

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **FOLEY INFANT SCHOOL**

Kinver near Stourbridge

LEA area: Staffordshire

Unique reference number: 124095

Headteacher: Mrs A Dawson

Reporting inspector: Mrs B Walker  
1530

Dates of inspection: 2<sup>nd</sup> – 6<sup>th</sup> October 2000

Inspection number: 225348

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 7 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Fairfield Drive Kinver Nr. Stourbridge West Midlands
Postcode:	DY7 6EW
Telephone number:	01384 872382
Fax number:	01384 878156
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs C Polhill
Date of previous inspection:	19 <sup>th</sup> November 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs B Walker 1530	Registered inspector	English Information and communications technology Religious education Art and design Special educational needs	What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements How well are the pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
Mrs G Hoggard 14066	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Ms M Mann 23276	Team inspector	Areas of learning for children in the foundation stage Mathematics Geography History Music	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
Mr M Wainwright 11528	Team inspector	Science Design and technology Physical education Equal opportunities	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Foley Infant school is located in the village of Kinver, near Stourbridge in Staffordshire and serves the village and its surroundings. Houses in the area are mainly privately owned and the area is advantaged. The school has 158 pupils between the ages of four to seven years. Almost all pupils are white and none speak English as a second language. Most of the reception children who enter the school have enjoyed some form of pre-school education. Twelve pupils in the school have special educational needs (seven per cent), which is well below average. There are no pupils with a statement of special educational need. Ten pupils are entitled to free school meals (six per cent), which is below average. Attainment on entry to the school is good overall. At the time of the inspection the majority of reception children were four years of age. The school has experienced considerable change, with a new headteacher and deputy headteacher being recently appointed.

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

The school is satisfactory and is improving. Standards are satisfactory overall and good in literacy and numeracy. Pupils learn the basic skills well, making good progress through the reception class and satisfactory progress through Key Stage 1. The teaching is good. The headteacher provides clear leadership and the governing body is supportive. All staff support management in the clear intention to improve standards further. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

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

- The teaching is good overall.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is well managed, enabling them to make good progress.
- The provision for learning in the reception class is consistently good.
- Relationships are very good.
- There is very good social and moral development and very good behaviour
- The headteacher provides good and effective leadership and is well supported by the staff and governors.

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

- Standards in science and information technology.
- Not all aspects of science and information technology are taught.
- The use of assessment to ensure that new work is planned to take the pupils forward.
- The guidance and feedback given to pupils about their academic progress.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school was last inspected in November 1996 and has made satisfactory progress since that time. In response to the key issues, the school now has a development plan which provides a framework for strategic planning. Additionally, the provision for the physical development of children under five is satisfactory and there is a wider range of activities for pupils in Key Stage 1. Considerable improvements are more broadly evident: management involves all staff more effectively. The school has responded well to the requirements of the Literacy and Numeracy strategies. Teaching has improved. Given the recent period of uncertainty and the changes in management personnel, the school has achieved as much change as could reasonably be expected. The school is showing good development in important areas and is moving forward at a good rate.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			Similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
Reading	A	C	A	B
Writing	A*	C	A	B
Mathematics	A	D	A	B

Key	
Very high	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

Almost all pupils who took the tests and tasks in the year 2000 have achieved average levels or above, with about a third achieving at higher levels. Results are higher than the national averages and higher than averages for similar schools.

The inspection found that standards in speaking and listening are very good, while standards in reading, writing and mathematics are good. Standards in science and information technology are below expectations. Standards in design and technology are also below what could be expected. Standards in geography and religious education are good. In the remaining subjects of history, art, music and physical education, standards meet expectations for the age group. Children in the reception class are well challenged and their learning exceeds expectations for the age group.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Attitudes are good overall. Pupils like coming to school and they enjoy learning new things. They try hard when they are challenged in lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is very good in class and in the playground. Pupils are polite and courteous. They work and play happily together and are co-operative and helpful.
Personal development and relationships	All relationships are very good. Pupils' personal development is very good. They support and care for one another and take responsibility readily.
Attendance	Attendance is very good. There has been no unauthorised absence and there have been no exclusions.

This is a caring and co-operative school community. Attendance levels are better than the national average and the school monitors attendance carefully. Older pupils care for younger ones and they play together happily. Pupils understand and respect the feelings of others.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years
Lessons seen overall – 41	Good	Good

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

Teaching is good overall. All teaching is at least satisfactory, with the majority being good or very good. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection, so that now 17 per cent is very good, 56 per cent is good and 27 per cent is satisfactory. The teaching in the reception class is all good, with one third being very good. Teaching in Key Stage 1 has very good features in some of the English, geography and religious education.

Literacy and numeracy are taught well, with carefully planned programmes which provide for different levels of learning. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in their learning. Higher attaining pupils are catered for in some lessons, but not all are challenged consistently. Pupils are managed well and lessons are very well organised. Classroom support staff are very carefully briefed by the teachers, and they contribute well to this good teaching profile.

Learning is often good. Pupils gain new skills and understanding at a good rate, putting good effort into their work.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum for children under five years is broad and well balanced. At Key Stage 1, there is a satisfactory agreed time allocation and satisfactory breadth and balance. Provision for information technology is incomplete but improving. Provision for designing is under-developed.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The school gives good support to pupils with special educational needs, keeping very good records, involving a good range of support and ensuring appropriate provision in class.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Moral and social development are very good and there is satisfactory provision for the pupils' spiritual and cultural development. The strong relationships in the school help the pupils to reflect on their experiences and share their feelings with others.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good concern and provision for pupils' welfare and personal development. Unsatisfactory provision for pupils' academic progress in some subjects. Higher attaining pupils are not always effectively assessed or challenged. Pupils do not receive enough feedback about how well they are doing.

The curriculum provided for reception pupils is rich and varied. Pupils enjoy a very good range of activities. The curriculum for Key Stage 1 is weighted towards English. The provision for information technology is not fully in place. The planning does not take enough account of pupils' previous knowledge and experience. Extra-curricular activities are satisfactory.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Leadership and management are good overall. The headteacher has set a clear direction for the school's work, delegated effectively and balanced the budget, achieving a great deal in the short time she has been in post. Senior staff show a clear lead.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are well informed and supportive of the school. They fulfil their management responsibilities conscientiously and are increasing their understanding of how standards are to be further improved.



The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. Effective systems are in place and these are becoming established. They enable the headteacher to measure the effectiveness of teaching.
The strategic use of resources	Good use is made of the school's budget and staff are well deployed. External grants are obtained and used effectively and resources are well managed and accessible.

The management of the school is focused on improving standards. Monitoring of teaching is effective. Established governors have become more knowledgeable about the curriculum and standards. There are good levels of staffing and resources in the school, supported by best value principles. Expectations are being raised through literacy and numeracy and the school is currently forging ahead and is achieving well in those aspects which have had recent management attention.

