

INSPECTION REPORT

HERTSMERE JEWISH PRIMARY SCHOOL

Radlett

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 131955

Headteacher: Mrs Michèle Bazak

Reporting inspector: David Westall
2414

Dates of inspection: 15 - 18 January 2001

Inspection number: 230524

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 junior

School category: Voluntary aided

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Watling Street
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Hertfordshire

Postcode: WD7 7LQ

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Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Jonathan Arkush

Date of previous inspection: n/a

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
2414	D W Westall	Registered inspector	Science Art and design Design and technology Music	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
1333	E Forster	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
2420	B McCutcheon	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Geography Foundation Stage Equal opportunities	How good are curricular and other opportunities?
3856	S Wellsted	Team inspector	English History Physical education Special educational needs English as an additional language	Attitudes, values and personal development

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Hertsmere Jewish Primary School is a new voluntary aided Jewish day school which opened in September 1999 with one Year 1 and two reception classes. Only the administrative area, staff room and four classrooms were ready for use. The building was completed in January 2000, and the nursery children joined the school. The school will be taking in 60 new entrants each year; and expects to be full in 2005, providing education for children from three to 11 years. There will be no Key Stage 2 pupils until September 2001. At present, there are 128 children across reception and Key Stage 1; and 45 children attend the nursery on a part-time basis. The percentage of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is well below the national average, while four pupils speak English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils on the school's register of special educational needs is below the national average; and three pupils have statements of special educational need. On entry to the nursery, children's oracy and personal and social skills are generally a little above average, while their attainment is otherwise broadly average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school with some very good features. It benefits from the effective leadership partnership of the headteacher and governors, who have a clear vision for the school. The teaching is mainly good and pupils generally achieve well. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are a credit to the school; and it fosters their personal development very well. The provision made for pupils with special educational needs is also very good. Naturally, there are some areas for improvement in this new school, but it is well placed to address these and they are vastly outweighed by the school's strengths. Overall, it provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards are above average in English, mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 1.
- Teaching is good in reception and in Key Stage 1.
- The headteacher has good analytical skills and provides the school with a clear sense of direction.
- The governors are well informed, committed and effective.
- The school provides very well for pupils with special educational needs.
- Very good provision is made for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development; and good provision is made for their cultural development.
- Pupils achieve good standards in history, music and gymnastics in Key Stage 1.
- The school is a caring community and pupils' welfare is a high priority.

What could be improved

- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT), and in art and design are too low at the end of Key Stage 1.
- More opportunities are required for teachers to develop roles as subject co-ordinators.

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

STANDARDS

The current Year 2 class will be the first to undertake the statutory assessment tests (SATs) in the school, so there are currently no school results to compare with the national average or the achievements of similar schools. However, the school predicts results in English, mathematics and science in 2001 which are above the national averages for the 2000 SATs, and inspection findings are consistent with these predictions.

When pupils move to Year 1, at the end of the Foundation Stage, most demonstrate overall standards which are a little above average in language and literacy, mathematics and in their scientific understanding of the world. In English, Key Stage 1 pupils build well on their prior achievements, and standards are above average in speaking and listening, reading and writing in Year 2 (at the end of the key stage). Pupils listen particularly well, sustaining their concentration during discussions and responding appropriately to their teachers' questions. In their speech, they become increasingly articulate and confident, develop a good vocabulary and can use standard English accurately. They achieve well in reading and, by the end of Key Stage 1, can recognise many common words and have good strategies for decoding those which are unfamiliar. Most Year 2 pupils use sequences of well-constructed and accurately punctuated sentences. They successfully match the style of their writing to their intended audience, and generally demonstrate good spelling and handwriting skills.

In mathematics, pupils achieve well in relation to the development of key numeracy skills and when learning about measure, shape and space. As a consequence, overall standards in the subject are above average at the end of Key Stage 1. In science, most pupils have good knowledge and understanding, and overall standards are above average at the end of the key stage. Standards are also above average in history, music and gymnastics at the end of the key stage, while standards in ICT and art and design are below those expected nationally. Insufficient evidence was available to judge pupils' standards in geography or design and technology.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are enthusiastic, enjoy coming to school and are interested in their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is very good, throughout the school day.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils form constructive relationships with teacher and with each other. They work together amicably on shared tasks, and respect the opinions of others. Pupils respond well when given responsibility for a range of class and school duties.
Attendance	The attendance rate is just below the national average, mainly because some pupils are taken on holiday during term time. However, levels of unauthorised absence are very low. Pupils are punctual and lessons start promptly at the beginning of the school day.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years (The Foundation Stage)	aged 5-7 years (Key Stage 1)
Lessons seen overall	Satisfactory in the nursery. Good in reception.	Good.

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

The quality of teaching was satisfactory or better in all lessons observed, and three quarters of these demonstrated good, and sometimes very good, teaching. The most effective teaching is usually in Years 1 and 2, where a quarter of all lessons were very good, and the remainder were mainly good.

The quality of teaching in the nursery is mainly satisfactory and is otherwise good. It enables children to make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development, and sound progress in all other aspects of their learning. In the reception classes, the teaching is good and enables children to continue to make effective progress in their personal, social and emotional development, and to make good progress in communication, language and literacy, and in mathematics. In addition, good teaching in reception results in children progressing well in the development of their scientific understanding of the world.

In Key Stage 1, the teaching in English is mainly very good and is otherwise good. All teachers are well informed about the National Literacy Strategy, plan their lessons effectively and match tasks carefully to suit the learning needs of individuals. The teaching enables pupils to progress well in speaking and listening and in the development of reading skills. The teaching of writing is very effective in Year 2, and builds on the secure foundation provided in Year 1. The teaching in mathematics is mainly good in Key Stage 1; and teachers are implementing the National Numeracy Strategy effectively. They ensure that good use is made of time in mathematics lessons, and enable pupils to make mainly good progress. Teaching is also good in science, and results in pupils progressing well in most aspects of their scientific learning. Teachers' planning is mainly good, and provides a coherent programme for the development of pupils' scientific knowledge.

In history, physical education and music, the teaching is good, and this is reflected in the effective progress pupils make in these subjects. Insufficient evidence was available to make secure judgements about the quality of teaching in ICT, art and design, geography and design and technology. However, teachers generally provide pupils with too few opportunities to develop their skills in ICT and pupils' progress in the subject is unsatisfactory, as a consequence. In art and design, evidence suggests that some teachers would benefit from in-service training to increase their knowledge and to raise their expectations of pupils' potential standards; and this is reflected in pupils' work which is a little below average at the end of the key stage.

All lessons are characterised by good relationships between staff and pupils, an orderly atmosphere in lessons and clear explanations of tasks. A common feature is also the skilful use of teachers' questions to probe pupils' understanding and to assess their future learning needs. Pupils respond well to this effective teaching, listening attentively and persevering with their tasks.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum in the Foundation Stage (in nursery and reception classes) provides a broad range of appropriate learning opportunities, and is a secure basis for the National Curriculum. In Key Stage 1, the curriculum is broad, reasonably balanced, and meets statutory requirements. Sufficient time is allocated for literacy and numeracy, and this time is used well. However, pupils need more opportunities to develop their skills in ICT; and there are also important weaknesses in planning for the development of pupils' key skills in art and design.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The school makes very good provision for these pupils, and they are taught well.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school makes very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development, and good provision for their cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school is a caring community, and pupils' welfare is a high priority. Procedures for assessing pupils' learning needs are particularly effective in English and mathematics, and are sound in science.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The successful start made by this new school owes much to the headteacher's energy and commitment. She has high expectations which have a beneficial effect on pupils' attitudes and behaviour, and are also reflected in the standard of teaching. The headteacher has good analytical skills and provides the school with a clear sense of direction. The co-ordinators for English and mathematics make an important contribution to the school's good achievements in these subjects, but have no job descriptions and would benefit from more feedback about their work. Now that the school is fully staffed in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, the headteacher recognises she needs to delegate more responsibility to teachers to act as leaders in other subjects of the curriculum; and should establish procedures to support and develop their new roles.

	The school development plan has been formulated through effective leadership by the headteacher. It identifies relevant priorities and is making a valuable contribution to school improvement.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The school benefits from a highly committed governing body which makes a valuable contribution to the leadership and management of the school. Governors work well with the headteacher, and appropriate committees are established to guide the school's work. Those with responsibility for literacy, numeracy and special educational needs are well informed. The governors have good awareness of the school's performance, know the challenges it faces and ensure that statutory requirements are met. They are a strength of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher checks teachers' planning conscientiously, and regularly observes lessons to assess the quality of teaching and learning. She identifies strengths and areas for improvement very clearly, and provides valuable feedback to the teachers. The co-ordinators for English and mathematics also monitor planning carefully, observe lessons and develop a good overview of the school's performance in their subjects.
The strategic use of resources	The school budget is analysed rigorously, and financial planning is linked appropriately on the school development plan. The governors have formulated a good 'Best Value' policy, and debate expenditure very thoroughly. Overall, the school makes good use of its resources.

There are sufficient teachers, and the school is well staffed with learning support assistants. Accommodation is good, and learning resources are satisfactory, overall.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What some parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They believe there are high standards of teaching. • They believe children make good progress. • They believe their children are happy at school. • They believe there are high expectations of behaviour in school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They would like more information on how their children are progressing. • They would like the school to work more closely with them and be more approachable. • They would like more extra-curricular activities.

