

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **DEEPDALE INFANT SCHOOL**

Preston

LEA area: Lancashire

Unique reference number: 119228

Headteacher: Mrs Anne Desforges

Reporting inspector: Jean Riley  
20969

Dates of inspection: 25 – 28 September 2000

Inspection number: 225401

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school;	Infant and Nursery
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	St Stephen's Road Deepdale Preston
Postcode:	PR1 6TD
Telephone number:	01772 795586
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Joe Singleton
Date of previous inspection:	February 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Inspector Number	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs Jean Riley Registered inspector	20969	Mathematics Music Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well the school is led and managed. What sort of a school is it? What the school should do to improve further.
Mr Peter Dannheisser Lay inspector	1165		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well the school cares for its pupils. How well the school works in partnership with parents.
Mrs Susan Walker Team inspector	21045	Geography History Information and communication technology Areas of learning in the foundation stage	How well pupils are taught.
Mr Roger Linstead Team inspector	19041	English Art and design Design and technology Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The curriculum.
Mrs Gaynor Smith Team inspector	31546	Science Religious education Physical education Equal opportunities	Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

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Inspection Quality Division  
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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The school has 262 full-time pupils, boys and girls aged from four to seven. Fifty-two boys and girls attend part-time in the nursery. Children are admitted to one of the three reception classes at the beginning of the year in which they are five. The nursery is normally oversubscribed and although the rest of the school is not full, the number on roll shows an increase from year to year. The school serves an area of social and economic disadvantage and is part of the Preston Education Action Zone (EAZ). It is next to Deepdale Junior School, and pupils share the same canteen. In 1997, there was a major fire, which caused extensive damage and delayed educational development. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals (42 per cent) is above average and English is the first language for less than one in five children. The children come mainly from Asian families and the main languages spoken other than English are Gujarati, Punjabi and Urdu. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs (34 per cent) is high and eight pupils have Statements of Special Educational Need. The school has a high level of pupil mobility as around 15 per cent of pupils either leave or join the school during the year. Most pupils have nursery or pre-school education, but despite this the average level of attainment of pupils entering the reception year is well below average.

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

Standards are mostly in line with those of similar schools. The pupils enjoy coming to school and are keen to learn. The teaching is satisfactory overall, and there is much that is good. Parents know about their children's progress and are happy with what the school provides. The teachers work together well and are keen to improve further. The school is well led and managed and has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. It is cost-effective and runs efficiently. On balance, the overall effectiveness of the school is good.

At the time of the last inspection, the school provided good value for money. The school's unit costs reflect the difficult challenges that it faces and are above average. Matching the overall effectiveness of the school against its running costs, it provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- Effective teaching in mathematics, science and art helps the pupils to make good progress in these subjects.
- Bilingual pupils make good progress in learning to speak English.
- Most pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and their behaviour is good.
- The school helps pupils from different faiths and backgrounds to learn and play happily together.
- There is plenty of good teaching in Key Stage 1 that helps the pupils to learn quickly.
- The headteacher and governors lead and manage the school well.
- The teachers work well together and continually look for ways to improve.

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

- Pupils do not make enough progress in learning to write.
- Some aspects of the teaching are not as good as they should be.
- A few pupils do not make good progress because they do not attend school often enough.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made satisfactory improvement since its last inspection in February 1997. At that time it was described as a "good school that provided a high standard of learning opportunities for its pupils". Since the last inspection, standards in reading and mathematics have improved at the same rate as those in other schools, but standards in writing have not kept up. Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships are still good, but there has been little improvement in attendance and this affects the learning of a few pupils. The quality of teaching is better than it was and the quality of leadership and management is still good. Parents take a more active part in the life of the school and this valuable partnership between home and school helps their children to learn more effectively. Careful use of funds and a community partnership have enabled improvements to be made to the buildings. Children who are under five make better progress in many areas of learning as they now have the use of a safe yet exciting outdoor play area, while the older pupils are helped to extend their reading skills and enjoyment of books in a welcoming new library.

## STANDARDS

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

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

When pupils begin school, many are at early stage of learning English and are working at a level that is well below average when compared with other children of the same age. Their achievement, in terms of the progress they make in all areas of learning is good. The pupils who are currently in the foundation stage are not progressing quite as well because there have been recent changes to the staffing that have affected the quality of their learning.

The results of national tests in 1999 were higher than those of previous years. The results of national tests in 2000 and evidence from pupils' work in school indicate that pupils achieve standards that are average when compared with those of similar schools in speaking and listening and in reading. In writing, however, standards are not as good as those in similar schools and pupils do not make enough progress. Pupils do better in mathematics and in science. Their progress is good, particularly in mental calculations and the results are above average when compared with those of similar schools. Standards in art are above average, and in all other subjects they are at the level expected for the pupils' age.

Pupils who are learning English as an additional language make good progress in learning to speak and understand English as the teachers make sure they understand and give them extra help. Most pupils with special educational needs also make good progress towards their targets but a few pupils do not have enough support in lessons and this adversely affects their progress. Pupils who learn quickly also make good progress, particularly in reading, mathematics and science.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy school and have positive attitudes to their learning. They usually concentrate well and work hard.

Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. The pupils help to make sensible rules and understand why they need to follow them.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils listen well to their teachers and follow their instructions. They are polite and show respect for adults and for school property. Pupils from different cultures and faiths work and play amicably together.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. High levels of absence prevent several pupils from making as much progress as they should.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years
61 lessons were seen	Satisfactory	Good

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

Ninety-two per cent of the teaching is satisfactory or better and 13 per cent is very good or better. Eight per cent of the teaching is unsatisfactory. The most effective teaching is in mathematics, science and art and as a result, the pupils' progress in these subjects is good. Teaching in the other subjects is satisfactory overall, although there are some shortcomings in the teaching of reading and writing and in the areas of learning for children under five. In the most effective lessons, the teachers provide challenging tasks and ask plenty of questions that stimulate the pupils to think carefully before replying. In some cases, however, the teaching lacks pace and the pupils have to listen for too long. In the literacy hour, for example, the pupils do not always have enough time to practise the small steps of reading and writing enough to really improve their skills. Unsatisfactory teaching is mainly the result of the teachers' insecure understanding of either the subject matter or of how young children learn.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum is broad and balanced. Role-play helps pupils to practise the skills of literacy and numeracy while learning how to co-operate with other pupils.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils who need extra support have clear individual education plans and the teachers help them to reach their learning targets.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Bilingual support for pupils in the foundation stage helps them to settle into school and to begin learning. Most teachers speak clearly and give extra help to pupils to help them to understand better.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Pupils are taught how to value and respect different faiths and cultures. In assemblies, they learn how to behave quietly at a special time, but also to join together and celebrate in song.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Care is good. The school has effective ways of checking that pupils are making progress. They are safe and well cared for and are taught good habits, such as healthy eating.
How well the school works in partnership with parents.	The partnership is good. Parents have many opportunities to visit school to find out how their children are doing. Compared with other schools, not many parents help the teachers regularly in school.



## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher has a strong vision that is shared by staff. Teachers are committed to helping their pupils achieve well and help to create an ethos of care, respect and good relationships. There is a very strong commitment to improvement.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil their responsibilities well. They are well informed and have effective procedures for managing the work of the school. The governing body is not as strong as it could be as there are two governor vacancies.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. Regular reviews of the work of the school ensure that lessons are taught well, but the governors' plans for further improvement are not clear enough.
The strategic use of resources	The school is very well organised and administered. The building is well cared for and used efficiently. Staff are deployed well and the teachers use learning resources imaginatively to help pupils' learning. Governors spend the school's finances wisely to support the pupils' learning and follow the principles of best value.

The school has enough teachers, but there are not enough support staff to help pupils who have particular difficulties with learning. The accommodation is generous, although the dining facilities are poor. With the exception of computer equipment, all subjects are very well resourced.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children enjoy coming to school and are interested in their work.</li> <li>• The children are well taught and make good progress especially in learning to speak English.</li> <li>• They learn to behave well and to act responsibly.</li> <li>• The teachers respect family traditions and religious belief and promote equality of opportunity.</li> <li>• Teachers are approachable and always ready to listen to parents and tell them about their children's progress.</li> <li>• The school is well managed and led. The teachers expect the pupils to achieve high standards.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• About one in seven parents would like their children to have more work to do at home.</li> <li>• A very small number of parents would like to know more about the work their children are doing at school.</li> <li>• A very small number of parents would like more activities outside lessons.</li> </ul>

The school provides reading and mathematics activities for children to do at home that help their learning. The inspection team agrees with parents that, for pupils who want them, more activities to complete with their parents at home could help children's progress. Although comprehensive and accurate information is provided for parents about their children's progress, there could be more to inform them about the curriculum. The school arranges interesting educational visits, but there are few activities outside lessons.

Parents strongly support the aims and values promoted by the school and believe that they are reflected in all its work. With the exception of ensuring that pupils achieve well in all aspects of English, the inspection team agrees with the parents' positive views.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1 As the inspection took place at the beginning of a new school year, the evaluation of standards at the end of the foundation stage is based on observation of the current Year 1 pupils, a scrutiny of written work completed last year, and the school's assessment records. These show that although attainment on entry to the nursery is well below what is normally expected for children of this age, their achievement, in terms of progress from a very low starting point, is good. By the end of the reception year, the majority of children attain the goals expected for their age in personal, social and emotional development, physical development and in most aspects of creative development. In the other areas of learning, very few attain the standard expected, and most enter Key Stage 1 working at a level which is below average for their age.

2 By the end of the foundation stage, most pupils have formed good relationships with their teachers and other pupils; they show appropriate independence in dressing and personal hygiene and are beginning to show respect for people's different beliefs and cultures. This represents good progress and prepares the pupils well for learning and co-operating with other people in the next stage of education.

3 Pupils' achievement in the area of learning supporting their developing skills in communication is good. Most pupils have English as an additional language; they start with very little understanding of English and have limited opportunity to practise speaking in English outside school. Well-targeted bilingual support enables these pupils to develop their confidence as speakers through the nursery and reception classes, and they learn to take turns in conversation and negotiate ideas and plans for their play. However, much of the interaction is (appropriately) in the pupils' own languages and few of them become sufficiently proficient in communicating in English to explain their thinking or to resolve difficulties or disagreement.

4 Assessment records indicate that most pupils also made good progress in language and literacy through the reception year. A few gifted pupils who were assessed in reading at the beginning of the year at standards that were well below average, progressed so well that they achieved standards that were above average at the end of the year. Through the foundation stage, pupils grow in confidence as writers, they progress through the stepping stones of the curriculum and as a result, know the different purposes for writing and are well motivated to use it to communicate with other people. In this respect, their achievement represents good progress through the key stage. However, most pupils do not leave the foundation stage with the necessary knowledge and understanding of letter sounds and patterns to enable them to read well enough or to communicate in writing at the standard expected.