## **PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The quality of teaching.</li> <li>• The behaviour of the pupils.</li> <li>• The approachability of the headteacher and staff.</li> <li>• The school's expectations that children do their best.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The range of activities outside lessons.</li> <li>• The outcome of mixed age teaching.</li> <li>• The range of information they receive.</li> </ul>

At the parents' meeting there was some confusion about the school and its work, with some parents not being clear about policies, procedures and standards since the school leadership has changed. Inspectors found that some important information about standards was missing from some documents for parents, but otherwise the flow of information from the school is effective. A few parents at the meeting felt that their children were not sufficiently challenged. There was considerable concern in both the questionnaires and the parents' meeting about the impact of mixed age classes. Inspectors found that mixed age classes are operating well, with pupils receiving appropriate work and support in literacy and numeracy, and similar developments beginning, but not so advanced, in other curriculum areas. The range of activities outside lessons includes visits and visitors to support the curriculum, organised playground activities in the lunch period and family social events organised by the Parents' and Teachers' Association. Inspectors feel that this is satisfactory provision for the age group. The inspection findings support parents' positive views of the school.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. The results of the end of key stage national tests for seven-year-olds in 2000 show that the pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics was well above the national average. Compared with similar schools, reading, writing and mathematics standards were above average. Prior to 1999, when results were lower, trends were towards improvement; they are clearly improving again. Test results between 1996 and 1999 show that boys did less well than girls over that period of time, but the year 2000 results have begun to reverse this trend, particularly in mathematics. Writing results have improved in 2000, but standards are still behind those in reading and spelling. Results for science were high, but teachers' judgements, which are the means of assessing science, are inaccurate and over-optimistic.
2. Inspection findings show that standards in reading, writing and mathematics are above those expected of seven year olds, and some groups of pupils are likely to achieve standards which are well above by the end of the school year. This reflects the most recent tests. Since the last inspection, when English and mathematics standards were good and progress in both was good, standards have been maintained. Inspectors found no significant difference between the standards achieved by boys and girls.
3. The attainment of children who enter the school is good in all areas of development, and particularly good in social and language skills. Their progress through the foundation stage is good and the majority are likely to exceed the early learning goals by the time they leave the reception class, with many achieving Level 1 of the National Curriculum in some subjects.
4. The pupils in Key Stage 1 make good progress in English and mathematics and satisfactory progress overall. Their good listening skills are extended, and in speaking they learn to use an increasing range of vocabulary, ask questions and explain their ideas. The teaching in the daily literacy sessions is particularly effective in helping pupils to use a range of strategies to sound out words, to spell them accurately and to use them effectively in their writing. In mathematics, pupils make good progress in their use of number facts and have a good grasp of numeracy. They work out word sums and use mathematical facts in problem-solving. The improved standards in English and mathematics which are evident in the test results for the year 2000 are also evident in the classroom. The good teaching and very well organised support in the literacy and numeracy sessions is having good impact on learning and achievement.
5. Standards in science are below average and progress is unsatisfactory. Pupils are not achieving at a level of which they are capable. There has been variation in the quality of teaching of science between year groups and classes which has affected all pupils in Year 1 and Year 2, but particularly the higher attaining groups.
6. Standards in information technology are below those expected and progress is unsatisfactory. The school has recently made considerable improvements to the resources and has begun to offer all pupils opportunities to use these facilities, building on the valuable start made in the reception class. Pupils are beginning to appreciate a range of communication techniques and a few have begun to produce

simple graphics and text. At present there is no discernible difference in the attainment of different age groups. This is because of the new experiences which are being offered to Year 1 and Year 2 pupils together. Some pupils have begun to use the keyboard and mouse, but the majority are just beginning to learn about the range of possibilities they will eventually learn to control, such as the Internet, word processing and graphics. The teachers and other staff are working hard at developing their own skills and will shortly undertake further targeted training.

7. Standards in religious education are good and some pupils achieve above the levels specified in the locally agreed syllabus. A new scheme of work and a strong leadership of the subject ensures that pupils receive a well balanced and effective programme of learning. Pupils' progress in the knowledge and understanding of faiths, including Christianity, is good.
8. By the age of seven pupils achieve the standards expected in history, art and music. In geography, standards are above expectations. In design and technology, standards are below expectations. While pupils have satisfactory knowledge of materials and how to join them, the skills of planning and evaluating their work are unsatisfactory.
9. The pupils with special educational needs are well supported, particularly in literacy and numeracy. They make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. Individual education plans set out their learning needs clearly and these are regularly reviewed with parents and appropriate staff to maintain the good progress.
10. At the time of the last inspection, standards were sound or good across the curriculum and progress was at least satisfactory. The current picture shows that these standards have been maintained in most subjects, but in science, design and technology and information technology they have deteriorated.

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

11. Pupils show enthusiasm for school and learning; the high standards found at the time of the last inspection have been maintained. Pupils are well-behaved and attentive in lessons and eager to learn about new things. Year 2 children, for example, listened attentively to the story of Charlie and the Chocolate Factory and the under-fives showed joy and astonishment as they heard their teacher's voice emerge from the Language-Master machine. In a music lesson, Year 1 pupils were very well behaved, keen to learn and showed good concentration. The children in the reception class showed remarkable ability to sit still and concentrate. Even when the teaching approach is rather challenging, as in a Year 1 and 2 lesson about articles of religious significance, pupils behave well and remain obedient. Behaviour in moving around the school, such as to and from assembly, playtime and lunch, is often very good. Boys and girls of different ages play happily together in the playground, assisted by a range of co-operative games and toys. Pupils hold doors open for one another and are polite to staff and visitors.
12. Relationships between staff and pupils, and between pupils themselves are very good, with a notable absence of unpleasant behaviour. Pupils are encouraged to care for one another and the under-fives have been helped particularly well to collaborate together. Pupils with special educational needs are fully respected and integrated into the life of the school. Pupils are constantly but unobtrusively reminded by staff of the importance of considering others' feelings. Guided by their teachers, pupils are beginning to show respect for other beliefs and backgrounds. For example, when listening to a story about the importance of the Jewish prayer shawl, they handled this

artefact with respect. Pupils also respect the school buildings and there is no evidence of damage, graffiti or litter. Personal property and resources are treated with equal care: displays of autumn fruits and nuts were admired but remained untouched.

13. Where possible, pupils enjoy using their initiative and embrace small responsibilities such as taking the register to the office, collecting in worksheets or leading the reception children back to their classroom from assembly. The overwhelming majority of parents feel the school helps their children become mature and responsible. However, responsibility is not encouraged all the time. For example, the mealtime supervisors frequently help pupils to carry their meal trays, even though they are clearly eager to do it themselves.
14. Attendance, at 95 per cent, is very good; there were no unauthorised absences last year and no exclusions.

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

15. The teaching is good overall with some very good features. Teaching quality has improved since the last inspection, with the proportion of good or very good teaching having increased from 66 to 74 per cent. There is no unsatisfactory teaching in the school. Very good teaching, in 17 per cent of lessons, was seen in the foundation stage, English, religious education and geography. The teaching is having a positive effect on pupils' learning in English and mathematics, where the literacy and numeracy frameworks have helped to improve standards, because the planning and the monitoring and tracking of pupils' performance ensures that most lessons build on their previous learning. These processes are most effective in mathematics and show some success in English, but are not established across all subjects.
16. Since the last inspection, and since the new management appointments in the school, teaching has been strengthened through a variety of strategies, including shared in-service work, new planning arrangements stating what the pupils will learn, consistent methods, stronger teaching partnerships with classroom support staff and various monitoring techniques. These all have good effect on the teaching in the school, which is always well prepared, resourced and organised. Teachers' subject knowledge is improving in literacy, numeracy and religious education. There are still weaknesses in subject knowledge in science, information technology and design and technology.
17. Throughout the school the pace of lessons is satisfactory or good. Teachers and support staff use discussion and questioning well, drawing effective responses from pupils which support the further development of speaking and listening skills. A strength of the teaching in all parts of the school is the very well developed working partnerships between teachers and other staff and the guidance given by teachers to ensure that these additional staff lead their groups well. Teachers provide resources, instructions and information, tell assistants what to encourage and show them how to recognise the learning. They ensure that their skills are effective so that, for example, all handwriting examples by adults are consistent in presentation. Homework arrangements support learning, with some activities, such as the spelling lists, being well matched to learning levels.
18. Teachers work very hard. They plan class work and group work in English and mathematics well, using a good range of resources effectively. In literacy and numeracy they group the pupils and provide work of different levels to ensure continuing progress in pupils' learning. In the best teaching the teachers use

assessment effectively in these two subjects. Assessment skills across the whole curriculum are unsatisfactory, being varied and showing weaknesses. In some of the very good examples of teaching there was clear evidence of higher attaining pupils being introduced to more challenging ideas through high expectations. This process is not common across all classes or all subjects yet, but the examples in the school show that the practice is becoming established, helped by the monitoring and guidance being offered by the headteacher. A strong team approach is emerging, which is leading to greater consistency and which shows full commitment to improved standards.

