

# INSPECTION REPORT

**Dryclough CE (VC) Infants' School**

Huddersfield

LEA area: Kirklees

Unique reference number: 107729

Headteacher: Mrs Linda Kitson

Reporting inspector: Sheila Pemberton

Dates of inspection: December 10th to 13th 2001

Inspection number: 230733

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 - 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Dryclough Road Crosland Moor Huddersfield West Yorkshire
Postcode:	HD4 5HX
Telephone number:	01484 222202
Fax number:	01484 222238
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Rev. Canon Michael Storey
Date of previous inspection:	March 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
20810	Sheila Pemberton	Registered inspector	Mathematics Design and technology Physical education Religious education	What the school should do to improve How high standards are How well pupils are taught How well the school is led and managed
19365	Gordon Stockley	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well the school cares for its pupils How well the school works in partnership with parents/carers
22881	George Halliday	Team inspector	Science Geography History Special educational needs Equal opportunities	How good curricular and other opportunities are
18342	Megan Spark	Team inspector	English ICT Art and design Music English as an additional language	
18101	Ann Sharpe	Team Inspector	The foundation stage	

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Dryclough CE (VC) Infants' School serves an area of high unemployment where most pupils live in local authority housing. A few pupils live in housing association property and privately owned homes. The school has four classes in each year group, is housed in two buildings and has 60 fewer pupils than in 1998. Of its 243 pupils, 123 are boys and 120 are girls. Eighty seven pupils are from white ethnic backgrounds, 119 are Pakistani and a small group comes from Indian and black Caribbean families. The achievements of four-year-olds entering the school are much lower than is typical in reading, writing and mathematics. Sixty eight per cent speak English as an additional language and 28 per cent are just learning English. The percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals is above average at 37.5 per cent. Of the 42 pupils with special educational needs, 32 are at the earliest stages on the school's register and two have statements of special educational needs for their physical disabilities. This is in line with the national average. Recently the school joined the *Excellence in Cities Initiative*, which will provide two additional support staff in January 2002. It also joined a *Private and Public Partnership*, which will provide it with a much better building in 2002.

### HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides its pupils with a satisfactory education. Its particular strength is the support it provides for pupils whose command of spoken English is weak. It is also a school where pupils work free from tension or racial disharmony. As a result of sound teaching, standards in English, mathematics and science are beginning to rise steadily above the very low levels of recent years. Sound leadership and management are moving the school forward at a reasonable rate. The school gives satisfactory value for the funding it receives.

#### What the school does well

- Good support for bilingual pupils and others whose spoken language is poor provides them with the same opportunities to learn as other pupils.
- Because teachers are good at managing difficult behaviour, pupils work steadily in lessons without disturbance.
- Good provision for personal, spiritual, social and moral development and very good provision for cultural development allow pupils from different backgrounds to work together harmoniously.
- Teachers are good at checking pupils' progress and know where they are up to with their learning.

#### What could be improved

- The way that teachers organise reading allows too little time for pupils to improve their skills.
- The work provided in mental mathematics and science does not always meet the needs of some pupils in Year 1, less able pupils and pupils with learning difficulties
- Some activities in the reception classes are not planned carefully enough to move children's learning forward.
- The time allocated to classroom assistants is not always spent appropriately working with pupils.

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

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

The school has made satisfactory improvements since its last inspection. Teachers have achieved positive changes to pupils' behaviour and learning takes place in a calmer atmosphere than in 1998. Although more able pupils are still not doing well enough in reading and mathematics, the standards reached by most pupils in English, mathematics and science are improving at a steady rate. Pupils' new-found skills in writing bring improvements to their work in other subjects. Governors are now fully involved in the work of the school. Their intervention has done much to secure a new building.

Attendance and punctuality have improved slightly. The school has worked with parents and pupils to do as much as is reasonably possible to reduce unauthorised absence.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	Compared with				Key
	All schools			Similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
Reading	E*	E	E	D	well above average    A above average        B Average                C below average        D well below average    E
Writing	E	E	C	A	
Mathematics	E*	E*	E	D	

Most children enter the school with very limited experiences of reading, writing and mathematics. For many, their restricted command of spoken English stands in the way of their learning. With good teaching, most pupils make good progress in acquiring spoken English. By the time they are seven, their achievements in speaking and listening are comparable with those of most pupils nationally. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics were at very low levels between 1996 to 1999 especially in reading and mathematics, where they were in the lowest five per cent nationally. In 2000, although standards in mathematics were still in the lowest five per cent nationally, standards in all three subjects began to rise with the national upward trend. This more positive picture was repeated in 2001 and although still very low and below the levels reached by pupils in similar schools standards have improved in mathematics and reading. Most pupils' understanding of number is a good feature of their achievements in mathematics. For the first time, standards in writing showed a good improvement in 2001. They were much better than those reached in similar schools and are being maintained at a satisfactory level in this year's Year 2. Similarly with science, standards rose in 2001 to just below the national average and have risen to average this year. Although they failed to achieve higher levels in reading and mathematics, more able pupils did well in 2001 by reaching the levels they were capable of in writing and science. Although standards are satisfactory in information and communication technology (ICT), pupils make good progress in word processing. When pupils work with a skilful artist in residence standards in art and design are better than those reached nationally by most pupils in Year 2. The school maintains satisfactory progress in religious education because it adapted national guidelines to meet the specific needs of its pupils. Standards in all other subjects are satisfactory and pupils make steady progress.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have good attitudes to school. They enjoy all activities, work hard and are keen to do their best.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Many pupils' good behaviour helps them to pay good attention to their teachers and to get the most out of lessons.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils usually act in a sensible and reliable way. Their good relationships with one another and with teachers make lessons enjoyable and contribute to the quality of their learning.

Attendance	Attendance is unsatisfactory. In many instances this is because pupils are taken abroad for long holidays when they should be at school.
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## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

*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.*

Good teaching supports the steady development of pupils' spoken English. From their involvement in national strategies, teachers have become skilled at teaching reading, writing and mathematics. Weaknesses in pupils' learning arise because reading is not taught often enough for them to make sufficient progress. Teachers plan work in mental mathematics and science that fails to meet the needs of some pupils in Year 1, less able pupils and pupils with special educational needs. It prevents them from solving problems in their heads at their own level. Staff are good at controlling pupils' behaviour. This ensures that all pupils have the same opportunity to work without disruption. Because teachers provide them with suitable work, more able pupils do well in writing and science. Teachers make good use of resources and visitors to interest pupils in the work and to extend their learning. In some lessons, teachers allow classroom assistants to waste the time they could spend working with pupils. Some of the work provided for children in the reception classes is not planned in sufficient detail to move children towards national goals for their learning.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The school provides suitable programmes of work for children in the reception classes, in religious education and all subjects of the National Curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Mainly satisfactory. Teachers and support staff are good at meeting the needs of pupils with physical disabilities and emotional and behavioural problems. The support provided for pupils with learning difficulties is less effective in mathematics and science: some of the work is too difficult and slows their progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Teachers and multilingual assistants use their skills effectively to ensure that children improve their understanding of both English and their home languages.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school places considerable emphasis on pupils' personal growth and individuality. It is also good at promoting their spiritual, moral and social development. Cultural development is very good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school is good at keeping pupils safe and secure. Staff keep close checks on pupils' behaviour and personal development. Teachers do not always use their good understanding of where pupils are up to with their learning to plan work that meets the needs of less able pupils and pupils with learning difficulties. A good feature of the school's care is reflected in its positive relationships with parents.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. By recognising the importance of additional training, helpful advice and team work, the headteacher has moved the school forward. Standards are beginning to rise at a steady rate as a result of the way that teachers and support staff work together.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors fulfil their legal responsibilities. They keep up with new educational initiatives, and are closely involved and interested in the life and work of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	By keeping close checks on pupils' learning and personal development, the headteacher has a good understanding of the school's performance and its position in relation to other schools.
The strategic use of resources	The school has enough suitably qualified teachers to teach a full curriculum. Resources are maintained at satisfactory levels and are usually put to good use. The skills of multilingual staff are used effectively to support the learning of bilingual pupils and to increase their understanding of spoken English. The school is usually good at getting best value from spending and resources. It sometimes wastes a valuable resource when support staff spend time listening to teachers rather helping pupils with their learning.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The school is well-led and managed.</li> <li>All parents are glad that their children enjoy school.</li> <li>They think that behaviour is good.</li> <li>They believe that the teaching is good and that teachers expect children to work hard and to do their best.</li> <li>Their children are making good progress in school.</li> <li>They find it easy to approach the school with their questions or problems.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some parents would like more homework for their children.</li> <li>Others would like a more interesting range of activities outside lessons.</li> </ul>

