitudes to the school are good and their behaviour is always satisfactory and often good. Children make a happy and confident start to school in the nursery and reception classes, quickly establishing effective relationships with adults and each other. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language are fully integrated into the life of the school. They are treated fairly by teachers and pupils and their different cultures and nationalities are valued by all.
12. Pupils of all ages have positive attitudes to their learning. They participate well in lessons, contributing interesting comments and questions. The majority listen attentively, settle quickly to their work, and concentrate on their tasks. This is particularly evident when teaching is good. Pupils are interested and inquisitive about their work, as in a science lesson in Year 2 when they were eager to discover the mechanism for using electricity and fitting a switch system. During the inspection, there were good examples of pupils sharing their work with the class, for example in Year 2 literacy and during conversation time in the nursery and reception. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting, and during the inspection, said that they are very happy with the attitudes and values that the school promotes and the confidence it gives to pupils within a strong community atmosphere.
13. Behaviour in lessons is mostly good and often very good, but where teaching sometimes lacks interest and rigour, as in Year 1, there is a deterioration in pupils' behaviour, especially that of pupils with special educational needs. No issues of bullying or oppressive behaviour were observed and pupils and parents are confident that any issues arising will be dealt with swiftly and sensitively within the school's 'no blame' policy. There have been no exclusions in the last year.
14. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory. Pupils respond well to opportunities to become involved in daily routines. Children in nursery and reception, for example, give out milk and snacks and clear away resources at the end of the activity sessions. In Years 1 and 2, pupils act as register monitors and give support in assembly. However, there are limited opportunities for development of pupils' independent learning. Relationships in the school are good. All staff and pupils relate well to one another and the friendly relaxed atmosphere permeating the school has helped pupils to settle after only a few days of the new school year. Pupils from all year groups understand the feelings of others and the effects of their action on others. They share well, take turns, and listen to one another. Parents feel St Albans Road is a caring school where teachers take time to listen to problems and concerns and support their children's welfare well.
15. Attendance levels are satisfactory overall. Parents confirm that their children enjoy school and are keen to attend. Pupils arrive punctually and lessons start on time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Of the 53 lessons seen, 46 per cent were good or better, 43 per cent were satisfactory overall and 11 per cent were unsatisfactory. All of the unsatisfactory lessons seen were in Year 1, where the rate of progress pupils make during lessons is too slow. Pupils' achievements are better in nursery, reception and Year 2, where most of the good and all of the very good teaching was seen. Due to unforeseen circumstances, all of the teachers in Year 1 are new to the year group this term. They are unsure of the demands they should make on pupils of this age and do not use the records of pupils' previous achievements to set suitably adapted work for pupils of different abilities, except in mathematics. Whereas this is also a weakness of Year 2 teachers, they have more experience of what pupils normally know by the end of Year 1. Because teachers in Year 1 do not yet have this experience, the mismatch is increased and its negative impact on pupils' learning is greater.

17. The teaching of children under five is good overall, with some very good features in both nursery and reception classes. Teaching is particularly good for personal, social and emotional development, and extending children's physical, speaking, and listening skills. The adults in both classes have a good understanding about how young children learn through exploration and observation and enhance children's learning very effectively through a wide range of purposeful activities, which engage children's interest and capture their imagination well, such as rolling balls through pipes and hand printing. Children respond well by applying physical and creative effort and persevering with their work and play. Activities that require children to communicate with one another, such as asking for items in the shop, or pushing and pulling each other in and on the wheeled toys, develop and extend children's speaking and listening skills well. The adults in the nursery and reception classes value and encourage talk and often join in children's work and play, painting their own picture, for example, or writing letters on the chalk board, acting as good role models. Teachers and nursery nurses work together well and plan work effectively to meet the needs of all of the children. They assess children's achievements carefully and accurately and use what they know about children's prior learning to guide individuals in their choice of activities and the level at which they complete the work.
18. In contrast, the use of assessment in Key Stage 1 is unsatisfactory. Teachers do not always use the information they have about pupils' prior achievements to adapt work to suit the needs in particular of the lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs and English as an additional language. Consequently, the learning of these pupils is often unsatisfactory. Although the school employs support assistants who help these pupils with their work, because the work does not always meet the needs of the pupils, their support is often ineffective in building pupils' learning. Some teachers in Year 1 are insufficiently aware of special educational need pupils' individual learning targets and how to develop the behavioural, linguistic, social and developmental needs of these pupils. Teaching is more successful when teachers focus on the specific needs of pupils, for example, in a Year 1 mathematics lesson when one pupil with linguistic problems was invited to explain to the class how he had made models using nine cubes. This successfully raised his self-esteem, gave him the confidence to talk to an audience, and developed his understanding of the properties of number. Because teachers do not understand how to teach pupils with English as an additional language effectively, they tend to place them with the lower attaining pupils, although most of them do not have learning difficulties, just difficulties learning.
19. Strengths in teaching in Key Stage 1 lie in the general management of pupils. Teachers are very calm and, because of this, pupils feel secure and confident in what they do. Lessons are usually well prepared, resulting in brisk starts. Teachers use praise and encouragement effectively to motivate pupils and build their confidence. They use resources well, such as tapes during physical education lessons and 'big books' during literacy lessons. Teachers plan their lessons effectively, giving direction to their teaching and purpose to their tasks. In English, pupils are set individual learning targets, which are taped to their desks as a constant reminder of what they need to focus on. This gives them an understanding and knowledge of their own learning needs. However, some pupils have difficulty reading them and because pupils do not always sit in the same place, they often have the incorrect targets in front of them.
20. The teaching of English is satisfactory in Key Stage 1. It is better in Year 2 than in Year 1, where two of the seven lessons seen were 'free writing' sessions, which served little purpose and did not develop pupils' learning effectively. The teaching of speaking, listening, and reading is good. The introductions to literacy lessons encourage pupils to use their imaginations and motivate them well, particularly the higher attaining. However, sometimes the explanations and questions teachers ask do not focus on the needs of the least able pupils and these pupils sometimes get 'left out' of the conversation. Teaching of reading is well organised. Teachers give pupils good opportunities to talk about the books and stories they read, which are well matched to their abilities. For example, when introducing the book

'Six dinner Sid' to Year 2 pupils, the teacher and pupils together recalled the author, illustrator, and title, and named the cover and spine. Teaching encouraged pupils to predict the story line as they went through the book. Pupils responded eagerly and with great interest. In another successful Year 2 lesson, effective questions such as "What's going to happen to Morag?" and "What does an exclamation mark do?" made pupils think about the stories. Animated story telling encourages pupils to listen and successfully builds anticipation and enjoyment of both language and literature.

21. Except in the nursery, where it is good, the teaching of writing is unsatisfactory. Teaching does not help pupils with their spelling and sentence construction and the writing demands made on pupils of all ages and abilities are too low. Teachers too readily accept low standards of writing; pupils' work is often untidy and their handwriting is poor. Too often the work of the lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs is poorly matched to their capabilities. For example, during a Year 1 lesson, lower attaining pupils who did not recognise the sound 'ar' could not participate in the lesson. Children in the reception classes have many appropriate opportunities to practise their independent writing skills when, for example, writing shopping lists or letters to each other. However, in addition to these valuable experiences and the weekly story writing session, there is a weekly 'free writing' session in the reception and Key Stage 1 classes which serves little purpose as pupils lack stimulation and motivation and many struggle to know what to write. Those who have not yet acquired the techniques of writing write their name over and over, whilst others write pages of numbers, wasting time. Although they are taught the technical skills of writing in some of the structured writing sessions, these sessions are too infrequent and pupils' writing skills are under-developed by the time they leave the school.
22. Teachers are much better at teaching mathematics, where the teaching and learning are satisfactory in the foundation stage and good overall in Key Stage 1. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the requirements of the subject are very secure and the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has effectively improved teaching and learning. Teachers plan together effectively, particularly in Year 2 where the teaching team is well established, ensuring consistency between similar attaining pupils in parallel classes. Lessons are well structured and work is suitably adapted to meet the needs of all of the pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language. Consequently, pupils of all abilities make sufficient progress during lessons and over time. Because the work matches pupils' assessed needs, the learning support assistants effectively help the lower attaining pupils with their work and enhance the learning of these pupils successfully. Resources are used well and effective questioning probes pupils' previous learning and extends their thinking appropriately. For example, in a Year 1 lesson the teacher asked "Which number do you think comes next?" - allowing all pupils time to think and respond. Other questions, such as "Do you see a pattern when we turn over the numbers?" challenge pupils effectively and encourage them to listen and concentrate. A competitive element added interest and enthusiasm for the subject when the teacher divided pupils in Year 1, for example, into four sets when counting on and back in twos.
23. Teaching is satisfactory overall in science, information and communication technology, religious education and physical education. In science, the initial and on-going discussions are well managed and attract the pupils' interest and attention. However, the recording of findings and drawing of conclusions of investigation and experimental work is under-developed. The teaching of information and communication technology has improved since the last inspection and is now satisfactory. Computers are sometimes used to support work in other subjects, such as drawing in art, but this aspect of teaching and learning is still under-developed in the classrooms. Although the computers in the designated teaching area are well used, pupils get little time to use them and those in the classrooms are often switched off. Control technology has been given a sufficiently increased profile since the last inspection, mainly through the use of programmable toys, and is taught satisfactorily throughout the school. Staff teach the Agreed Syllabus for religious education effectively, but

do not always use time effectively in lessons to enable pupils to complete their work. Consequently, too much of the pupils' work is unfinished.