Inspection findings fully support parents' positive views. They also show that the school is effective in providing information about pupils' standards and progress. No evidence was found during the inspection to support the view of a minority of parents that the school needs to work more closely with them and to be more approachable. Nevertheless the headteacher and governors acknowledge the importance of taking these views seriously. Extra-curricular provision is broadly satisfactory given the size and stage of development of the school, and it plans to increase its provision when it has Key Stage 2 pupils.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. On entry to the nursery, children's oracy and personal and social skills are generally a little above average, while their attainment is otherwise broadly average. In the nursery, their achievements are good in relation to their personal, social and emotional development and are sound overall in all other aspects of their learning. In reception classes, children continue to achieve well in their personal, social and emotional development, and their progress becomes good in speaking and listening, reading and mathematics. In other aspects of their development, their progress is sound, overall. At the end of the Foundation Stage, most children achieve the nationally expected outcomes in all areas of learning, and their overall attainment is a little above average.
2. In Key Stage 1, the current Year 2 class will be the first to undertake the SATs in the school, so there are currently no school results to compare with the national average or the achievements of similar schools. However, the targets set by the school in English, mathematics and science for 2001 are above the national averages for the 2000 SATs, and inspection findings are consistent with these predictions for the end of Key Stage 1.
3. In English, Key Stage 1 pupils build well on their prior attainment, and standards are above average, overall, in all aspects of the subject at the end of the key stage. Pupils listen particularly well, often sustaining concentration through quite lengthy discussions and responding appropriately to questions. In their speech, they become increasingly articulate and confident, develop a good vocabulary and can use spoken Standard English accurately. They achieve well in reading and, by the end of Key Stage 1, can use phonics well to decode unfamiliar words and recognise many common words on sight. In response to skilful questions from their teachers, they are able to explore both literal and hidden meanings in a text; and most pupils can talk convincingly about the setting, plot and characters in a familiar story. In Year 1, pupils make sound progress in developing basic writing skills. These are built upon very effectively in Year 2, where pupils achieve well in writing. Most Year 2 pupils use sequences of well-constructed and accurately punctuated sentences. They successfully match the style of their writing to their intended audience, and generally demonstrate good spelling and handwriting skills. Overall, standards in writing are above average at the end of Key Stage 1.
4. In mathematics, pupils make mainly good progress in acquiring key numeracy skills, and achieve well when learning about measure, shape and space. As a consequence, overall standards in mathematics are above average at the end of Key Stage 1. In science, most pupils achieve well in relation to their starting points, so that overall attainment in the subject is above average at the end of the key stage.
5. Insufficient evidence was available during the inspection to make a secure judgement about pupils' standards in geography or design and technology. In history and music pupils achieve well, in Years 1 and 2, and demonstrate standards which are above those expected nationally at the end of the key stage. In Year 2, pupils' written work in history reveals their good understanding of the life and work of Florence Nightingale, of the Great Fire of London, and of domestic life in Victorian times. They are also able to make relevant comparisons between the past and present. In music, pupils' singing

skills in Year 2 are particularly good. Pupils also achieve well in Years 1 and 2 in gymnastics, and demonstrate standards which are above average. It was only possible to observe gymnastics lessons during the inspection, so it is not possible to judge pupils' standards in other aspects of their work in physical education.

6. Across Key Stage 1, pupils make uneven, and mainly unsatisfactory, progress in using ICT to communicate and handle information, and to support their problem-solving, recording and expressive work. As a consequence, the attainment of most pupils is below average at the end of the key stage. Pupils' progress in art and design is similarly spasmodic and unsatisfactory; and standards in the subject are a little below average at the end of Key Stage 1.
7. Pupils with special educational needs make mainly good, and sometimes very good, progress in their learning. They build well on their prior attainment and achieve standards which, although sometimes a little below average for their age, nevertheless are accurate reflections of their current capabilities. It is not uncommon for some pupils on the special educational needs register to attain the nationally expected standards for their age in their work. More able pupils also achieve well in English and mathematics. In science, the progress and achievements of more able pupils are sound, overall. The few pupils for whom English is an additional language, are achieving well. There is no evidence of significant differences between the achievements of boys and girls across the school.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. In the nursery and reception classes, children under five are secure and happy and settle well into school routines. They behave very well, are friendly and open, develop good relationships, and communicate enthusiastically amongst themselves and with adults, whether in the course of work or at play.
9. In Key Stage 1, pupils have very positive attitudes towards learning and towards the religious life of the school. In lessons, they concentrate well, persevere with tasks, and take great pride in their achievements. They strive to do their best under all circumstances, and they can be trusted, from a very young age, to remain conscientiously engaged on a task even when not directly supervised by an adult, for example during time given to independent group work during the literacy hour. They show great respect for their teachers and for everyone they meet, and they are keen to discuss their work and to share it with others. They recognise the value of effort and they are particularly warm in their recognition of others' achievements, for example during the presentation of awards in assemblies. From the youngest to the oldest, they work sensibly together in pairs, groups or teams when asked to do so. They share resources equitably, without fuss, engage in genuine dialogue about their work to develop hypotheses or to reach judgements, and accord equal respect to others' contributions. Pupils with special educational needs are fully integrated into all activities and are just as much valued and helped by their classmates as they are supported by their teachers and by other staff.
10. Pupils' behaviour is very good, and all pupils, regardless of ability, gender or background, mix well together. They show respect for property, are polite and courteous, and are quick to offer help, for example by opening doors for others. They have a very clear understanding of the difference between right and wrong; and there is no evidence of racist or sexist behaviour. Their own contributions to classroom rules are rational, and strongly reflect, as does their general behaviour, the Torah values that are so well promoted through all the life, work, policies and procedures of

the school. All pupils are guided by a strong moral code acquired in part from home, in part from their schooling, and in no small measure from their religious faith. There has been one recent instance when a fixed-term exclusion was deemed necessary, but inappropriate behaviour is very rare indeed, and the very few pupils with special educational needs associated with behavioural difficulties are making good progress towards their behaviour targets.

11. The seriousness with which pupils respond to spiritual and moral issues is evident in assemblies, in blessings and in prayers. Robust yet reverent attitudes on the part of all staff and pupils, and a strong sense of 'family' within the Jewish faith combine to fill such occasions with spiritual energy. When the school community combines adult and children's voices in songs of praise, the singing has a powerful spiritual quality that communicates deeply held beliefs. Within the wider curriculum, pupils' concern for moral and spiritual values is always evident. They show a strong awareness of the impact of behaviour on others. For example, when Year 2 pupils discuss the actions of various creatures in a story, 'The Rainbow Fish'; and when they respond with great empathy for the feelings of families caught up in the Great Fire of London.
12. Pupils enjoy the various duties and responsibilities they are given, and undertake them responsibly and well. For example, all pupils learn to take the register to the office, to keep the environment tidy by clearing things away at the end of lessons, and to set out and put away apparatus in physical education lessons. In relation to their learning, they complete their homework assignments conscientiously and, as they become older, learn to undertake independent research, for example in preparation for new history topics.
13. Levels of attendance are just below the national average, mainly because some pupils are taken on holiday during term time. However, levels of unauthorised absence are very low. Registration procedures fully meet statutory requirements. Pupils are punctual and lessons start promptly at the beginning of the day and after breaks.
14. Boys and girls work well together and enjoy mixing at playtimes. Pupils with special educational needs play their full part in school life.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. The quality of teaching was satisfactory or better in all lessons observed, and three quarters of these demonstrated good, and sometimes very good teaching. The most effective teaching is usually in Years 1 and 2, where a quarter of all lessons were very good, and the remainder were mainly good.
16. The quality of teaching in the nursery is mainly sound and is sometimes good. It enables children to make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development, and sound progress in all other aspects of their learning. In the reception classes, the teaching is good and enables children to continue to make effective progress in their personal, social and emotional development, and to make good progress in communication, language and literacy, and mathematics. In addition, good teaching in reception results in children progressing well in their scientific understanding of the world. Classroom assistants are briefed effectively by teachers, and are deployed well. They make a valuable contribution to children's learning. All staff provide good role models and have high expectations of children's behaviour. Nursery and reception staff plan and provide a broad range of activities

which are beginning to reflect the new Foundation Stage curriculum. However, teachers' planning for progression, through the 'stepping stones' for each area of learning (as identified in the new guidance), would be improved if it was undertaken collaboratively by all staff working in the Foundation Stage.

17. In Key Stage 1, the teaching in English is mainly very good and is otherwise good. All teachers are well informed about the National Literacy Strategy, plan their lessons effectively, and match tasks carefully to suit the learning needs of individuals. The teaching enables pupils to progress well in speaking and listening and in the development of reading skills. However, there is scope to broaden pupils' reading beyond the reading scheme, particularly to promote their awareness of the work of authors and to increase some pupils' enjoyment of reading. The teaching of writing is very effective in Year 2, and builds well on the secure foundation provided in Year 1.
18. The teaching of mathematics is mainly good in Key Stage 1. Teachers are implementing the National Numeracy Strategy well. They are clear about the learning intentions of lessons; these are shared with the pupils appropriately at the outset, and provide the basis for effective evaluations at the end of lessons. Teachers ensure that good use is made of time in mathematics, and enable pupils to make mainly good progress in the subject.
19. Teaching is also good in science in both Year 1 and Year 2, and enables pupils to make good progress in most aspects of their scientific learning. Teachers have secure subject knowledge, organise their lessons efficiently and motivate their pupils effectively. They introduce appropriate technical vocabulary and reinforce this well in their teaching. There is generally a good match between the work set and the learning needs of pupils. However, more able pupils could achieve even higher standards if their work was sometimes more challenging. Teachers' planning is mainly good, and provides a coherent programme for the development of pupils' scientific knowledge. The school is aware that provision for the systematic development of pupils' enquiry skills is less effective, and this is reflected in the satisfactory, but slower, progress pupils make in this aspect of their learning.
20. Due to timetabling arrangements, insufficient lessons were observed in ICT, art and design, geography and design and technology to make secure judgements about the quality of teaching in these subjects. However, teachers generally provide pupils with too few opportunities to develop their skills in ICT in order to communicate and handle information, and to support their problem-solving, recording and expressive work, across the curriculum. As a consequence, pupils' progress in the subject is unsatisfactory. In art and design, evidence suggests that some teachers would benefit from in-service training to increase their knowledge and to raise their expectations of pupils' potential standards; and this is reflected in pupils' work which is a little below average at the end of the key stage. In geography and in design and technology, there were insufficient examples of pupils' work to judge the impact of teaching on pupils' progress and standards. However, these subjects share a common weakness also evident in teachers' planning for ICT and art and design. In all these subjects, coherent programmes are not yet securely in place to develop pupils' key knowledge and skills systematically. However, teachers are beginning to make use of the valuable guidance provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority to inform elements of their planning.
21. In history, physical education and music, the teaching is good, overall. Teachers communicate their enthusiasm for history to their pupils and are well informed. In Year 2, history teaching is of a very high standard; and teachers promote pupils'

historical research skills effectively, across the key stage. In physical education, pupils benefit from consistently good teaching by a qualified physical education instructor. She has good subject knowledge, organises lessons well and ensures that pupils make good use of time. As a consequence, pupils make good progress in gymnastics and achieve standards which are above average. In music, there is also an effective specialist teacher whose teaching is consistently good. She has high expectations and enables pupils to achieve good standards in music, particularly in singing in Year 2.