Inspectors agree with the parents' positive views about the school, although teaching and pupils' progress are satisfactory rather than good. They also agree that more homework would increase pupils' learning, especially in reading where the progress made by many pupils is too slow. In response to parents who are unhappy with the activities the school provides outside lessons, inspectors judge that the activities teachers provide are reasonable for an infants' school. They consist of football, sewing and recorder clubs to extend pupils' interest in sport, design and music.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Assessments of children's learning when they enter the reception classes indicate that many have very few early experiences of reading, writing and numbers and that their knowledge and understanding of the world are very limited. Very low attainment often arises because children's command of spoken English is weak. A considerable proportion of pupils have poor skills with spoken language regardless of the language they speak at home. Of the 68 per cent who come to school speaking English as an additional language, 28 per cent are at the earliest stage of acquiring the language. The school is good at addressing this serious impediment to many pupils' learning. By the time they leave the school at the end of Year 2, pupils' achievements are good and their attainments in speaking and listening are comparable with pupils in most other schools. In their first year in school, children make steady progress in learning the sounds of letters and counting up to ten, but their attainments in other areas of learning are well below those of many five-year-olds.
2. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics wavered considerably from 1996 and National Curriculum tests for pupils in Year 2 produced a different picture each year. Overall, standards deteriorated between 1996 to 1999 and reached exceedingly low levels in writing and very low levels in reading and mathematics. However, an upturn in standards took place from 2000 when they began to improve. This coincided with teachers' improved expertise following additional training in the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. For the first time in four years, standards rose sufficiently to follow the national upward trend. This trend of improvement was repeated in 2001 in all three subjects. Standards in writing have shown a good improvement since the last inspection. They reached the national average in 2001 and were much better than those reached by pupils in similar schools. More able pupils did their best in writing. Their achievements were equal to those of pupils in most other schools and much better than those of pupils in similar schools.
3. However, while pupils' achievements in reading and mathematics are improving in the current Year 2, standards in both subjects were still too low and were below the average of similar schools in 2001. The low achievements of many pupils result from planning that caters only for the needs of average and more able pupils in mental mathematics. Both of these groups are on course to achieve the expected levels in mathematics in national tests in 2002. The achievements of a large group of less able pupils or pupils with learning difficulties are slowed because they are developed only during the practical parts of lessons. Pupils' progress in reading is also slowed as a result of limited opportunities to practise their skills. This applies equally to more and less able pupils. Standards in science have risen from a very low level in 1997 to just below average in 2001. This trend of improvement is evident in science in this year's Year 2 and results from teachers' growing confidence in a practical approach to the subject. More able pupils do better than others in most schools in science.
4. In 2001, boys in the school did not do as well as girls in reading or writing, but achieved identical results in mathematics. They did slightly better than boys in other schools in writing, while girls' results were not as good in writing as those reached by most other girls. Neither boys nor girls did as well as boys and girls in other schools in reading and mathematics. The school has not analysed the reasons that underlie these variations in attainment.

5. Pupils in Year 2 reach standards above those typical for their age in art and design as a result of the experiences and resources provided by an artist in residence. Their knowledge of religious education is maintained at a satisfactory level through stories about the beliefs and traditions of Christianity and Islam. Because teachers have adapted programmes of work in other subjects to meet the needs of pupils in the school, standards are satisfactory and pupils maintain steady progress. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are at their best in word processing. Pupils make steady progress in design and technology by covering all aspects of the subject in sufficient depth.

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

6. Pupils' good attitudes to school have a positive effect on their work. They exhibit high levels of enthusiasm and interest in lessons, as, for example, when children in a reception class showed keen interest in words, letters and books. Most pupils are friendly and polite to one another, teachers and other adults. Many are keen to talk about their time in school and their enjoyment of it. Those who had attended a workshop with the artist Tom Wood spoke enthusiastically about their achievements.
7. There has been a significant improvement in behaviour since the previous inspection, when it was unsatisfactory. Behaviour now is good. In several lessons pupils' behaviour is very good; for example in *circle time* in a reception class you could have heard a pin drop while pupils decided who to roll a ball to next. Even in practical activities where there are greater opportunities for silly behaviour, pupils behave sensibly. This is apparent in physical education, for instance, when they are working with hoops and balls, and in music when playing musical instruments. Good behaviour means that little time is wasted. This helps pupils to gain more from their lessons.
8. Behaviour is also good in the dining room and in the playground. This turns mid-day meals into pleasant social occasions where pupils sit and chat politely with their friends and eat their food in a sensible manner. In the playground, pupils play together with very few problems. There have been no recent incidents of bullying or racism. Pupils from different cultural backgrounds play and work together in harmony. This creates a happy and peaceful place where learning can flourish. Last year, several pupils caused difficulties because of their inability to control their behaviour. As a result, there were twelve fixed-term exclusions and one permanent exclusion. One of the pupils involved was excluded permanently when all other strategies failed.
9. Personal development is good. Pupils become more sensible as they move through the school with good support from teachers and support staff. In lessons, pupils work well together in pairs and small groups, as in an art lesson where pupils concentrated hard and shared ideas with one another. Pupils soon work with independence because they are keen to accept responsibility. Willingly, with enthusiasm and pride, they carry out duties such as taking registers to the office and looking after new pupils. Many pupils maintain good levels of motivation when working without support or intervention from an adult. Relationships have improved since the previous inspection and this has improved the quality of pupils' learning. Good relationships among pupils and between staff and pupils make lessons enjoyable and make a good contribution to sound learning.
10. Attendance is unsatisfactory. Although it has improved since the previous inspection, when it was poor, it is still well below the national average. This has an adverse effect on the education of a significant minority of pupils who fall behind with their learning

when their parents take them on extended holidays abroad. Registers are completed accurately and quickly, enabling a prompt start to be made to lessons.

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

11. Teaching has improved since the last inspection. Although much remains satisfactory, a considerable amount of good teaching stems from effective use of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Standards are rising as a result of better teaching in reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers are also more skilful at providing experiments and investigations that improve pupils' understanding of science. While teachers' increased expertise has raised pupils' achievements in writing and science it has also increased teachers' expectations of more able pupils in both subjects. What still restricts pupils' progress is the limited amounts of time teachers allocate for pupils to practise and improve their reading. They also provide tasks that are too hard and that slow the learning of less able pupils and pupils with special educational needs in mental mathematics and science.
12. Teachers in the reception classes are good at teaching reading and writing and introducing children to early work with numbers. Their teaching is less effective when it lacks clear objectives. While teachers understand the importance of children learning as they play and often provide the right opportunities, they do not always build effectively on what children already know and understand. This slows children's progress at a time when their keenness to learn makes more rapid progress possible. Teachers use helpful ways to develop children's confidence in the reception classes. Because of teachers' expectations, children become independent learners from an early age. By the time that pupils reach Years 1 and 2, many work without support on tasks requiring concentrated effort.
13. Effective planning is evident when teachers plan together for pupils in the same year group. Joint planning means that pupils usually cover similar work at their own level and gain similar experiences. Planning is developed when teachers evaluate the outcomes of lessons in terms of pupils' progress and aspects of work that need different approaches or repetition. The success of planning for different year groups falls apart when pupils from Years 1 and 2 are taught together in the same class. The work provided is often too hard and restricts the progress of too many pupils in Year 1.
14. Because their expertise in ICT has improved, teachers meet new national requirements for the subject. As a result, pupils' learning remains steady in ICT and they are good at using computers to record their work. Teachers are skilful at improving pupils' knowledge of spoken English. They help bilingual pupils and pupils with learning difficulties to develop their vocabularies in different subjects. Teachers are also good at managing pupils' behaviour. They have become more skilled since the last inspection at dealing with pupils with behavioural difficulties and in ensuring that they work without disturbing others. When teachers find it hard to control demanding pupils it is mainly due to inexperience.
15. By approaching pupils' learning in a practical way, teachers increase their achievements and enthusiasm for different subjects. This approach is evident in the use of fieldwork in history and geography, inputs to art and physical education by visitors to the school and performances from a variety of musicians. Teachers raise pupils' interest through role-play in history and telling stories that appeal to their imaginations in religious education. They use praise and rewards effectively to encourage hard work and good behaviour