24. Too few lessons were seen in art, design and technology, history, geography, and music to judge the overall quality of teaching in these subjects. However, work in history and geography is not adapted to suit the needs of the lower attaining pupils in particular and too often, these pupils are asked to complete work that is too difficult. There is inconsistency between the demands teachers make on pupils of similar ability in parallel year group classes in history. This is a weakness from the last inspection that has not been effectively dealt with. For example, one class was asked to write the story of Samuel Pepys whilst in another class they were asked to fill in missing words. In art, pupils are often asked to draw on poor quality paper and this does little to influence high standards.
25. In many lessons and across most subjects, introductions go on too long, leaving insufficient time for the pupils to complete the planned activities. This results in too much unfinished work, which is sometimes continued next time, sometimes abandoned, such as in religious education. Marking is variable. At best, it tells pupils how they can improve their work next time. However, much of the work is simply ticked and is not a useful aid to assessment.

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

26. The quality and range of pupils' learning opportunities are satisfactory. The school provides a reasonably broad and balanced curriculum that incorporates all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education, and includes satisfactory provision for pupils' personal, social, health, and sex education, and teaching pupils about the dangers of drug mis-use.
27. The curriculum for children in the foundation stage is good. It is wide and varied, with a good balance between teacher directed and child initiated activities. It contributes well to children's development and prepares them effectively for the National Curriculum in Year 1.
28. The allocation of time given to subjects has been carefully considered and high priority is given, appropriately, to English, with a particular emphasis on writing, identified this year as an area for improvement. The introduction and largely successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy is having a positive impact on the quality of teaching in mathematics by providing a good structure to lessons. However, the curriculum provision for mathematics, reading and speaking and listening is more effective than that provided for writing, and the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, whilst successfully raising standards in speaking and listening and reading, has been less effective in raising standards in writing. There are not enough opportunities for most pupils, particularly the least able, to develop the technical skills of writing successfully. In an attempt to improve writing standards, the school has introduced periods of 'quiet writing' where pupils are encouraged to write freely. Teachers and other adults provide little guidance or help in these short, unproductive sessions where pupils make too few gains in their learning. Some opportunities are taken at the end of the key stage to write at length in other curriculum areas, such as history, religious education and science and the more able pupils achieve satisfactory standards. There is insufficient emphasis overall, however, on the development of pupils' literacy skills through other subjects.
29. There is sound curricular provision in most other subjects, although there is limited investigative work in science and the curriculum for music lacks sufficient opportunities for composing.
30. The school is appropriately reviewing its subject schemes of work in light of the introduction of Curriculum 2000. Current schemes provide adequately for the building of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding from year-to-year. Planning by teachers in year groups

ensures that pupils in parallel classes have access to the same curriculum content, although the demands made on pupils of similar ability differ from class to class.

31. The school aims to ensure that all pupils have equal access to and benefit from, the full range of learning experiences available. It is not always successful in achieving its aim, however, as the curriculum for pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language does not always meet the needs of these pupils effectively. For example, one girl in a Year 2 class who does not speak English well, was insufficiently motivated by a task restricting her to finding simple words beginning with 's', not because it was beyond her evident capabilities but because of a lack of effective communication. Those special educational needs pupils with the most severe needs, although receiving good support on an individual basis, are not sufficiently included in lessons to give them equal access to the curriculum. Targets on pupils' Individual Education Plans vary in their effectiveness. Where they include specific, measurable and realistic tasks they give good guidance to adults. Too often, however, they are very broad and in some cases they are exactly the same as in previous years indicating a lack of progress and appropriateness. The school monitors its provision well, however and has accurately identified this as a weakness.
32. The school has effective links with the community and its partner institutions. There is particularly good liaison with the junior school, providing continuity of learning. The curriculum is suitably enriched by a range of visits, including one to a Sikh temple, and visitors, such as musicians and theatre groups. Book weeks are regular features of the curriculum and a highly successful art week provides additional opportunities for broadening pupils' learning experiences in music, drama and art.
33. The school offers a limited range of extra-curricular activities including an after school computer club and a story session. There are no musical or sporting activities available during lunch times or after school.
34. The provision for pupils' spiritual understanding is satisfactory. Opportunities for spirituality are provided through the curriculum, especially in religious education, music, literature and art. Pupils are given some time to reflect on issues raised during assemblies and collective acts of worship. In the nursery and reception classes, children experience many moments of spiritual awe and wonder, for example, when discovering fossils in sand, mixing colours, and making porridge. Pupils in Year 1 were thrilled to release butterflies they had seen develop from the eggs and chrysalises they had nurtured.
35. The provision for pupils' moral development is good, with great store being placed on the teaching of moral values and of pupils' understanding and keeping of the school's 'Golden Rules'. The behaviour policy places due emphasis on the development of positive attitudes so that, for example, pupils behave well towards others because this is desirable rather than to avoid a sanction. These positive attitudes are nurtured through 'circle time' and personal, health and social education lessons. The school has a good collection of books, which promote moral values, many taken from the Christian faith. The school has a caring ethos in which the views of others are valued and respected. Teachers and support staff provide good role models in the ways in which they treat pupils and each other and encourage pupils to play their parts in maintaining this caring environment.
36. The school makes good provision for pupils' social development. This begins in the nursery where children are taught from their first days the happiness of sharing their lives with each other. Pupils throughout the school are encouraged to work together in groups and share equipment and resources. They co-operate and play well together during playtimes and there are very few recorded instances of poor or oppressive behaviour. Each class provides pupils with the opportunities to act as monitors, for example, by delivering registers, putting out equipment or helping to tidy up.

37. The provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. The school celebrates special days and festivals such as Harvest Festival, Divali and the Jewish New Year. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of their own culture through their studies in history, music, art and geography. These lessons also enable pupils to play musical instruments from other countries and study the work of artists from different parts of the world. Although the school has a number of pupils for whom English is an additional language, insufficient use is so far made of this potential to extend the range of opportunities for further cultural development. Pupils benefit from their visits to places such as the Mayor's Parlour and a Sikh Temple.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

38. Since the last inspection the school has maintained the caring and supportive environment in which pupils feel valued. The school cares effectively for its pupils' welfare and safety. Child protection arrangements are good and comply with statutory requirements and local guidelines.
39. Procedures for monitoring good behaviour and for ensuring that oppressive behaviour is eliminated are good. They are well known to pupils and parents, who receive a booklet on induction, and information in the school prospectus to support the work carried out by teachers in the school. The school's open door policy encourages parents to play a full part in pupils' welfare both at home and in the school.
40. The health and safety provision is good. Procedures are appropriately followed by the staff and monitored by the governor with responsibility for health and safety, and subsequently the full governing body. Risk assessment is up to date and all equipment is well maintained with recorded checks. During the inspection, no health and safety concerns were noted. Overall, the school and the playground are safe places for pupils and staff.
41. There are clear notices to support procedures for fire evacuation; fire drills are carried out regularly and logged. All learning support assistants, midday supervisors and office staff have a current first aid certificate and first aid provision is very good. All serious accidents and head injuries are appropriately reported and recorded. The school successfully promotes healthy and safe living through an effective personal, social and health education programme. Pupils have recently discussed healthy eating; one parent said her child returned home and explained why it is important to eat fruit regularly for good health and teeth.
42. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good and are appropriately adhered to. Registers are correctly completed both morning and afternoon and returned to the school office. There is informal daily monitoring each day by class teachers and formal weekly monitoring by the school secretary and head teacher.
43. There are sound procedures for monitoring pupils' academic and personal development. Assessment on entry is well established and is used effectively to track the progress of pupils from when they enter the school to when they leave. The school is, however, less successful at measuring the aptitude of pupils with English as an additional language and these pupils' needs are not always accurately identified and met. The school identifies pupils with learning difficulties at an early stage using a recognised infant screening test. Individual Education Plans for these pupils are adequately completed and regularly reviewed. Those with specific and detailed learning targets are helpful to teachers. Some of the plans, however, lack detail and this limits their usefulness to teachers when planning work.
44. The school keeps careful records of individual pupil's achievements and their National Curriculum levels. Sometimes teachers make valuable assessments on a day-to-day basis and record them on their weekly planning sheets so that they can refer to them later. During introductions to lessons, some teachers ask learning support assistants to write down pertinent notes of pupils' responses to their questions and explanations. There is, however no agreed structured system for on-going day-to-day assessment and practice varies

between teachers. Information gathered is used to identify individual targets that are taped to desks in front of the pupils. These have limited use in some classes, however, as only the most able pupils are aware of and fully understand them whilst many are unable to read them, and sometimes pupils do not sit in front of their own targets.

