

INSPECTION REPORT

CALMORE INFANT SCHOOL

Calmore

Southampton

LEA area: Hampshire

Unique reference number: 116049

Headteacher: Mrs A Neale

Reporting inspector: Mrs L Woods
21079

Dates of inspection: 16 – 18 October 2000

Inspection number: 225168

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

© Crown copyright 2000

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

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant school
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Calmore Drive Calmore Southampton
Postcode:	SO40 2ZZ
Telephone number:	02380 865 994
Fax number:	02380 666 505
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs G Etherington
Date of previous inspection:	January 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs L Woods 21079	Registered inspector	Information and communication technology	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
		Art and design	
		Design and technology	
		Foundation stage	
Mrs C Webb 9614	Lay inspector		Attitudes, values and personal development/ attendance. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents? Staffing, accommodation and learning resources/ efficiency.
Mr M Pipes 17551	Team inspector	Mathematics	How good are curricular and other opportunities? Assessment.
		Science	
		Music	
		Physical education	
Mrs J Bavin 16038	Team inspector	English	Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
		Geography	
		History	
		Religious education	
		Special educational needs	
		Equality of opportunity	
English as an additional language			

The inspection contractor was:

Solent Inspection Services Ltd
Pond Cottage
Owslebury
Winchester, Hants
SO21 1LU

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

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

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7 - 11
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	12 - 14
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	14 - 16
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	16 - 18
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	18 - 19
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	20
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	20 - 22
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	23
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	24 - 27
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	28 - 38

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Calmore Infant School shares a site with the adjacent junior school to the north-west of Southampton. There are currently 198 boys and girls on roll including 41 children in reception who attend school part time. Children come from a wide variety of backgrounds, and their attainment on entry to school is below average. About nine per cent are known to be eligible for free school meals, which is below the national average. There is very little ethnic mix in the school. Temporary housing in the area results in a turnover of around 15 per cent of pupils during the academic year. Fifteen per cent of pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs, which is broadly average. Three of these pupils are at Stage 3 and above of the Code of Practice¹ for the identification of such pupils, although none has a statement of special educational need. Two pupils have English as an additional language, but they are fluent in English and have no difficulty in taking a full part in the curriculum.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an improving school. The quality of teaching has improved significantly, and standards are rising steadily through the commitment of staff to providing an interesting, relevant and effective education. The school has emerged from a period of considerable uncertainty under the firm but sympathetic guidance of the new headteacher. She provides good leadership for the school and has the full support of governors, staff and the vast majority of parents. Whilst well aware that much remains to be done, the school is in a good position to improve in the future, and provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The school provides a warm, caring environment and pupils enjoy coming to school.
- Pupils behave well; they are polite, co-operative, work hard and are interested in their work.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- The school makes good provision for pupils' personal and social development, and for their welfare.
- The school has a good partnership with parents, who support and value its work.
- It is well led by the headteacher and governors, who have a clear understanding of how it can improve.

What could be improved

- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are below national expectations.
- Pupils should be given more opportunities to work collaboratively and conduct their own investigations and research.
- Higher attaining pupils do not always receive work appropriate to their abilities.
- Provision for children in reception does not yet meet the requirements for the new Foundation Stage curriculum.

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

¹Code of Practice – this gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that children with special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act. Stages of special educational needs range from Stage 1, when additional support is provided entirely from within the school, to Stage 5, which ensures that a child has a statement outlining his or her needs and shows what additional and specific support they will receive.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good progress in addressing the key issues raised by the previous inspection report in January 1998. This has been particularly marked since the appointment of the new headteacher, following her involvement as acting headteacher. The leadership and management of the school are now good. Communication between the staff and the headteacher is based on mutual respect and understanding, and all staff share an equal commitment to providing a good quality of education for the pupils, and raising standards of attainment. Identification of areas for development involve discussion with all staff, and priorities are included in a detailed school development plan. Governors are well informed and closely involved in the work of the school. Their understanding of their roles and responsibilities is good, and statutory requirements are now met. Curriculum provision has improved, and co-ordinators are enthusiastic about developing their individual subjects. Assessment and monitoring have also improved, although the school is aware of the need to develop these further. Behaviour is good throughout the school, helped by effective systems and consistent expectations from all staff. As a result of the above improvements, standards of attainment and pupils' progress are rising steadily, particularly in the core skills of literacy and numeracy.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
reading	D	C	C	C	very high A* well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E very low E*
writing	D	D	D	D	
mathematics	C	C	C	C	

The table shows that attainment in reading and mathematics is average both in comparison with the national picture and when compared with schools with a similar intake of pupils. This is an improvement over attainment in the 1999 tests, when results were below average compared with similar schools. Attainment in writing in 2000 has significantly improved which represents a positive step forward for the school. However, compared with both the national picture and with similar schools attainment is below average because, whilst attainment at the expected Level 2 overall is above the national average, no pupils achieved the higher Level 3. Effective action to address this issue is evident, with current pupils in Year 2 making good progress in developing their writing skills. The school's performance in all three tested areas is improving steadily, year-on-year, in line with national trends. The school sets realistic targets for pupils' attainment, based on their achievement when they join the school and through tracking their progress, and was pleased to exceed these in the 2000 tests.

Evidence from the inspection shows that attainment at Key Stage 1 in English, mathematics and science is average, with a high emphasis on developing pupils' competence in the core skills of literacy and numeracy. Attainment in physical education is above national expectations. In art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music and religious education pupils attain standards in line with expectations. In ICT standards are

currently below national expectations. The school, however, is working hard to overcome pupils' lack of basic skills in this subject and standards are steadily improving.

Children's attainment when they join the school is below average, particularly in relation to their social skills and language development. Many children have poor speech patterns and lack basic vocabulary. At this stage in the term, children's attainment in mathematical and physical development is appropriate for their age. However, their attainment in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development is below the expectations for their age, and the school does not yet have clear planning to identify the steps towards achieving the early learning goals¹ by the end of the year.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and work hard at the activities provided. Almost all work sensibly and co-operatively together.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. The school has successfully addressed the issue relating to behaviour, and pupils are polite, considerate and friendly. They behave well in and around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Warm relationships exist between staff and pupils, and pupils themselves. Pupils respect the feelings and needs of others. They enjoy taking responsibility around the school, and carry out their duties seriously and competently.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Almost all pupils arrive promptly in the morning and settle quickly to their work.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the time of the previous inspection, and is a positive contributory factor to the progress the school has made in addressing the key issues from that report. Teaching was at least satisfactory in 93 per cent of lessons seen, compared to 80 per cent at the previous inspection. It was good or better in 49 per cent of lessons, and very good in 11 per cent. Only three lessons were seen across the school where teaching was less than satisfactory.

¹The early learning goals establish expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage (age three to the end of the reception year) in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development.

Teaching in lessons in the new Foundation Stage was satisfactory in the majority of sessions seen, with elements which were good. Teachers and their assistants work hard to provide a warm and caring environment within the two reception classes. They know the children well and when sessions have a clear objective, interaction with the whole class or with groups of children to extend their understanding is good. However, teaching in this stage presents an unsatisfactory picture overall, with planning not yet linked effectively to the early learning goals, and much teaching being too controlled. In most cases, also, classroom assistants are not adept at extending children's thinking or developing their imaginations. In other activities, children are left too long without adult intervention and they drift from activity to activity without purpose.

The quality of teaching and learning at Key Stage 1 is good. Teachers in parallel classes plan carefully together to ensure pupils of the same age in different classes have similar experiences. They have a sound knowledge and understanding of the different subjects they teach, and this is particularly good in English, geography and history, and in art and design and physical education. Teaching in English is good overall, with well-planned lessons based securely on the structure of the literacy hour. Teachers place a high emphasis on teaching the basic literacy skills and most use well-focused questioning to involve all pupils in discussions at the beginning and end of sessions. As a result pupils are closely involved in their learning and enjoy, for example, the sound of words and discovering patterns and rhymes. Teaching in mathematics is sound, with appropriate emphasis on securing and developing pupils' numeracy skills. Lessons begin with practical activities to develop mental agility, which pupils enjoy. However, teachers are less adept at using probing questions in this subject, and shared sessions are less focused on getting pupils to explain their thinking.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The school meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and provides a broad and interesting range of activities. The curriculum is enhanced effectively by visits, visitors and special events. The school is aware parents would like more activities outside lessons. The curriculum for children in reception, however, does not yet fully meet the requirements for the six areas of learning in the Foundation Stage.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils are well supported in class and in separate sessions, where their needs are met effectively. Provision for these pupils is well managed, and the targets on their individual education plans are reviewed regularly.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Good overall. Provision for their spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. Assemblies, collective worship and religious education lessons provide sound opportunities for pupils to develop spiritual and cultural awareness. Provision is good for their moral, personal and social development, through group sessions known as circle time, and the many activities and responsibilities provided.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The school has good systems in place to support and monitor pupils' welfare and their personal and academic progress.