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

16. The school meets statutory requirements by providing suitable programmes of work in all subjects of the National Curriculum. It combined recent national guidelines with its own programmes to ensure that teaching is relevant to its pupils. Since the last inspection, the school has placed appropriate emphasis on improving standards in English, mathematics and science. For this purpose it has improved its provision by using the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Considerable importance is attached to offering a curriculum that improves the spoken English of bilingual pupils and pupils with little knowledge of the language. The curriculum for children in the reception classes gives them access to work planned to achieve the national early learning goals. The school modified national recommendations and provides a programme of religious education that matches pupils' needs more closely.
17. The curriculum for pupils whose special educational needs arise from difficulties with reading, writing and mathematics is at its most effective when pupils work towards the targets set out in their individual education plans. On these occasions many of the problems they encounter are resolved and their progress is satisfactory. Pupils with learning difficulties are excluded from the school's provision in parts of lessons where no specific work is planned to meet their needs. The curriculum takes good account of pupils with physical disabilities. Their learning and well-being is supported effectively and they have access to suitable or alternative activities.
18. An effective programme for personal, social and health education has helped to improve pupils' attitudes and behaviour. The school lays great emphasis on promoting healthy lifestyles and achieves this in subjects such as, art, physical education, design and technology and science. The policy of the governing body is not to teach sex education as part of the curriculum. A small number of parents are unhappy with the range of activities the school provides outside lessons. However, the activities teachers provide are reasonable for an infants' school. They consist of football, sewing and recorder clubs to extend pupils' skills and interest in sport, design and music.
19. The school maintains good provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It promotes spiritual development mainly through assemblies and religious education. Daily acts of worship contribute to pupils' spiritual development when they take part in short periods of silent reflection. Music effectively sets the mood for worship and prayer. Pupils listen carefully to the spiritual messages and moral themes raised in assemblies. Their interest is gained through carefully chosen resources and ideas that relate to what is happening in their lives. The vicar regularly leads assemblies. His excellent rapport with pupils makes a good contribution to their spiritual and moral growth. Spiritual events are planned into the curriculum, such as when pupils observe beans growing, or feed caterpillars and watch them change into butterflies.
20. High expectations of positive behaviour underlie good provision for moral development. By dealing with poor behaviour in a consistent way, teachers ensure that pupils appreciate the differences between acceptable and undesirable behaviour. Adults in the school set good examples for pupils by treating them with kindness and respect. They promote values such as honesty and fairness successfully through personal and social education and through stories with a moral theme in daily assemblies. Pupils are aware of what is expected of them, and know the difference between right and wrong.

21. Good provision for social development is also based on the good examples set by staff. It encourages pupils to behave responsibly towards others in the school and is developed in assemblies when, for example, pupils were reminded not to drop envelopes from Christmas cards on the footpath as they walked home. Teachers encourage pupils to work together in many lessons and they respond well to these opportunities. Caring and supportive mid-day assistants help pupils to develop good manners in the dining room.
22. Cultural development is very good and has improved since the last inspection. In subjects such as geography, teachers develop pupils' understanding of the cultural traditions of their own locality. They develop pupils' knowledge in history when residents of the area talk to pupils about their childhood. Visits to a local art gallery extend pupils' appreciation of art. Many activities are planned to prepare pupils for life in a multicultural society. The school values the beliefs and traditions of families in the area and celebrates festivals such as Christmas, Divali and Eid. It displays interesting artefacts, such as attractive ceramics and unusual musical instruments. Musicians from other countries perform for pupils from time to time and the school has links with an African community.
23. The school maintains satisfactory links with the community. Its links with the church are particularly strong and contribute well to pupils' learning. Links with local schools are sound. Strong relationships with an adjacent nursery smooth the passage from nursery into the reception classes and allow children to settle quickly into school. Good relationships with local colleges and secondary schools bring pupils into contact with students seeking work in childcare. Asian women bring their skills and experiences into the school when working on childcare courses. This initiative is of equal benefit both to the adults involved and to the school.

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

24. The school is a welcoming place where pupils are safe, well cared for and valued for their individuality. Good procedures promote pupils' health and safety and staff have a genuine concern for pupils' well-being whatever their needs. The school gives high priority to child protection and its procedures to ensure that it is good. The headteacher is responsible for child protection and makes sure that the staff know what to do when concerns arise about a pupil. Several members of staff are qualified in first aid. The school records accidents to pupils and informs parents about injuries to their children. Routine checks take place regularly on fire equipment and electrical appliances.
25. The school has sound procedures for monitoring and improving attendance. The school receives good support from an education welfare officer in cases of poor attendance or punctuality. Rewarding good attendance helps to reinforce its importance. The school has worked hard to improve attendance and this is reflected in a moderate improvement in two of the past three years. A new initiative to improve punctuality has a beneficial effect on pupils' health. It takes the form of a breakfast club where ten to twenty pupils enjoy cereals, or toast and a drink each morning before school. The school takes good care of children in the reception classes. Before attending school, they visit the classrooms with their parents, meet the staff and become familiar with the building. Their entrance to the school is gradual. This ensures close attention from teachers and support staff and provides a calm introduction to their lives in school.
26. Good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour focus on rewards and sanctions that are agreed and used consistently by teachers and support staff. The

successful use of these procedures creates an orderly community where pupils learn without disturbance. A good range of toys is available at break and lunchtimes to occupy pupils and reduce the incidence of poor behaviour. Good procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour involve pupils in telling a teacher or other adult if they are bullied. As a result, incidents of oppressive or racist behaviour are unusual.

27. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are good. Personal development is assessed on entry to the school. It is reviewed informally, recorded and shared with parents at intervals throughout the year. This is effective because teachers and support staff know pupils and their families well and this enables them to promote pupils' personal growth. More formal arrangements for pupils with significant personal needs were demonstrated by detailed comments on the report of a pupil with behavioural problems. The comments also showed care and concern about the pupil's problems and teachers' efforts to help the pupil find friends and to behave in an acceptable way.
28. Support for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. The school makes good use of services, such as those supplied by an educational psychologist, speech and behavioural therapists, to promote pupils' learning and well-being. Pupils with statements of special educational needs receive good guidance for their learning from support staff. Staff provide sensitive guidance for pupils with emotional and behavioural problems that helps them and others to work with minimal disturbance. Teachers use assessments of pupils' progress to update their individual education plans and to set new targets for their learning.
29. The school has good procedures for assessing pupils' learning. At its best, assessment helps in the provision of suitable work and resources and in raising standards in writing, mathematics and science. However, the use of assessment is not consistently effective. This is evident when work in mathematics and science is too hard for less able pupils and pupils with special educational needs. A particularly effective form of monitoring is the use made of assessment to improve the language of bilingual pupils. Although no formal systems exist to target pupils' progress in acquiring spoken English, the support and attention given to these pupils are so effective that many speak the language with reasonable accuracy by the time they are in Year 2.



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

30. Parents are pleased with the school and the education it provides. They are particularly satisfied with the teaching and pupils' behaviour. An issue that was raised at the last inspection was repeated by parents who would like more homework for their children. By not addressing this concern, the school misses opportunities to raise standards by involving willing parents in their children's learning. Parents appreciate the school's arrangements for moving children from the nursery to the reception classes and say that they minimise anxieties caused by a change of school for all concerned.
31. Good information helps parents to understand their children's learning. To achieve this, teachers hold annual events to explain how English and mathematics are taught and about National Curriculum tests in Year 2. Annual reports inform parents how their children's achievements relate to national standards. They set out pupils' strengths and weaknesses, and usually targets for improvement. Teachers invite parents to discuss their children's progress every term and to set targets for the remainder of the year. Half-termly newsletters, which are supplemented when the need arises, keep parents well-informed about events and the school's routines. At the beginning of each half term parents receive helpful details of the work their child will do in coming weeks and this information is also on class notice boards. Some letters are written in two languages to assist non-English speaking parents. All this activity keeps parents informed about the work of the school and allows them to take some part in their children's learning.
32. The school uses the skills of multilingual staff effectively to build bridges with parents whose knowledge of English is limited. It encourages parents to talk to teachers if they have worries or concerns and to work with the school to help their children. This partnership is effective when parents and teachers work together for the benefit of pupils with physical disabilities. It is also evident in the strategies teachers use to improve the attitudes and learning of pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. There is an open invitation for parents to help in school but few parents accept, partly because of other commitments, or because they lack confidence, or feel they lack the necessary skills. The school tries to overcome this difficulty by arranging home visits by teachers and multi-lingual staff and courses for parents in school.
33. A small group of parents tried to set up a Friends' Association but failed because there was little support from other parents. Parents are keener to come to school when their children are involved in activities such as concerts. Teachers make good use of these occasions to raise issues with them. Although the school has positive relationships with parents, their contributions to their children's learning and the work of the school are limited.

