

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **BURE PARK PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Bicester, Oxfordshire

LEA area: Oxfordshire

Unique reference number: 132057

Headteacher: Mr Rob Pearson

Reporting inspector: Mr Douglas Hayward  
21234

Dates of inspection: 5<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> February 2001

Inspection number: 230828

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school: Nursery, Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Lucerne Avenue  
Bure Park  
Bicester  
Oxfordshire

Postcode: OX26 3BP

Telephone number: 01869 354059

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Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Cllr Douglas Spencer

Date of previous inspection: n/a

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Douglas Hayward 21234	Registered Inspector	English Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Special educational needs Equal opportunities English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught?
Graeme Norval 9624	Lay Inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Gail Robertson 24137	Team Inspector	Areas of learning for children under five Geography History Physical education Religious education	How well is the school led and managed?
Katherine Spencer 30028	Team Inspector	Mathematics Science Music	How good are the curricular opportunities offered to pupils?

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Bure Park is a large primary school that opened in January 2000 to serve the rapidly growing Bure Park housing development on the outskirts of Bicester. Most pupils live in privately owned housing. The school was built to accommodate 350 pupils and currently there are 177 on roll. Many of the pupils have moved to Bicester from other parts of the country as a result of their parents' jobs being relocated. A significant number transferred from other schools in Bicester. Pupils who joined Bure Park School, especially in Key Stage 2, show a wide range of ability.

Children are admitted to the nursery at different times of the year depending on their date of birth. They start on a part-time basis in the nursery at the beginning of the term after their fourth birthday. The attainment of most children when they start school is in line with expectations for children at the age of five. During the inspection 25 children attended nursery in the mornings and 24 in the afternoon. There are also 18 reception children in two Year 1 classes. There are eight pupils (5 per cent) who have English as an additional language. This is high compared with other schools, although most of them do not require any additional help to learn English. Seven pupils (4 per cent) are eligible for free school meals, which is below average. Twenty-six pupils (15 per cent) are on the school's register of special educational need, of whom one (1 per cent) has a statement of special educational need. These figures are below average compared with other primary schools.

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

**A great deal has been achieved in the very short time that the school has been open. The headteacher, staff and governors have worked very hard to make Bure Park a happy, successful school that is going from strength to strength. Pupils like their new school very much. They work very hard and are keen to learn in lessons that are very well planned and taught. The school provides good value for money.**

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

- It gives children a very good start to their education in a stimulating, caring nursery.
- Teaching is at least good in almost nine out of every ten lessons. It is very good, and occasionally excellent in almost a third of lessons. Teachers are very enthusiastic and hardworking, and work very well as a team.
- It places great importance on pupils' very good behaviour. They listen very carefully to their teachers, work very hard and enjoy coming to school.
- It forms very good links with parents and has grown in popularity. Parents feel very welcome and support the work of the school.
- It helps pupils with special educational needs to make good progress. Their work is well planned and they have lots of good support in classes and small groups.
- It has very good ways of finding out what pupils have learned and using that information to plan the next stages of work that become gradually more difficult.
- The headteacher provides very good leadership and is very well supported by staff. The governing body has played an important part in the development of the school.
- The school has used its budget well and provides good value for money.

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

- The number of written policies in place, including the statutory policy for sex education.
- The ways in which the school ensures equal access to a full range of activities.
- The range of opportunities for pupils to take responsibility around the school.
- The range of visits outside school and the number of visitors to school.
- The condition and safety of the school field.

*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 not been inspected before.**

## STANDARDS

**Only two pupils took the tests at the end of Key Stage 2 last year. The existing guidance from Ofsted is that test and examination data should be excluded from inspection reports and parents' summaries if the year group is 10 or fewer.**

In national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 last year, the percentage of pupils attaining Level 2 and above was below average in writing, well below average in reading and very low in mathematics. The targets the school has set for pupils' attainment in future years are appropriate and suitably challenging.