The school has established good links with parents. It keeps them well informed about events and their children's progress, and values the help they give, both in class and through the Friends' Association.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The new headteacher leads the school firmly and sympathetically. She has worked hard to raise staff morale, and all staff now feel valued members of the team. She is supported very well by the deputy headteacher. Co-ordinators have a clear understanding of their responsibilities and are tackling their roles with energy and enthusiasm.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The chair of governors has played a central, effective role in developing governors' understanding and involvement. The governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities well. They have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development, and provide effective support for the headteacher and the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. All staff have contributed to identifying areas for development, and these are effectively identified in the school action plan.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Financial decisions are carefully evaluated, using the principles of best value, and the school makes good use of staff, accommodation and resources to provide an interesting range of activities for the pupils.

The school is fully staffed with well-qualified and experienced teachers. Accommodation and resources are good.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

45 questionnaires were returned, representing 23 per cent of those distributed. 18 parents attended the meeting.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school and make good progress. • Teaching is good, teachers have high expectations and are very approachable. • Children behave well and become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A minority of parents do not feel well informed about their children's progress. • Parents would like to see more activities outside of lessons.

Inspectors fully support parents' positive views about the school. The school provides parents with detailed information about pupils' progress, and is always happy to discuss concerns with individual parents. The range of activities outside lessons has declined during the recent period of uncertainty, but the school plans to redress this in the near future.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Children's attainment when they join the school is below average, particularly in relation to their social skills and language development. Many children have poor speech patterns and lack basic vocabulary. Most have attended pre-school, but the amount of time they have spent with other children varies, and a significant minority has no pre-school experience at all. At this stage in the term, children's attainment in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development is below the expectations for their age. Their attainment in mathematical and physical development is appropriate for their age. The school does not at this stage have sufficiently clear planning to identify fully the steps towards achieving the early learning goals by the end of the year, or useful ways to assess individual children's development and progress. Without these, it is not possible to judge whether, or for the school to secure that, the early learning goals will be met by the end of the reception class.
2. Results from the 2000 end of Key Stage 1 standard assessment tasks show attainment in reading to be average both in comparison with the national picture and when compared with schools having a similar intake of pupils. This is an improvement over attainment in the 1999 tests, when results were below average compared with similar schools. Attainment in mathematics has also improved, in line with the national trend, and is average compared both with national picture and with similar schools. Attainment in writing in 2000 has significantly improved, with 92 per cent of pupils reaching the expected Level 2, compared to 78 per cent in 1999. This represents a positive step forward for the school, although compared with both the national picture and with similar schools attainment is below average. This is because, whilst attainment at Level 2 overall is above the national average of 85 per cent, no pupils achieved the higher Level 3, which is well below average. Effective action to address this issue is evident, with current pupils in Year 2 making good progress in developing their writing skills. The school sets realistic targets for pupils' attainment, based on their achievement when they join the school and through tracking their progress, and was pleased to exceed these in the 2000 tests.
3. Inspection evidence shows attainment in English, mathematics and science at Key Stage 1 is average, and the school places a high emphasis on pupils' developing competence in the core skills of literacy and numeracy. Attainment in physical education is above national expectations. In art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music and religious education pupils attain standards in line with expectations. In information and communication technology (ICT) standards are currently below national expectations. The school, however, is working hard to overcome pupils' lack of basic skills in this subject and standards are steadily improving.
4. Across the school pupils' speaking and listening skills are average, although they are better in listening than in speaking. Pupils listen carefully and attentively in lessons, and show this by relevant answers to teachers' questions. A significant minority, however, needs sympathetic encouragement to voice their opinions in class discussions, although they speak more confidently on a one-to-one basis. Standards in reading are average, and the school places a high emphasis on developing pupils' skills as well as their appreciation of books and love of reading. Standards in writing are average, with

spelling and handwriting improving steadily. Teachers develop pupils' writing well, both in lessons designed to encourage them to write in greater depth, and in using writing skills across the curriculum, for example, in science, geography and history.

5. Pupils' mental arithmetic skills are improving. Teachers encourage pupils to develop mental agility successfully in sessions at the beginning of mathematics lessons and at other times, such as registration. Mathematics is used satisfactorily across the curriculum, for example, in measuring in design and technology, bar graphs in geography and time-lines in history. Pupils are good at making close observations, for example, in science, geography and history, and explain what they see with reasonable confidence. They are less adept at initiating their own investigations without guidance from teachers. Pupils' ICT skills are improving. At this stage of the year there is little evidence of word processing being used to publish pupils' work, but ICT is being used well to support their work in geography.
6. Pupils enjoy their lessons and respond with positive interest to the activities provided. Teachers' emphasis on developing basic skills and their enthusiasm for different subjects is having a positive impact on standards in the school. Pupils make good progress in English, science, art and design, and physical education and sound progress in other subjects of the curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well, particularly when given additional support in small groups and individually, both within and outside the classroom. They make steady progress and attain standards in line with their abilities.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. Parents are pleased with the positive attitudes and values their children learn at the school, which reinforce those taught at home. Children like coming to school and most arrive on or before time in the mornings. Attendance overall is satisfactory, with fewer parents taking their children on holiday during term time. Behaviour, criticised in the previous report, is now good as a result of the new positive behaviour management policy. Pupils know the sanctions that follow if golden rules are not obeyed, and all are keen to gain stickers and certificates.
8. The youngest children soon gain confidence when they start school and quickly learn the routines and what is expected of their behaviour. Most children behave well in lessons and are beginning to develop satisfactory social and personal skills during their play, although some still find it difficult to share and take turns. During a physical education lesson, for example, they are keen to learn new ball skills and are sorry there is no time to 'show' these at the end of the lesson.
9. Pupils are enthusiastic about school; they want to do well and to please their teachers. Year 1 pupils, for example, tried very hard to produce accurate models of pigs in clay and were proud of their achievements. In a religious education lesson in Years 1 and 2, all pupils were keen to act out the story, 'planting' seeds enthusiastically around the classroom and miming imaginatively various weather conditions which destroyed most of their plants! Pupils with special educational and other needs, and those from different backgrounds, are well integrated and well supported by their peers and teachers. Relationships throughout the school are good. Learning support assistants foster very good relationships with pupils whom they support either individually or in small groups. Pupils with special educational needs concentrate very well in these small separate sessions and apply themselves impressively to work that they find challenging.

10. Pupils behave well. They are polite and hold doors open for each other and for adults. In most lessons they concentrate on their tasks and share resources, working well together, even without direct supervision. In assemblies, most are attentive although some low murmuring occurs when pupils lose interest in the theme. Although quite noisy at lunch times, pupils are keen to talk and they listen well to what visitors have to say. Play outside can be quite exuberant with all enjoying the space whilst 'letting off steam', but few incidents require adult intervention. Effective use of strategies such as 'exclusion zones' for short time periods has made pupils realise the advisability of behaving properly outside if they want to play with their friends. Pupils are careful to include others in any games in the playground, with older pupils caring for those younger. They are aware that their actions can impinge on others, and enjoy collecting for charities in aid of those less fortunate than themselves.
11. Pupils' personal development is good. They agree rules for their class at the beginning of the year. Issues are discussed sensitively in circle time sessions, to which nearly all contribute. When given the opportunity, pupils exercise their responsibilities conscientiously and all help willingly when asked to do so. Those lower down the school are keen to take charge of registers and assist their teachers. Year 1 pupils, for example, take good care of paintings as they return these to class after assembly. Year 2 pupils are proud to be given tasks such as preparing the hall for assembly, when they carefully move benches and chairs into position. They appreciate their visit to the junior school, which develops their confidence and independence, and introduces them effectively to the next stage in their education.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

12. The quality of teaching has improved significantly since the time of the previous inspection, and is a positive contributory factor to the progress the school has made in addressing the key issues from that report. Teaching was at least satisfactory in 93 per cent of lessons seen, compared to 80 per cent at the previous inspection. It was good or better in 49 per cent of lessons, and very good in 11 per cent. Only three lessons were seen across the school where teaching was less than satisfactory.
13. Teaching in lessons in the new Foundation Stage was satisfactory in the majority of sessions seen, with elements which were good. Both teachers and their assistants know the children well and work hard to provide a warm and caring environment within the two reception classes. When teachers have a clear objective for a session, and interact with the whole class or with groups of children to extend their understanding, for example, when playing a whole class game on shape recognition, the quality of questioning is good. As a result, children think carefully about what they are doing, respond with sensible answers, and make steady progress in gaining knowledge and understanding.
14. However, teaching in the Foundation Stage presents an unsatisfactory picture overall. Teachers are still completing the extended battery of tasks for the local education authority's baseline assessments, which restricts opportunities to build on children's responses in a fully effective way. Planning does not yet take account of the requirements of the early learning goals, and teaching in most sessions is too controlled, limiting the development of children's creative and thinking skills. In most cases, also, classroom assistants are not adept at extending children's thinking or developing their imaginations by 'going with the flow'; letting constructive play or assigned tasks develop along the children's own paths, and asking questions designed to encourage the children to explain what they are thinking. As a result, the majority of children are too passive and wait to be told what to do. In other activities, children are

left too long without adult intervention to gently probe and question, 'what', 'why' and 'how', and children drift from activity to activity without purpose.