22. Pupils with special educational needs are well taught. Teachers' lesson plans include the provision of suitably matched work and, often, of additional adult support from learning support assistants or classroom assistants for the range of pupils with special educational needs. Support staff and classroom assistants are very well briefed. They know precisely what pupils are intended to learn, intervene appropriately to help them achieve the desired outcomes, and play a very significant role in helping the pupils to achieve their targets. All teachers know their pupils well, and they take particular care to make sure that pupils with special educational needs are involved in discussions, and that they play a full part in activities at every stage of a lesson. This is also evident in the teaching of the few pupils for whom English is an additional language. Individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are of a very good quality. They identify well-defined and achievable targets which will help each child to develop their strengths and to address any weaknesses they might be experiencing in their learning, or, occasionally, in their behaviour. Although most additional adult support is integrated into mainstream lessons, there are some occasions when pupils benefit from particularly focused work in small groups, for example for occupational therapy. The quality of this provision is also very good and the school ensures that these pupils do not miss out on important aspects of classwork when receiving this additional support. Extension activities are often planned for the more able or higher attaining pupils. In some subjects, such as English and mathematics, these work particularly well, but the teaching of more able pupils in science could sometimes provide more challenge.
23. Good use is made of homework to extend and consolidate what is learned in school. All lessons are characterised by good relationships between staff and pupils, an orderly atmosphere in lessons and clear explanations of tasks. A common feature is also the skilful use of teachers' questions to probe pupils' understanding and to assess their future learning needs. They take particular care to give equal attention and encouragement to boys and girls. Pupils respond well to this effective teaching, listening attentively and persevering with their tasks.

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

24. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory and provides a secure basis for the National Curriculum. However, in the reception classes, there is no secure outside area for children's play and, as a consequence, there are insufficient opportunities for them to develop their physical skills through the use of large toys and climbing equipment. In the nursery, and in the two reception classes, curriculum planning is broadly satisfactory and is beginning to take account of the new Foundation Stage Curriculum. However, nursery staff and reception teachers do not currently plan together and, as a result, there is sometimes a lack of coherence in the planning for each of the areas of learning, across the Foundation Stage. Staff would benefit from well-focused in-service training on planning collaboratively for the

'stepping stones' of progress, towards the Early Learning Goals, as detailed in the new national guidance.

25. In Key Stage 1, the curriculum meets statutory requirements, has sufficient breadth and is reasonably balanced. Sufficient time is allocated for literacy and numeracy, and the implementation of the national strategies for these key skills is having a beneficial effect on pupils' learning. However, pupils need more opportunities to develop their ICT skills across the curriculum; and the provision for art and design does not generally enable pupils to achieve sufficiently high standards.
26. Provision for special educational needs is very good, and the school generally provides well for more able pupils. The school has introduced useful proformas for long, medium and short-term planning for aspects of the National Curriculum; and all teachers complete these conscientiously. In most subjects, teachers are beginning to use the helpful guidance from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority to inform this planning. However, the school has not yet formulated effective schemes of work which ensure the progressive development of key skills in some subjects. As a consequence, pupils' progress in ICT, art and design, design and technology and geography is spasmodic. Appropriate arrangements are made for sex education; and the school is aware of the need to develop, and implement, a policy aimed at raising pupils' awareness of the dangers of drugs.
27. The school has established sound links with other Jewish schools which ensures pupils have the chance to share activities with others. The school welcomed pupils from across the county to see the exhibition on the Jewish way of life, and organised training sessions for teachers who cover Judaism as part of their curriculum. The school is firmly rooted in the local Jewish community which has a high level of commitment to the school. Pupils are encouraged to learn about their culture and religious observances which include regular charity giving to Jewish and international causes. Because of the remote location of the school, it is difficult to use the local facilities to enrich the curriculum but the school plans a variety of educational visits to support learning.
28. The school provides a broadly satisfactory number of extra-curricular activities for its pupils given its current size and stage of development. There are plans to increase the number and range available as the school grows, and includes Key Stage 2.
29. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, enjoy full access to the school curriculum and to extra-curricular activities. Where necessary or relevant, pupils with special educational needs receive support in the form of particular apparatus or resources, as well as adult help.
30. The school makes very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development, and is very effective in developing pupils' awareness of their Jewish identity and of Jewish culture. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good in all other respects.
31. The school's aims place the Jewish faith and Jewish identity at its centre, and a strong spirituality underpins and pervades all its work. So effectively do staff combine spirituality with moral, social and cultural values and with the practicalities of life, that the teachings of the Torah are made accessible even to the youngest children. Strong links with local synagogues and with the rabbi reinforce the spiritual dimension of pupils' development. The developing curriculum for Jewish studies accounts for 25 per cent of curriculum time. Although no Jewish studies lessons were observed

during the inspection, it is clear from discussions with staff, from displays around the school, and from conversations with pupils, that these lessons make a very strong contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. From the nursery onwards, children learn to respect and to value the teachings of the Torah, to engage regularly in prayer, to sing songs of praise in Hebrew, to recite blessings at appropriate times during the day, and to take part in, and understand the significance of, traditional Jewish festivals, days of observance, and Jewish rituals and customs. For example, children are involved in a ceremony during assembly where they fulfil, in role, the parts of adult members of a family preparing for Shabbat.

32. Adults provide good role models for pupils in all these respects, and school policies reflect, and promote, very high aspirations for pupils' conduct and for their interaction with others, as in the excellent behaviour policy. Teachers show respect for every pupil in their care. Nowhere is this more evident than in the very good provision for pupils with special educational needs, where as much care is taken to respond to their individual personalities as to their academic or other needs. Staff provide exemplary models for relationships and behaviour in their daily interactions with their classes. Pupils are taught the difference between right and wrong, and they are appropriately involved in drawing up classroom rules which inform their behaviour on a daily basis. Through their work in many subjects and through fund-raising activities, they are taught to reflect on mankind's moral responsibility for the care of others, and to do their best to help others less fortunate than themselves.
33. During lessons, pupils are given frequent opportunities to develop social awareness and social responsibility. They work together in pairs, small groups and teams, for example during literacy hours and in physical education lessons. All pupils are encouraged to assume responsibilities for routine duties within the classroom, and to help others wherever they might be, for example by setting out apparatus for gymnastics. Leadership roles are strongly encouraged, and pupils' social skills are nurtured carefully. Both in school and within the wider spheres of influence of their rabbis, pupils are taught to behave as useful citizens within an ever widening social context.
34. Pupils learn a very great deal about their Jewish inheritance, about Jewish history and about Jewish customs and culture, particularly, though not exclusively, through their work in Jewish studies. They also learn about Israel as a country, and they learn to speak, and to read, Hebrew. These aspects of their cultural development are very strong. The school also makes provision for their cultural development in a more general way through other subjects, through educational visits and visitors, and through a suitable range of extra-curricular activities. Resources are chosen carefully to raise pupils' awareness of the multicultural diversity of society, and pupils are taught, from the security of their own faith, to respect the views and beliefs of those who choose to worship in different ways.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

35. Since opening, four terms ago, the school has made sound progress in developing appropriate assessment procedures, and these are broadly satisfactory. The recently formulated assessment policy clearly outlines the purposes and management of assessment in the school. The learning objectives for lessons are identified in teachers' planning and, in the vast majority of lessons, these are shared with pupils. A significant amount of good teaching was observed during the inspection and was characterised by the use of skilful questioning to assess pupils' needs.

36. Satisfactory use is made of entry and ongoing assessments in the nursery and reception classes to inform the teaching of the youngest children, and enable the school to identify children with special educational needs at an early stage. The local authority 'Early Years Record of Achievement' has been introduced in the nursery and this usefully summarises the on-going assessments made by teachers, on a term-by-term basis. The record is to be continued in the reception classes and will provide continuity in recording children's achievements, across the Foundation Stage.
37. Throughout the school, teachers know their pupils well. They keep pertinent notes about the significant achievements or needs of individual pupils, and these usefully inform future planning. Assessment is particularly effective in English and mathematics, and is sound in science. However, assessment in some subjects needs to be improved in order to track pupils' progress and standards more carefully, and to inform teachers' planning more effectively. This is particularly so in ICT and art and design where pupils' standards need to be raised.
38. A satisfactory start has been made in identifying and targeting the needs of specific pupils, and cohorts, in order to improve performance at the end of the key stage. The targets for the current Year 2 class, for example, have been compared with national performance data and, as a consequence, improvements in the standards of writing have appropriately been identified as a school priority. A beginning has also been made in developing pupils' understanding of self-assessment. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are being encouraged to judge their own attainment in English and mathematics, and to identify targets for their learning. Staff meetings have been held to reach agreement on levels of attainment in English; and the school recognises that it would be valuable to undertake the same process for mathematics and science.
39. No monitoring of the quality of teachers' marking has yet been undertaken by the school. Inspection findings indicate that marking is satisfactory, overall, although there is some variation in quality across the school.
40. The school strongly promotes the safety, security and well being of its pupils. Relationships in the school are firmly based on respect and care, and pupils quickly learn to treat each other with the kindness and consideration shown to them by adults. This creates a happy and purposeful community where pupils develop confidence in coping with all aspects of school life.
41. Support staff are well deployed to help pupils with particular medical or educational needs; and appropriate use is made of outside specialists. Parents believe teachers listen well to their concerns and are sensitive to their children's pastoral needs. Children entering the school have the opportunity to see the nursery or reception class before they begin; this is good practice.
42. The promotion of high standards of behaviour is carried out very effectively, and the management of pupils' behaviour is a strength of the school. There are excellent policies for behaviour and anti-bullying which encourage pupils to develop self discipline and to take pride in themselves and their school. Detailed guidelines ensure that staff, parents and pupils understand what constitutes good and unacceptable behaviour and these values are consistently reinforced across the school. Consequently incidents of bullying are very rare and are dealt with promptly and effectively. Pupils' efforts in being polite or helpful are appropriately recognised and celebrated at the weekly awards assembly. The few pupils who find it hard to maintain

these high standards are carefully monitored, supported and given realistic targets for improvement. These strategies help pupils develop very positive attitudes to learning and an enthusiasm for school life.