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

34. Leadership and management are satisfactory. By recognising the importance of training, advice and intervention, the headteacher has moved the school forward. Without this strong support and guidance, standards would not have risen as much as they have in the last two years in English, mathematics and science. The involvement of senior staff in monitoring teaching and learning has accurately identified areas in need of improvement. Co-ordinators are instrumental in planning appropriate developments and bringing about changes that maintain and improve learning in their subjects. The co-ordinator for the foundation stage maintained sound provision from the last inspection with reasonable success by putting new national guidance into place to provide a suitable curriculum for young children.

35. What is less successful is that monitoring is not refined enough to identify subtler, underlying weaknesses in the school's provision. Senior managers are not combining information from analyses of national tests with the results of monitoring to pinpoint the reasons for low standards in reading and mathematics. One reason for this lies in the school's willingness to accept and follow advice from outside experts. While advice is usually helpful and often leads to better teaching, its uncritical acceptance resulted in a failure to recognise and adjust miscalculations in teachers' planning that slow down pupils' skills in reading and mental mathematics. The school found an issue from the last inspection to raise standards in writing and science more achievable. It has also improved the attainments of more able pupils in both subjects.
36. The school has tackled other issues from the previous inspection with reasonable success. The role of governors in managing the school has improved to a good degree. This is because governors regrouped into committees to examine different aspects of the school's provision. As a result, governors identify the school's achievements with confidence and accuracy and help redress many of its weaknesses. An area for improvement in the work of governors lies in their ability both to interpret and to use the results of national tests. While clearly aware of the need to raise standards in reading and mathematics, governors are not asking the school about why weaknesses occur in pupils' learning.
37. The most important feature of the recent work of governors has been their determination to provide the school with a new building early next year. Dedicated involvement in an initiative financed by public and private funds means that pupils will have high-quality accommodation for their learning. The budget has decreased in recent years as a result of a reduction in the number of pupils attending the school. With two buildings to maintain, this could have caused shortages in the funding available for staff and resources. However, as a result of the school's partnership with a private company, the governors and headteacher have maintained the current levels of provision. This is because the private company has taken over some of the responsibilities for maintaining both buildings and costs will be reduced when all the pupils are housed in a single building.
38. Good management of the funds allocated to the needs of pupils from minority ethnic groups improves their use of both English and their mother tongues. Effective management of the work of support staff ensures that a large group of bilingual pupils is fully included in the work and life of the school. By tracking pupils' achievements from their entry into school, the co-ordinator advises teachers about ways to use the skills of multilingual staff to improve these pupils' learning.
39. Sound leadership and management ensure satisfactory provision for pupils with special educational needs. The co-ordinator keeps teachers up to date with the Code of Practice and is on target to implement the new Code next year. Good use of funding to support the learning of pupils with special educational needs allows the school to maintain satisfactory provision. The school makes good use of the support of staff trained to promote the welfare of pupils with physical disabilities. When working with guidance from the teachers, staff support pupils with reasonable effect on their learning and good effect on their behaviour.
40. While there are enough suitably qualified teachers to provide pupils with a full curriculum, the school has a good complement of support staff. The school provides good support for new and newly qualified teachers and support staff. This enables them to settle quickly into its routines and prevents interruptions to pupils' learning. With

support from governors the school makes good use of most of its resources. It is fully aware of the need to gain best value from all its spending. The only weakness in the management of resources lies in the time wasted when support staff listen to teachers alongside pupils rather than working for their benefit. Recent additions to the equipment available for ICT will improve still further when the school receives all the funds to which it is entitled. Teachers make good use of generous supplies of books, many in dual languages, for reading in lessons. The school's well-stocked library contains a good range of fiction and non-fiction that may be borrowed for home reading.

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

41. The school should:

- (1) raise standards in reading for all pupils by
  - reorganising existing arrangements so that pupils read to teachers and other adults on a much more regular basis to improve their skills and confidence
  - devising ways of involving parents in their children's learning, especially by reading at home*(paragraphs 11, 35, 45, 51 and 55).*
  
- (2) raise standards in mathematics and science for some pupils in Year 1, less able pupils and pupils with special educational needs by
  - setting work at a level that promotes their thinking and develops their skills in mental mathematics
  - providing them with greater help and guidance when conducting scientific experiments and investigations*(paragraphs 11, 13, 29, 35, 57, 60, 63, and 65).*
  
- (3) improve the achievements of children in the reception classes by
  - making better use of time that is allocated to play by providing them with suitable activities that are planned to aid their progress in all areas of learning*(paragraphs 12 and 47).*
  
- (4) make better use of all the time allocated to support staff by
  - ensuring that they work with pupils rather than merely observing during the introductions and final parts of lessons*(paragraphs 40, 52 and 58).*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	59
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	29

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	4	23	28	4	0	0
Percentage	0	7	39	47	7	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one percentage point.

### 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)	0	243
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	83

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	10
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	42

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	134

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

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.5

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.4

National comparative data	5.2
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National comparative data	0.5
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*Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.*

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001 [00]	54 [54]	45 [57]	99 [111]

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	35 [39]	49 [42]	43 [43]
	Girls	35 [45]	41 [49]	40 [40]
	Total	70 [84]	90 [91]	83 [83]
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	71 [76]	91 [82]	84 [75]
	National	84 [83]	86 [84]	91 [90]

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	44 [40]	41 [41]	46 [41]
	Girls	40 [45]	39 [42]	39 [42]
	Total	84 [85]	80 [83]	85 [83]
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 [77]	81 [75]	86 [75]
	National	85 [84]	89 [88]	89 [88]

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

### Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	5
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	10
Pakistani	119
Bangladeshi	1
Chinese	0
White	87
Any other minority ethnic group	21

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	12	1
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 – Y1**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22
Average class size	27

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y1**

Total number of education support staff	14
Total aggregate hours worked per week	279.30

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	0
Total number of education support staff	0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	0
Number of pupils per FTE adult	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2000 to 2001
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	£
Total income	566342
Total expenditure	608069
Expenditure per pupil	1924
Balance brought forward from previous year	67716
Balance carried forward to next year	25989

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3.5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## ***Results of the survey of parents and carers***

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	243
Number of questionnaires returned	62 (25.5%)

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	60	35	5	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	48	40	6	0	5
Behaviour in the school is good.	52	40	3	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	26	42	18	6	8
The teaching is good.	47	45	0	0	8
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	52	32	13	0	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	52	35	6	0	6
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	56	34	3	0	6
The school works closely with parents.	40	40	10	3	6
The school is well led and managed.	48	39	3	2	8
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	45	45	5	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	26	32	13	5	24



## **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**

42. Assessments that take place when children enter the reception classes indicate that most children have very limited experiences of reading, writing and mathematics and that their knowledge and understanding of the world is very restricted. A large group of children speak little English outside the school and another smaller group is just beginning to learn English in addition to their own language. A further difficulty experienced by some children whose first language is not English is that they lack confidence and competence in the use of their mother tongues. Much of the work that takes place in the reception classes lies in improving the spoken English of these children. Although most of the teaching in the reception classes is satisfactory, this is an area where teaching is good and at its most successful.

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

43. Many children in the reception classes attended a local nursery, where they made a good start towards the national goals for personal, social and emotional development. Good teaching in this area provides a firm foundation for children's future learning and makes it likely that they will reach the expected goals for this area of learning by the end of the foundation stage. Teachers' good relationships with children and a friendly, but firm approach ensure that they settle happily into the routines of school and thoroughly enjoy their work. Staff provide an attractive, interesting and purposeful place for children to learn. As a result, children soon know what is expected of them; for instance, they all help to tidy up and to share equipment with one another. Children are well behaved, show interest in all activities and try hard to please adults. They move around the school and work away from their classrooms with confidence. Staff encourage children to select their own work and to form friendships with others. This helps children to feel secure. Teachers also help children to behave sensibly and to respond positively to adults in formal situations, such as assemblies and lessons in literacy and numeracy. This contributes to their good achievements when learning to read, write and recognise numbers.