15. The quality of teaching and learning at Key Stage 1 is good. Teachers have a sound knowledge and understanding of the different subjects they teach. This is particularly good in English, geography and history, and in art and design and physical education, where teachers plan and deliver interesting and lively lessons which capture the imagination and enthusiasm of the pupils. Teaching in English is good overall, with well-planned lessons based securely on the structure of the literacy hour. Teachers place a high emphasis on teaching the basic literacy skills and most use well-focused questioning to involve all pupils in discussions at the beginning and end of sessions. As a result pupils are closely involved in their learning and enjoy, for example, the sound of words and discovering patterns and rhymes. Teachers move smoothly from one element of the lesson to the next and most provide work which is well-matched and challenging to pupils at all levels of attainment. Teaching in mathematics is sound, with appropriate emphasis on securing and developing pupils' numeracy skills. Lessons begin with practical activities to develop mental agility, which pupils enjoy. However, teachers are less adept at using probing questions in this subject, and shared sessions are less focused on getting pupils to explain their thinking. As a result pupils do not show the same confident inquisitiveness seen in English.
16. Teachers in parallel classes plan carefully together to ensure pupils of the same age in different classes have similar experiences, seen, for example, in the map work in Year 2 and work on length in Year 1. Planning for English and mathematics is matched appropriately to the guidelines in the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, and work is matched well to the abilities of the pupils, although this is better in English than in mathematics. In other subjects planning is less detailed, and work for different groups of pupils is not often identified, but it is linked appropriately to the school's schemes of work. In good lessons, teachers share the purpose of the activities clearly with pupils. They modify their plans successfully to take account of the achievements in earlier lessons, which ensures that pupils' knowledge and understanding is developed steadily. Learning is enhanced effectively when different subjects are inter-linked. In Year 1, for example, the story of 'The Three Little Pigs' is set to music, pigs are modelled and the materials used to build their houses evaluated, in a lively series of inter-related lessons which the pupils thoroughly enjoy.
17. Most teachers carefully balance the discussion and practical activity in lessons to capture and maintain pupils' interest. In good lessons, pupils are actively involved in debate and encouraged to explain what they mean, sharing their ideas and developing their powers of reasoning well. Their sense of self-worth and pride in achievement is enhanced successfully through good use of praise from teachers and applause from their peers, for example, when they successfully read a sentence in English, demonstrate movements in physical education or mix colours imaginatively in art. In most lessons, teachers explain what they expect carefully and clearly, so that pupils move quickly and confidently to their assigned tasks. Teachers manage pupils well, with firmness and humour. Their high expectations are reflected in the atmosphere of serious concentration and the buzz of relevant and excited conversation which characterise many lessons. These high expectations; 'that's not good enough'; challenge pupils to do better and have a positive impact on their developing independence in their learning. In a significant minority of lessons, however, teachers do not encourage pupils to explore and think, for example, when investigating melting ice in science. Whilst pupils observe, record and follow instructions successfully, there is too little emphasis on the 'why?'.

18. Teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good overall and benefits from early identification and effective links with parents. Teaching is consistently good in separate specialist sessions. Recent in-service training has helped teachers to produce mostly clear and achievable targets on pupils' individual education plans, some of which are reviewed and modified weekly. However, teachers do not consistently consider the needs of each pupil when the whole class is working together, for example at the beginning and end of literacy lessons.
19. Teachers make good use of the available resources. In the best lessons, for example, in history when looking at how life was different in the past, books and photographs stimulate pupils very effectively to think and express their opinions about then and now. In most lessons, classroom assistants are valuable partners, sharing the same high expectations as the teacher. They make a positive contribution to pupils' learning by supporting and encouraging their assigned groups with well-focused intervention. Most teachers mark work regularly, and at its best marking includes good written comments to help pupils improve. Regular homework activities make a relevant contribution to work being done in class, and pupils enjoy sharing the results of tasks done at home with their peers in discussion sessions.

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

20. Curriculum planning for the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory. The school has not yet provided sufficiently detailed planning to ensure all the aims of the early learning goals are addressed, either in the short term or over the year in reception, and teachers have not had access to useful training in the new requirements. Consequently, whilst activities are appropriate for the children's age, they lack cohesion, and children's progress cannot be evaluated in relation to the expectations within the different areas of learning. Assessment opportunities for teachers at present are focused on the baseline activities, but other opportunities are missed, and assistants are not evaluating children's achievement and progress in the activities they supervise.
21. The school has successfully addressed the key issue from the previous report to strengthen the curriculum at Key Stage 1. Useful schemes of work exist for all subjects to guide teachers' planning. This planning is sufficiently detailed to ensure skills, knowledge and understanding are developed in a progressive way as pupils move from year to year. The curriculum is appropriately broad and balanced, with sensible time allocations for each subject. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are fully in place and delivered according to national guidelines. The structure of these sessions is having a beneficial effect on planning in other subjects, for example, science. There is considerable emphasis on the core subjects, as the school focuses on its targets to raise standards, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics. Attention to basic skills is emphasised effectively in other subjects, for example, writing in history and geography. The curriculum, planned and delivered in an integrated, inter-related way, is having a beneficial effect on standards. The school meets fully its statutory requirements for the provision of religious education and daily collective worship. Provision for personal, social and health education, including as appropriate sex education and the dangers of drug abuse, is handled sensitively and well.
22. Parents welcome contact with the school through the reading record, and most pupils take work, especially reading, to be done at home and shared there. The range of clubs and extra-curricular activities has been somewhat curtailed recently while the school was coming through a difficult and demanding transition period. However, the

headteacher is aware of the value of clubs and sports and is planning the gradual increase of these opportunities.

23. The school has good links with the junior school on the same site, for example, between subject co-ordinators. There are close and frequent links with local authority advisers, who provide valuable support in curriculum development. The school is establishing satisfactory links with the local community, and recently received a sum of money from one of the local supermarkets after their Fun Day. Grandparents have responded in detail to history questionnaires compiled by pupils. As a result of the vicar's encouragement, three local ladies have volunteered to hear reading, an offer the school has gladly accepted. Students on teaching experience from a local college bring a 'breath of fresh air' into the whole school community, from which both teachers and pupils benefit. Participation in such events as the Sports and Oral Music Festivals increases pupils' experience of the world outside school. Visits are made locally as part of the curriculum. Liaison with local agencies is well established and used, and the school nurse runs parents' 'drop-in' surgeries once a week on the premises.
24. The school's good ethos supports provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, personal, social and cultural development well. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. It is mostly promoted through collective worship and religious education, and is not yet planned for throughout the curriculum. However, spiritual values such as empathy, compassion and understanding are developed during circle time sessions. Occasionally teachers take advantage of spontaneous and unanticipated moments for pupils to value the natural world and the world of the imagination. For example, when pupils excitedly discover a new screen saver on the computer, representing the rainforest, and marvel at the parade of creatures before them, the teacher allows time for the appreciation to continue.
25. The school provides well for pupils' moral development. Since the last inspection, it has placed considerable emphasis on developing pupils' understanding of the difference between right and wrong. Staff successfully implement both the behaviour policy and the personal and social development policy, which help pupils understand the impact of their behaviour in their daily routines. Circle time sessions are regularly timetabled to allow discussion of moral issues. Whole school and year assemblies are planned carefully around themes such as 'friendship', 'honesty' and 'co-operation', making good use of stories such as 'Jamaica's Find' to illustrate the ideas in ways pupils understand.