19. The teaching of children under five in the foundation stage is good overall with some very good features. Children are managed well and staffing arrangements are always effective in supporting learning. The partnership between the teacher and the nursery nurse is very effective. There is a good balance of adult-led and independent activities, so that children learn to work and play independently. Information technology is planned and provided effectively. Where there are mixed reception and Year 1 children, the teaching arrangements make suitable provision for each year group. The resources support the teaching and learning well. A strength of this part of the school is the high quality of the speaking and listening opportunities during all activities, which support children's knowledge and understanding.
20. Teaching in Key Stage 1 is good, with some very good features. This quality of teaching has a positive effect on standards and pupils are making better progress and often achieving higher standards than those seen in last year's work. Teachers plan their literacy and numeracy lessons well. Basic skills are well taught so that pupils learn to read, write and count using a good range of strategies. The teaching methods used are effective in maintaining pupils' interest and involving them in discussion. Teachers offer much praise and encouragement but they do not give pupils enough guidance and feedback about how well they are doing and where their weaknesses need more work. Pupils are always well managed. Staff partnerships are very effective so group work is very well supported. This was the case in a religious education lesson when the pupils were presented with an interesting and stimulating introduction, given a chance to see relevant artefacts and involved in very lively discussion which stemmed from demonstrations and explanations by the teacher. Pupils of all abilities attempted their well-matched writing tasks with eagerness and enthusiasm and they enjoyed recounting what they had learned to a visitor. Already, in some classes, some pupils at the top of the key stage are working at higher than average levels in writing, giving clear indication of the higher standards they are likely to achieve by the end of the year.
21. Pupils with special educational needs are involved in lessons across the curriculum. They are given good opportunities to express their ideas in class discussion and are supported well in their learning. Their teachers keep careful records of their learning needs, making adjustments appropriately to ensure continuing progress at an appropriate pace.

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

22. The curriculum for Key Stage 1 pupils has satisfactory balance, but shows some under-developed areas such as designing and information technology. Overall, the curriculum has good breadth and relevance. English and mathematics are suitably emphasised, although a great deal of time is allocated to English and some literacy sessions are too long. There is insufficient provision for information technology. Other subjects receive sufficient time and have good, detailed programmes of work identifying the knowledge, skills and understanding that pupils will acquire during Key Stage 1. Sex education and education of drug misuse are not taught discretely, but are included in the personal, social and health education programme, "engendering an awareness and understanding of love, respect, responsibility and family life", as directed by the governing body's policy. Religious education is taught and the statutory requirement to provide a daily act of collective worship is met. Curriculum planning for pupils with special educational needs is good and all pupils have access to every area of the curriculum. The school receives very few pupils with English as an additional language and at present there are none in the school.
23. A very good curriculum is provided for children under five. There is appropriate emphasis and time given to all the early learning goals and the staff's very good understanding of the needs of this age group and their careful detailed planning ensure children's good progress. In the last report, provision for children's physical development was unsatisfactory because of the lack of suitable large play equipment and opportunities in the outside play areas. This has been addressed. A new, well-designed attractive play area and some large equipment have been provided.
24. The national strategies for literature and numeracy have been implemented very well and these skills are incorporated in the planning of the curriculum of some of the foundation subjects. Writing development is not planned effectively across all subjects and information, communication, design and technical skills are not sufficiently extended across the curriculum.
25. There are opportunities for extra-curricular activities within the curriculum. All Year 2 children learn the recorder and take part in festivals and concerts. Pupils benefit from a wide range of educational visits such as those to museums, places of historical interest, the local fire department and the canal locks, plus the rich environment of their own village and its community. A regular influx of visitors, including local historians, shopkeepers and the police extend the pupils' learning. There are no clubs after school because of the transport and collection arrangements for pupils of this age. Pupils are supported in their learning by the village community and the school is well integrated into village life. The children sing in the community at Christmas. There are excellent links with feeder nursery schools, play groups and the junior school.
26. The school's provision for spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory and for moral and social development it is very good. The school has maintained or improved the good standards found at the time of the last inspection. There is a good overall policy for personal development, which contains helpful guidelines for teachers to use in their planning.
27. Opportunities for spiritual development are both planned and spontaneous. Religious education lessons encourage pupils to think about the beliefs of others through considering special clothes and objects belonging to different faiths, for example a prayer mat. Assemblies offer time for prayer and reflection each day. Sometimes

moments of wonder occur naturally. This is particularly evident with the younger children who, for example, gasped with astonishment to see how greatly popcorn had increased its volume through heating.

28. Moral development is very good and is a strength of the school. There is a comprehensive system of rewards and sanctions to encourage good behaviour, which is fully understood by all pupils. All the staff give frequent unobtrusive reminders of correct behaviour and this is reinforced through the home-school agreement. Opportunities are planned to exploit lesson material: for example in the under-fives class the story of 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears' was used to reinforce the message that Goldilocks had done wrong to disobey her mother and enter the bears' house uninvited.
29. Social development is also very good. Pupils are encouraged to work together and co-operate, which even the youngest pupils are beginning to do. Additionally, they think of others through attention to charity events. Playground rotas are organised so that children of different ages and from different class groupings can play together. Children with special educational needs are fully integrated into the life of the school. Visits and visitors make a good contribution to social development.
30. Cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils are exposed to local culture through visits and events such as country dancing at the local country fair or a trip to the Black Country museum. There are pictures by European artists in school and some interesting work on Aboriginal art and dreamtime paintings. Religious education lessons and displays deal with several major world religions such as Islam. However, given the school's proximity to several large ethnically diverse urban areas, there is a lack of links with people of ethnic minorities.

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

31. The school carries out its pastoral role well, but its attention to academic progress is less effective.
32. The attendance register is taken promptly each morning and a computerised system is used to keep an accurate check on absence. Standard letters are used to express concerns and teachers are proactive in following these up. Pupils generally arrive at school and lessons on time, and registers are maintained according to statutory guidelines. The educational welfare officer may be consulted if it is felt necessary.
33. Rules and systems for ensuring good behaviour are applied consistently and unobtrusively. They are fully understood by everyone in school. Choosing a child as a 'special person' for a week and the use of praise, badges and certificates help to promote a friendly and harmonious atmosphere for both work and play. In this respect the school has maintained the high standards found at the time of the last inspection. Parents also feel that the school promotes good behaviour, although some expressed concern that the mixed-age classes were separating friends unnecessarily. However, the inspection found that there were many opportunities for social mixing and personal development.
34. Child protection procedures are satisfactory. The headteacher is the designated person and there is a policy for child protection and an appropriate section in the staff handbook. However, staff, including those new to the school, have not been given any recent training, though they are aware of correct procedures to follow in the case of any concerns.

35. Welfare arrangements are satisfactory. Pupils are carefully inducted into the school after home and playgroup visits by the reception teacher, and then guided into sensible daily routines and procedures. Children benefit from a seamless transition from their pre-school settings to the reception class.
36. The building is spacious, airy and maintained well. Toilets and washrooms are very clean. Sick children are brought to the office or medical room. There are two members of staff qualified in first aid and there is an up-to-date register of children with medical problems such as asthma. Accident reports are correctly maintained. Fire drills and other health and safety checks are carried out as appropriate; eating arrangements are pleasant.
37. Pupils' personal development is closely monitored; the school is a small enough community for all staff to know their pupils well. Within the half-termly topics studied, each child is set individual targets, which often include points about behaviour, such as improving concentration and focus, or learning to listen better. Certificates for achievement are given out in assembly and teachers frequently use praise to guide and motivate pupils. Children with special educational needs are satisfactorily identified and given targeted help and support.
38. The monitoring of academic progress is good in the foundation stage but is unsatisfactory in Key Stage 1. Pupils are placed into appropriate groupings for parts of the literacy and numeracy sessions and some other lessons. These are mostly successful, but while higher attaining pupils are generally recognised, except in mathematics and some English lessons they are not always served by challenging work. Learning targets for last year and the first term of this year were limited to average levels, although extended targets are now being set in some classes for literacy and numeracy. In other subjects, while teachers note the previous learning which has led to a current lesson plan, the provision made is frequently for the whole class. Notable exceptions beyond literacy and numeracy include religious education work and some geography lessons. Records of pupils' progress are very good in some classes for literacy and numeracy, and at least satisfactory in others. There are important areas where provision, assessment and recording are under-developed. These include science and information technology. Pupils receive considerable praise and encouragement, but their understanding of how well they are doing as learners is limited because teachers do not give enough information to them about the strengths and weaknesses in their learning.