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

44. Teaching in this area of learning is mainly satisfactory. Children absorb information avidly and follow instructions after listening attentively in a range of situations. This is because teachers have high expectations of children's ability to listen attentively. As at the last inspection, many children are likely to reach the national goals for listening by the end of their year in the reception classes. Teachers are well aware that most children need considerable help to improve their spoken language, especially those whose use of English is not fluent. Consequently, they engage children's interest and curiosity in discussions with the whole class. Teachers are good at asking questions that encourage children to think and to respond during sessions with the class or in smaller groups. This extends children's vocabulary and encourages them to use new words. Classroom assistants also develop children's vocabulary when they work alongside them and talk to them. Although this strategy involves children in discussion it is not as effective as it could be when staff are uncertain about the sorts of questions to ask. They are also unaware of the need to provide challenging questions for more able

children. Teachers know that as well as learning English, many children need to develop the language they speak at home. To achieve this, multilingual assistants make children feel at ease and secure by chatting to them in their mother tongue. This initiative provides children with the confidence to become independent learners because they are sure that their needs are understood and they know what teachers expect of them. Most of them still have a long way to go to achieve the confident use of language that most children have at the end of the foundation stage.

45. From a very low starting point, children make steady progress in understanding how books work. Their understanding of different ways of reading new words increases when children work in small groups with close attention from their teachers. However, children's progress towards the expected goals slows in reading because they do not take home the books that they read in lessons. This restricts opportunities for them to share books with their parents and older brothers and sisters. Children show strong interest in the alphabet when they practise writing letters and simple words by themselves. They soon realise that they can record their ideas in writing in the same way that they pass on messages by talking. Teachers make sure that children write letters correctly from the start and provide opportunities for them to practise writing, as when they make lists of the food they need for a picnic. They make good progress in learning to write and are ready to work at the earliest level of the National Curriculum by the time they reach Year 1.

### **Mathematical development**

46. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, and teachers are successful at interesting children in numbers. Children do as well as can be expected and make steady progress towards the expected goals in recognising and counting numbers. This is because teachers make good use of the time spent teaching whole classes to interest children in numbers. Children enjoy putting numbers in order and write them correctly. Many count to 10 and some more able children count to 20 and above. This is an improvement since the last inspection when some children made little progress with counting. Progress is not as good when children choose activities for themselves. Although adults talk to children all the time, especially those who need help to understand English, they do not focus discussions on developing what children already know. Children spend a lot of time playing with numbers, games and shapes, and using different containers to hold water and sand. However, teachers miss opportunities to make children think or to use mathematical vocabulary when talking about these activities. A group of more able children, that includes bilingual children, are capable of rising to greater mental challenges than teachers provide.

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

47. Teaching has many satisfactory features, but shortcomings in teachers' planning slow children's progress in some aspects of this area of learning. When children start school, many have had few chances to extend their knowledge and understanding of the world, to people and places beyond their homes and nursery. Because they are aware of this, teachers talk to children about common aspects of daily life, such as the days of the week, the seasons and the weather. This aspect of teaching is satisfactory. However, many gaps still exist in children's knowledge and most find it very hard to ask questions and to express their ideas about the wider world. Teachers limit children's progress towards the national goals for their learning when they allow them to spend long periods of time on repetitive unchallenging activities that lack specific objectives. Teaching is good and well planned in ICT and as a result, children make good progress towards the earliest level of the National Curriculum because they enjoy working with

computers. The encouragement and attention they receive from teachers means that as at the last inspection, most children are very confident and prefer to work independently with computers or with a friend. They also enjoy making models, such as spaceships from waste materials and are skilful at joining materials with glue and sticky tape.

### **Physical development**

48. Children's physical development is typical for their age and teaching is sound. In one lesson, children made very good progress when the teacher expected them to think carefully about their actions and to work hard at improving their skills with small equipment, such as balls. Teachers provide children with good opportunities to use different tools, materials and equipment. When playing in water, for example, they learn to pour accurately. Because they are aware of children's needs, adults spot when children need assistance with activities, such as, holding pencils or cutting accurately with scissors. They make sure that children move round the classrooms and playground safely and find their way around the building without bumping into others. Consequently, children gain increasing control and balance, even though they have no regular opportunities to work outdoors with large equipment such as climbing frames. As at the last inspection, most children are likely to reach the national goals for physical development by the end of the foundation stage.

### **Creative development**

49. Provision for creative development is satisfactory and helps children to reach the expectations for this area of learning by the end of the foundation stage. Every day, teachers encourage children to draw and paint and to enjoy and make up stories. Children are good at mixing colours from powder and at experimenting with bricks when making structures, such as *pretend sheds*. They sing songs and rhymes tunefully and are imaginative when planning food for a picnic. Although adults work alongside children to extend their language during role-play, they miss chances to involve themselves in children's work. As a result, the quality of imaginative play does not improve as much as it could and teachers provide few opportunities for children to discuss their feelings and experiences or what they hear, smell and touch.

### **ENGLISH**

50. Standards in English are below average by the end of Year 2. This is similar to the situation at the last inspection. The English spoken by many pupils when they enter the school is at a much lower level than expected for their age. This is because 68 per cent speak different languages at home and 28 per cent have little understanding of English. With good help from bilingual staff, most pupils make good progress in acquiring spoken English and as a result, play a full part in lessons. The teaching of speaking and listening is a good feature of teaching in English. Teachers extend spoken language in discussions with the whole class effectively by questioning, introducing new vocabulary and encouraging pupils to express their ideas. As a result, the language used by most pupils in Year 2 is as good as that spoken by many seven-year-olds nationally. Another outcome of good teaching is that most pupils listen attentively to their teachers with clear understanding.
51. Although standards in reading have improved since the previous inspection and teaching is mainly satisfactory, standards are still very low when compared with those reached by most pupils of the same age. Because pupils are taught the sounds of letters in a systematic way, they build up new words effectively from an early age. This

good start is lost because pupils read too infrequently. Most read with their teachers only once every week and further gains in their achievements are restricted by the limited time allocated to reading with adults. Pupils' progress is also slowed by the removal of group reading from many sessions of the literacy hour. Parental interest in reading is evident from the numbers of parents who read with their children in school. This daily event builds effectively on pupils' confidence and interest in books. However, by allowing library books to be taken home rather than the books pupils read in lessons the school wastes a good opportunity to raise standards. Although teachers keep good records of pupils' progress in reading they fail to ask themselves why the progress made by many pupils is slow.

52. Because teachers are more confident in the use of the National Literacy Strategy, and their expertise in teaching reading has improved, more pupils in this year's Year 2 are reaching a higher level in reading than last year. Teachers' confidence in the use of the National Literacy Strategy does not, however, extend to support staff. Too often they waste time that could be allocated to working with pupils by acting as spectators during the introductions and final parts of lessons.
53. More able pupils enjoy books and respond well to humour or interesting stories. Their reading is fluent and expressive, and they talk confidently about the parts of stories that they particularly enjoy. These pupils have a good command of the skills needed to become effective readers. Most pupils apply their knowledge of letter sounds well to read new words. They use the pictures to help them understand stories but rarely use the events of a story to predict what will happen. Limited experiences of the wider world affect some pupils' understanding of stories.
54. Standards in writing are satisfactory. With a good increase in teachers' expertise, writing has improved at a strong rate since the previous inspection. The main reason for this improvement lies in the effective way that teachers encourage pupils to use their knowledge of letters to spell new words. They also insist on appropriate punctuation and legible handwriting. As a result of good teaching most pupils know that sentences begin with capital letters and end with full stops. The way that teachers plan lessons in literacy has a good effect on pupils' writing. Teachers pay close attention to writing for a week at a time. This strategy is far more effective with writing than it is with reading. It improves pupils' progress in Year 1 and allows more pupils in Year 2 to achieve satisfactory standards. More able pupils do as well as expected at writing. This situation has improved since the last inspection. Teachers use ICT well to improve pupils' spelling and reading. With good levels of help, less able pupils and pupils with special educational needs take part in all activities and although their achievements are not as high as other pupils' are, they make sound progress in writing.
55. Teachers check pupils' progress thoroughly, and have good knowledge of their achievements. They use this information effectively to improve pupils' writing but lack confidence in their past experience to question the way that reading is organised. Overall, the management of English is satisfactory. Effective procedures to check teaching and learning have brought strong improvement to achievement in writing. Although monitoring ensures that most teachers use the National Literacy Strategy with confidence, it has not identified why too many pupils make slow progress in reading. Once the school modifies the way reading is organised, the only restraint to a general improvement to standards in English lies in the inaccurate use of spoken English by a small group of pupils in Year 2.