5 Children make good progress in their mathematical development though the proportion that reach the level expected for the end of the reception year is lower than in most schools. Evidence from the observation of pupils at the beginning of Year 1 indicates that around two thirds of pupils can count reliably and recognise numerals one to nine; they use the vocabulary associated with addition and subtraction and can recreate patterns. Although most pupils know the correct mathematical vocabulary to describe shape, they are less secure with the language of comparison or position, and pupils with English as an additional language have difficulty in using mathematical language to explain how they have applied their mathematical knowledge to solve problems. Nevertheless, the pupils have a sound basis for future learning and most are ready for the Year 1 work of the National Numeracy Framework.

6 In the area of learning concerned with knowledge and understanding of the world, most pupils achieve well in relation to their starting point. They learn to use their senses to investigate the world around them and have an appropriate understanding of the uses of every day technology. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress in learning new

vocabulary, but it is not sufficient to enable them to use English to ask questions about why things happen or how things work. For this reason, only a few pupils achieve the goals expected for their age before starting in Key Stage 1. In physical and creative development, the pupils' progress is good and most are close to achieving the level expected for their age.

7 Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress overall although their learning through Key Stage 1 continues to be affected by an insecure understanding of spoken English. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well in lessons. They have appropriate targets to structure their learning and consequently make sound progress.

8 The new school year has brought substantial changes to the foundation stage. Not only is there a new curriculum, but three out of the four teachers, including the foundation stage co-ordinator, are either new to the school or to the age group. At this early stage in the year, inspection evidence suggests that children currently in the nursery and reception classes are not achieving as well as they could as the quality of learning in lessons observed was mainly satisfactory, seldom good, and in a few lessons, unsatisfactory.

9 Standards in speaking and listening and in reading at the end of Key Stage 1 are below the national average for all schools. This judgement is based on inspection observations, teachers' assessment records and evidence from the test results from 2000, which were not as high as those of 1999. Most pupils make satisfactory progress in reading and achieve standards that are in line with those of similar schools. Pupils with the potential to do really well make good progress and overall, about one in five pupils achieve standards in reading that are above average for their age. Standards in reading have improved at the same rate as in other schools over the last five years. The pupils show enjoyment of stories and reading, but pupils with English as an additional language have difficulty in describing events or characters from what they have read. Many pupils do not have a really secure knowledge of letter sounds to enable them to work out new words for themselves and standards in literacy are not high enough to support pupils' learning in other subjects.

10 Standards in writing shown by the results of national tests in both 1999 and 2000, are well below the national average. Although the test results in 1999 were in line with those of similar schools, standards have not kept pace with national improvements and the proportion of pupils who attained the expected level in the tests in 2000 was lower than in previous years. The teachers provide ideas to help the pupils organise their writing, but many pupils struggle with letter formation and with expressing their ideas in writing. Higher attaining pupils again do well and the proportion of pupils who reach standards that are good for their age is well above the average for similar schools. However, progress for the majority of pupils in using skills of spelling, handwriting, punctuation, vocabulary or grammar in their writing is not satisfactory.

11 Standards in mathematics were above the national average in 1999 and well above average when compared with the results of similar schools. Inspection evidence and teachers' assessments indicate that standards are in line with the national average, and this is confirmed by the results of the most recent tests in 2000. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs and higher attaining pupils, make good progress through the key stage. Standards in mathematics have kept pace with national improvements over the last five years. Inspection evidence and teachers' assessment records indicate that pupils make good progress through the key stage. They gain a secure understanding of numbers and begin to use mental methods for calculation. This helps them with practical tasks such as measuring lengths or counting money and giving change. Standards in numeracy are at the expected level and sufficient to support pupils' learning in other subjects.

12 Standards in science have improved since the last inspection and are now in line with the national average. Teaching in small groups enables the pupils to make good progress. They have plenty of practical experience which supports them in learning skills of literacy and numeracy and enables them to extend their knowledge and understanding as well as practise the skills of observation and investigation.

13 Standards in art are above average. The pupils are skilled for their age and their work is imaginative and decorative. Pupils' achievement in information and communications technology is good; they are able to apply their skills to support learning in other subjects. In all the other subjects, including religious education, standards are at the expected level and most pupils' achievement in terms of their progress through the key stage, is satisfactory.

14 The governors maintain a close check on standards but do not set targets for pupils' attainment. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress in speaking and understanding English. Most pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their targets although a few pupils do not have enough support in lessons and this affects their progress. Higher attaining pupils achieve well across the curriculum as the work they are given is challenging and interesting. Careful analysis of national test results by senior managers suggests that in general, girls do not achieve as well as boys. This view is supported by classroom observation where girls tend to take a "back seat" in lessons, leaving the boys to answer questions and to take the lead in organising activities. The teachers' growing awareness and sensitive classroom management are helping the girls to make better progress and the gap between girls' and boys' achievement, although still evident, is narrowing.

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

15 Parents report that their children enjoy school and make good progress in their personal development. Observation in lessons and around the school supports the parents' views. At the last inspection, pupils' response to school, their attitudes to learning, behaviour and relationships with other people, were judged to be good. This has been successfully sustained.

16 Pupils in the foundation stage respond well to school. Most settle well into the carefully structured routines and show enthusiasm for exploring the interesting tasks that are provided. Although communication difficulties prevent many pupils from discussing their activities with each other or their teachers, they co-operate constructively at play and contribute appropriately in lessons. Standards of behaviour are very good in lessons; even when the teachers' explanations are not understood, pupils sit quietly and appear to be well motivated.

17 Pupils' attitudes towards learning are good. They are often enthralled, especially when they are encouraged to take part in active learning, for example in games, art and design, music and singing. They take part in pretend games with enthusiasm and assume the role of a shop-keeper, garage mechanic or parent with confidence. The pupils' interest in learning enables them to sustain their concentration well in lessons, even when they have difficulty understanding their teachers which limits their contribution.

18 Behaviour is good overall and there are no exclusions. Pupils are courteous and move carefully around the classroom. In the playground pupils share play equipment and show considerable ability to co-operate and play games together. They are considerate and respect one another. For example, they successfully manage the difficult task of walking over to the junior school for lunch, accompanied by staff, quietly waiting their turn to collect their meal. Later they queue to return – and do so in an orderly manner, even in the pouring rain. In a class assembly, five year olds sat quietly in a circle, respectfully listening to their teacher describing what and who was special to her and then willingly shared their own thoughts with the class.

19 Pupils contribute to formulating class rules for good behaviour, and in most lessons they conform well. On a few occasions, however, restless behaviour and lapsed concentration prevent successful learning from taking place. This is normally the result of pupils' fatigue at the end of the day and inappropriate teaching methods that require too much concentration rather than more active or independent choice of activity.

20 Pupils' personal development is good. A strength of the school is in the friendliness that pupils show to each other. They work well together from a young age and generally succeed very

well. For example, five year olds were well able to work in groups determining which types of paper were good to write on or sharing construction kits. Pupils with special needs also work well with others. They know how to take turns, listen to each other and respond well to praise. Gujarati speakers communicate effectively with each other and with the bilingual assistants, but at times pupils who speak a minority language are unable to contribute or join in with the work of their group. Even in these situations, relationships are positive and pupils show respect for each other.

21 Attendance figures are significantly below national averages for primary schools. A larger than average proportion of absences are of those pupils who take long periods of the school term to make journeys abroad with their families. The school is concerned about the impact on pupils' attainment of such prolonged absences abroad. There is no doubt that poor attendance has a detrimental effect on individual attainment, but the school recognises that these once in a lifetime journeys have great importance for many pupils' families. Even when these prolonged journeys and absences for religious festivals are not included in the absence figures, attendance is significantly lower than the average for primary schools. Punctuality is generally good.

22 Relationships between staff and the children are good, and this is evident both in classroom and around the school. Pupils with a variety of cultural backgrounds relate well together and show respect for the different beliefs represented. Lunchtimes are pleasant. Pupils mostly show a genuine eagerness to take an active part in lessons, and to show their work to visitors. They mostly remain focused on the tasks in hand. Pupils are able to work well with each other and take the presence of visitors and pupils from other classes in their stride.

23 Pupils clearly like their teachers, and they know whom to go to if there is a problem. However, some pupils with English as an additional language have difficulties in communicating their feelings and ideas to teachers. All pupils are given a reasonable amount of responsibility as they go through the school and enjoy helping out, clearing up, delivering registers, and assisting in distributing fruit at break time. They move well between classes and behave well in breaks, even when rain means they have to spend playtime indoors.

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

24 The quality of teaching is good in Key Stage 1 and generally satisfactory in the foundation stage. Overall, in the school, it is satisfactory. Of the teaching observed two per cent was excellent, 11 per cent was very good, 33 per cent was good, 43 per cent was satisfactory and eight per cent was unsatisfactory. Teaching in all subjects is at least satisfactory; there is a high proportion of very good teaching in Key Stage 1 in mathematics, where the clear structure of the national framework provides pace and challenge. Teaching is also good in Key Stage 1 in science and in some lessons in art and music. The proportion of good and very good teaching was higher in Key Stage 1 than in the foundation stage. In the nursery and reception classes the teachers' skills are more insecure, partly because all but one of the teachers are inexperienced and have not yet fully come to terms with the needs of the particular age group they teach.

25 The teaching of children under five years of age in the nursery and reception classes is sound overall. Resources are used well and staff have fostered warm relationships with the children and their families, which creates a secure environment for learning. There are, however, some weaknesses in the teaching in the foundation stage. There is a general lack of expertise in teaching the basic linguistic skills to the children, few of whom speak English fluently. As a result, the children are often confused about what is being said and what is expected of them and this inhibits their progress in acquiring effective communication skills. Similarly, the teaching of basic skills of reading and writing is not sufficiently structured to enable children with underdeveloped English to learn the language in small steps. This was exemplified in a reading session where all the reception classes read from a 'Big Book'. The chosen text was too sophisticated for the linguistic levels of the children, most of whom could recognise very few words indeed, and they made very limited progress in word recognition or word-building skills.