45. Information from formal and informal assessments is effectively transferred from one class to the next. Teachers take good account of it to group pupils within the class according to ability. It is not used sufficiently to inform curriculum planning, however, where the emphasis is on teaching the content of the scheme of work, rather than building on what pupils already know and understand. The school has established an effective evaluating and monitoring system and accurately identifies whole school issues, such as the need to develop punctuation, for example. There is little evidence of planning being modified to match teaching to what pupils already know and understand and build on the needs of individuals in light of assessment. There is a positive marking policy, which provides consistency throughout the school. It is not effective, however, in helping pupils improve their work and makes little contribution towards assessment as it does not set the work in context or indicate how much support pupils have had to complete it.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

46. The partnership with parents is good. Parents are encouraged to support their children's learning at home and are given good support and information from the school to do this. Parents are generally pleased with the quality of education provided at the school and the standards achieved by their children.
47. The quality and quantity of information provided for parents is good; parents are well informed of pupils' targets for improvement. There is clear communication between home and school, established mainly through the school prospectus, early years brochure, school policies, activities sheets, mathematical games, drop-in sessions and regular meetings between parents and teachers. Pupils' annual reports give useful information about pupils' attainment. Parents are well informed of school events through the monthly newsletters. Parents appreciate the increased efforts to keep them involved in school life. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting reported that they are able to approach the school with any queries or problems and are promptly and sympathetically heard. Home-school agreements are in place, although a number of parents feel the agreement is superfluous as the school already has good practice in place.
48. Parents are supportive of the school. Some of them help during the school day, and more of them help on school visits and trips. A number of parents, who are training to be learning support assistants, use the school for their classroom practice. On staff in-service training days, parents often arrange a school outing for pupils to complement their curriculum work.
49. There is a fund raising group organised by parents and governors that raises considerable funds for the school by holding fairs, coffee mornings and other events. These are very well supported by parents and other members of the community. Parents also organise a savings club to allow pupils to save money for spending in the school book club also organised by them.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

50. The leadership and management of the head teacher and key staff are sound overall. There is a clear commitment to raising standards, and the school has successfully improved teaching and learning in mathematics and for the higher attaining pupils across all subjects - a key point for action from the last inspection. The school is currently working through a difficult period of change that the head teacher is managing sensitively and effectively. Two of the teachers are newly appointed, one is newly qualified, the other has been teaching just

one year. They have been in school under two weeks, along with a temporary newly qualified teacher replacing a senior teacher on long-term sick leave. All of the teachers in Year 1 are new to the year group and have not worked together as a team before. The newly formed senior management team has not yet had chance to meet as a team as one of them is away from school at the moment. There are a number of newly appointed subject co-ordinators in post who have not yet had time to influence changes in their subjects.

51. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties effectively and governors are very clear about where improvements need to be made. They analyse results and discuss with the head teacher why they are as they are, appropriately holding her accountable for what is happening. They are developing a working knowledge and understanding of the work of the school through their regular visits and meetings with senior managers and subject co-ordinators.
52. School development planning is satisfactory. The school improvement plan identifies relevant key areas for development. However, the involvement of subject co-ordinators in development planning is unsatisfactory. This is because, with the exception of English and mathematics, they do not monitor teaching and learning in their subjects sufficiently to ensure that improvements are made. As a result, the points for action in most subjects are restricted to implementing the new National Curriculum and on the checking of resources. Although co-ordinators support colleagues through suggestions and advice, it is usually when asked, and too little is done to evaluate what is happening in individual subjects, such as history and geography, and identify precisely what improvements need to be made to improve teaching and learning.
53. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching is unsatisfactory overall. It is effective in numeracy and literacy lessons, where identified weaknesses are strengthened through staff development programmes. However, the issues raised are turned into whole school matters, such as improving the organisation of the plenary sessions at the end of lessons. Too little is done to make individual teachers aware of what is and is not working in their teaching and help them to build on their strengths and remedy their weaknesses through well-focused in-service training.
54. The monitoring and evaluation of pupils' learning is satisfactory overall. The school has started to track pupils' progress as they move through reception and Year 1, and use the end of year assessments to evaluate where more or less progress is made and to identify any differences in pupils' learning between pupils, classes and year groups. However, once again, the involvement of co-ordinators is limited to compiling portfolios and moderating work for assessment purposes. They do not scrutinise work rigorously enough in order to identify strengths and weaknesses in pupils' acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding.
55. Financial management is satisfactory. The school administration staff are efficient in their work and the finance officer keeps the head teacher and governing body well aware of the financial situation throughout the year. The governors have a very clear idea about finances and keep a watchful eye on their expenditure. They ensure that they get the best value for money through their effective tendering procedures and search for offers and 'bargains'. They discuss how best their budget can be spent to have the most effective impact on pupils' education and standards, and keep a watchful eye on whether their decisions are effective in raising standards.
56. The spending of grants allocated for pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language are spent carefully, but both are currently, and appropriately, under review. A newly appointed specialist teacher for pupils with English as an additional language, has not yet had time to impact on improving the teaching and learning of these pupils in ordinary lessons. Although during the weekly half-hour withdrawal sessions, these pupils make sound progress, teachers are unsure about how to meet their needs in ordinary

lessons. Governors are currently evaluating whether or not their decision to spend money on employing support assistants to help pupils with special educational needs is in fact contributing successfully to the learning of these pupils. Whereas the presence of the assistants means that pupils are supported well in class, the work the pupils are set does not always meet their needs appropriately, limiting the effectiveness of the contribution the support assistants can make to the progress of these pupils.

57. The school is well staffed with qualified teachers and a good number of learning support assistants to meet the demands of a broad and balanced curriculum and the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs. Teachers work together well in their year teams, providing consistency in the work pupils are given in English and mathematics in particular, but not always in other subjects such as history and geography, where similar attaining pupils in parallel classes do not always have the same demands made on them. Induction procedures for newly qualified teachers are good, but the induction of the recently appointed teacher in Key Stage 1 is not as successful. However, it is early in the year, and year teams are to provide curriculum advice in their weekly meetings. Staff receive training in designated subject areas linked to the school development plan. The training has increased their knowledge and understanding in information and communication technology and design technology, but as yet their individual training needs are insufficiently identified and met.
58. The school, although old, is maintained to a high standard. It is clean and bright and provides a good environment for learning. Displays of pupils' work in many areas of the curriculum celebrate pupils' achievements appropriately and add to the learning atmosphere. There is no grass play area, but there are marked play-ground activities and stimulating outdoor learning areas for children in the nursery and reception classes.
59. Most subjects of the curriculum are well resourced. Each class has a computer and a colour printer and staff have access to a number of CD-ROMs – an improvement since the last inspection. The library has a good selection of books including foreign language books for pupils with English as an additional language. Pupils with special educational needs have access to a room that is equipped with resources well suited to their individual needs.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

60. The school should:

(1) Raise standards and improve progress and teaching in writing by:

- i) ensuring that teachers use what they know about pupils' previous learning to set the less able and those with special educational needs suitable work that meets their needs more appropriately;
- ii) improving the organisation of free writing sessions in order to give pupils a suitable purpose to write and challenge to strive for higher standards;
- iii) improving pupils' sentence construction and use of capital letters and full stops;
- iv) improving pupils' letter formation and spelling of common words, and ensuring that they use upper and lower case letters correctly;
- v) raising teachers' expectations about what pupils can achieve and encouraging pupils to take a greater pride in the presentation of their work;
- vi) using computers more effectively to promote and support the development of pupils' writing skills;

(Paragraphs 3-5, 9, 21, 28, 62, 69, 77, 80-82, 110)

(2) Raise standards in science by:

- i) improving pupils' recording of investigations so that they can draw conclusions more easily;
- ii) improving pupils' understanding of what constitutes 'a fair test';
- iii) using assessment more effectively to set individual learning targets for pupils of all abilities;
- iv) improving the use of computers to record investigation findings and show the results of tests and experiments.