26. Provision for pupils' personal and social development is good. Each class negotiates together a set of class rules, and determines a class 'target' for the week, such as picking up litter in the school grounds. This is set up on one Friday and evaluated for its success on the following Friday in the 'good work assembly'. Pupils are given many responsibilities throughout the school and develop a sense of social responsibility effectively, for example, by performing the Christmas production for the local senior citizens. Class teachers are beginning to introduce good opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own work, as they become accustomed to managing shared sessions at the end of lessons.
27. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Most of the pupils' cultural experience is connected to the Christian calendar. For example, pupils visit the local church at Advent and Easter; they sing Easter songs and enjoy an Easter egg hunt. The school is mainly dependent on the religious education syllabus to increase pupils' knowledge and understanding of cultures beyond white European. Pupils enjoy the richness of Hinduism and the colourful displays of Hindu artefacts. However, the school is gradually acquiring literature to support pupils' understanding of diversity through their reading, literacy lessons and use of the library.
28. The school ensures that all pupils, regardless of age, ability or gender, have equal access to the curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs share a broad and balanced curriculum with their peers. The school complies fully with the Code of Practice for special educational needs, and is striving hard to meet the needs of individual pupils. Individual targets help teachers to focus upon each pupil and these benefit all pupils including those with learning difficulties. Additionally, the separate sessions to support pupils' understanding of phonics are consistently good. Most teachers adapt work well for small groups within the class to provide appropriate challenge according to the level of pupils' understanding.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

29. The school has improved procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare and for child protection since the last inspection, and these are now good. Pastoral care is a strength of the school. Health and safety has a high priority, and the comprehensive draft policy is now ready to put before the governors. Risk assessments are recorded, and security is under regular review. Many staff have been trained in first aid, and practice is good. The school follows the county guidelines for child protection and teaching staff are fully aware of these issues. Two teachers have attended training and shared this fully with their colleagues.
30. The school was apprised of a number of minor concerns noted during the inspection, which include the need to keep a permanent record of latecomers, and to ensure that emergency telephone numbers and the visitors' book are taken out to fire drills. Inspectors also observed that some pupils are not wearing appropriate shoes for school.
31. Assessment procedures are satisfactory. Teachers know their pupils well and are sympathetically aware of their home circumstances. During lessons they make helpful comments to pupils and praise their good work. Marking varies between subjects and teachers, with some good written comments and helpful feedback seen, for example, in science and mathematics. However, this is inconsistent, and pupils are not always given sufficient guidance on how they can improve. Some of the higher attaining pupils finish their allotted task early and are not given further more challenging work to extend them. The weakest element in the use of assessment to improve standards is in the

use made of teachers' understanding of what has, and has not, worked in individual lessons. Provision is made on the well-designed lesson planning sheets for this assessment, but little evidence was seen of modification to plans as a result of this evaluation.

32. Good systems for monitoring the progress of individual pupils at regular intervals are emerging. Detailed information on pupils' attainment comes from initial assessments when they join the school. Tracking sheets give a clear picture of pupils' attainment and progress in number, reading and writing. These are beginning to be used effectively to set individual and year group targets for attainment in these areas at the end of the key stage. Together with the initial assessments, the school is also beginning to use the information well to establish the value added for individuals. It is aware that the system can usefully be extended into other aspects of the curriculum as teachers gain confidence in its use. Pupils with special educational needs have good individual education plans which contain realistic targets for progress and improvement. These are reviewed regularly and effectively. The assessment of pupils with learning difficulties also benefits from the school's procedures to set targets and track the progress of individual pupils.
33. In response to a key issue in the last report, the school has tackled well the improvement of pupils' behaviour, and now has good procedures for monitoring this. The positive behaviour management policy is well known to and understood by all. The five Golden Rules have been discussed and agreed with pupils, who want to earn stickers and their teacher's approval. Sanctions are well known and perceived as fair, although none wish to be sent to the headteacher! Golden Time is valued and, if lost, can be redeemed through negotiation with teachers, who agree targets with pupils in order to achieve this. There have been no recent exclusions, and no bullying or harassing behaviour was seen during the inspection.
34. The school keeps satisfactory records of pupils' attendance. Registers are completed correctly and monitored regularly. The education welfare officer looks at these on twice-termly visits and is appropriately involved with latecomers when necessary. Parents are encouraged to give reasons for their child's absence promptly and not to take their children on holiday during term times.
35. Pupils' personal development is promoted well and recorded in individual pupil records. These are regularly updated throughout the year. Procedures for monitoring this have improved and are satisfactory. The personal, health and social education programme, interwoven with assembly and circle time sessions, is about to be reviewed to identify where improvements can be made. The police talk to pupils about 'Getting It Right' in order to alert them to possible difficulties outside the classroom. The school provides pupils with regular opportunities to take responsibility, which they value and exercise well. Even the youngest child is proud to be chosen to take charge of the registers and older pupils enjoy helping teachers in any way they can. Educational visits are an important part of pupils' education, building their confidence and self-esteem and enhancing their social development.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

36. The school has improved its relationship with parents since the last inspection and this is now good. Parents are consulted on a variety of matters and their views are carefully considered. They are pleased with the recent changes and support the school's aims and ambitions for their children. The majority of parents have now signed the home/school agreement. Many give generously of their time, helping regularly in lessons, which is appreciated by teachers, and some supervise the changing of library books. Most parents help their children at home, listening to them read and hearing spellings. They are proud to accompany their children on outings. However, a minority regret there are not more activities for their children outside lessons.
37. The school is well supported by the hard-working Friends of Calmore Infant School Association which runs successful and enjoyable fund-raising events. They have provided the new outdoor play equipment now enjoyed by their children, and additional computers and books. Recently, in a joint venture with the junior school, the Friends, parents and children much enjoyed the circus visit on site.
38. Good information is provided for parents, and the majority feels well informed about the school and their children's progress. Through regular, well-written newsletters and other correspondence they are made aware of events and topics to be studied. The brochure and governors' annual report contain useful data, and diary dates are published well in advance. Almost all parents attend consultation meetings and school productions are a 'sell-out'. The 'Meet the Teacher' evening introduced this term has proved a great success, and parents found the recent numeracy morning 'excellent'. The headteacher and staff are always available to see parents, and all in the office will help with paper work at any time. Parents like the annual reports, which are comprehensive and comment on individual's achievements, although as yet not all contain clear targets for their children to attain. Homework cards and reading records, sent home in the popular 'zippy bags', are well used as effective dialogue between parents and school. Parents of children with special educational and other needs are well informed and involved in the planning for their progress.
39. The school's commitment to maintaining and developing the already good links with parents, coupled with parents' strong support for and involvement in the school, enhances children's learning and makes a positive contribution to their personal development and to the academic standards they achieve.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

40. The headteacher provides caring, committed and energetic leadership, and has had a significant impact on raising morale within the school in a relatively short space of time. She works tirelessly to motivate staff and pupils and involve them in making decisions, with evident success. She has the full support of governors, staff and the vast majority of parents.
41. Governors' understanding of their roles and responsibilities has improved significantly since the last inspection, largely due to the sterling efforts of the chair of governors, and their involvement in the work of the school is good. They have a clear understanding of the school's strengths, where development is needed and are beginning to be involved in analysing results to establish the value added by the school. The chair of governors visits regularly, as do other governors as often as their commitments allow, to see the work of the school first-hand. Governors bring a reasonable degree of expertise to the

school and are beginning to play an important role in strategic planning for the future. New governors receive detailed information about the work of the governing body, and meetings are well attended, tightly focused and minuted fully. Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities and appreciate the efforts of the new headteacher and other staff in keeping them informed about the work of the school.