## **MATHEMATICS**

56. Although standards in mathematics are still below average, they have risen sharply over the past three years. Most pupils progress at a reasonable rate. Their learning is steadier than at the last inspection because teaching in the subject is now more skilled. Improvements in teaching stem directly from the support and guidance the school provides to raise teachers' understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy. More able and average ability pupils are doing as well as could be expected in mathematics because teachers challenge their thinking and their ability to retain basic facts about numbers. In classes in Year 1, teachers provide enough clear explanations and helpful resources to ensure that most pupils add and subtract numbers accurately when solving problems that include ten objects. The successful way that teachers in Year 2 build on this secure foundation allows more able pupils to move on to accurate addition of two-digit numbers up to 100.
57. Most of the teaching in mathematics is satisfactory. However, the progress made by less able pupils and pupils with special educational needs in mathematics varies in different parts of lessons. This is apparent in mental mathematics, where teachers aim explanations and questions at a level understood by more and average ability pupils. Consequently, the work is usually too hard for pupils who work at lower levels and need more time to think. This strategy limits the time available for them to work at their own level and the chance of catching up with other pupils. However, the learning of these pupils and their enjoyment of mathematics increases quite rapidly when they work in small groups with strong support from adults. During this part of lessons, teachers provide less able pupils with suitable tasks, interesting activities and resources that aid their understanding. This means that when they are in Year 2, most less able pupils and pupils with special educational needs manage to reach a level just below most other pupils. They are beginning to work confidently with numbers from one to 20.
58. Because teachers explain the work in clear mathematical and descriptive language, many pupils acquire new ideas quickly and talk about them fluently. An example of this in a lesson in Year 2 clarified pupils' understanding of shapes. Pupils uncertain of the shape of an oval were told to *think of a circle and squash it*. For others who were confused about the difference between two- and three-dimensional shapes, the teacher reminded them that *you can't pick up two-dimensional shapes but you can draw them*. A pupil in Year 2 who talked about his work demonstrated his knowledge in clear mathematical language. When asked by the teacher to explain how he would add 42 to 34, he replied, *I'm looking for a two-digit and a one-digit number*.
59. Bilingual pupils improve their command of spoken English in mathematics because teachers insist on accurate vocabulary. Pupils in Year 1 who lack confidence with new ideas get good help to improve their understanding from multilingual assistants. By the time they reach Year 2, the number of pupils who need this support drops to a small group since early intervention is effective. The support provided by classroom assistants is not always as effective as it might be. Some remain inactive during mental mathematics instead of helping pupils with their work.
60. The systems teachers' use to track pupils' progress provide accurate information about the levels of their learning. Teachers use this information effectively to plan the work of more able and average ability pupils. Assessment is less effective when teachers fail to use it to provide suitable work for less able pupils in mental mathematics. A small amount of unsatisfactory teaching resulted when pupils in a class with pupils from two different year groups were provided with similar work. Because teachers have firm control of pupils' behaviour, enough work is covered in lessons to maintain steady progress. In response to praise for their achievements and strategies that keep them

thinking, pupils' behaviour is consistently good. They share ideas and resources sensibly and take an interest in the work. In a lesson in Year 1, pupils were clearly pleased when the teacher put a counter in a jar to mark their achievements and accompanied the action with *Well done!* In another lesson in Year 1, the teacher engaged pupils' interest and increased their involvement in the activity by *jumping* a model *buzzy bee* in twos along a counting stick.

61. The co-ordinator provides sound leadership for the subject and helpful support for teaching and learning. With advice from the local education authority, the co-ordinator visits classrooms twice each term to observe the quality of teaching. In this way, the school meets an issue from the last inspection to improve the achievements of more able pupils. A further good strategy for managing the subject lies in teachers' planning. By planning in separate teams teachers ensure that most pupils in a year group have access to the same activities. A combination of effective managerial strategies is responsible for an upward curve in standards over the last two years. A continuance of this secure management places the school in a reasonable position to meet the needs of less able pupils, with greater impact on their learning.

## SCIENCE

62. Standards in science are rising. They were very low at the previous inspection but improved to a level that was four per cent below average in assessments by teachers in 2001. This result was achieved by better leadership and teaching of the subject.
63. Most of the teaching is satisfactory. Effective planning emphasises an experimental and investigative approach to science. Because they plan together teachers provide the same tasks and interesting activities for all the pupils in each year group. This ensures that these pupils maintain steady progress as they move through the school. Their positive attitudes to learning and good behaviour stem from their enjoyment and involvement in lessons. However, a weakness in planning limits the progress of pupils in Year 1 who work at the same activities alongside pupils from Year 2. These pupils often find the work too hard, they are less interested in science and their progress is not as strong as that made by others in Year 1.
64. The school's approach to science has improved because of the emphasis teachers place on scientific investigations and recording. Teachers take pupils through a process that begins with *What do we want to find out?* and concludes with *What did we find out?* They also provide pupils with interesting opportunities for independent investigations with simple equipment. For instance, in Year 2, when pupils investigated whether those with the widest hand-spans would pick up the most marbles they were surprised that their findings were contrary to their expectations. Teachers help pupils to record their work in writing and simple tables. In a lesson in Year 2, the teacher showed pupils how to collect data about favourite foods by using a computer to represent the results in a bar graph.
65. The way that teachers check pupils' learning is now good. An effective method of assessment lies in the way that teachers write comments in pupils' books to identify strengths and weaknesses in their learning. This strategy enables teachers to plan activities for more able pupils that raise their achievements to a level above that reached by most pupils. Continuous and accessible information ensures that teachers group pupils to work with others at similar levels of attainment. As a result, learning is usually sound because tasks and activities suit pupils' needs. It also identifies pupils with learning difficulties who need additional support from classroom assistants. On the other hand, when less able pupils and pupils with special educational needs do the

same work as others, they struggle without adult help because the work is too hard for them.

66. Teachers expect pupils with special educational needs to record their work in the same way as others do in science. Because they often receive good support, these pupils usually make the same progress as others. In one lesson, for instance, two assistants improved pupils' understanding of scientific vocabulary and helped them to follow written instructions. As a result, the pupils completed their recording grids as well as the other pupils. Bilingual pupils receive good support from multilingual assistants. In a lesson in Year 2, an assistant talked about creatures in two languages and related them to pupils' existing knowledge. This meant that the few remaining pupils in need of this support managed to keep up with others.
67. Teachers teach investigative skills effectively by providing interesting activities. In Year 1, for instance, a teacher intrigued pupils by darkening a windowless room gradually to show that shiny objects are not themselves sources of light. This stimulated pupils' curiosity to learn more. Most pupils are attentive because teachers are good at managing their behaviour. This ensures that pupils take part in discussions without interruption. However, if a teacher is not firm enough with pupils, some of them take advantage. On a few occasions, lessons are dominated by those who are unwilling to take turns in discussions and their behaviour slows the pace of learning.
68. The school has effective plans for further developments of the subject. For instance, the co-ordinator is aware of the need to use information from the analysis of national tests to plug gaps in pupils' learning. The school also plans to improve the way that teaching is monitored so that weaknesses in pupils' learning are identified and rectified. With leadership that is effectively raising standards and a suitable focus for improvements, the school has a reasonable basis for continuing to raise standards.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

69. The standards reached by seven-year-olds in art and design are above those reached nationally by the end of Year 2 and have improved since the last inspection.
70. This strong improvement in pupils' achievements resulted from a recent initiative where a well-known artist supported pupils' work. The work that pupils produced in his lessons was of very high quality and made a strong contribution to their cultural development. Pupils visited Huddersfield Art Gallery to seek ideas and inspiration for their own work and studied pattern in African art. They learned to use sponges, rollers, and blocks very effectively and their finished work, a collage of patterns linked together over a series of lessons, is exciting and successful enough to be displayed at the gallery next term. This experience has inspired not only the pupils but also the teachers to strive for higher standards and a wider range of skills and experiences. Teachers introduce pupils to a good range of materials such as pencils, pastels, crayons and felt pens. Occasionally they use paint, although less frequently than other media.
71. Because the co-ordinator rewrote the scheme of work recently, teachers have a broader programme to develop pupils' knowledge and skills in a systematic way. For instance, lessons now include the work of a wider range of artists, more practical activities, and art generated by computers, which is a strong feature of pupils' achievements. Work this term has resulted in bright and imaginative calendars created from print blocks, paint and string in Year 1, and in Year 2, from designs cut into *Quick*

*Print blocks.* A few pupils made attractive three-dimensional pots in the form of *divas* fashioned from dough in order to share their culture with other pupils.