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

39. The school has strong links with parents and carers who are, in turn, largely supportive. They feel that the school works closely with them. They are mostly very satisfied with the school and praise the standard of work their children achieve, though at the parents' meeting a significant minority felt that their children were not sufficiently challenged or extended. The inspection found some evidence to support the view that the higher attaining pupils are being limited in what they can achieve in some areas of the curriculum. Parents and carers feel that there are clear and unambiguous systems for behaviour management and attendance, which are fully understood by all connected with the school; that teaching is good; that they are kept well informed; and that the school encourages children to do their best.
40. A varied and interesting range of information is provided for parents. There are meetings and a pamphlet for parents of children entering the reception class. The



school provided good opportunities for parents to be fully informed about recent changes to the re-organisation of classes into mixed ages. The prospectus is well organised and professionally produced, making it eminently readable, but it lacks the statutory national comparisons for the most recent national assessment results at the end of Year 2 and it does not report attendance figures as fully as required. Nor does the governors' annual report to parents, but this is satisfactory in all other respects. A monthly newsletter gives information about social events, curriculum meetings and open evenings, when parents and carers are invited into the school. The school is proactive in communicating with parents about school organisation and new initiatives. Some parents are dissatisfied with annual reports, which are unusual in format. They contain photographs and samples of work produced during the year, and the learning targets used in teachers' planning. These are highlighted to indicate which targets have been achieved by the child concerned and, where relevant, national test results are included. However, as targets on last year's reports go only up to Level 2, which is average attainment for Year 2 pupils, there is no indication that the higher attaining children are being suitably stretched. With these reservations, the reports are fulfilling recommendations and are satisfactory. Parents and carers of pupils with special educational needs are suitably involved in their educational support and plans.

41. Parents make a good contribution to learning at home. Most parents are very supportive and willingly help their children with reading and spellings sent home. Their involvement in school is good. They are actively involved in raising considerable sums of money and running social events involving the school, through the auspices of the parent-teacher association. They have arranged events such as a Christmas fair and fashion show at the school, which are well supported by the local community. Parents are encouraged to help in class and in the regular parent workshops, carrying out tasks such as cutting out or preparing materials; they also assist on school visits.

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

42. In the last two years the school has experienced a complete change in the senior staffing profile, with a new headteacher and deputy being recently appointed. These senior managers have been in post for less than a year. In that period of time there has been a full review of the school's work, involving all appropriate personnel and a clear educational direction has been established.
43. The headteacher provides good and effective leadership and has set a clear, well-paced agenda for development. She is active in helping all teachers to understand their contribution. A good school development plan has been prepared with fully appropriate priorities to support improving the school's standards. Systems, policies and procedures for curriculum design, evaluation, assessment and monitoring have been developed and implemented. The curriculum is under-developed at this stage. Information technology is not given enough time. Some areas are more effective, such as the curriculum provision for literacy and numeracy. The headteacher's monitoring of teaching in English and mathematics is having good impact on teaching quality in these two subjects. Members of the teaching staff have growing understanding of the management elements of their work. The co-ordinators who have been in the lead so far have set an effective example to the others who are to follow in this role. They are improving their subject knowledge, guiding their colleagues, supporting the planning process and beginning to feel confident to lead training sessions. Monitoring at this level is not yet in place, so there is little real influence by co-ordinators on the quality of work in classrooms. The team-building

process which this development work has generated is a strength of the management. The management of the school is having a clear impact on standards.

44. Governors make a satisfactory contribution to overall management. Governors are hard working and conscientious in fulfilling their role. They have assisted the headteacher in balancing the budget by reducing a large deficit and taken responsibility for special roles and classroom visits. Some are well informed about the school's standards and have some knowledge of the factors which have influenced these in recent years. Other governors are new to the role, but are eager to become well informed and active in the work of the school.
45. The school is adequately staffed with appropriately qualified teachers. The employment of effective nursery nurses and classroom assistants shows good attention to value for money. Overall, staffing is good and matches the demands of the curriculum. The induction and support for newly qualified teachers is very good and has good effect on teaching competence and confidence. A professional interview system for staff is about to be implemented and is anticipated very favourably by all concerned as a professional development opportunity. In-service training programmes are carefully selected and built into an effective coherent programme which is linked to priorities.
46. The indoor and outdoor accommodation is attractive, spacious and used well. The outdoor environment is being improved and includes interesting and varied features. Displays in classrooms and corridors enhance the surroundings, celebrate the classroom experiences and contribute to pupils' learning.
47. Educational priorities are appropriately supported through the school's financial planning. Additional grants are explored with vigour and obtained for specific areas of work. Control of budgets is good. All designated funds are well monitored. Financial decisions are made by the appropriate group of governors and presented for approval to the full governing body. The day-to-day administration is carried out effectively.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to further develop the school, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- (i) Improve standards in science and information technology by:
  - ensuring that all staff develop appropriate subject knowledge;
  - ensuring that all aspects of these two subjects are taught.

*(Paragraphs 5, 6, 16, 70, 74, 77, 86, 87, 89, 94, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 102).*
  
- (ii) Build on the established assessment practice of the foundation stage so that all pupils, especially the higher attaining groups, make appropriate progress in all subjects.

*(Paragraphs 15, 18, 38, 40, 64, 78, 101).*
  
- (iii) Monitor and support pupils' academic progress more effectively by ensuring that pupils receive feedback about their strengths and weaknesses.

*(Paragraphs 20, 38, 65).*

### Minor issues

- Provide training in child protection issues for all staff.

*(Paragraph 35)*
  
- Include the full range of information in the prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents.

*(Paragraph 41)*
  
- Improve standards in design and technology.

*(Paragraphs 8, 83, 84, 85, 86)*
  
- Make more effective provision for writing across the curriculum.

*(Paragraphs 24, 63)*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	41
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	20

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	17	56	27	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	158
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	9

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	12

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.1
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2000	20 (30)	29 (29)	49 (59)

<b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20 (25)	20 (24)	20 (24)
	Girls	26 (27)	27 (29)	28 (28)
	Total	46 (52)	47 (53)	48 (52)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (88)	96 (90)	98 (88)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

<b>Teachers' Assessments</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20 (27)	19 (23)	20 (27)
	Girls	27 (28)	28 (24)	28 (27)
	Total	47 (55)	47 (47)	48 (54)
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	96 (93)	96 (80)	96 (92)
	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	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	126
Any other minority ethnic group	

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

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

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.2
Average class size	25.8

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y2**

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	129

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

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

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

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	325,411
Total expenditure	318,811
Expenditure per pupil	1,812
Balance brought forward from previous year	-(9310)
Balance carried forward to next year	-(2,710)

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	158
Number of questionnaires returned	86

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	65	28	6	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	42	43	5	0	10
Behaviour in the school is good.	34	56	0	0	10
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	34	45	10	2	8
The teaching is good.	51	43	0	0	6
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	40	40	8	2	10
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	65	30	2	0	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	51	44	1	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	40	42	10	0	8
The school is well led and managed.	59	36	1	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	44	42	2	0	12
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	9	40	21	7	23

## **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**

48. At the time of the inspection there were thirty children in the foundation stage. Children are admitted either at the beginning of the autumn term if their fifth birthday falls between 1st September and the last day of February, or at the beginning of the spring term if their fifth birthday is between 1st March and 31st August. All admissions are full-time. During the inspection all were being taught in one reception class for the majority of the time.
49. Standards in all areas are good and the curriculum for the under fives is a strength of the school. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when standards were satisfactory.