(Paragraphs 7, 23, 92-94)

(3) Improve the teaching and learning of pupils in Key Stage 1, and in Year 1 in particular by:

- i) improving the standards and learning of the lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs and English as an additional language by ensuring that the work teachers set them is appropriately based on their level of understanding and previous learning, and thereby ensuring that support staff can make a more effective contribution to their progress;
- ii) ensuring that the foundation subject co-ordinators in particular know and understand the strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning in their subjects by ensuring they are suitably trained to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning in their subjects;
- iii) ensuring that the head teacher's and senior managers' monitoring and evaluation of what works and does not work in lessons identifies what individual teachers can do to improve their teaching;
- iv) improving teachers' organisation and use of time in lessons in order that they give pupils sufficient time to complete the tasks set them;
- v) ensuring consistency of work set for similar attaining pupils in parallel classes;
- vi) raising teachers' expectations about, and increasing pupils' pride in, the presentation of work;
- vii) improving the effectiveness of teachers' marking by making sure that their comments make clear to pupils how they can improve their work.

(Paragraphs 3, 6, 10, 13, 16, 18, 23-25, 31, 45, 52-54, 56, 78, 85, 103, 105-106, 108-109, 112, 116, 119, 121)

The school should consider the other following matters, which are identified as weaknesses in the report, but are not included in issues for action:

1. Develop pupils' speaking and listening skills more effectively in Year 1 (paragraph 78).
2. Improve pupils' access to the computers in classrooms and use them to support work in other subjects more effectively (paragraphs 23, 83, 96, 111).
3. Ensuring pupils are given suitable paper on which to record their work in writing in the reception class and in art across the school (paragraphs 69, 99).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	53
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	43

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	6%	21%	43%	11%	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	22	269
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	25

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	27

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

Attendance

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
	%		%
School data	6.3	School data	0.3
National comparative data	5.4	National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	1999	47	41	88

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	36	34	42
	Girls	34	34	38
	Total	71	68	80
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	81 (86)	77 (80)	91 (94)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	35	37	37
	Girls	33	34	29
	Total	68	71	66
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	77 (78)	81 (78)	75 (80)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	2
Black – other	1
Indian	15
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	1
Chinese	0
White	159
Any other minority ethnic group	1

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.9
Average class size	29.9

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	126

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	44

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	64

Number of pupils per FTE adult	14.6
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/00
	£
Total income	526416
Total expenditure	519761
Expenditure per pupil	1818
Balance brought forward from previous year	11930
Balance carried forward to next year	18585

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	318
Number of questionnaires returned	103

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	62	30	7	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	55	39	6	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	39	56	2	2	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	33	48	18	1	0
The teaching is good.	48	48	1	1	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	33	48	17	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	55	40	2	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	51	46	2	1	0
The school works closely with parents.	34	46	18	3	0
The school is well led and managed.	36	58	1	4	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	45	50	3	1	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	18	30	33	18	1

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

61. The good provision for children under five in the nursery and reception classes has been successfully maintained since the last inspection. It is excellently managed and organised and continues to be a strength of the school. There are very effective procedures in place for meeting the needs of children of all abilities, including those with special educational needs placed there by the local authority. The teacher and nursery nurses work hard to provide all of the children with an excellent learning environment and purposeful experiences. At the time of this inspection, there was just one reception class, increasing to three next term. The class is taught by a newly qualified teacher, with two experienced teachers supporting her. The provision in this class is good. The teaching is supported well by the nursery teacher, who is a senior manager and has a very good understanding about how young children learn through exploration and observation. Much of the good practice in the nursery is being extended to the reception class and the induction of the reception teacher to the school is good.
62. The initial assessments of children in both classes show that many of the children begin nursery and reception with poorly developed communication, literacy and language skills and their knowledge and understanding of the world are insecure. Many children have difficulty speaking clearly, although their mathematical ability is better, being broadly typical of most other children of this age. Because of the very good teaching in nursery and the good teaching in reception, by the time they are ready to start in Year 1, the majority of children attain the early learning goals in speaking and listening, reading, personal, social and emotional, mathematical, physical and creative development. Although the teaching of knowledge and understanding of the world is satisfactory overall, children are still insecure in this area of learning by the end of the foundation stage and their learning is below the expected level. The teaching of writing is unsatisfactory and children's writing skills are under-developed by the end of the reception year.
63. All nursery children have a morning or afternoon session in the nursery, transferring to the reception class in either September or January, depending on when they were born. They attend reception part-time for the first half-term and then full-time. There is insufficient room in the nursery to take all of the pupils who attend main school and this means that around two thirds of the children entering reception have not attended the school's nursery. Those who have are identified easily, as they are generally very confident and mix with others well.

Personal, social and emotional development

64. There are a range of excellent opportunities in both nursery and reception, which promote and develop children's personal, social and emotional skills very well. Nearly all of the children enter the nursery, and some the reception class, with immature skills in personal and social development. Because the quality of teaching is so good in both classes, by the end of the foundation stage, most children are confident with high self-esteem and faith in their own ability. Adults in both classes constantly encourage children to work and play together, for example, pushing and pulling each other on the wheeled toys in nursery and buying and selling from each other in the reception class shop.
65. Both classes are exciting places to visit. They are full of activity, with teachers and nursery nurses working and playing alongside children. They make appropriate comments to children that support their learning, as with "I'm going to try mixing red and yellow to make green". This gives children a good role model on which to base their own learning behaviour and prompts them to ask questions and try things for themselves. Children respond by eagerly exploring the activities that are set up around the classrooms. They work and play

together well and talk about what they are doing. For example, in reception, they buy fruit for a visiting inspector from the class shop so that she is not hungry, and show her their hand print pictures with pride.

- 66. Children's independence skills are developed well. Resources are easily accessible in both classes and children are encouraged to take care of their classrooms by tidying away the equipment when they have finished with it. Whilst they are not eager to stop work, they do this with a growing self-discipline.
- 67. Children learn to share their lives with others, particularly those less fortunate than themselves. Because adults in both the nursery and reception class show all children care and great respect, children learn to show sensitivity towards their classmates. Children with special educational needs and English as an additional language are supported effectively by the adults and other children. They are secure and growing in confidence and make appropriate progress in their learning.

Communication, language and literacy

- 68. Many children start nursery and reception with poor communication skills, and a high percentage with speech and language difficulties. Because teachers are well aware of children's individual needs, they direct them to activities that develop their speaking and listening skills well. Both classrooms are linguistically stimulating, with labels and captions on the walls for children to read and refer to. Teacher-made books, containing photographs of the children's experiences (such as the erection of the playhouse and the visit to school by the African storyteller), prompt discussion well and successfully encourage children's interest in reading. Teachers and nursery nurses talk with the children at every opportunity, asking questions and making comments about their work, acting as good role models. In both classes, the adults share books with children, which helps to develop a love of books and a fascination about what lies beneath the covers. Voice, body and humour are used effectively to capture and hold the interest of the children. Children respond well by listening attentively and accurately guessing what happens next. The book area in the nursery is particularly bright and attractive, with places to sit and relax and enjoy the good range of books available. Teachers in reception develop children's reading skills well. Children are introduced to book characters in interesting ways, with the use of puppets to make the characters of Biff and Chip come alive. By the time they are ready to start in Year 1, most children read books enthusiastically and confidently, recognising some letter sounds and familiar words on sight. They understand the way that a book is written and enjoy stories that contain humour, such as 'Floppy's mad bath'.
- 69. The teaching and learning of writing are good in the nursery but unsatisfactory in the reception class because children's skills are not built on effectively and their learning is slowed. Teachers recognise this as an area for improvement and have already started to talk about ways in which they can develop children's writing skills more effectively, particularly towards the end of the reception year. Children are given sufficient opportunities to practise their writing skills during play in, for example, the shop and writing areas. Through this, they learn that print carries meaning and that writing is a valuable means of communication. However, the teaching of writing skills is under-emphasised and lessons in writing are too infrequent. Time is wasted during 'independent writing' sessions when some children do no more than write a page of letters or numbers, or copy their name over and over again. Children are sometimes asked to write on scrap paper or the back of wallpaper samples and this does little to convince them of the value of the written word. Untidy work is inappropriately accepted and children's handwriting skills are not developed systematically over time.