26 Throughout the school the quality of the teachers' planning is good. It is undertaken collaboratively in year groups. This approach is very successful in ensuring that pupils in all parallel classes benefit from a similar curriculum. It also shares the expertise of teachers by capitalising on their individual strengths and provides support for those who are inexperienced. The planning is detailed and thorough, identifying clearly what pupils are to learn. A good feature is the way in which this is made explicit to pupils in all classes. In the best planning, notably for mathematics, care is taken by teachers to identify the vocabulary that is to be introduced or reinforced during a lesson. Key vocabulary is often identified in teachers' plans but is not always emphasised enough in practice.

27 In the particularly successful lessons teachers have high expectations of the pupils' behaviour and manage them in an unobtrusive but firm manner. As a result pupils maintain their concentration and make gains in learning. Conversely, when expectations are not high enough, the pace of the lesson is insufficiently brisk or the teacher is not firm enough in discouraging unacceptable behaviour, pupils rapidly become restless and lose concentration. This is especially noticeable during afternoon sessions of literacy and numeracy lessons, when the concentration span of the pupils deteriorates as they become tired.

28 Teachers' subject knowledge and competence in teaching basic skills in numeracy and literacy are satisfactory overall. A notable strength is the precise diction of all staff, which provides an appropriate model for pupils to follow. Most lessons commence with a period of direct teaching, which is often lively and engaging, but there is generally not enough emphasis on encouraging the pupils with their speech in order to develop their confidence in communication. When language development is carefully incorporated into the lesson pupils increase their vocabulary and become more confident speakers. This was seen in an imaginative science lesson where pupils made bread, drawing on their past knowledge and experiences to describe its texture and appearance. Some teachers tend to talk too quickly, often using too wide a range of vocabulary, which is confusing to young children. The pupils' understanding of what is said to them is not always reinforced sufficiently well by repetition and practice, nor are pupils given enough opportunities to engage in talking activities. The stimulating role-play area is potentially a rich resource for imaginative play and language development but its impact is not maximised because there is not always sufficient adult involvement in the play to guide the conversation and introduce new vocabulary.

29 When teachers ask open-ended questions pupils are able to give more lengthy responses and to express their own thoughts and ideas with increasing confidence. An example of this was seen in a good lesson in religious education in Year 1. Through the teacher's skilful guidance and frequent reiteration of key words the pupils made good progress in understanding how a school community is similar to that of their own families. They also increased their confidence in participating in a discussion. In less successful lessons it is the teachers who do most of the talking and questioning of pupils requires only brief, one-word answers.

30 Throughout the school classroom management and organisation are good. Rooms are tidy and welcoming with interesting displays that provide helpful reference points that aid learning. Children themselves have written many of the labels on displays. While this practice places value on pupils' efforts and uses their writing for a real purpose, teachers do not encourage the pupils to make enough use of accurate and well-written points of reference such as vocabulary lists, name cards or word banks. The staff use a good variety of appropriate teaching methods. In the best lessons challenging activities are appropriate to the pupils' individual levels of attainment and are successful in sustaining their interest. This is noticeable in numeracy lessons, where there is a good balance between class teaching and independent activities. The most effective organisation ensures that all pupils receive some adult support during group work.

31 The wide range of attractive and well cared for resources is used effectively to support learning, and teachers supplement purchased items with materials of high quality which they have prepared themselves, such as attractive cards that illustrate pictorially the desired outcome of activities on a computer. The support from the nursery nurses, non-teaching auxiliaries and

bilingual assistants is very beneficial. The teachers deploy them efficiently and they make a contribution to curriculum planning. As a result of this they have clear knowledge of the part they are expected to play to support pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is not the first language. The good progress these pupils make in speaking and listening owes much to the high quality of the support they receive. Time is not always used efficiently however. In some cases, the pupils are expected to listen to lengthy explanations by the teachers and this leads to restlessness and lapsed concentration.

32 There is a comprehensive range of different types of assessments of pupils, including helpful and perceptive observations of each pupil. In the main teachers make good use of these to enable them to group pupils and to set appropriate tasks. For example, in one successful mathematics lesson in Year 2 the teacher used assessment information very effectively to anticipate the mistakes pupils might make in their work and use them as teaching points, encouraging pupils to 'spot the mistake'. Occasionally teachers fail to make the best use of the assessment information to establish the learning levels of each pupil.

33 Since the previous inspection the proportion of lessons that are satisfactory or better in Key Stage 1 has risen slightly, whilst the proportion judged to be good, very good or excellent has risen from about fifty per cent to nearly seventy per cent. In the nursery the teaching has improved from being satisfactory in only half the lessons to being satisfactory overall. The quality of teaching in the reception classes has dropped from good to satisfactory overall, with one lesson in seven unsatisfactory. The key issue to improve the quality of teaching in the nursery has been met to some extent, although senior managers recognise that the teachers' inexperience adversely affects the quality of pupils' learning.

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

34 The curriculum for the nursery and reception years is based appropriately on the national guidance for the foundation stage. Teachers plan a structured programme of work that enables pupils to experience all six areas of learning areas, to progress through the outlined "stepping stones" towards the early learning goals. A particular strength of the provision is the exciting role play which enables pupils to use their initiative and take control of their own learning while practising basic skills. The curriculum provides for a good balance of adult and pupil-initiated activities, and visits to local places of interest extend pupils' knowledge and understanding while enhancing their confidence and positive attitudes to learning.

35 At Key Stage 1, the school continues to give pupils a good range of interesting learning opportunities. Lessons and educational visits cater well for pupils of all abilities, including brighter pupils and those with special educational needs. The curriculum meets all legal requirements. The school teaches the new National Curriculum, and religious education to the locally agreed syllabus. The daily act of collective worship meets legal requirements. The governors' policy is not to provide sex education. The strengths of the curriculum are in mathematics and art. There is a weakness in the development of writing. The curriculum for pupils in the foundation stage is appropriately balanced and includes all the recommended areas of learning.

36 Teachers follow the new national methods of teaching the basic skills in English and mathematics. These subjects each take up about a quarter of the teaching time. The curriculum is appropriately balanced although the amount of time given to physical education is less than that which is suggested nationally. The implementation of the National Literacy strategy has been satisfactory. It has helped to raise standards in reading, but has not improved writing standards. These are lower than at the time of the last inspection. The school makes good use of the National Numeracy strategy. As a result, pupils' progress and achievements in mathematics are good.

37 Teachers use well-resourced specialist rooms for English, mathematics, science, art, design and technology so as to enrich learning opportunities. The disadvantage of this

arrangement is that some literacy and numeracy lessons take place in the afternoon. Pupils are then less attentive and less open to new learning, and teachers sometimes expect them to sit still for too long. Their concentration fades as a result.

38 Role-play work each week in a further specialist room makes a good contribution to the development of pupils' speech and to the basic skills of numeracy and literacy, although, with greater adult intervention in some instances, even more could be achieved.

39 Arrangements to include all pupils in learning activities are sound. Teachers are careful to match work nicely to pupils' abilities in English and mathematics. However, there is not always enough skilled support to meet the emotional and behavioural problems of a few pupils. Occasionally they reduce the learning opportunities of other pupils in their groups.

40 The school provides well for pupils' personal and social education. The role-play programme supports pupils' social development. Weekly class discussions with their teachers make significant contributions to their personal development. As a result, by the end of Year 2 nearly all pupils are confident, cheerful and open. Pupils gain appropriate understanding of healthy living, and the dangers of some substances through their science lessons.

41 The school makes appropriate extra-curricular provision for pupils of seven and under. For example they have opportunities to attend a story club in the library at lunchtime each week.

42 The school makes satisfactory use of its immediate area for observational work and fieldwork, for example in geography. Pupils visit Moor Park, Worden Park and local shops. There is an effective educational exchange with another local infant school and links with the local community enrich the school's celebrations of religious festivals such as Harvest and Eid. Good links with the junior school on the same site enable pupils to move easily into the second stage of their education.

#### *Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development*

43 Parents are happy with the attitudes and values that the school promotes. There is a warm and welcoming atmosphere in the school that enables pupils from different cultures and backgrounds to get along well together. The good provision that was described in the last inspection report has been sustained.

44 The provision for pupils' spiritual development is sound. It is fostered through the curriculum and through a programme of school assemblies. Assemblies make a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual and social development. Music and singing create a spirit of sharing and community. An atmosphere of calm and respect for each other is created during religious education lessons where, in one lesson, a pupil voluntarily recited a quiet prayer. During one class assembly candles were lit to mark the beginning of a period of quiet reflection. The stimulating range of pictures, books and access to the well-tended garden encourage pupils to think about the wonders of nature. There are, however, missed opportunities in lessons where pupils could be encouraged to talk about special moments in their lives and reflect on their meaning.

45 The provision for pupils' moral development is good. Pupils are taught to distinguish right from wrong and they are encouraged to contribute towards the development of school rules. Pupils listen respectfully to adults and to other children. Teachers and other adults in school provide good role models for pupils. They ensure a calm, orderly environment for all pupils. Pupils know what is expected of them and they demonstrate respect for people and property. A system of 'buddies' encourages older pupils to look after younger pupils at lunchtimes and playtimes. In the library and in classrooms there is a wide range of stories and poetry which support pupils' understanding of right and wrong. A book entitled 'We All Have Feelings' has been started to encourage pupils to explore negative and positive feelings and develop empathy with each other. Weekly celebration assemblies promote a sense of pride in each other's achievements.



46 Provision for pupils' social development is good. Visits to shops, the fire station and places of worship provide opportunities for the youngest pupils to experience being part of a local community. Assemblies provide good opportunities for pupils to reflect on day-to-day life, values and concerns. The assembly theme of sharing extends from sharing in the classroom and around school to sharing with others in need. For example the pupils thought about children across the world and began building a "Tree of life" where each leaf represents a contribution to someone less fortunate than themselves. The school has a tradition of contributing to charities such as 'Children in Need'. The Ribble Environmental Project encourages pupils to take an active role in caring for the local environment. Role-play provides every child with an excellent opportunity to co-operate with others in a range of simulated social settings such as the hospital, garage, bank and home.

47 The provision for pupils' cultural development is good. The school community represents a rich diversity of cultures which is reflected in its work. Many multi-cultural books and artefacts are available to support pupils' work in religious education. At appropriate times of the year the school celebrates festivals of various faiths. Diwali and Eid-ul-Fitr are celebrated with food, drama, art and stories from the relevant culture. A successful production of an Aborigine folk tale extended pupils' understanding and a book of stories and paintings representing 'Dream Time' was constructed. Paintings by Mondrian, eastern European craftwork and a beautiful range of pottery are displayed in the hall.

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

48 The staff and governing body contribute to the provision of a caring school in which the personal needs of the pupils are met very well. Parents appreciate the care that is provided for their children and particularly the way in which pupils' different needs are recognised and met. The good standard of provision that was recognised at the time of the last inspection has been successfully sustained.