43. The school is aware of local authority guidelines for child protection and staff are briefed to refer any matters of concern to the deputy headteacher. There are plans to draw up a policy for child protection following his attendance at a suitable training course in the near future. Arrangements for monitoring attendance and punctuality are sound, and parents are reminded of the disadvantages of taking their children on holiday in term time.
44. Although there is no agreed Programme of Study for personal, social and health education, the school generally makes very effective provision, including through Jewish studies. However, it recognises that drugs education will need to be included in the curriculum. There is an emphasis on personal safety and security, and visitors such as the police are invited from time to time to increase pupils' awareness. During the inspection week, children in the nursery benefited from a focus on road safety, with practical experiences using the school's car park. Parents were appropriately invited to join the session.
45. The school pays due regard to matters of health and safety with a sound policy and regular site inspections by staff and governors. Guidelines for safety in lessons will be added to subject policies as they are developed. The school is also planning to take appropriate action to address the few remaining safety improvements suggested in the local authority safety audit. There are well-established procedures for first aid, medicines and fire safety, and appropriate documentation is maintained.
46. All pupils are valued and encouraged to feel part of the school community. The school appropriately identifies pupils with particular medical, social or behavioural needs; and sensitive and well targeted help is provided for them by classroom assistants.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

47. Parents have a very strong commitment to the school and feel partners in its development. They value the ethos being firmly rooted in the Jewish tradition and fully support the high expectations set for both academic attainment and standards of behaviour. The school works hard to give parents pertinent information about the school and there is no evidence to support the view of a minority of parents that they are not well informed. The weekly newsletter is exemplary in providing details about school activities, summaries about what is to be taught in each year group in the following week and full information on the curriculum covered in Jewish studies. The prospectus and annual report to parents also provide the normal range of information expected.
48. Parents have regular opportunities to discuss their children's progress with teachers and to see their children's work. Day-to-day contact can be maintained through home/school reading records or homework diaries. Annual written reports are particularly detailed in assessing pupils' strengths and weaknesses in English and mathematics and include appropriate targets for improvement. The school makes every effort to make sure that parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept fully informed about any concerns related to their child's progress and welfare. Parents are involved appropriately and regularly in reviews of their child's progress. Wherever possible, the school provides information not only about the procedures

involved in implementing the Code of Practice, but also about the particular learning difficulties the child may be experiencing. In addition, it is not unusual for the school to put parents in contact with relevant agencies and support groups should this be deemed helpful.

49. The questionnaire returns show that some parents believe the school should work more closely with them, and to be more approachable. No evidence was found during the inspection week to support this view. Sound procedures are in place to ensure that parents of pupils coming by bus can talk to teachers by phone; and the headteacher now holds weekly surgeries where parents may raise any concerns. Nevertheless, the headteacher and governors acknowledge the importance of taking these views seriously. The school accepts that there is scope for more guidance on helping parents to understand how reading is taught, and a literacy evening is planned which may help to meet concerns from a minority of parents. Initiatives of this kind are recognised as important as a forum for dialogue and to develop common expectations.
50. Parents give strong support to the school and their children's learning. They hear them read regularly and support them in their homework tasks; and some parents help regularly in class. The active Parents Association successfully raises funds for additional resources and projects to enhance the school environment. The value parents put on education provides a good role model for the pupils, and fosters positive attitudes to school and learning.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

51. The school benefits from a highly committed governing body which has been very effective in helping to establish this recently created school. The governors work well with the headteacher, and an appropriate range of committees help to guide the school's development. The governors with responsibility for monitoring provision in literacy and numeracy are taking a keen interest in the school's response to national strategies for these subjects. They are well informed, observe lessons regularly, provide useful feedback to the governing body, and help the school to set realistic targets for pupils' standards. The governor with responsibility ICT has researched the school's resource needs with great care, demonstrating the conscientious attitudes which are characteristic of the governing body. The governor with responsibility for special educational needs has a particularly good awareness of school procedures, and visits regularly to monitor provision. The chair leads the governors well, and his positive approach to school development has a beneficial effect on the life of the school. In summary, the governors have a good awareness of the school's performance, know the challenges it faces and ensure that statutory requirements are met. They are a significant strength in the school.
52. The headteacher was appointed in January 1999, prior to the school's opening in September 1999. The successful start made by the school owes much to her energy and commitment. She has high expectations which have a beneficial effect on pupils' attitudes and behaviour, and are also reflected in the standards of teaching and learning. The headteacher has good analytical skills and provides the school with a clear sense of direction. She monitors teachers' planning conscientiously, and regularly observes lessons to assess the quality of teaching and learning. Her lesson observations identify strengths and weaknesses very clearly, and provide teachers with valuable feedback which has a beneficial effect on their professional development. The headteacher's commitment to overseeing all aspects of the school's work has been a significant factor in forging a common sense of purpose

among staff, and a level of consistency and coherence which is unusual in such a new school. However, she now needs to delegate more responsibility to her growing staff.

53. The school development plan has been formulated through effective leadership by the headteacher and appropriate governor involvement. Teachers were also consulted, and the headteacher has sound plans to provide opportunities for them to make a more substantial contribution in the near future, now that all nursery, reception and Key Stage 1 staff are in post. The development plan is well organised, with a clear vision statement to guide its focus. It provides a coherent overview of priorities until 2003, and detailed planning for initiatives in the current educational year. Objectives are clearly identified, together with the specific action to be undertaken, those responsible, costings, time scales, success criteria, and monitoring and evaluation strategies. Overall, the development plan identifies relevant priorities and is making a valuable contribution to school improvement.
54. The co-ordinators for English and mathematics are well informed about the national strategies for their subjects, and set the staff effective role models through their own teaching. They monitor teachers' planning carefully, observe lessons across the school and provide their colleagues with useful feedback. They are conscientious and have developed a good overview of provision in their subjects. However, they do not have job descriptions as co-ordinators; and the headteacher appropriately recognises that procedures for monitoring and developing their roles are not sufficiently established. At present, these co-ordinators receive insufficient feedback about the quality of their work, and opportunities are missed to celebrate their achievements as well as to identify strategies to make their work even more effective. The headteacher retains oversight of the remaining subjects of the National Curriculum, and no other teachers are subject co-ordinators. Naturally, the headteacher is very stretched to develop a sufficiently rigorous analysis of the strengths and weaknesses in so many subjects, or to identify and pursue strategies for improvement. Now that the school is fully staffed in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1, more responsibility should be given to teachers so that they can develop their roles as subject co-ordinators. However, in order to develop their new roles successfully, they will need clear job descriptions and the support of professional dialogue provided through a systematic training programme, tailored to meet their needs.
55. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The headteacher retains a key leadership role with general oversight of special educational needs provision. Two very effective special educational needs co-ordinators take responsibility for all the day-to-day work involved in managing provision for pupils at Stages 1, 2 and 3, while the headteacher organises provision for those pupils with statements of special educational needs and, where appropriate, establishes contact with any outside agencies involved in special educational needs support for pupils. Although an unusual arrangement, this division of responsibilities works well in the interest of the pupils. There is very effective teamwork amongst all staff involved in special educational needs work in the school. All staff have received appropriate training to fulfil their various roles, and administrative and organisational procedures are clear and consistent. The governing body is particularly supportive of special educational needs provision.
56. The school has a comprehensive policy for equal opportunities which reinforces the school's ethos of valuing each individual. Training has been given to ensure that staff have similarly high expectations for boys and girls. Procedures are in place to monitor the attainment of different groups of pupils such as the summer born. All areas of the school buildings and grounds are accessible to wheelchair users.

57. The day-to-day management of the school is good, and benefits from efficient secretarial support. Routines are well organised and help to provide an orderly atmosphere.
58. The administration of the budget is carried out efficiently by the headteacher and the school secretary. Spending is also carefully monitored by the finance committee. The committee provides good support for the management of the school. The budget is analysed with great care, and financial planning is appropriately linked to priorities on the school development plan. The governors have formulated a good "Best Value Policy", and debate expenditure rigorously. Overall, the school makes effective use of its resources. As a consequence, pupils generally make good progress in their learning and the school provides good value for money.
59. There are sufficient teachers and overall they have the expertise and experience to cover the age range and ability of the pupils. Teachers' subject knowledge is good in English, mathematics and science, but evidence suggests that some would benefit from in-service training to increase their knowledge about art and design. The school is well staffed with learning support assistants, and they make a particularly valuable contribution to pupils' learning. They develop good relationships with pupils, and are well briefed by teachers. The headteacher and governors have used thorough and rigorous procedures to select staff for this new school, and have been successful in recruiting highly conscientious, able people. Induction procedures are sound; and the school has adopted an appropriate policy for performance management.
60. Learning resources are satisfactory, overall, and the new school building provides good accommodation. Teachers take care to enhance the building with attractive displays of pupils' work, and it provides a stimulating learning environment. Teachers make sensible use of classrooms, which will eventually be occupied by Key Stage 2 pupils, to provide additional teaching space for children in nursery and reception. There is a good hall, and a computer suite is shortly to be established. There is sufficient outdoor space, and nursery children have direct access from their classroom to an outside area to develop their physical skills. A weakness in the school's provision is the lack of direct access to such an area for reception children.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

61. In order to improve standards and elements of teachers' professional development, the school should include the following issues in its post-inspection plan:
- (1) Raise standards in ICT by:
 - (a) planning and teaching a systematic programme for the development of pupils' key skills in the subject;
 - (b) establishing rigorous procedures to assess pupils' standards, progress and future learning needs; and
 - (c) ensuring pupils have sufficient opportunities to develop and use ICT skills across the curriculum.(see paragraphs 6, 20, 25 and 112)
 - (2) Raise standards in art and design in Key Stage 1 by:

- (a) providing in-service training to increase teachers' knowledge and to raise their expectations of pupils' potential attainment; and
 - (b) establishing a coherent scheme of work for the subject, and effective assessment procedures.

(see paragraphs 6, 20, 25, 98, 99 and 100)
- (3) Develop the roles of teachers as subject co-ordinators by:
 - (a) delegating more responsibility for teachers to take on roles as subject co-ordinators;
 - (b) creating clear job descriptions for co-ordinators; and
 - (c) providing effective support and professional development systems for new and established co-ordinators.