42. Management responsibilities have been allocated effectively. The senior management team meets fortnightly to discuss issues, which are quickly shared with all staff, who consequently feel their contributions to decision making are valued. Year groups meet weekly to plan both for the long and short-term, and frequent, informal meetings between teachers ensure pupils in parallel classes have similar experiences. Co-ordinators manage their responsibilities with enthusiasm and commitment, although many are new to their roles and their action plans have not had sufficient time to have a measurable impact.
43. The headteacher monitors teachers' planning on a weekly basis, and co-ordinators are beginning to play an active part in this important role. She has a clear understanding of the relative strengths and areas for development in teaching, through both formal and informal classroom visits. The local education authority has provided valuable support for this monitoring. Evaluation of the work pupils do is at an early stage of development, although plans to sample specific children throughout their time in school are well in hand, and the school is aware of the need for greater involvement of all staff in monitoring pupils' attainment and progress. The school plans to involve co-ordinators more closely in practical monitoring of their subjects and areas of responsibility, including providing them with time away from the classroom.
44. Realistic development planning has been drawn up through consultation with all staff, with a four-year overview providing a clear picture of the steps to be taken towards improvement. The action plan for the current year sets challenging expectations, with appropriate success criteria and responsibilities for these, and clear ways to evaluate whether targets have been met.
45. The headteacher, together with the named governor, is 'caretaking' provision for pupils with special educational needs whilst the co-ordinator is on sick leave. This arrangement is effective in ensuring that recent developments, such as those for target writing and reviewing, are sustained, and continue to have a positive impact upon provision for pupils with learning difficulties. The headteacher has clear priorities for continued improvement in managing this area of provision. For example, she plans to reorganise the special educational needs register, to make tracking pupils' progress easier to access.
46. The school is fully staffed with suitably qualified, committed teachers and well-trained learning support assistants. Good induction procedures for newly qualified and newly appointed teachers are in place. Performance management plans are well in hand, and any individual training is shared effectively in the staff room. Meetings are held regularly, and teacher and staff morale is good. The developing strong ethos and sense of whole school community contribute positively to the well-being and education of the pupils.
47. The school's generous accommodation for numbers on roll is well planned and used. The many good wall displays, most celebrating pupils' work, make the school an attractive learning environment. Caretaker and cleaners ensure that all is kept in good condition and cleaned well. Surplus classrooms are let to pre-school groups, with many of the children later coming into the infant school, which assists their smooth

transition. The spacious grounds are generally well kept and there is minimal litter or vandalism. However, there is no boundary fence between the junior school playing field and path around the infant school. Playgrounds are in satisfactory condition and markings enhance pupils' enjoyment of the outdoor hard surface areas. Governors have highlighted the need to repair gaps in the perimeter fencing within the maintenance plan.

48. The school has a good range of learning resources to deliver the curriculum. These are particularly good for teaching physical education and music and good for mathematics, science and ICT. English resources are satisfactory, and good use is made of the library. The school recognises the need to obtain more multi-cultural books to give a wider range of reading material. All except the very good musical resources are well used, and the school benefits from the local authority loan service to augment its own historical artefacts. Although the Foundation Stage has adequate resources for children of this age, these are not always well used during their sessions. Children and pupils with special educational needs enjoy good resources to supplement their education.
49. The school has good procedures for financial control, and monitors expenditure effectively. Day-to-day administration is satisfactory. Office staff work hard and are always ready to assist. Monies are banked regularly, and monitoring of specific grants and expenditure against projected costs is carefully calculated. The budget, now securely linked to priorities in the school development plan (thus addressing part of a key issue in the last inspection report) is initially set by the headteacher. This contains figures based on historical data plus inflation for 'constants' such as staffing, and includes a choice of scenarios for the remaining monies. These are carefully considered by the finance committee and the governing body decide on the final plan. Expenditure against budget costings is discussed and formally monitored in finance committee meetings twice a term. Best value principles are now applied to any spending. Through stringent budgeting, the school has successfully reduced the sizeable deficit to a manageable amount, which should be cleared within the next year. All the recommendations in the latest auditors' report have been dealt with.
50. The school has emerged from a period of considerable uncertainty, and has made good progress in addressing the key issues from the previous report under the firm but sympathetic guidance of the new headteacher. The shared commitment from all associated with the school to continue improvements and raise standards is commendable, and is having a noticeable impact on pupils' attainment in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. Whilst well aware that much remains to be done, the school is in a good position to improve in the future. Taking these factors into account, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

51. The governors, headteacher and staff should now:

(1) continue efforts to raise standards in the school by:

- improving pupils' skills in ICT and its use across the curriculum;
- providing more opportunities for pupils to share ideas and collaborate with each other;
- encouraging a greater degree of independent learning and research, particularly in mathematics and science;
- raising teachers expectations of what the higher attaining pupils can do;
- making full use of lesson evaluation, to analyse what has worked and what has not, and assist in planning of future lessons;
- implementing plans to increase the monitoring of pupils' work.
(Paragraphs 3, 4, 5, 15, 17, 31, 32, 43, 60, 66 – 68, 71, 82 – 86)

(2) improve provision for children in the Foundation Stage by:

- providing useful training for staff in the requirements of the early learning goals;
- improving long term planning so that the six areas of learning are covered fully and progressively;
- improving short term planning in order to link daily activities to individual areas of learning and make them purposeful;
- ensuring that all staff understand the need to interact effectively with children as they work to develop their vocabulary, imagination, social skills and ability to think and talk about what they are doing.
(Paragraphs 1, 14, 20, 53 – 58)

52. In addition to the key issues above, the following points should be included in the governors' action plan:

- (3) ensure targets on pupils' individual education plans are reflected fully in planning;
(Paragraphs 18, 63)
- (4) make more explicit planning for pupils' spiritual and cultural development;
(Paragraphs 24, 27)
- (5) address minor health and safety concerns; (Paragraphs 30, 47)
- (6) improve consistency of marking; (Paragraph 31)
- (7) make better use of music resources. (Paragraphs 48, 87, 88)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	45
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	37

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
	11	38	44	7		

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	Y R – Y 2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	179
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	12

Special educational needs	Y R – Y 2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	30

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	16
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	13

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.6
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	30	32	62

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	25 (41)	26 (40)	28 (51)
	Girls	28 (26)	31 (25)	28 (30)
	Total	53 (67)	57 (65)	57 (77)
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	86 (81)	92 (78)	92 (93)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	25 (43)	27 (51)	26 (48)
	Girls	27 (25)	29 (30)	23 (27)
	Total	52 (68)	56 (81)	49 (75)
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	84 (82)	90 (98)	80 (90)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	134
Any other minority ethnic group	3

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: Y R – Y 2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22
Average class size	26

Education support staff: Y R – Y 2

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	107

Financial information

Financial year	1999 / 2000
	£
Total income	428 280
Total expenditure	420 157
Expenditure per pupil	2 123
Balance brought forward from previous year	-9913
Balance carried forward to next year	-1790

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	198
Number of questionnaires returned	45
Percentage returned	23

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	58	36	4	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	51	36	0	0	13
Behaviour in the school is good.	29	64	0	0	7
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	22	51	9	0	18
The teaching is good.	47	36	0	0	17
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	29	42	11	4	14
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	60	32	4	0	4
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	62	30	4	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	48	36	7	2	7
The school is well led and managed.	44	38	2	0	16
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	42	47	4	0	7
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	11	31	18	7	33

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

53. Children's **personal, social and emotional development** is below the expectations for their age. At this early stage in the term, some still find it difficult to co-operate with their peers or share toys and equipment happily. In good sessions, such as circle time activities, teachers gently and effectively encourage children to consider each other and develop their social skills well, such as 'passing a smile' and changing places in the circle. This is having a positive impact on children's awareness of the needs and feelings of each other. On other occasions, however, with insufficient, focused adult intervention children do not play well together. Children quickly become familiar with the routines of the classroom and move confidently between the activities they know they can choose. Again, however, their attention spans are short, and effective adult intervention to encourage children to concentrate is not well focused. In many sessions, children drift from one activity to another without a sense of purpose, and little learning takes place. Children know where everything is kept, tidy up efficiently at the end of sessions and line up quickly and quietly when asked to do so. They change for physical activities with reasonable independence, although few can do this completely on their own and some are not quite sure which way round their clothes should go!
54. Children's **communication, language and literacy** development is below expectations for their age. Their skills in communication are the least well-developed aspect of this area of learning and are well below expectations. Poor speech patterns for a minority of children prevent them from expressing themselves clearly, and lack of effective adult intervention is inhibiting improvement in children's ability to explain and reason about what they are doing when given free choice of activities. Children listen carefully during class discussions and most confidently contribute their observations when asked. They recognise the sounds of letters and are gaining confidence in identifying the initial letters of different objects when sorting these with an assistant. Children enjoy 'reading' and handle books carefully. They listen with serious concentration to taped stories, although their ability to follow the text in the accompanying books depends a little on looking to see which page their neighbour is on! They retell stories from pictures enthusiastically, particularly when familiar with the text. Children take books home on a frequent basis in their 'zippy bags' and teachers make good use of parents as partners in developing children's love of books through effective dialogue in the reading records. Children enjoy experimenting with writing, both in directed activities and in free play, for example, writing out the bill in the 'penny shop'. Most hold pencils firmly and correctly, and use mark-making and trace writing confidently. A minority of children are writing letters correctly, although they use a mix of upper and lower case letters when writing their names.
55. Children's **mathematical development** is in line with expectations for their age. They count confidently to five and many children count beyond to ten and above when using counters to match the numeral on a card. Some need help in recognising and naming the numeral but, in this activity, careful support from an assistant helped children make progress in counting skills. The chance to extend more able children into thinking about addition and subtraction, however, was missed. Children enjoy making patterns, threading beads on a string, and confidently name the colours and shapes they have used. They have a reasonable understanding of mathematical vocabulary, such as longer and shorter, but find it difficult to reproduce a pattern set by the teacher. They are proud of their very long lines, which show good collaborative work. In a good

session on shapes, children carefully describe the properties of a hidden shape, and their peers enthusiastically, and reasonably accurately, identify the one they are 'feeling'.