49 The academic achievements and progress of all pupils are assessed well throughout pupils' school careers using a number of methods starting before they enter the nursery. The school analyses this data thoroughly, year by year and class by class, and uses the information to evaluate overall attainment.

50 Individual pupils' progress is carefully monitored. Class teachers have had training in assessment and can refer to examples of work that has been appropriately graded against agreed standards. As a result, teachers' assessments are accurate. The progress of pupils with particular learning needs is monitored and regularly reviewed. The statutory requirements for assessing the progress of pupils with statements of special educational need are met. However, in spite of the school's best efforts, there is a lack of support for several pupils awaiting statements and some have been waiting a considerable time. This lack lessens the quality of the provision for pupils with special needs.

51 In the early stages of learning to read and write, teachers do not assess well enough the achievement of individual pupils through the small steps outlined in the national literacy recommendations well enough. As a result, they do not always structure the teaching of reading and writing in sufficiently small steps, or target groups for extra help as effectively as they might.

52 There is a positive atmosphere and the teachers know their pupils well. Parents and pupils say that all the staff are kind and supportive. Pupils' personal, social and emotional development is carefully tracked. The school records serious incidents of bad conduct and tracks the behaviour of pupils having particular difficulty. Pupils are well motivated by the special awards that are presented at Friday assemblies. The clear explanation of why they were deserved encourages other pupils to emulate the good behaviour.

53 The school monitors attendance well and uses a contractor to follow up any unexplained absences immediately. The school rewards classes and pupils whose attendance is good.

Prolonged journeys abroad are authorised if the school is informed and the teachers are able to provide a distance learning pack for the travelling pupils. Punctuality is also well monitored and repeated occurrences are looked into by the school or welfare officer. When necessary, cases of persistent lateness or unexplained absences are referred to the educational welfare officer, with whom there is a close professional relationship. Registers are well kept and conform to requirements.

54 The curriculum covers issues of health and safety, cleanliness and relationships and good use is made of visitors to the school to add to the main messages. Classroom strategies to promote good behaviour and for helping pupils to participate to their fullest ability are successful. Staff concentrate appropriately on reinforcing success. There are special assemblies and pupils celebrate each other's achievements. Child protection procedures are well established and understood. Members of staff with specific responsibilities are trained and good relationships are maintained with outside agencies.

55 The premises provide a clean and pleasant environment that is respected by the staff and the pupils. For example, the shelves in the hall and library are enlivened by a large number of decorative and delicate objects that have been on display for some time and remain in very good condition.

56 Staff take good care of their pupils and ensure that pupils are sensible and safe. Healthy eating and understanding of how to lead a healthy life are promoted. Several members of staff are trained in first aid. There are regular professional checks on the safety of portable electrical equipment, fire extinguishers and physical education equipment. The governors and staff give the safety and security of the people working and learning in the school high priority. There is regular monitoring of health, safety and security issues through audits by staff and governors.

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

57 The large number of parents who responded to the questionnaire sent out before the inspection were very positive about the school. Parents appreciate the information they receive about their children and the active encouragement from the school to help them to contribute as well as they can to their children's education. Pupils' learning benefits from the effective links between school and parents.

58 Parents feel that the staff are approachable and their involvement in school has increased significantly since the last inspection. Parents attend special events such as the mathematics week and the annual concerts, and a very large proportion of parents come to the termly meetings with teachers to discuss their children's progress. Not many parents contribute to the school's work, however, other than by supporting their own children's learning at home. Few parents come to school to help and there is no parent-teacher association.

59 At the end of the year, parents discuss with the teachers the full report on their children's progress. These reports record children's views about their own learning and parents appreciate the opportunity to record their opinion of their children's progress and needs for the following year. Equally, parents are fully involved in reviews of the individual education plans for those pupils with special educational needs.

60 Parents appreciate the efforts made by the school to welcome their children into the nursery class, and in particular, the home visits, which occur at that time. The home visits make a positive contribution to the speed in which children settle into school and begin to access the learning. Letters to parents from the school are informative but do not always take into account the fact that the main spoken language of many families is not English. The school acknowledges that many parents do not want special concessions to take into account different languages. This view was supported by parents who attended the meeting for parents.

61 Parents are sent a considerable amount of information about school activities and parents of children in the nursery receive additional information about what their children are to learn. A small number of parents indicated in the questionnaire that they would also like to receive more information about the curriculum in Key Stage 1. Most parents value the shared approach to learning and support the work of the school by contributing to and signing the home/school agreement. The school provides useful guidance to parents to support them with helping their child with reading. Parents can watch a video, talk with their teachers and there are regular messages from teachers to parents included in the helpful reading diary maintained by all pupils. The family numeracy project provides a very good opportunity for parents of nursery children to take mathematical material home and work with their children. Parents are invited into school annually and are introduced to the scheme. They are appropriately encouraged to help their child with reading also shown a video about reading at the start of the year.

62 Parents strongly support the school's work but although many help their children effectively at home, very few contribute more to the school in terms of time in the classroom or on visits, beyond supporting their own child.

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

63 The quality of leadership of the headteacher, governors and key staff is good. This was also the judgement at the last inspection. The headteacher has a clear vision which is reflected in the aims of the school, is shared by staff and governors and guides their work. The shared vision contributes to the strong commitment to equality of opportunity, the good relationships and caring ethos that are valued by parents. Governors are well informed and discharge their statutory duties effectively. With the headteacher and key staff, they work hard to promote high standards through effective teaching and learning. Although the governing body is new, it includes many experienced and skilled governors who recognise and celebrate the school's achievements but also understand where improvement is needed. Parents and ethnic minorities are represented appropriately, but the governing body is incomplete as two unfilled vacancies affect the governors' efficiency and effectiveness in their work.

64 The school is well managed. Responsibilities are delegated efficiently and staff receive appropriate training, time and resources to enable them to fulfil them effectively. Subject leaders make a valuable contribution to raising standards. The induction and training for new staff are well organised and enable them to adjust quickly to school routine. Clearly understood policies are consistently implemented and contribute to its smooth running. Efficient day-to-day administration enables teaching and learning to proceed effectively. Good use is made of information and communications technology for communication, for the storage of data and for planning the budget. Funds for supporting pupils at an early stage of learning English and for pupils with special educational needs are spent appropriately. Secure accounting systems produce accurate and useful management information that reflects the principles of best value.

65 The accommodation is generous and the high quality of display supports the pupils' intellectual and personal development. The shared dining facilities are poor; they do not help pupils' social development and create unnecessary difficulties for staff and pupils alike in bad weather. Improvements to the outdoor play area and to the library that have been carried out since the last inspection contribute well to the quality of education provided.

66 With the exception of an unavoidable delay in linking the school to the Internet, all subjects and areas of learning are well equipped. The good quality of learning resources and their efficient use have a positive impact on pupils' progress in lessons. There are an appropriate number of teachers and their qualifications and experience provide for a well-balanced staff. The quality of teachers' work is enhanced by regular personal professional development, although pupils' learning is still affected by a shortage of teacher expertise in English, in information and communications technology and in the curriculum for the foundation stage. Although a large proportion of the budget is spent on support staff and their training, the school does not have

enough skilled adults to support all the pupils who experience real difficulty with learning. Nevertheless, nursery nurses and special needs and classroom and bilingual assistants are deployed effectively. They make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning in the foundation stage and through the provision of stimulating role-play.

67 The school has effective procedures for reviewing its work. Pupils' progress and the quality of teaching are both monitored thoroughly, and staff with management responsibilities know the school's strengths and weaknesses well. This knowledge has enabled the school to bring about improvements to the quality of accommodation and to teaching that have helped to raise standards in reading, mathematics and science. The success is limited as it does not extend to writing, where standards have not kept pace with those of other schools. The procedures for development planning do not support school improvement as well as they should as educational initiatives are not evaluated thoroughly enough to determine their impact on pupils' achievement. The governors do not evaluate how well their provision for pupils with special educational needs enhances the pupils' achievement, for example. In addition, the action to bring about improvement is not supported clearly enough by planned spending on staff development, as the specific grants from the national Standards Fund are not linked well enough into the plans.

68 Nevertheless, the school has a great strength in its staff and in their determination to improve in all that they do. This is most evident in the teachers' honest reflection of the quality of their work and their willingness to learn. The shared commitment to improvement in the school is excellent and provides a strong foundation for success.

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

i] Raise standards in writing by implementing the current plans, ensuring that the following points are included:

- providing more points of reference in the classroom where pupils can find words to use in their own writing;
- giving greater emphasis in lessons to the elements of writing, particularly to structure, vocabulary, grammar, handwriting, punctuation and spelling;
- making greater use of the results of assessment to structure the teaching of writing;
- extending the opportunity for writing through other subjects of the curriculum.

(paragraphs 10, 51, 94, 96, 103)

ii] Improve further the quality of teaching by:

- extending teachers' expertise in the teaching of English and information and communications technology and of pupils in the foundation stage;
- extending the range of teaching methods to give the pupils more opportunity to discuss together, explain their thinking, ask questions and check each other's working;
- making better use of time in lessons by limiting the length of teachers' oral explanations;
- giving greater emphasis to the teaching of speaking by providing opportunity for the pupils to practise the technical vocabulary used in all subjects;
- making greater use of role-play for the structured teaching of basic and key skills;
- continuing to work with the Local Education Authority to reduce the waiting time for statements and to increase the amount of skilled adult support for pupils with special educational needs.

(paragraphs 24-33, 37, 72, 74, 76, 78, 87, 91, 100-101, 132, 136, 149)

iii] Improve the rate of attendance and further reduce the level of unauthorised absence by implementing the current plans (paragraphs 9 and 21).

The school has already brought about improvement in many of these areas and all are already included in the governors' development plans.

The following less important weaknesses are mentioned in the report and the governors may wish to include them in their plans for improvement:

- pupils with special educational needs do not always have enough skilled adult support in lessons (paragraphs 39, 50);
- the governing body is incomplete; it does not set targets for pupils' improved performance and the impact of school improvement initiatives is not evaluated well enough (paragraphs 14, 63, 67);
- the amount of time allowed for physical education is less than the national suggestion (paragraphs 36, 150);
- there are missed opportunities to extend pupils' spiritual development (paragraph 44);
- the shared dining facilities are poor (paragraph 65);
- the teaching of information and communications technology does not give enough emphasis to the retrieval of information or data-handling (paragraph 136);
- the curricular guidance for music is not sufficiently detailed (paragraph 145);
- assessment records are incomplete (paragraph 158).