72. Although there is a regular element of imaginative work in art, this has a lower profile than observational drawing. As a result, pupils often lack inspiration when expected to be creative and have problems generating their own ideas. Sketchbooks provide clear records of pupils' progress and teachers use them effectively to improve pupils' skills. The main purpose of sketchbooks is for design and sketching. They are not used as effectively for experimenting or exploring new ideas.
73. The teaching of art is satisfactory and has some good features. Teaching in workshops is very good. Lessons are well planned and organised. Teachers' instructions and explanations are so clear that pupils know what to do and how to go about the work. Teachers also support pupils with advice and assistance to carry out tasks. The encouragement pupils receive during practical activities aids their confidence and concentration. Timely interventions help pupils to improve their efforts and remind them how to use materials and new techniques. Although pupils compared their work with that of artists in a gallery, there are not enough opportunities in lessons for them to discuss their work or suggest improvements. The initiative that improved pupils' learning in Year 2, also increases the ability of teachers to raise standards and to improve the range of opportunities for pupils throughout the school.

## DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

74. Teachers have maintained sound standards in design and technology since the time of the last inspection. The enthusiasm the newly appointed co-ordinator injects into planning and supporting teaching provides a good foundation for standards to rise even higher. Over the last term, the co-ordinator has made good use of advice from the local education authority to draw up an effective policy for teaching and learning and an *exciting action plan*. The benefits of these activities provide good support for teachers' confidence and skill in teaching the subject. Recent projects in Years 1 and 2 contained all the elements needed for successful learning.
75. Teaching is mainly satisfactory. In Year 1, teachers linked recent work to the promotion of healthy eating. They reminded pupils of how fruit and vegetables contribute to their healthy growth and produced a range of fruit for them to examine, talk about and draw. Pupils' drawings of pears, peaches, bananas, apples and oranges reflected their growing ability to sketch accurately through careful observation. Teachers also made sure that the activity extended pupils' vocabularies by encouraging them to discuss the tastes and textures of several kinds of fruit in words that are normally beyond most pupils' range. In this way, teachers added to pupils' achievements with spoken language and had a good effect on the learning of bilingual pupils. For example, pupils talked about pears being *soft*, *juicy*, *slimy* and *slippery*. Peaches were *furry*, *hairy* and *sweet*, while limes were considered *sour* and *sharp*. Teachers introduced pupils to the safe use of graters, peelers and knives when they prepared vegetables for cooking. Pupils' planning sheets involved deciding which tastes they enjoyed most, selecting fruits for fruit salad and the tools that would be most useful. The work was carried to a successful conclusion when teachers recorded pupils' comments on its highlights.
76. The co-ordinator's influence is evident, though not as strong, on teaching and learning in Year 2. While teachers show reasonable understanding of the subject, the work they plan lacks the variety and creativity evident in Year 1. Teachers prepared pupils in Year 2 to make moving vehicles by providing them with a vocabulary of suitable words. This meant that when pupils sketched the plans for their designs they could label them with



*windscreen, engine, wheels and lights.* The successful models pupils made demonstrated effective support and sound progress in their learning. As with pupils in Year 1, they learned to select tools and to combine the materials that made the vehicles work. Teachers provided extra help to pupils who find it hard to follow instructions or experience problems when using tools. As a result, these pupils made reasonable improvements to their achievements.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

77. The school has maintained satisfactory standards since the previous inspection. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and as a result pupils make steady progress.
78. Effective leadership and management in geography have moved the subject forward at a reasonable pace. Assessments of pupils' learning inform teachers about aspects of the work that need improving. The co-ordinator emphasises a practical approach to the subject and has strengthened the use of fieldwork to provide pupils with a variety of first-hand experiences. This emphasis is reflected in teachers' planning. It brings the subject to life for pupils and enables them to build steadily on their achievements. A weakness in planning limits the learning of pupils in Year 1 who are taught alongside pupils in Year 2. These pupils miss the same experiences provided for other pupils in Year 1 and this slows their learning. With extra help from support staff, bilingual pupils and pupils with special educational needs make steady progress in geography.
79. Lessons based on fieldwork often enthuse and motivate pupils. For instance, pupils in Year 1 learn their addresses by walking to the local post office and posting letters to their homes. Teachers in Year 1 are good at developing pupils' understanding and ability to use maps. Pupils responded well when they drew their route from home to school with details of buildings such as shops. Teachers provide excellent opportunities for pupils in Year 2 to learn of places that are different from where they live. Maintaining traditional links with a secondary school in Tanzania provides pupils with new insights and experiences. They learn about the lives of people in the village of Issenye and compare their own lives with life in Tanzania. For instance, pupils are aware that it is much harder to get fresh water in Issenye than it is in their locality. Teachers link this work with writing by introducing new ways to record information. They also link geography with ICT when pupils in Year 2 use *Planning a Town*, a programme that corrects simple errors with computers.
80. Plans to improve the monitoring of teaching and learning place the school in a reasonable position to identify and address weaknesses in its provision. Given the quality of leadership, it is likely that the school will manage to maintain and improve standards in geography.

## **HISTORY**

81. The school has maintained satisfactory standards in history since the previous inspection. This is because teaching remains sound and pupils learn at a steady rate.
82. An effective co-ordinator influences the way that teachers work and plan together as a team. Influenced by the co-ordinator, teachers have a practical approach to history and provide pupils with an interesting variety of activities. Pupils enjoy learning about homes, toys and schools from the past in lessons that promote their understanding. For two of the topics taught in history, teachers widen pupils' horizons by combining fascinating items from the past with visits and visitors to the school. A storyteller sets the scene when staff and pupils in Year 1 dress up for a *history day* in post-war Britain.

One activity involves washing clothes in a poss-tub. In Year 2, staff and pupils take part in role-play in a replica of a Victorian school in a local museum. Teachers extend this experience by setting aside an area in the school for a Victorian classroom, complete with furniture and equipment. Such excellent experiences raise pupils' understanding and develop their ability to find and interpret information about the past.

83. The school lacks resources to cover all the work in history with such good effect on pupils' learning. For instance, resources for work about *The Great Fire of London* do little to capture pupils' interest or develop their understanding. Consequently, lessons are run of the mill and although pupils listen to their teachers with adequate attention, their enthusiasm for the topic is not as strong as in other lessons. Also, the school has not enough material for pupils to work independently in lessons. As a result, although pupils have reasonable knowledge of events, they have limited access to different ways of looking at the past. For instance, few pupils know why the diary of Samuel Pepys is important to historians.
84. Because teachers are good at managing pupils' behaviour, pupils listen attentively to others and make steady progress during discussions and activities. To extend pupils' learning, teachers link history effectively with English, music, and ICT. For instance, pupils who enjoyed singing *London's Burning*, listened attentively to the story of the *Great Fire*. Good help and support for bilingual pupils and pupils with special educational needs allows them to make steady progress in history. In one lesson, a special needs assistant made sure that pupils with learning difficulties fully understood the gist of the lesson. This filled gaps in pupils' understanding and allowed them to learn at a steady pace.
85. The school plans to improve the way it monitors teaching and learning in history so that teachers can identify and act on any weaknesses. When combined with sound leadership, this initiative puts the school in a reasonable position to raise standards.