56. Children's **knowledge and understanding of the world** is unsatisfactory. They show little curiosity in the world around them, and there are few planned activities to develop this. Whilst the strictures of the baseline assessment limit the range of activities at present, opportunities for children to investigate, for example in sand and water play, are insufficient. There is no planning to show how this area of learning is to be developed in the future. Children enjoy playing in the shop and in the 'secret garden' and talk about their activities appropriately when prompted, such as buying the supper and taking photographs. The tea-party, organised by an assistant, was too controlled, however. Children put up their hands to answer set questions and development of their knowledge and understanding was limited. By contrast, another assistant had children enthralled as she and they discussed the secret garden together with her puppet. Children use construction kits to build confidently, but do not have a clear purpose in mind and do not persevere with the activity for any length of time. They use the computer competently to draw patterns with thick and thin 'brushes'. They understand how to change colour and line and control the mouse well. Sadly, there is no easily accessible colour printer for them to have hard copy of their efforts.
57. Children's **physical development** is in line with expectations for their age. Most are well co-ordinated when moving around the room, and cope satisfactorily with tools and equipment such as scissors and modelling material when, for example, cutting out flower petals and making shapes. They enjoy their lesson in the hall, bouncing and rolling balls and hoops to each other competently. They are less adept at catching these, but are very proud to be chosen to demonstrate their skills. Good teaching maintains a lively pace to the lesson, with valuable warm-up and good sustained activity in the session. The good partnership between the teacher and assistant effectively encourages children to do their best and make progress. The school has a reasonable range of wheeled toys, but these are not available on a daily basis, and the outdoor area is under-used to develop children's physical co-ordination skills.
58. Children's **creative development** is below expectations for their age. Children have a variety of activities to choose from during the day, designed to support their creative development. However, these are not used to maximum effect, being either too controlled or lacking in sensitive adult intervention. For example, whilst children enjoy painting with bright primary colours, and mixing colours to 'see what happens', activities are over-directed. Expectations that children will produce a particular 'end product' achieve lively and colourful results, but do not allow them to experiment and develop their own imaginative ideas. Children enjoy joining in with rhymes and songs, and sing enthusiastically and reasonably tunefully when they are confident with the words. They play happily in the 'secret garden' and shop, but their attention spans are short and lack of effective adult intervention as they play means that they are not encouraged to develop imaginative stories and increase their vocabulary. In addition, a minority of children find it difficult to co-operate with others and disturb the concentration and play of their friends.

ENGLISH

59. The previous inspection found pupils attained expected levels in reading, but standards in writing, speaking and listening were below average. In response to the key issue from this previous report, the school has made significant improvements in the breadth of the English curriculum as well as in both the teaching and learning of this subject, and attainment has risen as a result. If current standards are maintained, pupils are set to achieve levels similar to the national average in speaking and listening, reading and writing by the end of Key Stage 1.
60. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are satisfactory. Teachers work hard to encourage pupils to think carefully and speak clearly during discussions. They use big books well, which stimulates pupils to listen to stories attentively and to answer questions thoughtfully. Circle time sessions, as well as regular drama lessons, provide good additional opportunities for pupils to share their experiences and ideas. During a drama session, for example, older pupils listened with rapt attention and then mimed appropriate actions to accompany a story about pirates discovering secret treasure. Pupils begin to develop their thoughts and explain their ideas with an appropriate level of detail, for example, when they scrutinise photographs together to determine which is the oldest. In good lessons, teachers challenge pupils with questions, such as 'are you sure?'. Pupils are keen to explain the reasons for their answers and occasionally incorporate a level of detail into their speech that exceeds expectations for their age. However, teachers occasionally place a greater emphasis upon providing opportunities for pupils to listen or answer adults' questions than on them working constructively and collaboratively together.
61. Standards in reading are average. Pupils enjoy books and reading, and most use phonic strategies well to decipher new or unrecognised vocabulary. They devour the latest 'Magic Key' adventure avidly, whether by reading the text fluently or by extracting the meaning from the illustrations. All pupils are keen to express their views about their books. Higher attaining pupils talk about the characters, suggesting, for example, that the 'children look worried' and they predict how the story will develop confidently, reviewing and amending their ideas as each page is turned. Those pupils who have more difficulty in recognising or de-coding words identify their favourite part of a story or their favourite book. Teachers encourage pupils to take an interest in books and print at every opportunity. In a geography lesson about maps, for example, pupils relate their experience of walking around the school's immediate locality to the book, 'Rosie's Walk'.
62. The school has responded positively to concerns about writing expressed in the previous report. Pupils now learn to use cursive script from the beginning of their time in school. In handwriting lessons, teachers' high expectations are met well, and pupils attain good standards. Teachers' very focussed approach to teaching spelling enables most pupils to attain the level expected for their age. Regular lessons provide pupils with an hour to write imaginatively, and pupils have a mature approach to this activity. Writing is used well across the curriculum; for example, in religious education pupils write a lively comic strip version of the Annunciation from the perspective of the Angel Gabriel. Attractive displays of pupils' writing include acrostic poems related to the theme of 'Alice in Wonderland'; letters inviting 'Alice' to a party; space stories made into little books; and instructions on how to make a 'dog face'. These displays enhance pupils' pride in their work and its presentation effectively.
63. Teaching is good in just over 70 per cent of lessons and satisfactory in the remainder. This high quality teaching promotes good rates of learning within lessons. Teachers

plan lessons carefully, making effective use of the structure of the National Literacy Strategy, to ensure pupils systematically build on their experiences and develop their knowledge and understanding well. Teachers' own enthusiasm for books and poetry is effectively communicated and engages pupils' interest fully. They encourage pupils to express themselves freely on paper and are particularly successful in promoting pleasure in writing in all subjects. Where teaching is good, lessons have a brisk pace and move smoothly from one part of the literacy hour to another. Teachers use interesting activities to reinforce the purpose of the lesson and have high expectations of pupils. When teaching is satisfactory rather than good, the teachers' questions are less effective in including all pupils and sustaining interest. This slows the pace of the lesson, although pupils make satisfactory gains in their learning. Pupils with special educational needs learn well in separate individual or small group sessions. They have good relationships with support assistants, who meet their needs sensitively and effectively. However, teachers do not consistently ensure that they, and lower attaining pupils, are fully involved in whole class sessions, such as the discussions at the beginning and end of lessons based on the National Literacy Strategy.

64. The school uses its spacious, light and airy library well. There is a plentiful supply of good quality fiction books, big books and sets of books for use in small groups, in classrooms as well as in the library. Books reflect appropriately the diversity of culture and tradition that contributes to modern Britain. The school is increasing the range of books to incorporate more non-fiction, suitable for pupils' ages. Good use of the library, together with pupils having a choice of books to take home, successfully contributes to pupils' positive interest in books and approach to reading. The co-ordinator leads the subject effectively, providing support to colleagues in using the National Literacy Strategy, developing assessment procedures, for example for spelling, and monitoring the effectiveness of planning and teaching.