(see paragraphs 52 and 54)

In addition to the key issues above, the governors should also consider the following less important weaknesses for inclusion in their action plan:

- (1) Improve elements of teachers' planning by:
 - (a) ensuring that teachers in the nursery and in reception work co-operatively to achieve more overall coherence in planning for children's learning across the Foundation Stage; and
 - (b) establishing schemes of work which develop pupils' key skills systematically in geography and design and technology.

(see paragraphs 24, 26, 100 and 106)
- (2) Provide more opportunities for children in reception classes to develop their physical skills by using large toys and climbing equipment, in an outside area.
(see paragraphs 60 and 77)
- (3) Promote pupils' enjoyment of reading by encouraging them to read more books outside the reading scheme, by good authors.
(see paragraphs 17 and 81)
- (4) Improve the attendance rate, so it meets or exceeds the national average, by making some parents more aware of the disadvantages of taking their children on holiday during term-time.
(see paragraph 13)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	38
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	19

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	13	63	24	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	23	128
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	24

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	4

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	2
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	1

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.8
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	84
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	1	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)	7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24
Average class size	28.8

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	203

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	37

Number of pupils per FTE adult	4.6
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	292,981
Total expenditure	297,196
Expenditure per pupil	2,251
Balance brought forward from previous year	0
Balance carried forward to next year	-4,215

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	188
Number of questionnaires returned	134

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	71	25	2	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	54	37	6	1	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	53	43	1	1	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	37	42	7	3	11
The teaching is good.	49	46	4	1	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	28	46	22	5	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	48	28	14	9	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	62	33	1	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	33	37	16	10	4
The school is well led and managed.	40	41	8	7	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	51	39	1	2	6
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	13	40	15	13	19

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

62. Children are admitted to the nursery class at the beginning of the year in which they reach four, and then transfer to one of two reception classes at the end of the year. A small percentage of children do not attend the nursery and are admitted to the school at the beginning of the reception year. Most children have previously attended pre-school provision; and attend the nursery on a part-time basis. The nursery is housed in an attractive purpose built unit with an outdoor play area, which has soft safety features. Currently, all the children attend the nursery during the morning sessions.
63. There are currently 45 children in two reception classes. These children have opportunities to use an additional classroom for more practical activities but do not have easy access to a secure outside area. Some use is made of the good outdoor provision in the nursery and the school hall, but children have only limited opportunities to play with large toys and equipment in order to develop their physical skills.
64. The nursery, reception classes and activities room are well organised and staff work hard to provide an attractive and stimulating learning environment. In order to provide more working space for the youngest children, the nursery staff are using additional accommodation on the first floor of the school. While this arrangement meets the requirement for more space, it reduces the access which children have to the rich environment in the nursery and the range of valuable learning opportunities which this provides.
65. The partnership between parents and staff is firmly established. The induction programme is effective, ensuring children are well prepared for entry into the nursery. Parents are kept well informed about the curriculum through the weekly school newsletter which has a page dedicated to 'Nursery News'. Results of assessments are shared with parents, and they are fully involved in supporting their children's progress in learning.
66. On entry to the nursery, children have a wide range of abilities but attainment, overall, is broadly average. However, in personal, social and emotional development and in oracy, it is a little above average. The quality of education provided for children in the Foundation Stage provides a secure foundation for the statutory curriculum. By the end of this stage, most children achieve the nationally expected outcomes in all of the required areas of learning, and their overall attainment is a little above average.

Personal, social and emotional development

67. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is good both in the nursery and in the reception classes and, as a consequence, children make good progress. Staff successfully establish a supportive, caring ethos and effective routines which help to promote independence. Children settle quickly, and well, into these routines and are able to follow them confidently. They are keen to come to school, are interested in the activities, have good concentration and perseverance and are keen to try new experiences. Most children listen attentively when required to do so, for example, to instructions or to stories they are read. All adults give good support to the children and this promotes their confidence and self-esteem; and children relate very well to each other and to adults working in the nursery and in the reception classes. They

work co-operatively to good effect, share resources sensibly and willingly take turns. Children know what is expected of them and understand the difference between right and wrong, in the school setting. Behaviour is very good whether children are working in a group or as a whole class; and they take good care of their environment and equipment. By the time they have reached the end of the Foundation Stage, most children exceed the Early Learning Goals for personal, social and emotional development.

Communication, language and literature

68. The communication skills of most children in the nursery are a little higher than average for their age. They make sound progress in speaking and listening and in early literacy skills during their time in the nursery, working towards, and through, the various stages or 'stepping stones' that contribute to the achievement of the Early Learning Goals. They enjoy daily interaction with their teachers and helpers and with one another, and most are very keen to answer questions during discussions and to chatter with their friends as they engage in play and in structured activities, for example in the role-play corner. At this early stage in their development, a few children are rather more keen to communicate than to listen to others, but all children are gaining confidence and, with rare exceptions, they are able to tell others their 'news' clearly and audibly, to take turns during discussions, and to respond appropriately to questions and instructions. A few children can give very clear explanations which require them to organise their ideas and sequence events, for example when describing exactly how they had made traffic-lights in activities related to road safety. Most children are developing a good vocabulary in association with the topics they study, and are completely at ease with terms such as 'reflective strips', 'fluorescent paint', 'diamond' and 'square.' Almost all children are quick to identify their own names in written form, and most recognise some initial letters by their shape and sound. Many can already identify a few upper and lower case letters in an alphabet frieze. They show an interest in books, enjoy listening to stories, and quickly learn by heart the refrains of familiar songs and rhymes. A few children can write their names, and most can form a few letters accurately in the 'emergent' writing they produce while pursuing their own intentions for writing in the writing corner.
69. Children in the reception classes make good progress in speaking and listening and in reading, and sound progress overall in writing as they engage in activities which lead them through appropriate stepping stones in the Foundation Stage and towards the early stages of the National Curriculum. They are well prepared by their teachers for the gradual introduction of the literacy hour, and, by the end of the Foundation Stage, most children are achieving standards which are slightly higher than is usual for their age in speaking and listening and in reading, while standards in writing remain broadly average. During discussions and when sharing stories with their teachers, they listen well, sustain concentration and anticipate what might happen next. In answer to their teachers' questions, they show good understanding of the plot, and they enjoy the act of reading aloud, joining in enthusiastically when they can as the teacher reads 'The Enormous Watermelon' from a 'Big Book' designed to be shared with them. All the children know, and can recite, the alphabet. Most recognise a suitable range of common words on sight and are developing a range of strategies for decoding unfamiliar words. A few higher attaining children can already read simple stories aloud confidently and fluently, and can talk with understanding about the characters and plot. When account is taken of the fact that these young children are simultaneously learning Hebrew, it is to their teachers' credit, and their own, that they have mastered the left to right orientation of print in English at the same time as the right to left flow of Hebrew. Indeed many of the children who came to read to

inspectors were as keen to demonstrate their prowess in Hebrew as they were to display their command of English. Standards of writing in the reception classes are broadly average. All children can use their phonic knowledge to build short, simple words which follow a predictable pattern, and most can write their own names. Most can also copy their teacher's writing with reasonable accuracy, leaving appropriate spaces between words and forming some letters correctly. Much of their 'independent' writing remains at the 'emergent' stage, although a few higher attaining children can produce short pieces of writing with some support. For example, with some help from their teacher, they write simple letters to fairy-tale characters asking them to help Mother Hubbard pull up the enormous watermelon that figures in the story they have heard.

Mathematical development

70. On entry to the nursery, the mathematical knowledge and understanding of most children is broadly average. The quality of teaching is mainly sound and sometimes good in the nursery, and consistently good in the reception classes. In this area of learning, children generally make satisfactory progress in the nursery and good progress in the reception classes. As a consequence, at the end of the Foundation Stage, the majority of children demonstrate attainment which is a little above the nationally expected outcomes for mathematical development.
71. In the nursery, children make sound progress in developing their understanding of numbers through sorting, matching, ordering, sequencing and counting. In these activities they appropriately use either everyday objects or mathematical resources such as 'compare bears'. Children are beginning to use numbers as labels and they make satisfactory progress in recognising the numerals zero to nine and using number names. Some can count beyond this. A group of older nursery children, for example, counted the large number of cars in the school car park each day during the week of the inspection and, with the support of their teacher, were able to record these as a simple pictogram. They consolidate their knowledge and understanding of numbers through learning number rhymes and songs, and when playing mathematical games. This good practice is continued in the reception classes.
72. In the reception classes, teachers build effectively on the sound foundation of mathematical understanding fostered in the nursery. Good use is made of the nearby activity room to consolidate pupils' understanding through a range of appropriate practical activities. These provide good support for all children, particularly for those with special educational needs. The majority of children show a real interest in numbers and want to explore bigger and bigger numbers with their teachers, during the introductions to lessons. Most can calculate pairs of digits which make ten, and find 'one more' or 'less' than a given number. The majority of children use simple mathematical language confidently when talking about size and position and can recognise and name a number of two-dimensional shapes. Well-organised practical activities using sand and water, which are also undertaken in the nursery, enable children to make good progress in extending their understanding of capacity and measures.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

73. Children make satisfactory progress, overall, in developing their knowledge and understanding of the world. By the end of the Foundation Stage, the majority achieve the Early Learning Goals for this area of learning, and some exceed this standard. Children make sound progress in developing an understanding of the wider world in

which they live. They learn to use simple geographical terms through visits they make around the school or further afield to the local shopping centre. They consolidate their sense of place through appropriate activities such as painting pictures or making models of buildings and features in their locality. Children also develop a sound understanding of the world of work through their role play. In the nursery, for example, a garage was the focus of their inside play whilst outside a 'crossing patrol warden' and traffic lights were in use to develop children's understanding of road safety. Observations they are encouraged to make also enable them to develop a sound understanding of change, for example, in the weather and the seasons, or in their own lives. Children use computers with increasing confidence as they move through the nursery and reception classes; and make sound progress, overall, in developing ICT skills. However, in the nursery more could be done to promote the use of computers on a regular basis.