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

86. The school has successfully maintained satisfactory standards in ICT since the last inspection. All aspects of the subject are taught successfully, even though some computers are out of date and unable to cope with the latest software. Word-processing is a consistently good element of all work with computers and is an area where pupils make good progress. By the end of Year 2, pupils can select fonts, change the size, style and colour of print and redraft their work. Pupils acquire skills quickly and demonstrate considerable confidence when using computers.
87. Pupils throughout the school log on and off confidently, use icons and menus, and access and close programs with ease. In Year 1, pupils enter simple texts using a word-processing programme that includes the use of shift and delete keys. Pupils in Year 2 produce artistic designs with a program using lines, shapes and a *spray can*. They fill in spaces with colours. They know how to delete things they do not need and some print their work independently. Pupils make comparisons between designs in ICT and those that they produce manually, identifying speed, regularity and boldness of colour as the advantages of computer-generated work. This aspect is a relative strength in pupils' knowledge.
88. Pupils use instructions competently to programme an electronic toy to travel along a simple track and a square. To support their work in geography, pupils in Year 2 use information from a database to create graphs and charts about homes. They create roadways and maps with appropriate geographical symbols. Many pupils are keen,

independent learners who use a range of programmes to support spelling and writing in English, and read along with characters from their reading books. Bilingual pupils and pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to other pupils. This is because classroom assistants and more able pupils support them as they use computers by discussing their work, helping them to remember procedures and how to read or interpret displays.

89. The teaching of ICT is good and this contributes to the rate of pupils' learning. Lessons are well-structured with introductions that state clearly what is to be learned and helpful demonstrations about how to do the work. Pupils usually start the work themselves. They concentrate for long periods but willingly seek help. Teachers provide pupils with regular assistance, encouragement and praise. They organise the work of classroom assistants to ensure that pupils use their time with computers productively. Teachers check up on pupils' understanding by summarising what has happened at the end of lessons.
90. The co-ordinator manages the subject effectively by ensuring that ICT is taught regularly and in subjects such as English, geography and art and design. This makes a significant contribution to pupils' learning. At present, a shortage of computers and suitable software means that for most pupils the use of ICT is not frequent enough nor is it developed in all subjects of the curriculum. This shortage will be remedied when the school is housed in a new building and the school receives the funding it is entitled to for resources.

## **MUSIC**

91. The school has continued to maintain satisfactory standards in music since the last inspection. Pupils make sound progress and achieve standards in Year 2 that are similar to those of seven-year-olds in other schools. Teachers plan lessons effectively to ensure that bilingual pupils and pupils at different levels in their learning achieve equally well. The co-ordinator introduced new programmes of work for the subject recently and these have increased teachers' confidence and knowledge of the subject. As a result, the teaching of music has improved and is now good. This increases the school's chances of improving pupils' achievements in music. Teachers set a brisk pace to nearly all lessons and couple this with invigorating enthusiasm. They use strategies that are suited to the needs and interests of young pupils and generally demand high standards. Lessons are well planned with clear progression in the development of pupils' skills. This enables pupils to build on their achievements and ensures the maintenance of satisfactory standards.
92. Pupils in Year 1 are beginning to copy a simple rhythm and to clap, chant and sing rhythmically. They use percussion instruments sensibly to accompany singing. They know the names of most percussion instruments and play them correctly. Pupils appreciate music from a variety of cultures and traditions and enjoy working with a range of different instruments. They exhibit good posture when singing and sing tunefully with clear diction. Pupils make sound progress in composition and singing. They learn to listen attentively to music and master complex musical terms when talking about instruments. Their use of musical terminology is good.
93. When singing for residents of an old people's home, pupils develop the social skills and the confidence needed to perform before an audience. The school has enough instruments to ensure that all pupils get a chance to use them. Pupils' cultural development is extended when they experience music from a range of cultures. They

enjoy a variety of visits and workshops and took part recently in an African drum session and listened to a woodwind ensemble.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

94. Standards in physical education are at the same satisfactory level as they were at the last inspection. Teaching in the subject is mainly good. Teachers' confidence and understanding of the subject allows pupils to make good progress in regular lessons in games, gymnastics and dance. The quality of indoor accommodation provides good opportunities to cover a range of activities in all aspects of the subject. Good accommodation in two school halls more than compensates for a lack of enclosed outdoor facilities.
95. A noteworthy feature of good teaching lies in the encouragement and support teachers provide for different groups of pupils. Praise for their efforts bolsters pupils' achievements. They love to show others the things that they are good at, and teachers use pupils' enthusiasm to improve their performances. Because pupils enjoy physical education they are receptive to instructions and keen to take part in activities. Teachers are so good at controlling boisterous behaviour that pupils with behavioural problems usually take a full part in lessons. Multilingual support staff make a good contribution to lessons by demonstrating and explaining to bilingual pupils what teachers expect them to achieve. In this way, bilingual pupils make the same good progress as other pupils. Support staff for pupils with physical disabilities take good care of their charges and help them to enjoy activities in which their safety would otherwise be jeopardised.
96. A good strategy in Year 1, that affected pupils' imaginations also set the scene for imaginative dance. When the pupils changed their clothes, the teacher read them the poem about cats on which the lesson was based. Pupils were reminded of the poem throughout the lesson and put in the right mood for action with music about the *Pink Panther*. In another lesson in Year 1, pupils made reasonable progress in throwing, catching and aiming balls with accuracy. Pupils in Year 2 made good improvements to the techniques and accuracy they brought to similar activities. They build on earlier achievements to aim and pass balls, bounce them on the ground while moving and catch them with reasonable skill and co-ordination. Teaching was very good in gymnastics in Year 1 when the teacher asked pupils to comment critically on their performances and to suggest ways of making improvements. This encouraged pupils to fold themselves into an effective variety of shapes and to move smoothly from fast to slow when cooling down.
97. The current co-ordinator has recently assumed responsibility for the subject. Nevertheless, a lot has been achieved in a short time. With good advice from the local education authority, improved planning is in place for most aspects of the subject. The co-ordinator has audited, improved and re-organised resources to increase their availability to larger classes of pupils. This improves access to the equipment and reduces the time spent waiting for resources. An emphasis on healthy eating stems from the school's involvement in the *Healthy Schools Award*. Clear plans to improve teaching coupled with the promotion of healthy living are positive features of the school's efforts to raise standards.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

98. Although pupils' attainment at the last inspection was good, the programme teachers used at that time has changed. As a result of a new scheme of work, which is being

implemented at present, the school maintains satisfactory standards in religious education through sound leadership and management of the subject. By keeping up with local initiatives to improve pupils' learning, teachers provide a suitable range of work from the locally agreed syllabus. With the backgrounds of its pupils in mind, the school modified national plans for teachers in Years 1 and 2 that introduced Judaism in addition to Christianity. Instead, teachers made the programme more relevant and interesting to many pupils by choosing Islam as the additional faith. Teachers from the Christian tradition make good use of pupils' varying beliefs to increase their understanding of other faiths. Because teachers provide time for pupils to air their views to a receptive audience, religious education makes an effective contribution to spiritual and cultural development.

99. Pupils have satisfactory knowledge of the beliefs and festivals of other faiths. They are good at remembering facts and events covered in earlier lessons and in using this knowledge to increase their understanding of new work. Accurate recall of earlier learning in lessons about the first Christmas resulted when teachers linked the work to pupils' own experiences. In a lesson in Year 1, the teacher made events in Bethlehem meaningful to the class by asking *How do mummies get ready for new babies?* Pupils then discussed the differences between the arrival of babies in their own families and the birth of Jesus. In a class in Year 2, the teacher encouraged pupils to explore the feelings of people in the Christmas story. *How would you feel after a long journey on a donkey?* In the same lesson, the teacher used a pupil's question about Joseph to explain an article of Christian belief. *When Jesus was on earth, Joseph looked after him like a father. Christians believe that Jesus's real father was God.* Pupils accepted this clear explanation that added to their knowledge of different faiths.
100. The co-ordinator is extending the time allocated to religious education. At present, most lessons take the form of stories about people and events from the Bible and Qu'ran. While this approach engages pupils' interest it adds little to their experience of religious life in the community outside school. Nor does it deepen their understanding of different forms of worship and of buildings where worship takes place. The school's approach to religious education ensures that bilingual pupils have the same opportunities as others to learn about the festivals and stories of different faiths. Even though many have a reasonable understanding of spoken English, pupils in Year 1 heard events leading to the birth of Jesus in their home language at the same time as it was told in English. The teacher heightened their interest in the story while developing their listening skills and vocabulary.
101. Resources for religious education mainly take the form of books and lack materials and objects to make the subject livelier and realistic for young pupils. New procedures introduced by the co-ordinator ensure that pupils extend and build on their experiences and knowledge in a systematic way. With a clear action plan being put in place at a steady rate, the school has a satisfactory instrument to maintain and raise standards in the subject.