MATHEMATICS

65. The last inspection report judged attainment in mathematics to be satisfactory and progress steady. This picture has been maintained. There is a good scheme of work and, supported by the discipline of the National Numeracy Strategy, standards may reasonably be expected to be close to the national average by the end of the key stage. Both the 1999 and 2000 national test results showed standards to be close to the national average, both at the expected Level 2 and also at the higher Level 3. Teachers' predictions in 1999 were, however, somewhat above the eventual results, and correcting this is the subject of continuing in-service training. Results over the last three years reflect an upward trend, in line with the national picture. In 1999, however, there was a more marked difference than in previous years between the attainment of boys and girls, which the school had predicted. However, pupils' results in reading and writing were much closer, and the school is assessing what lessons, if any, it needs to learn from this relative under-achievement of the girls in that particular year group.
66. The manipulation of numbers is, as expected in these early years, a high priority. At the beginning of each day and in numeracy sessions, pupils handle number problems confidently using a variety of strategies, but leading as quickly as possible to doing sums 'in the head'. Younger pupils use a number line to count attendance, absences, cooked and packed lunches; and they fully appreciate the need for accuracy! They count on and count back confidently, extending well beyond 20. Year 1 pupils count up confidently in twos, but only a few count equally confidently back down in twos. Year 2 pupils were seen counting up and down in 'fives' without any obvious aids but doing it all 'in their mind'. However, there were clearly some pupils who found this very easy, and no opportunity was given for them to extend their learning by experimenting with the

number patterns or suggesting lines of enquiry.

67. Though not seen in lessons, planning for understanding of shape and space is satisfactory. However, within its balanced programme of mathematical development, the school does not encourage enquiry skills sufficiently, or persuade pupils to share and discuss the way they do their sums. This is related to the level of teachers' subject confidence and expertise, and the perceived need to instil conventional methods for mathematical problem solving.
68. Pupils respond well; they enjoy their lessons and the structure and predictability of the numeracy sessions. Teaching is satisfactory, and teachers cover all the expected elements competently. Work is well planned to ensure steady development of pupils' mathematical knowledge and skills, and periodic assessments confirm the progress being made by individual pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are included in the whole-class elements of the numeracy sessions and then receive good individual or small-group support during the group activities. By contrast, however, pupils who are more advanced in their knowledge and understanding are not sufficiently encouraged to devise and carry out their own investigations. In one of the lessons seen, the teacher focused well and intensively on the needs of one average attainment group during this session. In other lessons, however, teachers tended to move around too much, checking progress and not teaching in depth. Although provision is made on lesson-planning sheets for evaluation at the end of each lesson, there is little evidence of the information being used effectively by teachers to modify their planning for future lessons. Resources are plentiful and of good quality. The subject is well managed and led and there is a well-thought-through programme of in-service training and subject development.

SCIENCE

69. Good progress has been made since the last inspection, when low attainment in science was a key issue. Good subject management and a well-designed scheme of work are now in place. Standards are improving, and by the end of the key stage in 2001 may now reasonably be expected to be close to the national average. Analysis of the 1999 and 2000 teacher assessments showed the percentage of pupils attaining the Level 2 standard to be similar to the national average, but the percentage reaching the higher Level 3 to be well below. The school is taking appropriate steps to improve results overall.
70. The quality of teaching is satisfactory with some good elements. Strengths include good planning, balanced coverage of the expected topics, good routines in observing and recording, and in Year 2, assessing whether the test or experiment was fair. However, teachers are a little too quick to tell pupils what they are looking for, and provide too little discussion about reasons for what is being observed. For example, when different shapes of ice blocks were observed melting, pupils made accurate observations, but were not asked to offer suggestions as to why the longer flat shape melted more quickly than the spherical ball of ice. This shows an element of lack of confidence in teachers' subject knowledge, in encouraging pupils to attempt explanations and suggest lines of investigation to test ideas.
71. Pupils respond well in science lessons and enjoy the work. Learning is satisfactory and occasionally good. Lower attaining pupils or those with special educational needs are fully involved and encouraged, and they do well as a result. Good routines are established, and appropriate technical vocabulary is learnt and applied properly. Year 1 pupils discuss and show good understanding, for example, of the process of melting. The majority of Year 2 pupils understand the need for objective observation and fair testing. There is a slight weakness, however, in the extent to which higher attaining

pupils are challenged and stretched by the work they are given. There is too little opportunity for them to suggest experiments to test ideas and to carry out independent investigations.

72. The subject is well led and managed. The last inspection report indicated a weakness in teachers' understanding and assessment of the levels of expected attainment. This has been tackled successfully through in-service training, specialist local authority support and the guidance of a new nationally recommended scheme of work. Sufficient resources are of good quality. Learning support helpers give good assistance in lessons and with preparation, for example, in preparing ice samples for experiments on melting.

ART AND DESIGN

73. Attainment in art and design is in line with national expectations, which maintains the position found by the previous inspection. Whilst it was only possible to see one art lesson during the inspection period, the lively and colourful displays of work around the school give ample evidence that pupils use a wide range of media to produce attractive results. These displays are well mounted, which encourages pupils to be proud of their work, as well as enlivening corridors and classrooms. The scheme of work ensures pupils' knowledge and skills develop progressively, providing useful starting points for teachers and resources and techniques available. The displays show this has a positive impact, as pupils develop skills in colour mixing from free patterns in Year 1 to subtle use of secondary colours in Year 2. Pupils' observational skills develop well from lively portraits of their classmates in Year 1 to pastel drawings of leaves in Year 2. Activities link appropriately to science as pupils 'use their senses' to produce, for example, an attractive, well observed watercolour parrot in connection with geography work on the rain forest.
74. Pupils clearly enjoy their lessons. They listen closely to instructions and are keen to get started on practical activities. They share resources sensibly; 'have some of my brown'; and work carefully in rather cramped conditions. Teaching is good. Effective questioning successfully raises pupils' interest in the techniques they are using and encourages pupils to explain what they are doing, for example, when making colours darker. High expectations, a clear overview of the class and good use of praise encourages them to work hard and improve on their efforts. Good resources enable pupils not only to evaluate the techniques used by different artists to create hills and sky in landscapes, but also to make successful attempts at developing their own style.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

75. The school has worked hard to improve standards in design and technology, which were below national expectations at the time of the previous inspection. Teachers have had useful in-service training, and the scheme of work ensures that all elements of the subject are covered fully. The range of work on display and other evidence shows that pupils have appropriate opportunities not only to design and evaluate, but also to make models. Pupils' attainment is now in line with expectations by the end of Year 2, and they make satisfactory progress throughout the school.
76. Pupils are proud of their efforts and happy to explain, for example, their working playground models, although one girl could not remember why they had made them! The moving vehicles on display show an impressive level of imagination in both the materials used; plastic bags and bottles for the body, cotton reels and cardboard for the wheels; and in the finishing techniques, such as to make the racing car. In the one

lesson seen, pupils enjoy the story, which sets the scene for the activity, and struggle valiantly to mould their clay into recognisable pigs! They have a clear understanding of the need to keep clay moist in order to work it from first hand experience, work hard and evaluate their efforts with good humour. Teaching and learning is good as the teacher asks probing questions to encourage pupils to think about and explain what they are doing, and keeps them interested in the activity. Overall pupils make steady progress in design and technology skills and understanding, and projects are linked effectively to other curriculum areas, such as English, science and geography, which makes them relevant.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

77. The quality of learning in both geography and history is sound and pupils continue to achieve satisfactory standards as they did at the time of the previous inspection. During the inspection, one geography lesson and two history lessons were observed, in all three of which the teaching was very good. From examining pupils' work in books and around the school, it is clear that pupils make satisfactory progress over the time they attend the school. In the geography lesson observed, pupils extended their understanding of the purpose and characteristics of maps well. In the two history lessons, they made very good use of their understanding of the past and engaged in historical enquiry with impressive maturity.
78. In Year 1 pupils understand that objects can be represented in plans by their outline shape and the area they cover. They understand that maps may represent a route taken, for example by the 'Three Little Pigs'. When they draw their own maps of this route or a 'treasure island', their level of understanding and skill covers the expected range for their age and higher attaining pupils produce extremely good work. Older pupils extend their use of plans and maps, and begin to understand the purpose of symbols and to use them on their own maps. They also begin to read and use two-digit map references. Enthusiastic, confident teaching generates great excitement and good co-operative working as pupils use extensive resources, including a computer program to construct their maps.
79. In Year 1 pupils begin to develop a good understanding of chronology. They scrutinise photographs and illustrations of different harvesting methods over time, in order to determine the correct chronological sequence. Teachers' own confidence and enthusiasm for the subject creates a very good quality of learning. They use imaginative methods to help pupils develop an understanding of the differences in the past. For example, pupils follow a discussion about clothes in the past by drawing the Mad Hatter from 'Alice in Wonderland' complete with top hat and cloak. In Year 2, pupils make very good use of their literacy skills to extend their historical knowledge and understanding when they compile questionnaires for their grandparents. They quiz them about their experience of childhood at home and at school, and begin to draw comparisons between this and their own daily lives.
80. Geography and history are taught as separate subjects but co-ordinated conscientiously and effectively by the same class teacher. Suitable time is allocated to each, and the co-ordinator is currently revising the curriculum in the light of new curriculum requirements. She monitors teachers' planning regularly, to ensure that a balanced curriculum is maintained and interviews a sample of pupils to monitor their understanding and seek to continue to raise standards. The school's approach to planning within topics supports effective links between subjects, which reinforce knowledge and understanding sensibly. For example, within the topic 'Rainforest', pupils use their mathematical skills to produce bar charts of rainforest fruits that are liked most in the class, while increasing their geographical knowledge of another part of

the world. However, the school maintains the integrity of the separate subjects and distinguishes between, for example, literacy skills and historical understanding when assessing pupils.