Mathematical development

- 70. Children enter school with appropriately developed number skills. These are extended well in the nursery, where the quality of teaching is particularly good and children experience and

learn about number in most aspects of their work. They look at shapes of things they see when walking around their school and local area, noting, for example, the curved shapes in the church and the straight lines of windows. They show interest in counting, and join in number rhymes and songs. They recognise the different sizes of teddy bears, and confidently and accurately program the robot to move forward up to six spaces. They learn about capacity when filling containers 'full' or 'half-full' with sand and count teddy bears in sets of up to five, including 'empty sets'.

71. Children make steady progress through nursery and reception and most of them attain the early learning goals by the time they leave the reception class. Most children in reception count forwards and backwards to ten and use mathematical vocabulary correctly such as 'more' and 'less'. They recognise numerals and most put numbers to ten in the correct order and match sets of objects to the corresponding numeral. By the end of the foundation stage, some of them work confidently with numbers up to 20 and understand addition and subtraction. Their writing of numbers, however, is under-developed and many form them incorrectly.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

72. Children enter school with a limited knowledge and understanding of the world around them. The experiences they have are excellent in the nursery, where they grow sunflowers from seeds and tomatoes from young plants and record their growth rate in photographs and words. They explore the soft texture of sausage rolls and compare it with the crunchy texture of apples during snack time. They listen to sounds different instruments make and use the computer with increasing skill. They program the robot 'bus' to move several paces forwards along a given route, picking up teddies along the way. They join pieces of wood with nails and material together with glue. They explore why the cars travel down the sloping drainpipe and plan their route along the road, stopping their wheeled toys at the working traffic lights when they are on red. They visit the local supermarket to taste fruits and watch bread being baked, before shopping for their own bread in the bakery. The local postman visits the nursery and talks to the children about his work. An Indian visitor lets the children try on Indian clothes, look at and touch Indian musical instruments and explore Mendhi patterns.
73. Although satisfactory overall, their experiences are fewer and less wide ranging in the reception class. Consequently, by the end of the foundation stage, most children still have limited knowledge and understanding of the world and are not as fully prepared for their work in Key Stage 1 as they might be given their experiences in nursery. Nevertheless, by the end of reception, most children have well-developed computer skills. They create recognisable computer-generated pictures and use the keyboard and 'mouse' with good co-ordination and control to enter letters onto the screen. Their exploration of what they did yesterday, are doing today, and will do tomorrow helps to develop their sense of time passing. They think about what they can do now that they could not do as a baby and about how their hair, for example, will turn grey as they grow older. They glue the correct name labels to the different parts of a flower, such as seed, shoot and leaf.

Physical development

74. The outdoor learning areas in both classes contribute effectively to the physical development of children under five. They complement each other well and one compensates effectively for the other. Whereas the classrooms are cramped, and necessitate children learning how to use the minimum amount of space without bumping into others (which they do well), the outdoor areas are spacious, providing children the opportunity to run, jump, climb and manoeuvre wheeled toys along tracks and in and out of spaces. Consequently, children's physical skills are developed well in both classes. Nearly all of the children move confidently, safely and with good control and co-ordination. They climb under, over and through objects and climbing apparatus. They move large boxes to

make, for example, wooden crate 'buses' in the nursery and hold pencils with developing control in the reception class. They operate switches on the tape recorder and control the cursor on the computer screen well. They saw wood with control and hammer nails carefully. They 'paint' fences, filling the paint tub themselves from the outside tap.

Creative development

75. Children's creative skills are developed satisfactorily in both classes. Children in the nursery and reception classes are given suitable opportunities to work with different equipment and materials, such as modelling dough, paint, scissors and glue. In one lesson seen, children in reception were encouraged to explore colour mixing when painting. The child asked, "Where is the green?" The teacher replied challengingly, "There isn't one ... what can you do?" Working alongside the child, she encouraged him to explore mixing different coloured paints until he discovered that blue and yellow make green.
76. Children particularly enjoy role-play activities and sustain their concentration well in, for example, the playhouse or the class shop. They chat to one another on the telephone and go on pretend journeys together. They write shopping lists and then inform the shopkeeper confidently what they want. They paint increasingly recognisable pictures and, considering they hold the paintbrushes half way up the handle, control them well!

ENGLISH

77. Standards in English are average overall. By the time the pupils leave the school, the majority have made satisfactory progress and reach the expected level or above in speaking and listening and reading. Progress in writing is unsatisfactory and consequently, standards in writing are below average and too few pupils reach the expected level by the end of Key Stage 1. Since the last inspection, the school has successfully improved the performance of its more able pupils. It is less effective, however, in meeting the needs of the lower attaining and those with English as a second language. Teaching is satisfactory overall with good features in Year 2 and in aspects of speaking and listening and reading. The teaching of writing is unsatisfactory.
78. Pupils enter school with below average speaking and listening skills but these are developed well in the foundation stage and and by the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have made sound progress. In Year 2, pupils are well motivated to listen attentively to animated and enthusiastic introductions to lessons from their teachers. Pupils show confidence in response to teachers' questions and, when given sufficient opportunity, are keen to express their views and opinions clearly about stories and pictures. Only a minority use grammatically correct spoken English and there is frequent misuse of tenses and idiosyncratic speech, such as when a girl speaks of having "heard someone say that word before." In the best lessons, all of which were in Year 2, teachers use good questioning skills, listening carefully and valuing the spoken contributions from pupils of all levels of ability, developing their confidence to speak in front of others. They challenge pupils well to think carefully and extend their sentences. Pupils use a wide range of adjectives. In Year 1, however, opportunities for speaking are sometimes limited and teachers too readily accept one word answers to their questions. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, in a minority of lessons in Year 1, teachers do not always expect all pupils to listen, often giving instructions before gaining pupils' attention. As a result, pupils are distracted, lose concentration, and their behaviour deteriorates.
79. Reading is well organised throughout the school and pupils reach standards that are average for their age. Following the last inspection, the school has concentrated successfully on improving the standards of the most able pupils and the majority of pupils read simple books fluently and confidently, picking out the main points of the story. They enjoy reading and recognise an appropriate number of common words, identifying them in a

variety of contexts. Pupils in a Year 1 class, for example, shouted in delight when they recognised words such as 'my', 'said' and 'big' in the shared text and enjoyed finding words that rhymed with them. Pupils have a growing awareness of sounds and letter blends. They use a range of strategies to work out unfamiliar words in their reading books. The teaching of reading is good overall. Teachers have a good understanding of pupils' capabilities and books are generally well matched to pupils' levels of ability, providing the right amount of challenge. Teachers effectively encourage a love of books and language through lively and enthusiastic presentations of well-chosen texts. They provide good opportunities for pupils to talk about books and stories. Pupils in Year 2 classes enjoy reading and teachers use good questioning skills to effectively challenge the most able pupils to think about what might happen to the cat in the story 'Six Dinner Sid'. Most pupils predict outcomes with confidence and imagination. There is a high percentage of pupils, however, who experience some language difficulties and many of these pupils still do not know many of the initial letter sounds. Teaching of this group of pupils is less effective. Although in many cases they are supervised ably by learning support assistants, they are not sufficiently involved by the class teacher both in introductions and group activities. Pupils are developing an understanding of the structure of books and the most able can find their way around an information book quickly and with growing ease. The majority of pupils, although familiar with some library terms, such as index and contents, lack understanding and are confused as to their meaning. The well-stocked and neatly organised library is still under-used, although there is a library rota for class use. As a result, pupils' research skills are largely under-developed and this remains an area for improvement.