74. Evidence from teachers' planning, from previous work and from photographic records of activities indicates that children in the nursery and in the reception classes develop a sound understanding of past and present in relation to their own lives and to the wider world. For example, children in the nursery sort family photographs, recognising the different generations represented by 'babies', 'mummies and daddies', and 'grandmas and grandpas', and learn about their own position within the history of the family. The foundations for history are laid satisfactorily in nursery and reception through the daily use of language associated with the passage of time, through changing dates and by recalling the immediate past. The cycle of Jewish festivals and of days for religious observance, whether annual like Rosh Hashana, or weekly like Shabbat, further serves to develop children's awareness of the passage of time.
75. In the nursery and in reception, children make sound progress when using construction kits to make simple models, and demonstrate satisfactory skills when using scissors. In the nursery, children enjoy creating their own model petrol pump, made from recycled materials, and work together amicably when painting their model. They can join pieces of a simple jigsaw, and achieve well when helping to mix the ingredients for biscuits. In reception, children demonstrate satisfactory cutting and joining skills when creating model castles and palaces as part of their project about fairy tales.
76. In the nursery, children make sound progress when examining materials, and identifying those which will reflect light as road-safety armbands. They begin to learn that plants are living things which grow and change as they observe the development of bulbs they have planted. Children also make sound progress when examining a range of natural materials, including leaves and bark, gathered from the school grounds. When looking at the local environment, they learn that some trees lose their leaves in winter while others do not. In the reception classes, children achieve well when using their senses to explore the qualities of a range of fruits. They understand that most living plants have flowers, leaves and roots; and make good progress when planting seeds in different conditions, predicting which will grow the best.

Physical development

77. Children in the nursery and reception classes benefit from suitable opportunities to develop manipulative skills when using construction toys and when painting, drawing and cutting. They make sound progress and develop an appropriate degree of dexterity for their age. Children in the nursery enjoy regular access to an outdoor play area where, supervised by adults, they have satisfactory opportunities to develop their physical skills as they explore the area using a variety of large wheeled toys. They

also have access to a climbing frame and a slide. However, there is only limited intervention by adults to encourage them to extend their physical skills, control and co-ordination, or to build on the language and role play that quite naturally feature strongly in such enjoyable and imaginative contexts. Children in the reception classes do not have ready access to a secure, supervised outdoor area, and this is a shortcoming in provision for pupils of this age.

78. Appropriate use is made of the hall for physical education lessons which build on the 'stepping stones' for children in the Foundation Stage, and involve the children in more formal activities in preparation for the early stages of the National Curriculum. Children in reception learn to follow instructions and respond to signals as they move at different speeds around the hall, using strides of different lengths. They move confidently and safely, achieving standards of control and co-ordination which are slightly above average for their age. In dance, they work imaginatively, giving imaginative interpretations of the movements of characters from 'Jack and the Beanstalk' in time to the music.

Creative development

79. In the nursery and reception, pupils achieve well in singing, and learn a good range of songs by heart. They clap their hands to reflect the beat of familiar songs, and make satisfactory progress when learning about the sound made by different percussion instruments. They benefit from playing with small-world toys, and make sound progress when making up their own stories in role play. Children in the nursery have created bold painted portraits and make sound progress when creating collage pictures. They achieve satisfactory standards when experimenting with the use of clay; and make satisfactory progress when making careful rubbings and prints for the leaves found on the school grounds. In reception, children make up their own simple plays, using puppets, and this benefits their creative development. Their paintings of different characters in fairy tales are expressive; and they make sound progress when making clay pots. At the end of the Foundation Stage, most children reach the overall standard expected nationally in their creative work; and their singing skills are good.

ENGLISH

80. Most pupils entering Key Stage 1 demonstrate standards which are slightly above average in speaking and listening, and a significant minority of pupils are already doing a little better in reading than is usually the case for pupils aged five. The school builds well on their prior attainment, and standards are above average, overall, in all aspects of English, by the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils with special educational needs and the few pupils for whom English is an additional language also make good progress, achieving standards which reflect their capabilities. In line with trends nationally, attainment in reading is currently higher overall than attainment in writing. Nevertheless, recent written work by the most able pupils in Year 2 is of a high standard, and almost all other pupils in the year group are already achieving the expected standard for their age.
81. As a result of good teaching, pupils of all abilities make good progress in reading throughout the key stage, developing a suitably broad range of strategies to help them to decode and understand both stories and information texts. By the end of Key Stage 1, they use their awareness of phonics well to decode unfamiliar words, recognise many common words on sight, and make use of the cues presented by the context, meaning and graphics in a text to work out what the text says and what it means. In

response to teachers' skilful questions, they explore both literal and hidden meanings in a text, and most pupils can talk convincingly about the setting, plot and characters in a familiar story. In addition, pupils have a very sound grasp of significant differences between various kinds of reading materials and can use this understanding well when they come to write for different purposes, for example when compiling lists, sets of instructions, letters, stories and personal accounts. When asked to read aloud, most pupils read simple texts fluently and clearly, observing the cues to expression offered by the punctuation. Sadly, however, too few pupils seem to actively enjoy reading for its own sake. Few are developing preferences for the work of particular authors or for particular kinds of reading, whether fiction or non-fiction, and too many restrict their reading of fiction to the structured scheme materials available in school. This is an important aspect of pupils' wider reading development which school and parents need to address.

82. In Year 1, most pupils make sound progress in writing. They acquire a secure foundation in skills such as letter formation and handwriting, learn to compose sentences, and are introduced to capital letters and full stops. By the end of Year 1, a few higher attaining pupils can already produce short pieces of writing for a variety of purposes. For example, they write very simple short stories and personal accounts, lists of instructions and reports of a visit to a toy museum. Pupils of average and lower attainment can compose meaningful sentences to communicate their ideas. Sometimes, these are recorded by their teachers or by classroom assistants, but rarely do these pupils manage to write more than a sentence or two in the time available to them, whether in literacy lessons or in other subjects. In Year 2, however, the basic skills acquired by pupils in the earlier years serve the pupils well. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, make good, and sometimes very good, progress in writing. Spurred on by challenging and supportive teaching, they develop confidence in themselves as writers, take risks in their use of adventurous language, and learn to control and shape it. They match the style to the intended audience and purpose of their work, and they choose words very carefully for their precision and impact. For example, when writing eye-witness accounts of the Great Fire of London, they use short sentences to good effect to create an atmosphere of suspense, and choose telling adjectives which vividly but economically convey the feelings of the people and the devastation of the scene. Most pupils in Year 2 use sequences of well-constructed and accurately punctuated sentences. Some have learned to link ideas together using 'and' and 'but'. Only the highest attainers, however, have learned to use a variety of connectives to combine ideas effectively within complex sentences. Standards of handwriting and spelling are above average overall, and pupils generally take great care in the presentation of their work.
83. Pupils' skills in speaking and listening are above average, overall, by the end of the key stage. They listen particularly well, often sustaining concentration throughout quite lengthy discussions and responding appropriately to questions. At the end of lessons, they are usually able to recall the main points raised in discussion without much difficulty. In their speech, they become increasingly articulate and confident, develop a good general vocabulary and a technical vocabulary of subject-specific terms, and use spoken standard English accurately when appropriate to do so.
84. The quality of teaching is mainly very good, and otherwise good, throughout the key stage. Lessons are well organised and teachers have high expectations of what pupils should achieve in terms of attainment and behaviour. As a result of the good relationships that exist, pupils are well motivated, lessons are able to proceed at a good pace, and no time is wasted. All teachers have a good understanding of the

National Literacy Strategy, and the teaching has some common strengths. All teachers make clear what it is the pupils are intended to learn and pursue their objectives rigorously throughout a lesson; they provide good role models for the skills they want their pupils to acquire; they know their pupils well and direct their questions appropriately, involving all pupils in discussion and posing suitable challenges; and they match independent tasks carefully to suit the learning needs of individuals, including pupils with special educational needs, those for whom English is an additional language, and the more able pupils. Working in conjunction with learning support assistants and classroom assistants, they provide effective support for pupils with special educational needs. Support staff are well informed about the specific needs of the pupils with whom they work. They make a significant contribution to the progress made by these pupils and play a vital role in assessing and noting their achievements as well as the things they find difficult during lessons. Teachers' own assessments of pupils' work are focused and perceptive. They respond immediately to correct any misunderstandings, and they have recently begun to involve the pupils themselves in setting individual targets in for improvement, an arrangement which seems to be bearing fruit in terms of raising standards, particularly in writing.

85. The school is fortunate in being able to count on the support of parents, the majority of whom willingly hear their children read at home. Working in partnership with the teachers, they have contributed to the good progress made in reading. Teachers and parents now need to work together, as indicated earlier in this paragraph, to make sure that children read more widely and develop genuine interests in real works of fiction and non-fiction which inspire and challenge them and which fire their imagination.
86. The literacy co-ordinator is a very skilled teacher of English. Both she and the headteacher have observed lessons in order to monitor the quality of teaching, and they have provided staff with professional feedback and guidance. All staff have been involved in the assessment and moderation of written work across the school and, as a result, there is a shared understanding of what needs to be done to raise standards even further. Resources to support the implementation of the literacy hour have been chosen carefully and are of good quality. A variety of materials from structured reading schemes provides a secure framework for teachers to monitor pupils' general progress in reading, and the school is currently extending the range of books suitable to promote independent reading and to provide pupils with the additional challenges they need. Teachers choose the stories and non-fiction texts they use with their classes at the beginning of the literacy hour, and with groups, with great care. They make sure that the content promotes suitably stimulating discussion about language and about literacy. They also pay due attention to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural themes embedded in the text, drawing on these to good effect to enhance pupils' personal development. Information technology is used to a certain extent within English, notably in Year 1, but there remains scope for its further application and use, particularly for the drafting, editing and redrafting of written work. Planned opportunities for pupils to develop oral skills through drama and role play occur occasionally during literacy lessons, and also in assemblies, history and Jewish studies.

MATHEMATICS

87. On entry to Key Stage 1, the mathematical knowledge and understanding of most pupils are a little above average. Inspection findings show that pupils generally achieve well in relation to their starting points at the beginning of Year 1 and their

overall standards are mainly above those expected nationally at the end of the key stage. Pupils make mainly good, and otherwise sound, progress in acquiring key numeracy skills; and satisfactory progress in using and applying these skills. They also make mainly good progress in developing their understanding of measures, shape and space. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress across the key stage, and more able pupils generally achieve well.