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

50. On entry into school, the majority of children have above average personal and social skills for their age group. They quickly learn to work as a group and have a very positive attitude to all aspects of school life. They become increasingly aware that their actions can affect other people. For example, in a movement lesson when linking actions to a story, they were very aware of each other's space when stretching and striding and tried very hard not to spoil each other's work. They sit still and sustain concentration when listening to instructions and stories and co-operate well. Teaching and support staff have very high expectations of behaviour and the children respond accordingly. Staff encourage children to care and share, and consistently reinforce good manners. Children are encouraged to be independent and quickly learn to cope with changing their own shoes and clothes and putting them away tidily. They take turns when working in a group and play together happily, collaborating well both in and out of the classroom. They are learning to be part of the larger school community and listen attentively to the stories in assembly. They are beginning to take responsibility for a variety of tasks, for example, collecting equipment and taking the register to the office. They soon settle into the school routine and are self-assured. Positive remarks and much praise from staff promote further the children's self-esteem and increase their self-confidence. The reception area is a calm, purposeful and secure environment in which the children can flourish in all areas of development.

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

51. On entering the reception class, the children's spoken language and their understanding and experience of books and print are good. Their listening skills are very good. Most children talk confidently to their teachers and peers and are articulate in expressing their thoughts.
52. Skilful question and answer sessions give children a good quality of experiences in language skills and teachers use every opportunity to enlarge and enrich children's vocabulary in all areas of the curriculum. Role play, such as the children's enacting of a scene in the optician's corner and dramatising the story of "Goldilocks" help to increase children's listening and speaking skills and provide opportunities for them to interact and talk with their peers and adults. They are encouraged to think of new and different ways to express their thoughts, for example, some pupils were confident and imaginative enough to invent alternative endings to the stories they were acting out. Children enjoy rhymes and poems and join in with enthusiasm. Higher and average



attainers already have a growing knowledge of sounds made by different letters and by the end of the reception year have a very good knowledge of many commonly used words. The work of lower attainers shows good concentration and knowledge and understanding of sounds, letters and simple words.

53. Early reading skills are developing well. All children understand that print carries meaning and enjoy using books. Higher attainers are beginning to recognise words and sounds and are "reading" books. By the end of the foundation stage they are able to read a variety of simple books and retrieve information from them, whilst average attainers can read simple sentences in picture books. All children can attempt to write their own names and hold their pencils correctly. By the age of five, higher attainers write their own legible, neatly written sentences and use word books. Average attainers are beginning to write independently whilst lower attainers copy carefully and suggest their own news. Some children identify capital letters and full stops. Many opportunities are provided for children's reading and emergent writing skills to develop. For example, they try to write prescriptions for spectacles in role-play and write step-by-step instructions for making porridge as part of their work on the theme "senses". Teaching is good overall and often very good. Teachers' planning is very well organised and detailed. What the children will learn is always clearly identified and assessment is ongoing and thorough. There is a good balance between whole class and group teaching as well as opportunities for children to choose tasks for themselves. The use of the Language-Master audio tape machine and the computer are part of the rich environment that supports the very good development of communication, language and literacy skills.

### **Mathematical development**

54. On entry, children have well developed mathematical skills and understanding. They count confidently to ten, some beyond ten, and recognise the numbers. Every opportunity is used to encourage children to count, sort and match objects. They quickly learn about counting on and back and understand the terms "one more", "one less" and "how many". Rhymes, stories and songs reinforce number concepts. By the end of the reception year, higher attainers add and subtract to 20, counting on and back. Higher and average attainers have experience in finding missing numbers, matching and balancing and telling the time. They make good progress. Average and lower attainers have a good grasp of number bonds to ten. By the age of five, below average attainers understand and record addition to ten, add on and match numbers to objects and record their work. Pupils enjoy practical experiences in understanding how patterns work and know the terms "straight" and "curved" and what a square is. In one lesson they enjoyed taking basic shapes out of a bag and naming them. By the end of the session the majority were able to recognise a circle, triangle and square and know the number of straight lines in the square and triangle. Higher and average attaining pupils learn to write their numbers correctly, whilst a range of activities throughout the curriculum, for example, cooking, puzzles, matching games, computer programs and percussion band, help to reinforce number concepts. Teaching is good and often very good. Teachers' structured planning and good organisation ensure that all children's needs are met. Teachers encourage the use of number language at every opportunity and give the children very good support.

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

55. On entry, children's skills in this area are good. They show great interest and curiosity in their current theme about "senses". They enjoy tasting, smelling and touching a variety of objects and materials and try very sensibly to identify smells and textures. For example, in a lesson in which they make popcorn, children first smell the dry sweetcorn and make suggestions about how it will change when heated, watching in silence and delight as the pan heats up and then the corn pops, later showing enjoyment when tasting it. Children enjoy learning about how living things grow and are fascinated by the "baby" pictures on display. The majority talk confidently about their homes and families, explaining their position in the family and where they live. Children select appropriate materials from an accessible range, for example, when making an effective display for the 'touching zone'. They develop good skills in cutting, painting, sticking and joining and produce attractive and practical spectacles for the 'seeing zone'. Skills in this area of learning are very well developed. Children are beginning to make good progress in using the computer. They know that pressing a key on the computer causes a change on the screen and are developing skills in controlling the mouse to drag and drop. A range of programmes is used and children's progress is recorded. They are given experience in using the Language-Master and show complete surprise and joy when they hear their own voices, showing excellent listening skills when identifying sounds and matching them to pictures and initial letters. The quality of teaching is good. Work is challenging and imaginative and reception staff work very closely together making the children's learning meaningful and fun.

## **Physical development**

56. When children enter the school their physical skills are quite well developed, particularly in skills which demand fine, small, controlled movements. They use pencils, crayons, scissors, brushes and tools with care and precision. Children demonstrate good physical skills in their use of space in movement and use appropriate vocabulary to describe their movements, for example, "wading", "striding". They listen to instructions very carefully. They learn to take turns and be aware of the needs of others. A spacious hall with a satisfactory range of small and large apparatus enables children to develop skills of jumping, hopping, climbing, landing and balancing. The large, attractive, secure play area, adjacent to the reception class, provides space and challenge for children to improve their skills, while a range of playground games gives them opportunities to work imaginatively. The teaching and the children's progress in this area are good.

## **Creative development**

57. Attainment in creative development is above the level expected for this age group. Through well-planned experiences, using a variety of media in painting, modelling, collage work and making, children's skills in this area develop very well. Children work with enthusiasm and take pride in their creations. For example, they enjoy showing paintings of their visit to Scout Wood and their "spectacular spectacles" display. When creating pictures from shapes and playdoh, they articulate their thoughts and explain about their work with confidence. They show sustained concentration and produce work of a good standard. Children are given many opportunities to develop imaginatively in role play in the various areas of the classroom and in literacy lessons. A music area is provided where children can experiment with instruments and sounds. They learn to hold the instruments correctly, recognise high and low sounds and clap simple rhythms, for example they can clap their names. They understand

the difference between practising and performing and being part of the "audience" whilst watching their peers perform with various instruments. Teaching is good. Reception staff have high expectations of the children and give all children many experiences and opportunities to express their ideas and feelings creatively.

58. All under-fives benefit from the good curriculum provided. Staff have very good knowledge and understanding of this age group and of the early learning goals. There is very good rapport between the reception teacher and support staff who work as a mutually supportive team to ensure good learning and development in all areas of the curriculum. The range of activities and the pace of teaching are well-matched to the children's interests and maturity. Assessment procedures are thorough and individual records of achievement are kept, for example, in reading. Children have a report book which is sent to their parents at the end of the year; it covers all areas of learning with examples, plus a written report from the class teacher and head. These reception reports are comprehensive, informative and well-presented.
59. Resources are good and plentiful. Accommodation is good, it comprises a large teaching area, cloakroom and a separate toilet area housing lavatories and wash basins. The outdoor playground and field are spacious and attractive. This good level of resourcing has good impact on learning.