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	61
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	34

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2%	11%	33%	46%	8%	0%	0%

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR– Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	262
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	109

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	8
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	9	88

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	237

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	21
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	19

### Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	8.9
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.8
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	40	35	75

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	26	27	33
	Girls	27	25	31
	Total	53	52	64
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	71 (72)	69 (70)	85 (88)
	National	82 (80)	83 (80)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	27	33	31
	Girls	26	27	27
	Total	53	60	58
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	71 (69)	80 (83)	77 (70)
	National	82 (80)	86 (84)	87 (85)

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

### Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	113
Pakistani	11
Bangladeshi	1
Chinese	0
White	48
Any other minority ethnic group	2

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

### Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

### Teachers and classes

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	14.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.6
Average class size	28.8

#### Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	9.5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	290

#### Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26

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

Number of pupils per FTE adult	8.7
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

### Financial information

Financial year	1999/00
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	£
Total income	631,174
Total expenditure	690,691
Expenditure per pupil	2,398
Balance brought forward from previous year	84,653
Balance carried forward to next year	25,136

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	280
Number of questionnaires returned	217

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	76	23	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	62	35	1	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	65	31	2	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	45	37	12	2	4
The teaching is good.	74	24	1	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	72	20	5	1	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	74	22	2	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	70	28	0	1	1
The school works closely with parents.	69	28	1	0	1
The school is well led and managed.	72	24	1	1	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	69	29	1	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	57	29	5	2	7

### Other issues raised by parents

A few parents expressed their appreciation for the work of the school and for the way in which children of different faiths and cultures learn to respect each other and work together.



## **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**

70 The school has a nursery class accommodating fifty-two children who attend part time. In the three parallel reception classes there are a further seventy-seven children under the age of five. The children in the foundation stage follow a broad and appropriate curriculum with six nationally agreed areas of learning.

71 As the inspection took place at the beginning of a new school year, the evaluation of standards at the end of the foundation stage is based on observation of the current Year 1 pupils, a scrutiny of written work completed last year, and the school's assessment records. These show that although attainment on entry to the nursery is well below what is normally expected for children of this age, their achievement, in terms of progress from a very low starting point, is good. By the end of the reception year, the majority of children attain the goals expected for their age in personal, social and emotional development, physical development and in most aspects of creative development. In the other areas of learning, very few attain the standard expected, and most are working at a level which is below average for their age. Although most children are fluent in their own languages, the majority do not use English very much at home and their limited understanding of English words and phrases makes it more difficult for them to access learning across the curriculum. However, the school provides skilled bilingual support assistants in lessons who help the children with English as an additional language to progress well, particularly with learning the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. Pupils with special educational needs receive appropriate support; they have access to all activities and consequently they make sound progress.

72 The new school year has brought substantial changes to the foundation stage. Not only is there a new curriculum, but three out of the four teachers, including the foundation stage co-ordinator, are either new to the school or to the age group. Inspection evidence suggests that children currently in the nursery and reception classes are not achieving as well as they could as the quality of learning in lessons observed was mainly satisfactory, seldom good, and in a few lessons, unsatisfactory.

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

73 In the nursery progress in learning is good and children are beginning to develop positive attitudes. After just three weeks in school they are already becoming familiar with class routines and beginning to develop independence as they choose activities for themselves or put on their own aprons. A minority are beginning to respond to questions put by the teacher. Social skills are emerging as children learn to play together, settle for a story and join in a guessing game.

74 In the reception classes children continue to make good progress, building on what has been learned in the nursery and they are on course to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the foundation stage. Through a range of appropriate activities children learn to work and play together, to share and to take turns. Most sit attentively during class teaching, though they do not always fully understand what it is they are taught. Many are insufficiently confident in their speaking to contribute to class discussions and become restless when sessions on the carpet are too lengthy. They are however very responsive to teachers' instructions and gentle reminders to sit still.

75 The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Appropriate opportunities for social development are well planned. Classrooms are laid out in such a way that children can access resources independently and this promotes a calm working atmosphere. A notable strength in the provision is the preparation children receive from teachers through visits to their homes before they

start nursery. This results in an effective partnership with parents and children who are confident to start school.

### Communication, language and literacy

76 Although most children make good progress, standards in speaking remain low and consequently children are unlikely to reach the early learning goals by the end of the foundation stage. This is because of the limited ability to communicate in English of the majority. Strengths lie in the careful way in which lessons are planned and organised with clear learning objectives. The rooms provide a well-equipped environment for the teaching of literacy and numeracy. The imaginative role-play area provides a rich resource for the development of language and imaginative play but its potential to develop children's skills of speaking is not maximised because there is not always enough adult involvement in the play to promote spoken English. Many bilingual children revert to their home language when playing together and this limits the extent to which they broaden their English vocabulary and acquire greater fluency in their speech through conversation.

77 In the nursery children begin to communicate on paper through mark-making and they use their 'writing' for real purposes in the role-play areas, for example to write prescriptions in the hospital or to order food in the cafe. They begin to recognise letters and to know the sounds they make; they handle books correctly and with considerable care. In the reception classes most children recognise their name and some letters of the alphabet but very few are yet able to read very simple text. Samples of work from the previous year show that by the end of their time in the reception class children had made good progress. Pencil control was increasingly secure and higher attaining children were able to compose simple sentences, sometimes using full stop and capital letters.

78 The quality of teaching and learning in language and literacy seen during the inspection was unsatisfactory. The shortcomings arise from the teachers' insecure expertise in the teaching of basic reading and writing skills. Children's progress in language development is often hindered because there is not enough emphasis on the development of specific vocabulary or the provision of enough opportunities for children to participate in speaking. Sometimes the teachers speak to the classes too quickly assuming that children have understood, but this is not always the case and sometimes much of a lesson content goes over the heads of the children. Although lesson plans usually indicate the new vocabulary that is to be introduced it is not always reinforced or repeated enough in a way that consolidates learning. On occasions the material chosen to illustrate a lesson is unsuitable, such as in a literacy lesson when children were required to read a text that was too difficult for them. They made little progress in consolidating their knowledge of letter sounds or in recognising whole words. Displays are bright and stimulating, placing value on children's efforts, but there are not enough examples of well-written text for pupils to refer to when they want to write for themselves.

### Mathematical development

79 Children make good progress, though only about two thirds of them reach the expected level for the end of the foundation stage. In the nursery children establish their understanding of number through simple counting and number recognition activities and they make good progress through working in small groups supported and encouraged by an adult, though learning is impeded for many by a lack of communication skills. The children extend their understanding of mathematical concepts such as capacity through play in water and sand, but their learning is not really secure as they do not readily use the key mathematical vocabulary for themselves. Learning continues effectively in the reception classes when the National Numeracy strategy is carefully modified to suit the needs of younger children and enables them to make progress which is, in the main good.

80 Teaching and learning in the foundation stage is satisfactory overall, though there are some shortcomings. In one lesson, for example, the children did not extend their understanding about the measurement of length because they worked with too many different objects of differing size and shape. When teaching is good there is a strong emphasis on the development of key words and the lesson has a brisk pace, which successfully holds the attention of the children. This maintains their concentration and interest and they enjoy learning. In all classes tasks are planned well to cater for the range of mathematical abilities of the children. Those with special educational needs benefit from carefully adapted tasks and good adult support and they make good progress. Appropriate extension activities provide challenge for higher attaining children. The designated room for numeracy is well equipped with useful reference points on display and the attractive resources are used imaginatively.

### Knowledge and understanding of the world

81 Children make gains in knowledge and understanding about the world around through the apt range of activities in the curriculum but their progress is hindered by the limited ability to communicate of the majority of children who do not speak English fluently. Because of this it is likely that few will achieve the early learning goals by the end of the foundation stage, though most are achieving well in relation to their starting point.

82 Provision in the nursery introduces children to activities that lay the foundations for history, geography and technology. They begin to use information technology, listening to taped stories in their own language for instance, or learning how to control the mouse on the computer. Through close observation they find out about living things such as spiders. The role-play provision is a very rich and exciting source of learning about places and the world around as children play in the car-wash or cafe.

83 The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and careful planning supports the pupils' steady progress from the nursery through to the reception classes. Children extend their understanding of the passing of time, for example, through making connections with their own lives. Teaching is good when it encourages children to learn and use new words to describe their own experiences. As a result of the teachers' patient guidance most children were able to say a sentence describing what they had done the previous day. They had reinforced their knowledge of days of the week and learned to differentiate between schooldays and weekends. During a lesson about Little Red Hen children became familiar with vocabulary relating to farming and the sequence of events involved in making flour but their gains in learning were more limited because insufficient attention was paid to reiterating key vocabulary and encouraging children to speak.

### Physical development

84 Satisfactory provision is made to develop the fine and gross motor skills of the children and they make good progress, attaining standards that are typical for their age. By the age of five, most are on course to achieve the early learning goals in this area. The provision for physical development has improved since the last inspection when a key issue was to review the arrangements for outdoor physical play. The purchase of better equipment and a review of the curriculum have improved this provision.

85 In the nursery children are learning to manipulate a range of small tools and equipment such as pencils, crayons, brushes and scissors with increasing skill, for example to create spiders made from pipe cleaners and fabric. The curriculum offers opportunities for children to gain the confidence to try out new materials such as malleable material, which they mould into the shape of spiders, and painting with their fingers in shaving foam. Good use is made of the outdoor area in the nursery for free physical activity.

86 In the reception classes children continue to refine their skills with small apparatus and in the large hall they learn to move in more structured lessons. Here they respond happily to well-chosen music by walking and skipping, stretching and exploring the potential of their bodies.

87 Teaching and learning in the foundation stage is satisfactory. There are strengths in the way teachers link activities to other areas of the curriculum. For example, in a physical education lesson in the hall children re-enacted the story of Goldilocks through their movements. Teachers use demonstration effectively, for example to make 'big shapes' in their stretching. From this children are clear about what is expected of them and they make good progress in improving their skills and confidence. A common weakness is the lack of attention that is paid to engaging children in dialogue about their activities, promoting vocabulary and reinforcing new words. In the nursery teachers' plans identify clearly the apparatus that is to be used but do not indicate the specific skills to be developed to give the lesson a clear focus.

### Creative development

88 The provision of an appropriate range of activities including art, music and imaginative play contributes satisfactorily to the children's creative development and they make good progress. It is likely that children will achieve most of the early learning goals by the age of five, though in the field of music standards are lower than would normally be expected at this age. Throughout the foundation stage opportunities are provided for children to explore colour and shape and express their ideas in drawing, painting and modelling. The role-play provides an excellent environment in which children play imaginatively and develop their social skills.