80. Pupils' writing skills are unsatisfactory overall. By the time they leave the school, the more able pupils write logically sequenced sentences and use an increasingly wide range of punctuation and imaginative vocabulary. However, the majority have an insecure knowledge of basic sentence construction and their use of capital letters and full stops is haphazard. Their spelling ability is below average. Whilst pupils spell many familiar, monosyllabic words correctly, common words, such as 'school', are repeatedly mis-spelt. Pupils make good attempts, however, at spelling phonetically, such as 'roste dinure', showing a growing understanding of spelling patterns and groups of sounds. Handwriting is below average. There is regular handwriting practice, but teachers do not have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve and mediocre or poor standards of work are praised. Letters are often uneven and incorrectly formed, lacking in fluency. Pupils frequently mix small and capital letters and some of the resources used in Year 1 add to the confusion. Pupils take too little pride in the presentation of their work, which although often illustrated with vigour and imagination, is too often untidy and carelessly written. The work of the least able is often unfinished.
81. There are not enough opportunities for the systematic development of writing skills and the teaching of writing is unsatisfactory. Opportunities for writing are provided during weekly 'free writing' sessions, but these lack challenge and purpose and teachers do not build systematically enough on what pupils can already do. Teachers have well organised classrooms and, in the best lessons at the end of the key stage, they make good use of resources and displays to reinforce learning of vocabulary and sounds. A teacher in a Year 2 class modelled good handwriting well when she recorded words to show the passing of time. Some teachers make good use of learning support assistants when, for example, they ask them to make useful observations of pupils during introductions to lessons. These assistants provide effective support for pupils with special educational needs in Year 2 where teamwork is well established. However, in both year groups, teachers sometimes have unrealistic expectations of the least able pupils, and work provided for pupils with English as an additional language is inappropriate. The tasks expected of these pupils in many classes are not matched sufficiently to their stage of learning and, as a result, they make little progress. In a Year 1 lesson, for example, pupils who do not know initial letter sounds were expected to select words containing the 'ar' blend and put them into sentences. This means that too often, the less able pupils have to depend on learning assistants to complete the work for them.

82. Teachers manage pupils well in Year 2. They give very clear instructions, so pupils know exactly what is expected of them. Although teachers plan, in some instances, an interesting variety of activities, such as playing a word game to reinforce spelling patterns in a Year 2 class, they provide too few strategies for pupils to develop independent writing skills. Teachers do not reinforce pupils' learning of grammatical structure sufficiently during lessons, by frequent reminders and repetition of basic skills. Work sheets lack challenge or relevance and do not provide sufficient motivation for pupils to gain in knowledge or skill.
83. Information and communication technology is not used effectively to promote pupils' English skills. There are examples of literacy being promoted appropriately, although incidentally and unplanned for, through work in other subjects. Pupils write imaginative stories based on the 'Good Samaritan' in religious education, for example, and elaborate on the scientific facts of a tadpole turning into a frog in science.

MATHEMATICS

84. Standards in mathematics have improved since the last inspection, particularly the achievements of the brighter pupils, an issue for action highlighted in the last report. The number of pupils reaching the higher level has increased and is higher than most other schools nationally. Standards are above average by the time the pupils leave the school and pupils make good progress over time. By the end of Year 2, most pupils use numbers confidently and competently in measuring and computation and have a secure understanding of place value. Pupils recognise simple patterns in number and relationships between numbers. Most make accurate predictions and ask appropriate questions about their work. They collect information and present their results effectively in diagrams, charts, tables and graphs, using information and communication technology effectively. Pupils explain their findings accurately and discuss their methods of working knowledgeably with the teachers and the rest of the class. They use mathematical apparatus and equipment, including calculators, appropriately.
85. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, work with numbers successfully, as exemplified by a pupil with special educational needs who explained his various arrangements of nine cubes to the class with confidence and enthusiasm. Their presentation of work is often hurried, however, resulting in untidy work with insufficient regard to accuracy. The use of worksheets provides little opportunity for pupils to consolidate handwriting skills in recording mathematical information.
86. Although pupils often make good progress during lessons, when teachers do not demand that pupils listen, time is wasted and pupils' progress is minimised. Occasionally, more able pupils in Year 1 are not challenged sufficiently, even though they have the knowledge and ability to work with higher numbers. Nevertheless, examination of pupils' books and folders indicates that pupils of all abilities make good progress over time in number work and sound progress in measuring, simple fractions, symmetry, data collection and problem solving.
87. Pupils respond enthusiastically in class lessons - offering ideas and observations, as did one Year 2 pupil who noted that all of the missing numbers in a sequence were even. Pupils in Key Stage 1 enjoy the numeracy hour and in Year 2 use their whiteboards to record numbers, sequences and patterns, increasing their mental recall and ability to write numbers quickly, successfully building on their prior knowledge. The pupils behave and co-operate well with others, listening to each other's comments in a sympathetic and supportive way.
88. Teaching is good in Key Stage 1, and in Year 2 in particular. Teachers have a thorough understanding and knowledge of the National Numeracy Strategy. They inform pupils of the learning intentions and build upon prior knowledge effectively. Consequently, pupils are clear about what they are learning and why, saying, for example, "Yesterday you counted to and from 20, today we are going to count forward and backward to 30." They encourage pupils

to persevere: for example, "Its not easy" commented a less able Year 2 pupil. "No," responded the teacher; "it needs working at."

89. The warm relationships between teacher and pupils give pupils confidence and a willingness to ask for help. Tasks are adapted to suit the different abilities of the pupils and appropriate apparatus selected. Learning support assistants help and support pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language - effectively working to the plans of the class teacher. Occasionally, pupils are given insufficient time to complete a task, which prevents them from consolidating knowledge, skills and understanding. Teachers make good use of questions, such as "Has anyone noticed anything about this pattern?" when looking at a hundred square. Sometimes, when work is not sufficiently challenging or if expectations of listening and paying attention are not firmly established, pupils are noisy and demanding. The present marking policy does not give pupils guidance on how to improve the presentation and setting out of their work.
90. Teachers plan in their year groups and this is a great strength, particularly in Year 2 where there is an established teaching team, ensuring consistency of work and approach. Teachers in Year 1 are beginning to plan together and support each other effectively, although all of them are new to this year group. Pupils of all abilities have targets set which help them to understand what they are doing and why.
91. Numeracy is developed appropriately through other subjects and computers are sometimes used to promote learning. The school is implementing the National Numeracy Strategy successfully. The co-ordinator effectively monitors and evaluates teaching and learning across the school and feeds back her findings to the teachers. This has led to some whole school issues being discussed and debated, such as the structure and organisation of the plenary sessions, and has helped to improve teaching and learning and, in particular, consistency of approach to the use of learning resources and the style of teaching.

SCIENCE

92. Whilst the school has been successful in raising the attainment of higher achievers, which was a key point for action in the previous report, attainment generally is below average. Pupils' investigative skills are under developed. Pupils are able to gather information at first hand and carry out experiments under the control of their teachers. However, their ability to draw conclusions and explain or hypothesise on the basis of these experiments is very limited. Pupils in Year 2, for example, compile tables showing the results of exerting a twist or bend on different materials. However, their recordings show little attempt to explain or categorise and so pupils fail to make the simple generalisations, which give meaning to scientific enquiry. Although pupils understand the idea of 'fair tests', and the experience of conducting them, they do not have a secure enough understanding of what constitutes a 'fair test'. For example, pupils grow seeds in different conditions and compare results. Whilst they understand some of the reasons why plants failed to thrive when grown in the dark, they misunderstand the methodology. Pupils of all abilities name body and plant parts and classify creatures according to numbers of legs or habitat. Although most pupils name foods that might constitute a healthy diet, their understanding of why some foods are considered 'good' or 'unhealthy' is very limited. For example, pupils at the end of Year 2 thought all meats were made of fat and that eating cucumber made you strong!
93. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, with pupils attaining levels at the end of the key stage consistent with their assessed levels of ability. The progress of pupils is thus in line with what might be expected, given their attainment on entry. Teachers' subject knowledge, management of pupils, and planning of work are generally satisfactory, which is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. The use of questioning to further pupils' understanding has improved since the last report and teachers now instigate and maintain useful discussions with the whole class. This is most evident in the introduction to lessons, when pupils' interest is quickly captured and sustained through focused questioning and

careful use of pupils' responses. For example, in one Year 2 class, the teacher skilfully used pupils' responses to pose further questions and set groups off to some lively debates on the potential dangers of different electrical appliances. Pupils quickly became intensely interested and, by the end of the lesson, had learned a lot about how to avoid accidents, citing examples they had found for themselves. The showing of photographs of some pupils as babies in Year 1 provided an immediate source of interest, setting pupils at once to discussing whom it might be. This enabled the teacher to stimulate pupils into using their observational skills so that they considered hair and eye colour, face shape and other features as methods of successfully matching the baby pictures to their classmates. Although teachers encourage pupils to record their work using their own words and illustrations, this is insufficiently rigorous. A lot of work lacks the detail of what the experiment was designed to test, what happened, and the pupils' ideas on why. There are very few examples of pupils' work that show the drawing of conclusions or hypothesising. The poor quality of the recording of experiences and analysing results contributes significantly to the below average standards of attainment. Most lessons are planned with whole class discussions followed by group activities providing opportunities for pupils to explore the ideas discussed. In some lessons, the balance of these activities does not provide sufficient time for practical activities and some discussions go on for too long.