## **ENGLISH**

60. Standards in English are good. In the national tests for 2000 standards in reading and writing were well above average in comparison with all schools and above average in comparison with similar schools. These latest results match the findings of this inspection.
61. Pupils have very good speaking and listening skills, concentrate very well and participate in class discussion with confidence, using good vocabulary. Pupils make effective suggestions when asked to provide a list of good qualities of one member of the class, or explain the praying gestures of another faith, taking pleasure in expressing their thoughts. They participate in discussion about instructions, showing good understanding of the idea. Pupils are effective readers; they enjoy books and have good interest in stories and information. They know about authors and illustrators. Higher attaining readers can build up new words with confidence, explain the meaning of the text and project the narrative into new directions. In the mixed age classes, pupils of both age groups have good opportunities to participate in reading and develop at their own individual level.
62. Writing is developing well and is satisfactory, with some good examples of extended written work by pupils. They can write their own instructions, using a recipe format and producing an imaginative list of ingredients. In the literacy hour pupils develop understanding of the sounds of letters, letter combinations and spelling patterns, using these in their reading and writing. Since the last inspection pupils are expected to try to build their own words in a personal word-book. Most show considerable success, using their knowledge of letters and sounds, which they build up steadily through the daily literacy sessions. Written work is well presented and pupils benefit from the clear handwriting instruction they receive. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress in relation to prior attainment.
63. Reading across the curriculum is effective, but written work across a range of subjects is less well developed. Good examples included the writing of prayers and explanations about the Hindu faith in religious education lessons, but opportunities to

develop writing skills in science and design and technology are under-developed. The use of word processing to support writing is only just beginning in the school, as there has been a technical delay in getting the new computers up and running.

64. Teaching is good. Literacy sessions are very well planned and carefully resourced so that class work and group work are efficiently supported. Partnership work between teachers and support staff in each classroom ensures that pupils of different ages are given suitable work and have effective guidance. Teachers instruct the classroom assistants very clearly, ensuring that they know how to proceed with the skills work with which they are mainly engaged. Teachers have good subject knowledge and they are skilled at questioning pupils and leading them in the reading of texts or the recognition and use of sounds. Assistants are skilled in discussing aspects of the work with pupils and are clear in their group-work objectives. Teachers plan and prepare carefully for every element, maintaining a steady pace to pupils' learning for these long sessions. Changes of activity are provided to help maintain pupils' interest. At appropriate stages the whole class comes together for review sessions in which the teacher expects pupils to explain what they have learned. Record keeping procedures are used effectively to ensure that planned work builds effectively on what pupils can already do, although higher attaining pupils are not fully challenged in all classes.
65. Learning is good and all pupils respond well to the good teaching. They enjoy good relationships with the adults, maintain interest and apply themselves well. Their knowledge and understanding grows and they have an increasing range of skills to support their work in English. Pupils are not always given enough information to help them know how well they are doing or where they need to work harder, being offered much praise, but little detail of strengths and weaknesses. This leads to them having only limited knowledge of their own learning.
66. Resources are good. Many have been organised to support homework for reading and spelling. The spelling provision for homework is matched to the pupils' needs, so can be variable within a class or an age group. Home reading provision is organised well, with different sets of books from those used in school. Many efforts have been made to ensure that pupils enjoy maximum choice at the appropriate level.
67. The management of the subject is good. The co-ordinator has responded with energy and commitment, offering a quality of leadership which is well informed and effective, with clear guidance to staff. The co-ordinator does not monitor classroom standards. Teaching consistency is being promoted through support and guidance from the headteacher. This well co-ordinated approach towards the demands and complexities of broad literacy provision for the mixed age classes benefits from clear direction and good teamwork across the school. Good standards and progress have been supported well through the introduction of the literacy strategy and maintained effectively since the last report.

## MATHEMATICS

68. Standards in mathematics are above average by the end of Key Stage 1. These findings confirm the results of the National Curriculum tests in 2000. These results reflect the generally upward trend of the 1997 and 1998 results after a dip in 1999.
69. The numeracy strategy is well-implemented in the school. By the age of seven, the majority of pupils add and subtract numbers to 100 with accuracy and higher attainers go beyond. Pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of simple fractions, understand how to double numbers to 100 and have good investigative skills. They use the facts they know in problem solving. Higher attainers successfully and quickly solve problems. For example, a Year 1 higher attainer can understand the problem, "There are 19 books on the top shelf and 32 on the bottom. 24 books are moved. How many are left?" Pupils apply their numeracy skills well to find the answer. Mathematical vocabulary is consistently used and extended. For example, in a Year 1 lesson about coin recognition and value, pupils used the terms "less than" and "more than" and they showed understanding of mathematical expressions used by the teacher. Work in pupils' folders and books shows good progress and above average standards for both higher and average attainers. The majority of lower attainers reach average standards by the age of seven and are attaining well.
70. Teaching is good overall, although there are some minor weaknesses. Planning is good and teachers understand and have good knowledge of the numeracy strategy. However, sessions are occasionally too static for young children and sometimes review sessions are rushed and do not finish the lessons effectively. All teachers cater well for the mixed aged classes and meet the needs of pupils of differing levels of attainment with well-prepared worksheets and resources. Support staff are well-deployed and pupils with special educational needs are given appropriate help. Work is marked effectively with some positive, encouraging remarks. All teachers use praise well in class sessions. Teachers are, in the main, enthusiastic and maintain a good pace. Group work and mental sessions are well-managed and children work co-operatively and are well-behaved. In these sessions pupils show good observational and mental skills. For example, in a Year 2 lesson pupils quickly recognised patterns in sequences and discovered "near doubles". Little use is made of information technology to support pupils' learning in mathematics.
71. The co-ordinator is keen and has good subject knowledge, but does not monitor classroom standards. All staff have received in-service training, have had their work monitored by the headteacher and have had the opportunity to observe their colleagues teaching numeracy. In addition, staff plan together and have curriculum meetings to analyse test results. These developments are having good impact on teaching and standards. Day-to-day assessment is good and informs future planning. There are targets for year groups and individuals and the school is moving towards specific tracking of pupils' progress throughout the school.
72. Resources are good, plentiful and easily accessible. Resources have good impact on teaching, learning and standards, supporting the good variety of practical and written activities seen in lessons. Numeracy skills are promoted satisfactorily across the whole curriculum.
73. The previous inspection report judged the school's attainment in mathematics to be good. It has continued to be good. In addition, the numeracy strategy has been introduced and implemented well.

## SCIENCE

74. Teachers' assessment in 2000 showed standards to be above the national average. Inspection findings, based on a scrutiny of work completed in the school year 1999-2000 and discussion with pupils, do not concur with these assessments, which were inaccurate and over-optimistic. Standards are below the national average and pupils are not achieving at levels of which they are capable. The school has already taken action to redress this situation. The science lessons in the week of the inspection were not seen. From the analysis of previous work, inspectors found that there has been variation between classes and years in the content, range and depth of the science curriculum. The impact has been that pupils, including those with special educational needs and those of higher attainment, have not reached appropriate standards except in life processes and living things. This is because all teachers make some contribution towards learning in this aspect. Pupils' knowledge of materials and forces is much weaker and their ability to investigate and undertake scientific enquiry is under-developed because these areas are not systematically taught.
75. Pupils' knowledge of life processes and living things is good. Pupils link a range of animals to different habitats and identify how they are suited to them. They draw animals and point out, for example, sharp claws to be used for digging. Pupils know the requirements for seeds to grow. They grow four containers of cress seeds under different conditions. Having predicted what will happen; they observe, draw and write their results. Pupils also know about healthy lifestyles and they write about beneficial foods and people who help to maintain our fitness.
76. By the age of seven, pupils write clear explanations and show understanding within the expectations set in school, but this work is not at the expected national level. Challenges presented to pupils do not require them to extend their enquiries or their thinking sufficiently. On occasions, as in work on electricity, Year 1 pupils are set higher-level tasks than are pupils in Year 2. Often pupils within the same year groups are set similar tasks, with no account taken of prior knowledge and understanding. Some investigations and enquiries take place but these are insufficient for pupils to develop effectively their skills in scientific enquiry. A lack of any structure to the recording of investigations also contributes to this. In some classes there is overuse of worksheets, with no opportunity for pupils to give explanations about what they observe.
77. The curriculum provision for science is unsatisfactory because of the unbalanced coverage of the different aspects and the lack of investigative and experimental work and opportunities to extend learning. Provision for life processes and living things is good. Teachers provide good experiences of the natural world. For example, animals such as rabbits, tortoises and hedgehogs are brought into school for pupils to observe. Pupils explore the local environment and record what they find. Some good cross-curricular links are made. When pupils learn about the senses they use musical instruments and listen to changes in music. Provision for the study of materials and their properties and physical processes is weak and intermittent. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution to speaking and listening when pupils are asked to explain their understanding, but written work is very limited in amount and scope. There is little direct link with numeracy. Information technology is not used to support learning in the subject.