89 In the nursery children are beginning to become familiar with a range of different materials with which to make pictures and models. They use re-cycled materials to make models and are already able to select materials and stick them together confidently. They begin to explore the potential of paint in their colourful potato-printed pictures and they select instruments from the music table to experiment with sound. At this stage most do not readily join in with songs, though they take pleasure in listening to the teachers' renditions.

90 In the reception classes skills with paint become more sophisticated. With adult help children are able to mix powder paint to create a range of tones in the same colour, and to use fabric paints to design effective covers for Daddy Bear's chair. They paint well-defined portraits of their friends using the correct shades for flesh tones and placing facial features accurately.

91 The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. There is a high level of adult involvement with children as they work and this provides effective encouragement and continued reinforcement of teaching points. Activities are appropriate for the children's range of ability and are very well organised. Basic skills are demonstrated well, though teachers do not always capitalise on opportunities to promote language and engage children in speaking as they work. Music sessions are less successful when the teachers talk for lengthy periods and provide too little opportunity for the children themselves to be actively involved in making music.

92 The curriculum is well planned for children under five. The six areas of learning link well to the Key Stage 1 curriculum. Useful assessments are made on children when they enter the nursery and later in the reception classes. These effectively inform the planning of an appropriate curriculum for the under-fives. Joint planning across the three reception classes is thorough and effective; day-to-day assessment is used well to inform planning and children benefit from work that is well suited to their needs. Resources are of good quality, well chosen and used imaginatively. Very good use is made of support staff and they make an important contribution, working in close collaboration with teachers.

## ENGLISH

93 By the end of Year 2 standards are below the national average. Standards are close to those achieved by pupils in similar schools. Girls reach higher standards than boys, following the national pattern. Standards in speaking, listening and reading are below average. In writing, standards are well below average and below what they should be. The overall standard in English is similar to that reported at the last inspection, except that the standard of writing has gone down. Pupils no longer develop enough skill in sentence control, use of words, punctuation and handwriting. Standards in reading and speech have improved. The school has therefore met the first key issue from the last inspection to “accelerate the rate of progress in reading.”

94 The 1999 national test results reflect these standards. Reading standards have improved since 1997 but remain below the national average. Writing standards went down and were well below the national average. Reading standards were higher than those of similar schools; writing standards were the same as those of similar schools. Standards in the latest tests in the year 2000 were lower. There are several reasons for this difference. There were higher than usual numbers of pupils with special educational needs in the then Year 2. Five of them had statements of special educational need linked to language development. Three had behavioural difficulties. There were also weaknesses in teaching in one of the three classes.

95 Although standards are below average, pupils’ achievements in relation to their initial levels of attainment are satisfactory except in writing, in which progress has been unsatisfactory. With this exception pupils make sound progress from well below average English language skills when they start school.

96 English is the second language of most pupils. They have very limited skills in using English at the ages of three and four when they first come to school. They therefore make good progress in learning to use and understand the English language. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in improving their language skills.

97 The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall and no unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Five of the thirteen lessons observed had teaching that was judged to be of good quality and one lesson was very good.

98 The pupils make very good progress in lessons when the teacher gets all pupils interested and busy from the word go. For example, Year 1 pupils concentrated keenly on writing dictated words such as “bed” and “bad” on their own little white boards. This short practical start to the lesson set up concentration for the rest. In such lessons the teacher matches the work exactly to pupils’ abilities, gives them a challenge and uses very good quality resources. For example, four Year 1 boys with special educational needs made excellent progress in sentence building. They listened to the sentences on tape, put word cards in order to make sentences and wrote them out. They worked fast by themselves with little adult help. In such lessons the teacher also ensures that learning never stops, which continues through the class review of learning at the end. For example, a teacher got pupils to judge how useful it had been to draft sentences with felt pens first. As a result, the pupils gained both good knowledge of their own learning and took greater responsibility for their progress.

99 In the good lessons, thorough planning makes the aim and methods of work clear to each group of pupils. Teachers organise pupils and classrooms nicely, and use good quality resources well. Good timing ensures that pupils work busily to get all their work done. There is close teamwork between support teachers and staff. As a result, pupils do not waste time. They also keep concentrating because these arrangements make new learning both interesting and enjoyable.

100 Weaknesses in the teaching occur when teachers’ inexperience limits pupils’ progress in learning basics such as the shapes and sounds of letters. Nor do pupils learn these key skills when they do not have enough time to practise. For example, all teachers speak and read stories

well. But this good modelling does not have impact on the development of pupils' speech. This is because teachers do not give pupils enough practice in speaking and reading with and after them, particularly in the first half of each literacy hour. Similarly, handwriting practice sessions are often too short to fix new skills. Pupils do not therefore learn the true shapes of letters. The quality of handwriting goes down and pupils form bad habits in writing. These are often hard to put right later.

101 Teachers' provision of role-play and well-planned paired work develops pupils' speech effectively. Acting out real situations pupils have seen and heard builds confidence and widens their powers of speech. However, the development of language in these sessions relies too much on the skill of the nursery nurses in charge. Language develops well when teachers use pupils' speech as the means of learning. For example, a Year 2 class was learning about the past tense. The teacher asked pupils to tell each other what they had done the previous day. All spoke brightly and clearly to a friend using the past tense fully. By contrast there is little speech development in some weekly drama lessons. This is because pupils only practise speaking a few phrases from the week's story. For most of the time they are a silent audience for the few pupils chosen to act out the story.

102 A good quality reading scheme and very thoughtful weekly guidance for parents on how to help pupils read at home strengthen the teaching of reading. Year 2 pupils have opportunities to widen their reading by borrowing library books. As a result Key Stage 1 pupils are reading to a member of their family at home on most days. Following the slow start in the foundation stage in recognising the sounds, shapes and patterns of letters, pupils do not master these skills sufficiently through the key stage. As a result, the improvement in reading standards during the past four years has remained insufficient. Good knowledge of the letters and basic words is especially important for pupils for whom English is a second language. This is because they are also learning the systems of their own language. In addition they are learning Arabic at the same time in evening study of the Qu'ran. Present reading assessment procedures are not completed frequently enough to provide an accurate guide for teachers in their lesson plans. Literacy hour work gives pupils a satisfactory understanding of the parts of books and how to use them, but they have not had enough practice in finding books and information for themselves to develop these skills really well. However, pupils enjoy working in the welcoming library and are beginning to make use of the new lending section.

103 Teachers give pupils a satisfactory range of writing experiences. Higher attaining pupils use a few complex sentences. However, teachers do not give enough emphasis to basic skills. Spelling, letter-shaping, handwriting and punctuation do not get enough attention. Low expectations for these skills continue to hold writing standards down. Slow reading development and below average speaking standards are reflected in the small numbers of words that pupils use in their writing.

104 The school's use of the literacy hour, role-play, and the emphasis on speech and reading are steadily raising standards in these areas. Pupils respond well to this work and grow in confidence as readers and writers. However, more needs to be achieved in order to provide all pupils with the skills needed for the next stage of education.

## **MATHEMATICS**

105 Standards in mathematics are in line with the national average. This is reflected in the current work of pupils in Year 2, the written work completed by pupils who were in Year 2 last year, and the results of the most recent national tests of 2000. Over the last five years, standards in mathematics have improved at the same rate as in most other schools, although there was a substantial rise in 1999 when two thirds of the pupils achieved the level expected for their age. Most pupils make good progress from a very low starting point and achieve well. Standards in mathematics at Deepdale are consistently better than in similar schools and in the 1999 tests were

well above the average for similar schools. The successful teaching and learning reported at the time of the last inspection have been sustained.

106 The teachers keep a careful check on pupils' progress. This tells them that most pupils succeed well in aspects of mathematics concerned with number and calculations, but are less secure in their understanding of shape and space. By the age of seven, for example, most pupils use appropriate strategies for mental addition and subtraction and know many multiplication and division facts. Most pupils use the correct mathematical vocabulary to describe shapes, but have greater difficulty in describing position, direction or movement. The teachers make sure that enough time is given to all the aspects of mathematics to enable the pupils to do well. Nevertheless, even more could be done to help the pupils to use and apply their mathematical knowledge in other lessons. In a role-play lesson, for example, pupils co-operated with each other while measuring and cutting lengths of wall paper, but as they were working without adult help a valuable chance to develop more accurate skills of the measurement of length was lost.

107 The quality of teaching is good overall, but there is also much that is very good and at times, excellent. The teachers have high expectations, both for the quality of their own work and for their pupils' achievement. They assess the pupils' levels of understanding and skill effectively in order to plan activities and tasks that meet their needs. Pupils with special educational needs for example, normally make good progress and enjoy learning because the teachers check that they understand what they are to learn and provide tasks that are interesting and fun to complete. In most lessons, many pupils have additional help from skilled support staff. On the few occasions where there are not enough adults to work with pupils who have serious difficulties with learning, pupils' progress suffers as the teachers' time can be taken up dealing with minor disruption rather than in teaching.

108 In most classes, around a quarter of the pupils attain standards that are high for their age. These pupils usually learn well and make good progress as they are given tasks that challenge their thinking, often by practising the same calculation strategies as other pupils, but using larger numbers. The teachers have successful methods for helping pupils whose first language is not English to progress well. They give precise instructions and explanations that use key mathematical vocabulary and help the pupils to understand with extra drawings, signs or practical demonstrations.

109 Pupils have positive attitudes to mathematics and behave well in lessons. Their social development benefits from the frequent opportunities to work with other pupils in paired or group work. However, very few pupils check their own or each other's work and teachers do not ask "Is she/he right?" as often as they could in order to extend their pupils' mathematical understanding through practice of explanation and checking.

110 Mathematics is well led and managed. Pupils' learning has been supported well by the teachers' involvement in the National Numeracy Project and then through the effective implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. The subject leaders monitor carefully the standards in the subject and the quality of education provided. Their work has ensured that teachers receive relevant training and are able to draw on a range of methods to help their pupils to develop mental strategies for calculation and good recall of number facts. Attractive and well resourced specialist teaching rooms provide a stimulating area for pupils and teachers to work in, and displays are used well as points of reference for learning. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection, teachers' assessments are more accurate as they have worked together to compile a useful collection of pupils' work at different levels for reference, and the range of mathematical equipment has been increased. This has enabled the high standards in the subject to be successfully sustained.

## SCIENCE

111 Evaluation of pupils' written work, and their achievement in lessons indicates that by the end of the key stage, most pupils achieve the expected level for their age, about 20 per cent do not, and around 25 per cent exceed it. These figures are broadly supported by the results of teachers' assessments for 1999 and 2000. Standards are average when compared with similar schools, although the school does particularly well in enabling a large proportion of pupils to achieve the higher levels.