94. The previous report commented favourably on the quality and use of assessment. However, the evidence from this inspection indicates that teachers have not been secure in their assessments. Work is not always matched to the ability of pupils and expectations are sometimes too high for the lower attaining or too low for the higher attaining. Pupils may, for example, be set low level 'cut and paste' tasks using magazines as a resource when they are capable of compiling examples written and researched by themselves.
95. Pupils show considerable interest in their work and sustain their concentration well, are keen to share experiences, offer responses and discuss findings. For example, pupils in Year 2 gave a lot of thought about which electrical appliances to include on lists according to power supply and discussed each one's merit in some depth. Pupils in Year 1 enjoyed testing their observational skills in identifying which of their classmates was the baby in photographs provided for them. Pupils share resources and materials appropriately and work together well in groups, including the taking of turns in games designed to improve their scientific knowledge.
96. The school is committed to improving the quality of teaching and the raising of standards. It has recently introduced a new scheme of work largely based on the guidelines provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. The scheme provides levels of expectation, which the school intends to use in conjunction with a new method of assessing and recording individual pupils' progress. This will enable it to target work more appropriately and provide teachers with more accurate information on which to base their assessments. Although the school has made a start in the use of information and communication technology in science, for example, using computers to produce a variety of graphs to show the results of surveys of eye colour, this use is limited.

ART AND DESIGN

97. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. By the time the pupils leave the school, their achievements in art are similar to those of other pupils of their age. Evidence taken from the displays of work around the school, pupils' sketchbooks, discussions with pupils and observations of them working in the classrooms indicate that pupils have appropriate opportunities to experience different approaches to art, including a recognition of non-western art. For example, a visiting artist from Africa introduced the technique of shading when working with pastels during a successful arts week. Pupils in Year 2 used this knowledge and developed their skills during a lesson which taught them to observe a small area of a painting by famous artists and designers, such as William Morris and Van Gogh,

and to use a variety of media to reproduce it. They successfully control paint and mix colour on a palette, observe the differences of texture, and use fine brushes, pencils, and charcoal to achieve varying effects. Pupils in Year 1 show a sense of proportion and size when painting self-portraits.

98. Pupils of all abilities make appropriate progress over time, as exemplified in the careful line drawing of a snail by a Year 2 pupils with special educational needs. The work, involving marbling, is an example of quality observation and attention to detail. Sketchbooks are used effectively by pupils in Year 2 for practising different skills and techniques, and sketches show satisfactory development of fine motor skills particularly in drawing.
99. Not enough lessons were seen to judge the overall quality of teaching in art. Nevertheless, teachers plan well. Teachers in Year 2 plan together to ensure consistency and progress over the year group. They organise activities so that pupils can move freely between groups to build up their knowledge and skills of sketching, painting, and colour mixing. The use of poor quality paper, however, dulls the finished effect.
100. The co-ordinator monitors and evaluates the subject satisfactorily and collects evidence of good practice through photographs, models and display material, tracking the progress of pupils from reception through to the end of Key Stage 1. Support and suggestions are offered to colleagues during staff meetings or individually. Links with other subject areas such as information and communication technology are being appropriately developed with the introduction of 'colour magic' - a program suitable for all year groups. The arts week provided appropriate cross-curricula links with drama, design and technology, music, English and mathematics – an improvement since the last inspection. The policy and scheme of work is drawn appropriately from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and local education authority documentation. The school is well resourced, with sufficient equipment and materials available in each classroom and the communal store.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

101. Pupils make satisfactory progress in design and technology and, by the time they leave the school at seven years of age, pupils' achievements are as expected for pupils of this age. This reflects the findings of the last report.
102. Design and technology is taught alternate half terms and during the time of the inspection, was not on the timetable. However, through discussion with pupils and the co-ordinator, scrutiny of the limited amount of pupils' past work and the few displays around the school, it is evident that pupils are taught the National Curriculum Programmes of Study in accordance with the new statutory requirements. Pupils of all ages and abilities select and use appropriate materials to fix and join for example, model flowers in pots. Year 2 pupils draw appropriately detailed plans and evaluate their work effectively.
103. Teachers are appropriately trained - taking part in courses that benefit and improve their teaching. Subject monitoring relies upon the co-ordinator collecting evidence through photographs and models and talking to staff after school. This gives her a very narrow picture of the subject and limits her influence in improving teaching and learning. Classrooms are equipped with appropriate tools and well-labelled and easily accessible equipment.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

104. By the time the pupils leave the school, their achievements in history and geography are as expected for pupils of their age and their learning is satisfactory over time. No overall judgement about the quality of teaching is made about either subject as no history lessons were seen and only one geography lesson was observed during the inspection. From looking at pupils' past work and talking with pupils now in Year 3, by the time they leave the

school at the end of Year 2, they have secure factual knowledge about historical events such as The Great Fire of London and The Gunpowder Plot. They talk knowledgeably about the work of Florence Nightingale and Mary Seacole and about the problems of hygiene during the war, particularly with rats spreading disease. They have a well-developed sense of the past and reflect on how things have changed over time, such as the use of candles as a source of light and how children were taught in school compared with now. They talk about the history of their town and school – particularly about how each has changed over time.

105. Pupils' historical knowledge and understanding is developed appropriately from year-to-year. Much of the work of Year 1 pupils is based on their own experiences, such as looking at how they have changed since a baby. Whereas in Year 2, they move onto studying life long ago, such as in the Victorian era and what it was like to live in wartime Britain. Work is not usually adapted, however, to suit the needs of the different attaining pupils in either subject and too often the lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs are set the same work as the higher attaining, with support assistants usually helping them to complete the work.
106. Pupils' learning in geography is satisfactory. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of maps and places is secure. In one geography lesson seen, Year 2 pupils compared the town of Dartford with seaside places on the Kent coast, correctly identifying landmarks in Dartford, such as the bridge. However, little investigation work took place and resources readily available in school – such as the aerial photograph displayed in the corridor – were not used. Famous coastal landmarks, such as the channel tunnel and the white cliffs of Dover were not mentioned. Learning support assistants supported the two groups of lower attaining pupils, but the work they were doing was simple – drawing pictures of what they normally see when they visit the seaside – and so their effectiveness was somewhat limited.
107. The scrutiny of work in geography shows that teachers build pupils' learning systematically over time. Map work, for example, develops from drawing simple plans of the classroom in Year 1, to mapping out routes around the school building and grounds on birds-eye views of the school in Year 2. In Year 1, pupils study different types of houses, whilst in Year 2, they progress to looking at the differences between towns and villages. By the time they leave the school, they label maps of England, Scotland and Wales correctly. They plot their way to school on a map of the local area and label features of the landscape accurately.
108. There are no procedures in place for assessing pupils' knowledge and understanding in either history or geography, so teachers are uncertain about the level and rate of individual pupils' previous learning when pupils change classes. Pupils with English as an additional language do not access the curriculum at an appropriate level. They are too often asked to do the same work as the lower attaining pupils, without appropriate regard given to their level of geographical or historical understanding.
109. There have been a few minor developments in both subjects since the last inspection, and standards have been maintained. More reference books have been purchased and examples of work in geography are collected and kept in a subject portfolio. Planning is looked at and the use of the library to support work in history has been focused on. There are still some issues remaining, which have not been dealt with. In both subjects, the demands made on the pupils differ from class to class. Whilst, for example, average attaining pupils in one class are asked to write stories about The Great Fire of London, in another they are asked to cut and stick two halves of ready-made sentences together. This adds to new teachers' confusion about what pupils have already done and the level at which they have achieved. The co-ordinators do not monitor the teaching and learning in their subjects. However, new co-ordinators have been appointed, who are, as yet, unfamiliar with their subjects. Nevertheless, they have identified priorities for development that are relevant to the subjects, but these are limited in the main to implementing the new curriculum and

enhancing learning resources. Because they do not look carefully at the work of the pupils, they cannot be sure that the teaching and learning is effective, and their influence on further developments is therefore limited.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