78. The very strong recent emphasis on developing literacy and numeracy in the school has meant that science has regressed since the previous inspection. However, it is now at the forefront of current school development. The headteacher has taken on the role of subject co-ordinator and has an action plan for improvement. A new scheme of work has now been implemented although without sufficient time to effect any major impact. Provision has been made for teachers to be trained to teach the subject in more depth and with more confidence. There has been a lack of any structured ongoing assessment so that those made at the end of the key stage had insufficiently firm foundation. An assessment booklet has now been produced as a first step to providing an awareness of the levels of pupils' understanding.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

79. Standards and quality in art were judged through consideration of class activities, analysis of displays of work, scrutiny of the school's policy, planning and scheme of work, and discussion with the co-ordinator. Standards in art meet expectations for the age group at the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils in Year 2 can use appropriate tools and create pictures using a range of media such as paint and clay. They have good understanding of colours and can develop some of their painting work to higher than average standards. Progress in art is satisfactory.
80. Teaching is satisfactory. Lessons are well planned and carried out effectively. Pupils are able to work in a clean and well prepared area, where they sometimes embark upon a longer term project which will lead them, for example, through stages of observing, moulding clay, designing, painting and eventually, producing a finished dish. Painting and colour work is supported through reference to the work of famous artists. Pupils respond well to their experiences in art and maintain their interest in the work, producing well organised results which reflect their use of the media, their early understanding of colours and good efforts in representing what they see.
81. The curriculum is satisfactory. Pupils have many opportunities to explore a wide range of media and techniques. Good examples were seen in the school of work with paints, drawing materials and modelling materials. Techniques learned include colour blending, collage, painting and modelling. Three-dimensional work includes modelling with clay and boxes. Art is often linked to themes in the curriculum, so learning is frequently enhanced as pupils extend or use information from other areas of learning to complete their art projects. There is satisfactory contribution to pupils' cultural development through the use of artefacts from other cultures to inspire work and designs, such as the Aboriginal items used in one of the mixed age classes. A graphics program is used in some classes to create pictures on the computer.
82. At the time of the last inspection art standards were above expectations for the age group of the school. Standards are now in line with expectations. Since that time there has been satisfactory progress in the provision for art during a period of extensive change in the school. The current co-ordinator for art has only recently taken up this responsibility along with a number of others. Art has not been a high priority for development, but will become so in the next year. Curriculum guidance is available for staff in an informal way and the scheme of work supports class teaching effectively. The resource base has been developed and has particularly helpful examples of the work of a variety of artists, which support knowledge and understanding in the subject. The library contains some useful reference books about artists.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

83. Standards in design and technology are below those expected of pupils of this age. Although it was not possible to observe any lessons, evidence was gleaned from a scrutiny of articles made, photographs of activities, samples of planning and discussion with pupils. Standards were good at the time of the last inspection, so there has been some deterioration.
84. By the age of seven, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of materials and ways of joining them. They construct bathing machines and beach huts, employing a range of materials and achieving a good-quality finish. Didgeridoos made as part of an Australian theme show very careful work producing a high-quality end product. Standards in planning and evaluating work are below expectations for all pupils, including those with special educational needs, because they do not consider sufficiently if and how they could improve on their original plans. There is a lack of individuality in design and pupils' only suggestions for planning are to draw a picture.
85. Discussion with pupils confirms their experience with food technology and materials. Year 1 pupils made apple crumble and gingerbread men. They designed sandwiches but did not make them. Planning involves discussion with the teacher and making a drawing, sometimes labelled, of their proposed product. There is little evidence of development in this aspect and pupils are not being required to plan and test their own ideas. On occasions they have opportunities for considering and evaluating commercial products. For example, Year 2 pupils wrote about the suitability of a wellington boot for its purpose and on another occasion they explained how a torch works.
86. The new co-ordinator is aware of some of the shortcomings. Recent action taken has been to introduce the national model scheme of work. Some good cross-curricular links are made with geography, history and science. There is little reinforcement or use of literacy and numeracy skills through design and technology provision. Information technology does not yet contribute to the subject.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

87. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils reach standards which are above national expectations. The rolling programme throughout Key Stage 1 ensures that all programmes of study are covered. Pupils are developing good skills in map making and recording their findings. For example, in one lesson, having studied maps showing the countryside and the town, and identified particular features such as roads and rivers, pupils were able to produce a map of the "town mouse's journey to the country mouse's house" very well. Pupils are familiar with geographical language and use it accurately. For example, when comparing a seaside locality with their own village, pupils recognise the "coast line", "hills" and "rivers" and read specific signs and symbols. They also learn to deduce facts from looking at secondary sources of information such as photographs. For example, the word "hotel" found on a photograph, plus "No dogs allowed on the beach", confirmed the pupils' findings that the photograph was of a seaside resort. They show good observational skills. They look at various effects of weather on people's lives and choice of clothing, and can identify "hot" and "cold" countries. All pupils achieve well in the subject, including those with special needs. Good standards have been maintained since the last inspection.



88. Pupils work with enjoyment and discuss similarities and differences between their own and another environment enthusiastically. They are very knowledgeable about their own locality and link work in history with their geographical studies, for example, the local rock houses where they date the rock strata and discuss the flooding in their village and why it occurred many years ago but doesn't happen now.
89. Teaching is good. Systematic planning ensures that all stages of learning are catered for appropriately. Good and often open-ended questions such as, "What effect do you think this hot weather would have on people?" or "How would you feel?" encourage pupils to express their own views and understand how environments vary. Literacy and numeracy skills are developed in most aspects of the lessons, but only limited use is made of information technology to support work in geography.
90. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and shares the planning for the subject with the headteacher and staff. There has been no opportunity for the co-ordinator to monitor classroom practice but the current monitoring of planning is proving to be helpful in improving teaching provision. A good supply of photographs and some artefacts are available in school, supplemented by those from the local authority's resource centre. Day-to-day and end of topic assessments are good. There are plans to assess pupils at the end of the year to ascertain progress and to ensure that all pupils are appropriately challenged.