88. Throughout Key Stage 1, pupils show an interest in the subject, and behaviour in mathematics lessons is very good. Pupils respond particularly well when they are involved in practical activities and investigative work, for example, in a good Year 1 lesson when discovering how many two or three digit numbers they can make using three number cards. Most pupils are developing good work habits as they move through the school; and they demonstrate an impressive level of maturity when applying themselves to the tasks set by their teachers. As a consequence, they make good progress in mathematics lessons.
89. The quality of teaching ranges from sound to very good and is good overall. Teachers demonstrate secure subject knowledge and plan daily mathematics lessons effectively in line with the National Numeracy Strategy. Learning objectives are clearly defined and are shared appropriately with pupils at the beginning of lessons. In most lessons, the mental/oral introduction is well paced and teachers use skilful questioning to probe pupils' understanding and to extend their thinking. In a very good lesson, taught by the co-ordinator, the concentration and active involvement of all pupils was helped by their use of 'smiley' or 'sad' faces made from card. These enabled each pupil to simultaneously show whether their peers gave correct or incorrect answers about partitioning numbers. As a consequence, the lesson moved at a good pace and was enjoyed by the whole class.
90. During the main activity, teachers match work for pupils of different abilities successfully. They work intensively with one or two of the groups and deploy classroom assistants and learning support assistants well to support others. These assistants are carefully briefed and provide good support, particularly for pupils with special educational needs. As a consequence, pupils demonstrate a keen interest in their tasks, work at a good pace and develop their mathematical understanding well. Sessions at the end of lessons are used effectively to check that learning objectives have been met and to clarify the strategies pupils have used to solve the problems set.
91. Across the key stage, teachers make effective use of assessment to inform their planning, and all available data is analysed to set appropriate targets. Examples of pupils' work are being collected on a regular basis, and the school recognises that these now need to be discussed by staff and levelled against National Curriculum criteria. Some use is made of ICT to support and extend pupils' numeracy skills, although the potential of the new technology to support and enhance areas such as handling data has not yet been fully realised. The school plans to develop the use made of ICT in mathematics once the new ICT suite is in place, and this is appropriate.
92. The co-ordinator has attended training for the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy, accompanied by the headteacher and the governor with responsibility for numeracy. She sets a very good example in her own teaching and maintains an effective overview of mathematics through monitoring teachers' planning and observing lessons. Helpful verbal and written feedback has been provided for

individual teachers, and the co-ordinator has led whole staff in-service training in the subject. Resources for mathematics are satisfactory.

SCIENCE

93. On entry to Key Stage 1, the scientific knowledge and understanding of most pupils is a little above average. In Years 1 and 2, most pupils generally achieve well in relation to their starting points, so that overall attainment in science is above average at the end of the key stage. Pupils with special educational needs also make good progress, while the achievements of the most able pupils are sound, across the key stage.
94. In Year 1, pupils can name different sources of light, and achieve well when deciding which materials will allow light to pass through them. They can recognise and name the main external parts of the human body; and are aware of some of the similarities and differences between themselves and other pupils. In lessons observed Year 1 pupils made good progress when learning about the leaves, flowers, stems and roots of flowering plants; and achieved well when recording the growth of beans they had planted. In Year 2, pupils can identify common materials such as wood, plastic, metal, glass, paper and wool; and know that some occur naturally. They achieve above average standards when describing why some materials are particularly suitable for specific purposes, and know that some materials are changed by heating or cooling or by such processes as bending or stretching. They are aware of the dangers of electricity, and can create simple circuits, using batteries, wires and bulbs. They can also interpret drawings of simple circuits, making sensible judgements about whether they will function.
95. The quality of teaching is good, and enables most pupils to make good progress in most aspects of their scientific learning. Teachers have secure subject knowledge, organise their lessons well and motivate their pupils effectively. Their explanations are clear and they use questions skilfully to probe pupils' understanding. Pupils respond well, demonstrating highly positive attitudes to learning and very good work habits. Their behaviour is very good in science lessons, and they concentrate and persevere with their tasks. Teachers introduce appropriate technical vocabulary and reinforce this well in their teaching. Support assistants are thoroughly briefed by teachers, and make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning, particularly for those with special educational needs. Work is generally well matched to pupils' learning requirements, but the more able pupils could achieve even higher standards if their work was sometimes more challenging. Teachers' planning is mainly good, and provides a coherent programme for the development of pupils' scientific knowledge. However, the school is aware that provision for the systematic development of pupils' scientific enquiry skills is less effective, and this is reflected in the satisfactory, but slower, progress pupils make in this aspect of their scientific learning.
96. Procedures for assessing pupils' standards are mainly sound, and sensible targets are set for their attainment at the end of each academic year. Examples of science work are included in profiles for each pupil demonstrating their progress. However, teachers have yet to discuss examples of work to ensure that they have common interpretations of the National Curriculum levels in science.
97. The headteacher is the science co-ordinator, and monitors planning for the subject conscientiously. She recognises that procedures for monitoring and developing the subject need further development; and has appropriate plans to observe lessons and to examine samples of pupils' work, across the school. Resources for science are satisfactory.

ART AND DESIGN

98. There were fewer examples of pupils' art work in Key Stage 1 than is usual in most schools, and it was only possible to observe a limited amount of art teaching during the inspection. However, an analysis of all evidence available suggests that pupils are making spasmodic progress in the subject, which is unsatisfactory. While there are some examples of sound work, overall standards are a little below those expected nationally at the end of Key Stage 1.
99. In Year 1, pupils demonstrate satisfactory standards when making simple string prints and have made sound progress when creating clay pots. However, there is very little evidence of work in other elements of art, including drawing and painting. In Year 2, pupils have increased their awareness of the work of artists by visiting the National Portrait Gallery, but their own drawings of people are a little below average. They also demonstrate standards which are usually typical of the achievements of younger pupils when creating collage pictures of water creatures to make a class frieze.
100. Due to timetabling arrangements, insufficient art lessons were observed to make a secure judgement about the quality of teaching in the subject. However, an analysis of teachers' planning shows that key skills in art are not systematically developed, across the school. Evidence suggests that some teachers would benefit from in-service training to increase their knowledge and to raise their expectations of pupils' potential standards. More emphasis needs to be given to the development of pupils' drawing and painting skills, particularly through the direct observation of the natural and made world. Procedures for assessing pupils' standards and learning needs also require improvement.
101. At present, there is no co-ordinator for the subject, and procedures for monitoring and developing art require improvement. The headteacher has identified art as an area for improvement on the school development plan, which is appropriate. Resources for art are broadly satisfactory.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

102. In Year 1, pupils have achieved standards which are satisfactory for their ages when designing model houses. Their completed models, made from card and paper, demonstrate average attainment. In Year 2, no examples of pupils' completed work were available for examination; and no design and technology lessons were taught in Key Stage 1 during the inspection. As a consequence, it is not possible to make a secure judgement about pupils' overall standards or the quality of teaching in the subject.
103. An analysis of teachers' planning shows they are beginning to use some ideas which are included in the good scheme of work provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. However, a systematic programme for the development of pupils' key skills is yet to be established, across the key stage. There is no co-ordinator for design and technology, and procedures for monitoring and developing the subject need to be improved. Resources for design and technology are broadly satisfactory.

GEOGRAPHY

104. No geography lessons were taught during the inspection. A scrutiny of teachers' planning was undertaken in addition to discussions with staff and pupils. Few examples of pupils' work were available for scrutiny because the school's long-term planning for the subject does not include a significant focus on geography during the first half of the year. As a consequence, it is not possible to make a secure judgement pupils' standards or the quality of teaching in the subject.
105. The evidence in teachers' planning indicates that pupils are provided with some opportunities to explore the locality of the school and to compare this with contrasting localities in the United Kingdom and overseas. In Year 1, pupils learn to locate their homes on maps of the local area and develop mapping skills by drawing their routes from home to school. They use sets of local photographs to identify buildings and features, and are encouraged to express their opinions on their environment and ways of improving road safety. In Year 2, pupils contrast their own locality with that of a small Scottish island in the topic 'An Island Home,' and with the village of Tocuaro in Mexico. In both year groups, geographical knowledge and understanding are also acquired through some of the work pupils undertake in Jewish studies.
106. The school is making use of helpful guidance published by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority in order to inform planning for this subject. However, this has yet to be incorporated into a coherent scheme of work to inform teachers' planning. In addition, the units of work for both year groups are assigned to the second half of the spring term or to the summer term. This results in pupils having few, if any, opportunities to develop their skills in the first half of the school year. As a consequence, the progressive development of key geographical skills, across the key stage, is not secure and this should be addressed by the school. There is currently no co-ordinator for geography and it is important for the school to appoint a member of staff to take responsibility for the subject as soon as possible.

HISTORY

107. Three history lessons were observed in Key Stage 1, and further evidence was gathered from the scrutiny of pupils' work, from displays, from discussions with staff and pupils, and from teachers' planning. All available evidence shows that pupils thoroughly enjoy history, and that they attain standards which are above average at the end of Key Stage 1.
108. In Year 1, pupils respond to historical questions in their study of castles. They use documentary evidence, photographs, books and artefacts to good effect to inform their answers as to when and where castles were built, who lived in them, and why the buildings were sometimes surrounded by moats and designed with special architectural features such as battlements, towers and drawbridges. After deliberating for a while, they conclude that such features were important to defend the 'nobles' who built the castles from their enemies. They put forward reasonable suggestions as to why medieval castles were built in locations which gave them a vantage-point over the surrounding area, and are beginning to understand why people in the past behaved as they did.
109. In Year 2, pupils attain high standards in their work across a range of topics. Their written work reveals good knowledge and understanding of the life and work of

Florence Nightingale, of the Great Fire of London, and of domestic life in Victorian times, and a developing ability to make meaningful comparisons between the past and present. For example, they are able to compare conditions in a modern hospital with those in the hospital at Scutari in the Crimea where Florence Nightingale worked, paying particular attention to differences in standards of hygiene and nursing, and in the level of technological help available. They are perceptive in their observations as to why Florence was motivated by her experiences to establish training centres for nurses. In their study of the Fire of London, pupils are particularly moved by the account given in the diary of Samuel Pepys. They show great empathy with the families caught up in the inferno and write vivid 'eye-witness accounts' in their own words, cleverly conveying the drama of the scene. During a lesson on kitchens in Victorian times, they listen, enthralled, to a dramatised recording which reveals the hardships of domestic chores at that time, and they demonstrate a good understanding of the changes brought about in people's daily lives by the comparatively recent arrival of electricity. For example, they are able to explain that 'Lydia' would not have needed to get up at four in the morning to light the fires if there had been central heating at the time. In all their work, pupils use relevant dates and terms, quickly acquiring the vocabulary of a particular period. For example, they very soon refer naturally to household occupations and titles such as 'coachman', 'butler' and 'housemaid', and to artefacts such as 'flat-irons'.