110. From the evidence seen of pupils' work, discussions with them and observations of them using the computers, attainment is in line with national expectations by the time the pupils leave the school, and pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress through the school. Teaching in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory and builds appropriately on the work done in the foundation stage. Pupils in Year 1 develop their word processing skills, typing their name and confidently selecting the font and type size. They control the mouse to draw pictures linked, for example, to the topic 'houses and homes,' filling in the roof of a house with a chosen colour. They record numbers of pupils with blue eyes in graphical form as part of their science curriculum. In Year 2, pupils progress to spacing and positioning, using greater mouse and cursor control, and printing off their work. They are familiar with the colour-mix program that enables them to create designs and drawings of Christmas cards. They are engrossed when expressing and recording their holiday experiences, using dictionaries to assist spelling. Some able pupils are not challenged sufficiently, however, as they are capable of writing more than two sentences as requested when word-processing. The sharing of the computers restricts the time they have to develop their work.
111. Teaching is sound overall and has improved since the last inspection. However, the class computers are not used sufficiently frequently in the classroom and pupils are restricted to fifteen minutes of group teaching time with the learning support assistant, who gives clear instruction and support to pupils of all abilities. Although staff have received training, some teachers still lack confidence and knowledge of programs that will challenge the more able pupils and give basic skills' practice to the less able. However, the provision of further training and the purchasing of more resources have been planned for when the school receives its additional funding. Although there is some evidence of computers being used to support work in, for example, English and mathematics, it is limited and computers in classrooms too often switch off due to inactivity.
112. The co-ordinator provides sound guidance to the staff but there is too little opportunity for her to go into classes to provide support to teachers and pupils in order to enhance the teaching and learning of information and communication technology further. Following the last inspection, the school has installed computers in all classrooms except one reception class that will be operational next term. All classes have a colour printer and there are CD-ROMs and programmable toys available. The co-ordinator runs a computer club after school to assist those pupils who do not have access to a computer at home and this contributes successfully to their learning and progress.

MUSIC

113. Pupils' make satisfactory progress and their achievements in music remain broadly in line with the expectations for pupils of this age. Pupils have suitable opportunities to perform with others during lessons, assemblies and special occasions such as concerts and church services. They thoroughly enjoy singing together and learning new songs. By the time they leave the school, they have built up a suitable range of hymns and songs they know well and can sing tunefully and with confidence. They mostly pitch their voices accurately and modulate them appropriately according to the song or occasion. Pupils show an appropriate appreciation of dynamics and rhythm, can distinguish between high and low sounds, and have a good degree of voice control. Pupils understand and can follow a rhythm and a beat to a limited extent and create musical patterns using body parts such as their hands and feet.

114. Pupils listen quietly to music by different composers such as Vaughan Williams, both during lessons and as they enter and leave assemblies. They have, however, little knowledge of the names or different styles of composers. They have some limited opportunities to respond to and appraise live music, including music from other cultures and traditions. During the art week, they benefited from visits by musician groups from different backgrounds and cultures.
115. Although not enough lessons were seen to judge the overall quality of teaching, what was seen was generally satisfactory, with some good elements in Year 2. Lessons were well structured with clear learning objectives linked to the requirements of the National Curriculum. During a good lesson in Year 2, pupils responded well to enthusiastic teaching and clear instructions. The teaching provided good guidance with explicit learning intentions to ensure that pupils made good progress in learning about rhythm and beat. Where teaching is less successful, there is a lack of confidence and too much adherence to the published scheme when it is clearly unsuitable because there are too few opportunities for pupils to experiment with sounds and musical instruments in order to create their own compositions, or accompany their singing. Teachers form good relationships with pupils and have high expectations of standards and behaviour, with the result that pupils mostly behave well and co-operate with one another. Pupils respond reasonably to new and familiar hymns in a Year 2 hymn practice, becoming accustomed to a new pianist and music teacher.
116. There is little evidence of the school having taken effective action towards improvement in the subject since the last inspection and insufficient progress has been made. There are still too few opportunities for pupils to create their own compositions. Assessment procedures have not yet been established. However, the music co-ordinator is new to the school, so has had no opportunity to influence the subject as yet. A commercial scheme of work provides clear continuity and progression and covers the requirements of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study adequately. It gives suitable additional support to non-specialist teachers. It has not been adapted for this school's needs, however, and sometimes teachers do not match the content of lessons to the level of attainment of the pupils sufficiently.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

117. Pupils make sound progress and by the time they leave the school, their attainment is broadly in line with national expectations for pupils of their age. Since the last inspection, a scheme of work has been established, which provides adequately for pupils to experience an appropriate range of activities covering all of the requirements of the National Curriculum. By the end of the key stage, most pupils are proficient in ball skills, including throwing, catching and bouncing. They develop their control and co-ordination to a good extent, particularly when rewarded with praise, which increases their confidence and self-esteem. Pupils in Year 1 are learning to use the space appropriately in gymnastics lessons. They run, skip and hop with growing competence and where teaching is good, they evaluate and improve their skills during the lesson by watching others. They show a growing awareness of their bodies when they respond to clear directions to move their arms, legs, and shoulders in a controlled way.
118. In dance, pupils in Year 2 respond appropriately to musical stimulus and teacher direction when they reproduce and explore simple movements with a satisfactory degree of sensitivity and awareness. Pupils work co-operatively in pairs to produce a short composition incorporating a sequence of movements, building well on earlier work in the lesson. Only a confident minority communicate their ideas imaginatively, however. The majority are hesitant so early in the term in a group where relationships are not yet established. They listen carefully, however, and respond well to good teaching, which leads to good progress during the lesson.

119. Teaching is sound overall. Teachers generally make good use of their resources and the quality of teaching is best where the teacher adapts the well-chosen taped programme in dance sufficiently to meet the needs of the group. There is an appropriate emphasis on organisational matters and teachers pay good regard to safety, establishing clear rules and guidelines, particularly when preparing for apparatus work. Both pupils and teachers change appropriately for lessons. Pupils are generally well managed. Teaching is unsatisfactory where too little attention is paid to encouraging pupils to listen and change quickly. In a Year 1 lesson, for example, the teacher lacked effective strategies for gaining pupils' attention, resulting in much time being wasted, leaving too little time for physical activity.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

120. Pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress through the school so, that by the end of the key stage, the standards they achieve are similar to those expected in the locally Agreed Syllabus. These standards reflect those reported during the last inspection. Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of Bible stories and the teachings of Jesus especially through the use of parables. The meanings behind these are discussed and pupils have an adequate understanding of some of them. For example, pupils know that the parable of 'The Good Samaritan' teaches the virtue of being a good neighbour. Pupils have been introduced to some of the basic elements of other religions, including Sikhism and the Jewish faith, and recognise the significance of artefacts associated with them. For example, of Bar Mitzvah cards and Havdalah Candles to Jews and why Sikhs carry a Kirpan. Their oral skills are good and they discuss the ideas raised well, indicating their understanding of what they are studying. For example, pupils in Year 2 identified differences and similarities between the Christian faith and Sikhism when using Sikh artefacts as a prelude to a forthcoming visit to a local Sikh Temple.
121. The standard of teaching is satisfactory and enables pupils to make appropriate gains in their knowledge and understanding of their own and other religions and religious beliefs. Teachers plan activities enabling pupils to discuss ideas, use drama to enact stories and ceremonies and handle artefacts from different religions. The majority of work planned is of an oral nature. However, teachers offer too few opportunities for pupils to respond to lessons in a written form and much of the work seen does little to add to pupils' learning. There is an inconsistency between teachers in the amount and standard of written work their pupils produce. In one Year 2 class, pupils record only occasionally, while in another the majority of work seen is unfinished. In lessons, teachers initiate and handle discussions well enabling pupils to have a clearer understanding of what religious doctrine means to them. Pupils are encouraged to recount their own experiences and all responses are valued.
122. Pupils have positive attitudes to their work and readily take part in discussion, are keen to respond, and listen well to the views of others. They show respect for the feelings and beliefs of those from other religions and are absorbed when hearing these at first hand. This is achieved through the school's visits to the local church and Sikh Temple as well as the contribution of visiting speakers and pupils in the school from other beliefs.
123. Since the last inspection, the school has enhanced the learning opportunities of its pupils by developing greater links with the outside community. These have enabled pupils to see Hindu dancers, visit a Sikh Temple, and benefit from a number of visiting speakers. The school has also introduced a new scheme of work, to provide a means of ensuring greater consistency of what pupils are expected to do and achieve.