## **HISTORY**

91. There were no lessons observed during the inspection, as history is not taught during this half of the term. Judgements were made through analysis of work, discussions with teachers and children and through listening to recordings made previously.
92. By the time they are seven, pupils are achieving the expected standards. The subject is appropriately provided for and pupils have a good recall of previous work and are developing a keen sense of chronology. They are able to compare life in their village now and how it was in the 1960s, Victorian times and even further back. They use relevant vocabulary. For example, when recording an interview with someone who lived in the village fifty years ago, they asked questions such as "Did you have a play area then?", "What did you do for fun?". Pupils show great interest in learning about the different prices of things "in the old days" and they express wonder at the prospect of needing coupons to buy sweets. They relate precisely how the Fire of London started, giving names of places and dates and discuss sensibly the merits of whether the fire was a good happening or not. In these discussions the pupils show knowledge and understanding of events and their consequences. For example, one pupil contributed, "The fire got rid of the rats and rubbish and the people were able to rebuild the town". Pupils articulate their ideas very well. When describing their visit to a castle where they dressed in Victorian clothes, they were able to compare the procedure for washing clothes then and now, and discuss modes of transport. They can discuss photographs taken a long time ago and compare them with present day ones. They study teddy bears through the ages and make perceptive comments such as "There was a very old special bear with a famous name" and "It was definitely made in another country, China or probably Germany".
93. Pupils have a good understanding of the history they have learned. Work is recorded through a wide range of worksheets, wall displays and well-presented class books, plus photographs and tapes. There are appropriate artefacts and books to support pupils' learning. There are few opportunities to use skills in information technology to

find historical information or to help investigation or recording. History was found to be in line with national expectations in the last inspection and this has been maintained.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

94. Standards of attainment are below national expectations and pupils do not achieve as they should. The main reasons for this are the lack of time allocated to the subject, lack of suitable equipment, limitations in the scheme of work and the lack of confidence of teachers in teaching information technology. The quality and quantity of computers has now been improved and the school is in a better position to teach the required skills.
95. The use of a design program and a geography program has led to some competence for both Year 1 and Year 2 pupils in the use of the mouse to lift, drag and drop accurately. Some pupils in both year groups use the keyboard to copy their poems into the word processor. Some groups of pupils have been introduced to Encarta to find information, but are at very early stages of using this. Some have been introduced to the Internet as another means of communicating, in a range of communications they have studied. Pupils have only very limited awareness of the place of information and communications technology across the curriculum or in society generally.
96. Pupils were seen using information technology on a number of occasions, such as word processing after a language lesson. They used the new machines with help from teachers or support staff and were developing some familiarity with the hardware. Pupils were beginning to concentrate and use the equipment sensibly. Pairs of Year 1 and 2 pupils showed good co-operation. Observation of pupils indicates that they are making only very limited progress at present.
97. The curriculum for this subject is unsatisfactory; it is not clear how computers are to be used to support pupils' learning or provide additional enrichment across the curriculum. Some useful work has been done to introduce pupils to a range of technological devices, but it is not established which skills and competencies pupils will be taught. However, all teachers have growing confidence with word processing and use it readily in the preparation of lesson plans, making resources and preparing worksheets and other documents. Some classroom assistants are also competent in some aspects of information technology.
98. A new policy for information technology has been developed and staff training for using computers in lessons is planned for the near future. The co-ordinator has worked closely with the local education authority's providers and after a delayed start, some momentum is now evident. Fund raising has been an important consideration in all of this work, and money has been raised through various sources, including the National Grid for Learning. The policy and procedures have the potential to raise standards when the curriculum provision is clear and every teacher is fully trained. So far, few records are kept of pupils' progress. The provision for this subject rightly remains a whole school priority.
99. Since the last inspection, when attainment was good, there has been deterioration of standards. While the school can now offer a suitable range of hardware and software, the improved resources are only just beginning to make impact on learning and achievement. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory and have been effective in putting these good resources in place and overcoming the technical problems associated with their installation.

## **MUSIC**

100. By the age of seven, pupils reach standards which are in line with national expectations. They sing enthusiastically and tunefully and are beginning to understand the need to sing loudly or quietly and appreciate the mood of particular songs, for example, when singing the song "Sun Arise" from Australia. Teachers use their own voices to good effect when teaching new melodies. Pupils learn to handle percussion instruments correctly, to differentiate between high and low sounds and to clap simple rhythms. Pupils' listening skills are good. There is some composing, such as making sequences in percussion work, but this aspect is, as yet, under-developed.
101. The quality of teaching is good and staff are enthusiastic to follow the new programme for planning. However, a lack of musical expertise and confidence occasionally prevents some teachers from enhancing and furthering pupils' musical knowledge and understanding. For example, in a lesson with its focus on listening and creating sounds, only one simple song, which the pupils soon grasped, was used. This shows too little use of assessment. The introduction of more challenging songs with more musical content would have enriched the pupils' experiences and helped to increase their knowledge and understanding. Pupils take a full part in the village community, singing at special events and playing their recorders at concerts and festivals.
102. The very recently appointed co-ordinator is keen to develop music in the school and has drawn up a new policy to cover all aspects of music making. Resources are sufficient, apart from tuned percussion instruments and keyboards, to enable pupils to explore and create musical sounds and thus develop their composing skills. The use of information technology has not yet been incorporated into this subject, but it is in the planning. In the last report, music was taught by some specialists and was judged to be good. At present it is in line with national expectations.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

103. Lessons were seen in dance only, where standards are in line with expectations for the age group of the pupils.
104. All pupils learn country dancing and show skills appropriate to their age. The majority of them skip in a controlled way, both forwards and sideways. They listen to the music and respond to the rhythm. When pupils practise individual skills they show careful use of space and when dancing in sets they take care to avoid others. Pupils work well with partners and in groups. Pairings are of mixed gender and pupils show a sensible attitude to this.
105. Teaching is satisfactory. Teachers prepare themselves well for the lessons and planning is good. Effective warm-ups take place so that pupils are well prepared for subsequent activities. Pupils know the purpose of this part of the lesson. One teacher asked pupils to change their movements when they heard a change in the music, thus reinforcing skills in music and listening. When the pupils moved on to the full dance they were well prepared for the different elements of the dance in line with changes to the music. All teachers manage pupils very well so that activities take place safely. Plans for lessons show progression from skills to the complete dance so that pupils are able to apply skills whilst concentrating on the sequences. Insufficient emphasis is given to raising the quality of performance. Satisfactory learning takes place in lessons and some Year 1 pupils are particularly helped when older pupils support them. Progress over time is seen when many pupils learn a

complete dance in only a few lessons. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to others and the least confident pupils learn particularly well when supported by an additional adult. The large majority of pupils enjoy dance lessons and work very hard.

106. Country dancing supports numeracy well when pupils are required to count complex timing. The subject is supported by various activities through the year. These include 'fitness fortnight' and visits by outside agencies such as the local football club. The subject is led effectively and it makes a good contribution to pupils' personal and social development.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

107. Standards are good. This is an improvement since the last report, when standards were satisfactory. By the time they are seven, pupils explain some of the religious symbols and gestures of a world faith. They show a growing awareness of prayer and its importance to different groups of people. They are becoming familiar with some of the symbolic features of a number of religions and appreciate and understand the main Christian events, celebrations and symbols. The newly planned curriculum fulfils the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education.
108. Pupils make good progress in this subject, showing high levels of interest and enthusiasm for knowledge. They listen carefully, ask and answer questions and observe details in the artefacts. Their written work reflects this good level of attention.
109. Teachers use good resources to help pupils understand the subject matter. Very good classroom and hall displays extend the lessons and add further information. Lesson introductions are full of interest; teachers use questioning and discussion techniques well, drawing ideas from pupils and exploring new concepts. In one class the washing of feet by a pupil generated stimulating discussion among pupils about the meaning and purpose of such activity. Learning in lessons seen was good. Pupils in one class inspected a prayer mat and sought more information about the meaning of the decoration on it. Pupils in another class knew about prayer books and could explain different kinds of prayer. All pupils approached their written work with good understanding of what was required. Younger and lower attaining pupils were well supported, with targeted adult help to support their progress.
110. Co-ordination of the subject is good, even though the subject does not have high priority in the development planning. A clearly defined programme of work for the whole school has been introduced by the new co-ordinator, who has also provided effective guidance for teachers and obtained helpful resources. This has had the result of increasing teachers' confidence to teach religious education and teaching seen ranged from satisfactory to very good. However, classroom standards are not monitored in the school. A scrutiny of work shows that provision for religious education is quite different this year from that provided in the previous year, when work in this subject was unco-ordinated. The strong leadership means that standards are being improved rapidly and efficiently.