112 The school has been successful in overcoming the shortcomings in science which were found during the last inspection in 1997. Pupils, including pupils with special needs and higher attaining pupils, are now appropriately supported and challenged. There are many opportunities for experimental work to develop pupils' skills of inquiry and investigation. There has been good improvement since the last inspection.

113 Evidence gained during inspection indicates that progress in science is good. Pupils learn through a wide range of topics which include all the appropriate Programmes of Study from the National Curriculum. Work completed during the previous Year 2 showed that higher attaining pupils were able to develop and test hypotheses, for example designing tests to answer the question 'How can I make a light bulb shine more brightly?' Many pupils use scientific vocabulary appropriately and learn to develop a fair test such as testing suitable material for a sunblind and recording their findings. The combination of practical group work and effective support from learning support assistants enables pupils with special educational needs to make good progress. Pupils who are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language make steady progress. They are well supported by bilingual staff and assistants. No differences are noted between the progress of girls and boys.

114 The school makes effective use of space and resources so that science is taught to small groups of pupils. This arrangement means that teachers and assistants work closely with pupils to ensure that experimental and investigative work builds on their existing knowledge and develops scientific understanding.

115 Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in lessons are good. Skilful teaching and effective classroom organisation and management ensure that pupils remain involved and enthusiastic about their work. A group of pupils in Year 2 were observing a raw egg and predicting the changes that would occur after heating. They worked well as a group and confidently offered their ideas. Teachers and learning support assistants take every opportunity to encourage language development. In one lesson pupils learned the words 'liquid' and 'solid' to describe changes to the egg white. Teachers expect pupils to work hard and the pupils rise to the challenge. For example, they collaborate well and help to clear away at the end of lessons.

116 The quality of teaching is good. Teachers are secure in their subject knowledge and lessons are carefully planned to enable all pupils to acquire new scientific knowledge and skills. Language acquisition and literacy are priorities for the majority of pupils. Teachers effectively reinforce language skills by asking questions which require pupils to answer with complex sentences and to use the technical vocabulary. Before beginning active group work and experiments pupils spend time together with the teacher to clarify lesson objectives and practise some of the language associated with the lesson. This is an effective use of time which means that pupils are confident and well motivated to tackle their work. At the end of the lesson the whole group reviews what they have learned. In one lesson a pupil with learning difficulties and limited experience of speaking English was able to recount her prediction that her soft clay model would dry in the warmth of the sunshine to become 'hard like a statue'.

117 The use of the school garden enhances curricular provision and provides useful practical experience that helps the pupils to understand key scientific ideas. In Year 1, for example, the pupils plant seeds and keep diaries to note the conditions that affect growth. Effective links are



made with other areas of the curriculum such as personal, social and health education. The subject makes a good contribution to the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy.

118 Assessment of pupils' work is thorough and accurate. There are detailed records which monitor progress and ensure coverage of the curriculum. Pupils are helped to overcome difficulties during lessons. However, teachers do not always tell pupils what they could do to improve even further.

119 Science is very well managed and led. The effective co-ordination includes regular meetings with teachers to plan and evaluate lessons and to discuss pupils' progress in science. The teachers receive regular feedback on the quality of their teaching and this helps them to improve further. An appropriate programme of professional development ensures that teachers maintain their subject knowledge. Science is well resourced. Materials and equipment are in good condition. There is a helpful policy and scheme of work and a science portfolio provides guidance on planning and assessment.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

120 By the end of Year 2 pupils' skills and knowledge of art are above those expected for their ages. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. The school is maintaining the good standards found at the previous inspection. Pupils' good achievements are the result of the high quality of the scheme of work for each year from nursery to Year 2, the good quality of resources and teachers' skill and enthusiasm.

121 Each year pupils widen their experiences of art and design in painting, drawing, sculpture, printing, collage and textiles. This programme gives priority to the step by step development of pupils' skills, for example in the use of pencil and brush, shading and colour. Thoughtful links to termly themes broaden pupils' understanding. For example, pupils designed and printed out fabric to make a ball gown for Cinderella. Pupils created wallpaper for the role-play house.

122 There was not enough evidence to judge the overall quality of teaching and learning. In the good lesson seen, the teacher revised the previous week's learning well. At the same time she made good use of pupils' work, by showing them what they had recorded in their sketchbooks. Teachers ensure that pupils use these sketchbooks carefully and regularly throughout the key stage. Clear directions for work and exact planning help pupils to gain new skills in each activity. In such good lessons learning continues through reviews of learning at the end. For example, a Year 2 teacher got pupils to appreciate the characteristics of Hundertwasser's paintings of buildings. They imitated his style after study of some of his pictures, in large paintings of their own. They kept referring to a display of high quality of his paintings as they worked on theirs. At the end of the lesson the teacher invited pupils to compare these with the notes they had made of his style in their sketchbooks. Pupils were able to see what they had learnt.

123 Teachers use such displays of work effectively to introduce pupils to the work of major artists. For example, reception pupils looked at and discussed Van Gogh's "Village Postman" and a Kissling self-portrait before painting portraits of themselves. Good timing stimulates pupils to work productively and to finish each stage in new pieces. They enjoy their artwork as a result. Their good concentration in reviews of learning at the end of lessons shows how teachers have developed pupils' interest in art. Pupils make very good progress in colour matching because teachers make each step clear and give them challenging tasks.

124 The school uses art well to help pupils to record new learning. For example, Year 2 pupils made detailed line drawings of snails in science, showing the spiral of their shells. They also used vivid crayoned colours to show how frogs and grasshoppers camouflaged themselves to match their backgrounds. The subject makes an important contribution to pupils' personal development and cultural education.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

125 Standards by the end of Year 2 are similar to those found in most infant schools, but they are not as high as those reported at the last inspection. There are two main reasons for this difference. The school has not given teachers enough guidance on developing pupils' skills. Also, in the last two years, the priority given to raising standards in English and mathematics has reduced the time given to the subject. Teachers now follow the latest detailed national guidance on both projects and methods. As a result, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress to achieve the standards expected for their ages in designing, making and reviewing their work.

126 There was not enough evidence to judge the overall quality of teaching and learning. Examination of pupils' work showed appropriate cutting, joining and finishing skills. However, the amount and range of work were both limited for the reasons above. There was teaching of good quality in both lessons seen. Year 2 pupils were designing and making careful models of playground equipment. They were really interested in this work because it was close to their experience and started with a visit to a local playground. Pupils made detailed black ink sketches of their observations of swings, slides and a roundabout. They noted the colours and materials used. They planned their own design, labelling drawings and listing materials and equipment they would need. They selected materials and equipment such as small saws and a glue gun. They worked at an appropriate standard for their age and co-operated well together, observing safety rules and solving problems as they arose. Pupils' attitudes to their learning are good. A printed notice by the saw bench listed seven directions on using a saw. Reading skills developed naturally in following such guidance.

127 In another lesson the teacher's careful planning and good questioning gave pupils secure understanding of levers, pivots and slides.

128 Good use of a well organised role-play setting also increased pupils understanding of the use of design and technology skills. For example, Year 2 pupils improved cutting and sawing skills in their DIY Superstore role-plays. Measuring and marking out developed numeracy skills effectively.

129 The school is now well placed to develop its own responses to the new national guidelines.

## **GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY**

130 By the end of the key stage the majority of pupils make appropriate progress and reach the levels of attainment expected nationally. Considering their shortfall in linguistic ability when they first enter the school they achieve appropriately in both subjects in relation to their prior attainments. Current inspection evidence from the observation of one lesson of geography and one of history, displays and samples of pupils' current and past work indicates that standards are not as high as they were at the time of the previous inspection. At that time attainment and progress were both judged to be good. Since the last inspection national priorities have focused on literacy and numeracy and the school has rightly followed this trend. As a consequence the subjects of history and geography have had a lower profile in the curriculum than previously. Nevertheless, pupils are making gains in knowledge, gradually widening their vocabulary and increasing their awareness of the world in which they live.

131 Teaching and learning in both subjects are satisfactory. There is a strong emphasis on the development of enquiry skills and pupils learn well from first-hand experience, such as writing with pen and ink as children did in the past. Good links are made with literacy. An example of this was seen in a good history lesson in Year 1 when pupils examined the contents of a 'lost bag' and speculated about who might own it. The lesson was successful because the beginning was sufficiently dramatic to capture the attention of the pupils and the teacher was careful to introduce

and reiterate new vocabulary. Through careful open-ended questioning pupils were able to conclude that the owner of the items was the Hungry Giant and they made gains in learning.

132 Similarly, in a geography lesson in Year 2 based on a 'Funny Bones' book pupils recorded on their maps significant places such as shops, the zoo and the police station. Through careful questioning they were encouraged to think of ideas for symbols to represent the features and responded with imaginative suggestions that used their newly acquired vocabulary. Strengths of the teaching lie in the teachers' effective strategies to maintain the pupils' interest by varying the range of activities and ensuring that the pace of the lesson is brisk. Weaknesses occurred when class management was less secure and pupils lost interest as they were left to work independently for long periods with insufficient adult support.

133 The quality of pupils' learning is variable. The best teaching provides opportunities for pupils to record their findings pictorially rather than in ways that rely too heavily on writing skills. Yet the quality of pupils' illustrative work is often immature and reduced by the inappropriate use of felt-tip pens, which leads to a lack of detail and precision in the drawing. Pupils' attitudes to learning are satisfactory overall and their behaviour in lessons is normally good.

134 Teachers make imaginative use of the range of resources available in the school and also draw upon outside sources. For example, pupils are introduced to a contrasting environment at St Michael's-on-Wyre through reciprocal visits with pupils from the school in that village. The school makes some use of the local area to develop a sense of place, for example to enable pupils to record features they like or dislike. There is scope to develop this provision further. The role-play area provides an effective vehicle for developing pupils' awareness of the locality and their geographical vocabulary. Pupils make visits to places such as the vegetable market and launderette to gather ideas to incorporate in their role-play.