110. The teaching of history is good overall, and includes very good teaching in Year 2. This is reflected in the effective progress pupils make in their learning in the subject. Teachers are enthusiastic about history and communicate their enthusiasm to their pupils. They are also well informed, and this means that they are able to assess pupils' responses to questions as work progresses and prompt them to develop their own hypotheses based on the evidence available from primary and secondary sources. They choose good resources which allow pupils of differing abilities to access information, and they take care to involve pupils of all abilities in discussions, including those with special educational needs. Curriculum time for the coverage of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study is rather limited, with the result that lessons occasionally seem rushed. However, it is clear from discussions held with staff that the curriculum for Jewish studies also makes a significant contribution to the development of key skills, knowledge and understanding of the subject, particularly through the study of Jewish history and traditions. In this way, the study of history in the school in some respects makes a broader contribution to pupils' cultural awareness and development than is sometimes the case. The school makes good use of educational visits to bring the subject to life. For example, pupils in Year 1 visited the Museum of Early Childhood in Bethnal Green in connection with their study of toys past and present, while pupils in Year 2 were able to scrutinise a painting showing Florence Nightingale at work in the hospital at Scutari during a visit to the National portrait Gallery. Cross-curricular links, especially with English, are used to particularly good effect in Year 2. A further strength of the teaching, in both years, is the promotion of pupils' independence as learners: they are encouraged to undertake some research work at home, if they can, in preparation for a new topic, and they are organised in groups during lessons where they share resources and reach agreed judgements based on the evidence available.
111. Responsibility for the co-ordination of history has not yet been delegated to a member of the teaching staff, and there is no written policy statement. However, the headteacher has a sound overview of current provision, including the quality of teaching. Good resources have been acquired to meet existing curriculum needs, and the school rightly intends to extend its own collection of artefacts and to acquire additional resources over time as the school grows. The use of ICT to support

historical enquiry is currently underdeveloped in school, although some pupils make occasional use of the internet to download relevant information at home.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

112. Across Key Stage 1 pupils make uneven, and mainly unsatisfactory, progress in using ICT to communicate and handle information, and to support their problem-solving, recording and expressive work. As a consequence, the attainment of the majority of pupils is below average, at the end of the key stage. During the inspection, some pupils used computers to support their work, mainly in English, mathematics and science. However, little evidence was available to show the use of ICT in the previous term. Discussions were held with both staff and pupils, and teachers' planning was carefully scrutinised. Most pupils are beginning to develop sound keyboard and computer mouse skills and some have access to computers at home to consolidate and extend these skills.
113. Throughout Key Stage 1, pupils gain little experience of using ICT to handle data and, although they are given some opportunities to use the school's 'Roamers' (floor robots) these are too spasmodic to secure sound or better progress in control technology. When given the opportunity, pupils make satisfactory progress in their work with texts and design. In Year 1, for example, they use a computer to write lists and sentences using upper and lower case letters when working on 'names'; while Year 2 pupils compose sentences about 'Rainbow Fish' based on texts they are using in the literacy hour. The use of appropriate computer programs also enables pupils to consolidate their numeracy skills in Year 1 and their knowledge of the properties of two-dimensional shapes in Year 2. Pupils gain some experience of using the computer to draw pictures, for example of castles, to support their work in history in Year 1 but, overall, insufficient use is made of ICT in most subjects.
114. When given the opportunity, pupils enjoy using computers and other ICT equipment such as tape recorders. They show an enthusiasm for the subject, concentrate well and their behaviour is very good. Work with computers is mainly in pairs and pupils collaborate very well together, taking turns and helping one another.
115. Insufficient teaching of ICT took place during the inspection to make a secure judgement about the quality of teaching. Evidence suggests, however, that planning requires improvement, and that pupils are given insufficient opportunities to develop and use key skills in the subject. Good use was made of a short period of time to teach a Year 1 class how to enter, store and retrieve information; and effective management of literacy and numeracy lessons, in both year groups, enables pupils to use ICT programs which are linked to the work they are undertaking. Teachers ensure that pupils' use of ICT is recorded so that all have equal opportunities to use the equipment. Evidence suggests that most members of staff have at least satisfactory ICT knowledge and skills, and are enthusiastic about using the new ICT suite when this is in place.
116. The school is in the process of establishing an ICT suite and has sensibly researched and evaluated the most appropriate hardware and software available, which also secures good value for money. A school governor, with particular interest in ICT, has provided very good support for the headteacher in this exercise. However, as the school has been open for only four terms, progress in establishing the regular use of ICT throughout Key Stage 1 has inevitably been slowed as new equipment is

considered. This has been compounded by problems encountered with some of the existing hardware.

117. Units of work, taken from the helpful guidance published by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, have been introduced to provide a broad framework for planning. However, these have not yet been integrated into a scheme of work which promotes the progressive development of key skills in the subject, and ensures the application of ICT across the curriculum. Procedures for assessment in ICT require improvement in order to track pupils' progress and standards more carefully, and to inform teachers' planning more effectively.
118. Resources are currently adequate and will soon be significantly improved when the computer suite is established.

MUSIC

119. Pupils achieve well in music, across the key stage, and their standards are mainly above average in both Year 1 and Year 2. Year 1 pupils make good progress when learning when to sing loudly or more quietly; and respond well to simple notation provided by their teacher. For example, when using musical instruments and voices to sing about Jack and the Beanstalk, they match the volume of their performance to pictures showing different sizes of giants' footsteps in the notation. They learn to create very simple musical compositions, and sing well, with clear diction and good control of pitch. In Year 2, pupils' singing is of a particularly high standard. They achieve very well when performing in two vocal parts, providing accompaniment with wood blocks and chime box to reflect the rhythm of the music. Across the school, pupils sing Hebrew songs with strong commitment, and their singing of songs of praise often has a very strong spiritual quality. Year 2 pupils demonstrate good skills when recognising and repeating rhythm patterns, with body percussion, and make good progress when developing a musical vocabulary.
120. Music lessons are taught by a specialist teacher, employed on a part-time basis by the school. Her teaching is consistently good, and this is reflected in the good progress and standards which are evident. She has secure subject knowledge and plans her lessons effectively, with particularly careful attention to meet the needs of pupils with learning difficulties. Her enthusiasm is communicated clearly to the pupils who respond with positive attitudes and very good behaviour. Good use is made of the time available, and her expert guidance and clear instructions enable pupils to approach challenging tasks with confidence. Resources for music are satisfactory.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

121. Only gymnastics lessons were observed in Key Stage 1, although dance is also taught within 'Music and movement', and ball skills related to a variety of games are taught during the summer term.
122. Pupils make good progress in gymnastics and their attainment is above average for their age by the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils in both year groups within Key Stage 1 acquire increasing control and co-ordination in their movement through regular practice and sustained effort. By the end of Year 2, the majority of pupils achieve a high degree of control when travelling around the hall, whether walking, hopping or running, and when using hands and feet to travel over apparatus such as benches, stools and mats. They combine moments of stillness and sequences of movement

effectively, developing short, repeated patterns of movement. Within the demands of the tasks they are given, the pupils are particularly creative, and their work is characterised by its originality. Most pupils devise their own patterns of movement rather than copying others directly, and when they do borrow ideas, as is to be expected, they do so to only to embellish or refine some aspect of their own work. They learn by observing others' performance when directed to take note of particularly good work by their classmates, but they are not expected to give explicit evaluations of their own or others' performance, and this is a shortcoming. Nevertheless, they work hard to practise the skills they are taught and to improve their own performance through practice. At all times, they work safely, observing others' need for space, and they can explain why certain safety rules established by the teacher are absolutely necessary. They participate enthusiastically in the warm-up and cool-down routines at the start and end of lessons, responding thoughtfully to the teacher's questions about the effects of exercise on different parts of the body. Pupils with special educational needs are very ably supported, sometimes by learning support staff or classroom assistants, at other times by the class teacher or the physical education teacher. They are able to participate fully in all activities, and they make good progress.

123. Physical education lessons are taught by a qualified physical education instructor who is also a nursery nurse. The quality of her teaching is good, and this enables pupils to make good progress. She has a good understanding of the subject, manages the pupils very well and is very well organised. She makes clear to pupils what they are intended to do and to learn, and she encourages their independence by trusting them to set up and put away the apparatus according to established and safe procedures. Lessons include a variety of structured activities designed to maximise the development of essential skills and knowledge, and are conducted at a brisk but safe pace, giving pupils time to explore, practise and refine their movements. The teacher assesses work in progress well and is quick to identify particularly good effort or performance, recognising and acknowledging pupils' individual capabilities and achievements. However, pupils are rarely asked to identify and evaluate strengths and weaknesses in their own or others' performance, and this is an aspect that needs to be developed.
124. The school is fortunate in having a well appointed hall which is used for gymnastics and dance, and there are plans to develop outdoor facilities as the school expands. As yet, there is no designated co-ordinator for the subject, and no policy statement. The headteacher retains oversight of physical education provision, but has had little time to monitor teaching or standards. The Hertfordshire Physical Education Scheme provides a sound framework for progression in the subject across the age-range, and the fact that all physical education lessons are taught by the same specialist means that she has a good overview of development year on year. The gymnastics apparatus is of a high standard and is being used to good effect. Equipment for games is basic, although the school intends to increase provision through the 'Top Sport' scheme in the near future. Although time for physical education is rather limited, with only one lesson per year group each week, there are additional opportunities for pupils to engage in physical activity through dance and gymnastics. As part of pupils' curricular entitlement, dance is taught by class teachers within 'Music and movement' lessons. There are also opportunities for pupils to learn Israeli dance during voluntary sessions at lunchtimes, and there is an after-school club for those pupils wishing to extend their skills in gymnastics.