81. Both subjects have sufficient resources and the school makes good use of the local loan service to supplement their supply of artefacts. This year the school held a special 'Millennium Day' event when staff and pupils thoroughly enjoyed dressing up as either historical figures or fictional characters from the past. Parents also supported the event very enthusiastically and staff used the occasion well to reinforce historical knowledge and understanding by providing information about their 'character' and grouping people from the same period together, such as Queen Elizabeth 1 and Sir Walter Raleigh.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

82. At this stage in the year, pupils' attainment in ICT is below national expectations. This appears to be a decline in standards since the previous inspection, but expectations for the subject have changed since that time. ICT has a high priority in the current school action plan, and teachers are giving careful consideration to its use to support learning across the curriculum, such as using a graphics program in art in Year 1 and data handling in mathematics in Year 2. Pupils competently control tape recorders to listen to story tapes in connection with their literacy work. They make steady progress in specific ICT lessons, but overall their skills in using computers are at a low level, and the school is aware that considerable improvement is needed if pupils are to reach the expected standard by the end of the year.
83. Teachers make good use of the available hardware by drawing computer systems together in the library to create a 'mini suite' on two days of the week. This enables effective whole-class teaching to take place, and is having a positive impact on standards. Pupils enjoy these lessons, greeting the information that they are 'going down to the library to use the computers' with a smile and a cheer! They are particularly fascinated by the new screen saver, with jungle scenes, which has recently been installed. Pupils work hard at their assigned tasks and co-operate well with each other, sharing turns at the keyboard fairly and helping less confident peers sensibly.
84. Pupils in Year 1 practise their word processing skills and support their literacy skills by entering text with correct capital letters and punctuation. They understand how to achieve a capital letter on screen using the shift key, but their basic inexperience in keyboard skills shows in the lack of competence with which they use the mouse to move round the screen, locate letters and enter text. Their progress is limited by using a small font size, which cannot be changed on the notebook computers, so that they have difficulty in reading what they have set on the screen. In one lesson, lack of additional adult support prevented effective intervention with pairs of pupils as they worked, which further hampered progress, although the teacher worked hard to be everywhere at once. In another lesson, the teacher's own lack of ICT experience made it difficult for her to help sort out pupils' problems.
85. In Year 2, pupils have great fun constructing imaginary maps of a town. They recall in detail the different functions of the program and expertly drag and place different features, with decided opinions on what they are doing and why; 'the trees are upside down because they are on the other side of the road'. Teaching is good in one session and very good in the other; the edge being given by additional adult support to increase effective interaction with groups as they work. In both lessons, teachers use questioning well to encourage pupils to think, re-think and explain what they are doing.

The pace of learning is brisk and a buzz of lively, relevant conversation fills the room as pupils discuss their emerging towns with adults and each other. Pupils save their maps with adult support so that they can continue working on them during the rest of the week.

86. The school has a good range of hardware, although notebook computers are not easy for pupils of this age to use, and a growing library of software, including CD Roms and internet access. The comprehensive scheme of work ensures all aspects of the curriculum are covered. However, Year 2 pupils in the mixed year class are not following the same programme as their peers, and the school needs to give careful consideration to ensuring they have equal opportunities with others of the same age.

MUSIC

87. Standards in music are in line with national expectations, which maintains the picture found by the previous inspection. The scheme of work ensures a balanced programme of activities and experience, and pupils make satisfactory progress, but there is less enthusiasm and vitality than is often found in music in similar schools. When the song or verse of a hymn is well known, pupils' singing is reasonable. However, when learning a new tune, too many pupils, even at Year 2, have difficulty copying and pitching the note. Music is linked well to drama, and singing as a means of communication is enjoyed and tackled enthusiastically. Older pupils also make good attempts to record, in ways they have devised for themselves, compositions played on percussion instruments. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included and involved. They enjoy the activities and make good progress, with a clearly beneficial effect on their self-esteem. Pupils' response in music lessons is good. However, no evidence was seen of any recognition of particular talent or potential.
88. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. The scheme of work sets out in sufficient detail what is to be covered, which is much appreciated by the majority of teachers who are not music specialists, although a part-time teacher plays the piano and teaches singing. There is currently no support from, or involvement of, specialist peripatetic teachers, but professional musicians, for example, members of the Bournemouth Symphony Orchestra, visit the school occasionally to play to the children. There is a very good, extremely well equipped music and drama room, which is under-used for music teaching.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

89. Standards in physical education are above national expectations, which is an improvement on the picture found by the previous inspection. Pupils know the routines expected of them, change into appropriate clothing and are well trained in safety consciousness. Teachers start lessons with good warm-up sessions, which they relate effectively to science, for example, in keeping the heart strong and healthy. Pupils handle and use the low-level apparatus in the hall confidently and sensibly. They listen well to instructions and tackle exercise with enthusiasm, for instance travelling across the equipment in various ways, such as 'keeping low' or 'very slowly'. In the games session seen, skills were developed effectively, as pupils bounced a ball round some markers or dribbled a large ball with a plastic hockey stick. Pupils enjoy the competitive elements in games, but are mutually supportive and encouraging, developing good social skills. Lower attaining pupils are encouraged and supported; those with talent are asked to demonstrate and are applauded.
90. Teaching is good. Teachers know their pupils well and match expectations to individual levels of proficiency expertly. Underpinned by a very good scheme of work, there is clearly considerable teacher confidence and enthusiasm for the subject, which has a high profile in the school. The subject is very well led and managed and resources are of high quality and well maintained. The hall is very well equipped for use as a gymnasium, and development of gymnastic skills is a strong feature of the teaching. Dance and drama, however, receive equal attention, which ensures appropriate breadth in the range of what is taught.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

91. Standards in religious education have been maintained since the last inspection and pupils achieve levels of knowledge and understanding in line with those expected by the Hampshire Agreed Syllabus, 'Vision and Insight'. Since the last inspection the co-ordinator has produced a thoughtful set of plans for the subject that draw on national recommendations as well as meeting the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. These plans enable teachers to meet the syllabus requirements effectively, using topics that are relevant to all pupils, such as 'the sea', 'new life', 'the world about us' and 'myths and legends'. This represents a positive response to the criticism of the last report that work was too geared towards girls' interests.
92. Pupils make sound progress in developing their knowledge and understanding. In Year 1 they learn that some places are special, such as a church for Christians, and that special ceremonies take place there. They learn that some artefacts have special significance, such as the Bible for Christians. Pupils in Year 2 increase their knowledge of special places by, for example, examining a photograph of a stained glass church window, and describing the decoration with reference to the significance of Jesus' halo and the cross in the background. Younger pupils enjoy the story of Divali and learning about how the Hindu festival is celebrated. Older pupils begin to appreciate the values of different religions, to compare them and to identify similarities in beliefs. For example, within the topic, 'myths and legends' pupils learn that there are several stories explaining the creation that represent the beliefs of different people, both now and in the past.

93. Teaching was satisfactory in the one religious education lesson seen. However, a strength within planning lies in the way different subjects contribute effectively to pupils understanding of religious ideas. As a result, most pupils reach the expected levels of religious understanding through a variety of lessons and the subject benefits from good teaching overall. In a literacy lesson based upon the book, 'Owl Babies', for example, pupils empathise with and understand human feelings when they express concern that the owl babies do not see their father. When pupils select an important event from their own lives to share in class circle times they think about their families, pets or toys that are special to them. The subject is led with good knowledge of religions and religious ideas, with a strong commitment and considerable enthusiasm. This enables the subject to retain its integrity as a separate subject while benefiting from the topic approach and the support of other subjects.