135 Both co-ordinators are enthusiastic and well informed about their subjects. The curriculum for both history and geography has been adapted to cover the requirements of the National Curriculum and is supported by schemes of work, which provide a detailed and helpful framework for staff to follow without being too prescriptive. A promising start has been made in developing portfolios of work samples which, when fully implemented, have the potential to provide clear indications of standards between classes.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY (ICT)**

136 Standards are broadly typical for pupils of this age, though in relation to their prior attainment pupils are achieving well. At the time of the previous inspection standards were judged to be similar. For the majority of pupils English is not the first language, yet most are able to make gains in learning in literacy and numeracy by using programs that do not require extensive literacy skills. After only three weeks in the nursery children are beginning to become confident in manipulating a large roller ball mouse to click onto pictures. As they move through the school pupils are introduced to an increasingly sophisticated range of applications of information technology, including listening centres, programmable toys and computers and they make good progress in acquiring skills and confidence in using them independently. In the field of graphics and word-processing pupils make good progress. However, there is not enough retrieval of information or data-handling in the curriculum and so progress in these areas is limited.

137 The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall and pupils respond appropriately. Most are keen to use the computer and proud of their printed graphics or writing. They behave well and concentrate appropriately to finish the task. Throughout the school information technology is used appropriately to support work in other areas of the curriculum, notably literacy, numeracy, geography and art. It is particularly effective in developing the skills of pupils with special educational needs and of those whose command of English is limited. For example in a numeracy lesson in Year 2 pupils consolidated number facts in pairs on a computer. They were learning to work collaboratively and were able to check each other's work, relying wholly on the

program prompts when they could not read the instructions. When pupils are supported by adults they make good progress in deepening their understanding and extending their skills but when left to work independently for too long they find it difficult to sustain their concentration, particularly if the task is too easy or too difficult.

138 At the previous inspection most learning took place within the context of other subjects and there was less emphasis on the direct teaching of skills. This has been remedied and now where skills are taught directly pupils make good progress. For example, in Year 1 the teacher showed the class how to create a self-portrait using a simple graphics program. The pupils then worked in pairs to practise their new skills using very helpful prompt cards which the teacher had produced to enable them to continue with the task independently. As a result of clear instructions and their prior knowledge they were able to work productively in pairs consolidating their learning, persevering with the task and eager to learn. Where teaching is good key vocabulary such as 'icon' and 'undo' is introduced and repeated appropriately. When using the mouse to draw simple shapes to fill with colour pupils in Year 1 were able to explain exactly how to delete the line by 'pressing the pencil icon and undo'.

139 There are varying levels of confidence and expertise among staff. An appropriate range of software is used in each year group but computers are not always used to maximum effect in lessons. The daily plans do not indicate how information technology is to be incorporated as an integral part of the lesson and consequently, though computers are usually turned on, they are not always in use. In general teachers do not have enough real knowledge of the attainment of individual pupils in the class since there is currently no means of recording or assessing progress other than a file of work samples from each class. Consequently at times pupils undertake tasks that are unsuitable for their levels of ability. This was a weakness at the time of the previous inspection and has yet to be fully addressed.

140 The subject is well managed by a two co-ordinators who both have enthusiasm and expertise in the subject. They have a good insight into standards and what is happening in the school. They are aware where there are weaknesses and what needs to be done to remedy them. School documentation provides a good level of support for non-specialist teachers. The school has started to implement the new National Curriculum though it is too soon to judge how effective this has been. There has been a useful audit recently giving a clear indication of what needs to be done to improve the subject.

141 Since the time of the last inspection further resources have been purchased to support the subject though the ratio of computers to pupils remains lower than in many other schools. The school has been involved in national initiatives, has benefited from technical support from the EAZ and key staff have attended training events. These factors have all had an impact on developing teaching and learning.

## **MUSIC**

142 At the last inspection, pupils' attainment was judged to be higher than in most schools. Not enough evidence was found to support this view during this inspection as only a few lessons, taught mainly by a specialist teacher were observed. In singing, pupils are well taught, they join in with great enthusiasm and achieve standards that are good for their age. They have a good sense of pitch, sing with enthusiasm and enjoyment and clearly articulate the words. While singing, pupils are able to express mood through changes of volume and speed, and respond very well to their teacher's instructions.

143 Pupils' response to music is good. They are keen to learn and concentrate well for their ages. The subject contributes well to their personal development. In a lesson in Year 1 for example, the variety and rich depth of sound that could be produced from percussion instruments inspired the pupils to work together, to discuss what they had found and share together in its

wonder. They show care and respect when handling instruments and listen well to each other play, revealing a perceptive appreciation in their response.

144 The quality of teaching in the lessons seen was good and in one lesson very good. Similarly the pupils' learning in the lessons seen was good; their musical skills improved as a result of practice and careful guidance from their teacher. In the lessons observed, the high quality of teacher's expertise in the subject enabled pupils to spend most of the time working practically in making music for themselves, while the teacher's explanations and questions helped them to practise and refine their musical skills and increase their understanding of musical elements. A strength of the teaching is in the careful use of key language for instruction and explanation, reinforcing its meaning through demonstration and repetition. These strategies enable the pupils to develop their communication skills and understanding of English while also extending musical knowledge, and contribute well to the good progress made by pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language.

145 Teachers are supported by a comprehensive outline of work for the year, which covers all the elements of the National Curriculum. However, it does not include enough examples of musical activities on which teachers can draw to ensure that learning builds comprehensively on pupils' understanding and skill. The school does not keep enough records or examples of pupils' achievement in music, past musical performances or composition work to use as reference for teachers or to account fully for its work. Observation of pupils' exploration of sound using musical instruments in lessons suggests that most are an early stage of skill and that they have not had the range of experience of making music required to support their consistent progress from year to year or high levels of achievement.

146 There is a wonderful range of instruments, songbooks and recorded music. The resources are well chosen to reflect the music of different cultures and times. Within the constraint of time, music is well led and managed. The quality of education provided is monitored effectively and although there has been little whole-school training, teachers make good use of the specialist support and guidance provided by the subject leader. The subject makes an effective contribution to the aims of the school, but even more could be achieved.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

147 Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in physical education and by the end of the key stage achieve standards in line with those expected of seven year olds. Pupils get changed for their lessons quickly and sensibly. Most pupils understand how to exercise safely with consideration for others. The majority of pupils use space appropriately and with confidence. Pupils respond well to music in dance using the change of rhythm to make contrasting movements in skipping, jumping and walking. Teachers provide appropriate warm-up and cool-down activities that help the pupils to recognise the changes in their bodies after exercise.

148 In the hall useful prompts remind teachers to develop language to support literacy and numeracy lessons. In one lesson the teacher encouraged pupils to use appropriate connectives such as 'next' 'and then' and 'after that' to organise the movement of groups from the classroom to the hall. This was a helpful way of reinforcing key mathematical vocabulary and developing the pupils' communication skills. In most lessons pupils enjoy the activities and participate confidently and enthusiastically.

149 The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. In the best lessons teachers effectively use demonstration and instruction to help pupils to improve the quality and control of their movements. Where the quality of teaching is satisfactory or better, lessons are well organised and move along at a good pace with frequent changes of activity to motivate pupils and keep their interest. In good lessons pupils are well managed and expectations are high. For example, pupils in these lessons concentrate hard on improving balancing or achieving a smooth

transition between movements to build a sequence. However, in a few lessons over-ambitious planning leads to confused learning objectives and pupils are unsure what to do. In these lessons time is wasted in gaining pupils' attention and managing behaviour. In a few lessons insufficient attention is given to extending the skills of talented pupils. There is little evidence of partnership or group work in lessons.

150 In the previous inspection, standards in physical education were higher than in most schools. During this inspection standards are judged to be average. The pupils do not spend as much time as suggested in national guidance on learning PE and this has an impact on their progress. The subject continues to be effectively led by an enthusiastic co-ordinator. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and provides sound technical advice for colleagues. Appropriate support is available for the newly qualified teachers who joined the school in September. The subject is well resourced. The co-ordinator is aware of the strengths and weaknesses within PE and has made appropriate plans for its further development.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

151 By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils' attainment matches the expectations outlined in the local education authority's Agreed Syllabus. Pupils make satisfactory progress.

152 Throughout the school pupils become more aware of religions other than their own. They know that each faith has its own special place of worship and they understand that prayer is important in all faiths. The youngest pupils are encouraged to think about things that are special to them and special to others. Themes such as 'New Beginnings' and 'Families' effectively use pupils' own experience as a way of introducing and developing concepts such as growth, forgiveness and belonging. Older pupils know that each religion has its own special symbols and holy writings. A pupil from a Muslim background explained the Christian symbol of the cross and, with help from another pupil, he recalled the story of the crucifixion. Pupils understand some of the similarities and differences between faiths. They recognise that special events, such as marriage and birth, are celebrated in different ways in other religions. The subject makes a good contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils.

153 Pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, make steady progress in their knowledge and understanding of religions. No observable difference in the written work of boys and girls was noted. However, during lessons more boys than girls participated in class discussion. All pupils are encouraged to draw on their own experience to bring relevance to Bible stories. For example the 'Good Samaritan' story prompted writing about experiences of helping others and being helped by others.

154 In the lessons observed pupils showed positive attitudes. They are generally interested and well motivated to learn. Pupils are eager to demonstrate their knowledge about worship in the Christian church and the mosque. They share their experiences openly and candidly. Behaviour is mostly good. However, the combination of spending too long in whole-class discussion and excitement at recognising many familiar religious artefacts and pictures occasionally leads to over-excited behaviour and loss of concentration.

155 The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teachers have a sound grasp of subject knowledge although they do not always provide tasks that extend the knowledge and understanding of more able pupils. Planning is well matched to the locally agreed syllabus. On occasions too many activities were planned and this results in loss of focus during the lesson. Teachers question the pupils effectively in order to broaden their knowledge and test their understanding. Questions are effective as they enable all pupils to contribute to the discussion. Classes are well managed. Teachers make good use of appropriate resources to stimulate and maintain pupils' interest.

156 Literacy is used effectively to enhance the subject. There is a good supply of books about a wide range of faiths. Whole class discussion is well supported by shared writing and reading. Where pupils experience difficulty in writing teachers and assistants sometimes act as scribes so that all pupils are able to see their ideas recorded. This is especially useful for teachers' assessment of progress when pupils' development of thinking in religious education outstrips their ability to write.

157 The curriculum meets statutory requirements. Resources for the subject are good and there is a wide range of artefacts of high quality to support teaching in a range of religions. Visits to local churches and mosques and links with another school where pupils are from a different faith background help to widen pupils' experiences and encourage discussion about different religions.

158 The subject is effectively co-ordinated by the headteacher. A programme of professional development and meetings with representatives of a local mosque has led to improved subject knowledge and an increase in confidence for most teachers. A useful resource file, which includes examples of pupils' best work from reception through to the end of Year 1 provides teachers with a useful benchmark for standards in the subject. However, the school does not maintain assessment records of pupils' attainment, although the parents receive a well-written report. This requirement was reported in the last inspection but has not yet been implemented.