During the inspection, the standards attained by pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 were above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. It is too early at this stage in the school's development to identify any definite trend in pupils' performance. However, the inspection findings are that standards are much higher than those attained by pupils in the 2000 tests at the end of Key Stage 1 in reading, writing and mathematics. The inspection judgements are different from last year's test results because they are based on different groups of pupils. They also show the positive impact that very good teaching in Year 2 is having on pupils' standards. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards are below average in English, mathematics and science. There are only 18 pupils in Year 6 and their levels of attainment reflect the very wide range of ability and attainment of the pupils who have transferred to Bure Park since it opened. It does not reflect the school's very good implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, or the high quality teaching in Year 6.

Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 meet expectations in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, information and communication technology (ICT) and music. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards meet expectations in art and design, history, ICT and music. They are below expectations in design and technology and geography. Standards in physical education are above expectations in both key stages. Standards in Key Stage 1 meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus in religious education. In Key Stage 2, they are above the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	A strength of the school. Pupils like going to their new school and are very proud of it. They are enthusiastic and very interested in their lessons. They settle quickly to their work and concentrate hard.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils are very well behaved in lessons, in assemblies and around the school. They are very polite and courteous to each other and to adults.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils work well together in lessons and are mature and reliable. They treat resources and equipment very well. Older pupils do not always have enough opportunities to take responsibility for jobs around the school.
Attendance	Attendance is better than the national average for primary schools. Punctuality is good for most pupils.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Very good	Good

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

During the inspection 47 lessons were observed. No lessons were unsatisfactory. In fact, teaching is at least good in almost nine out of every ten lessons. It is very good, and occasionally excellent, in almost a third of lessons. This is high quality teaching and it is found throughout the school. Teaching is very good overall in the nursery, in Year 2 and in Year 6. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is good overall and has a significant impact on the attainment of pupils of all abilities. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good and helps them to make progress in reading and writing. Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan their lessons very well. They are very good at assessing how well pupils are doing and they set clear targets to help them make good progress.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school has worked very hard to plan a good all-round education for pupils that covers a wide range of subjects. The curriculum for literacy and numeracy is good. At present there are only limited opportunities to visit places of interest and to invite visitors to school to enrich the curriculum. There is a very good range of after school clubs. Children in the nursery enjoy a stimulating range of activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The school is very good at identifying and supporting pupils with special educational needs. Their work is well planned and they make good progress in English and mathematics. Learning support assistants provide very good levels of help.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The school makes sound provision for the few pupils who have English as an additional language. It does not yet record how it plans to provide support to improve their English.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Pupils are well aware of right and wrong and work very well together. They look after each other well and have a good understanding of their own and other cultures. The school celebrates pupils' achievements very well.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school looks after pupils well. It has very good methods for assessing what they do and using this information to plan work that is gradually more challenging.



## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very good leadership and is highly regarded by parents. He and the deputy headteacher form a strong partnership and they have worked very hard to set up and develop the work of this new school. They provide clear educational direction. All staff provide very good support. Subject co-ordinators work extremely hard to monitor standards of work in their subjects.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are knowledgeable, hardworking and enthusiastic. They support the school very well. They have not yet written a statutory policy for sex education.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has become very effective in a short time. It has introduced extremely good ways of monitoring teaching and recording pupils' progress.
The strategic use of resources	The school uses its budget well to provide a good standard of education.

There is a good and effective range of experience amongst the teaching staff. Resources are satisfactory for most subjects, and for English and ICT they are good. The school provides an attractive place for pupils to work, although the hall offers limited space for indoor games and whole-school events. The playing field is not well drained and potholes and tree stumps make it unsafe for pupils to use.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

**Seventeen parents attended the pre-inspection meeting and 117 parents returned their questionnaires**

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They think that the school has high expectations and that their children make good progress</li> <li>• They think that children's behaviour is good</li> <li>• They say that teaching is good</li> <li>• They are happy to contact the school with any questions or concerns and think the school works closely with them</li> <li>• They think that the school is well led and managed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A few parents are not satisfied with the school's arrangements for setting homework</li> <li>• A small number of parents do not think they are well informed about their children's progress</li> </ul>

The inspection team agrees with parents' positive comments. The homework that the school sets supports the work that pupils do in school very well and inspectors consider it is a reasonable amount of work for pupils to do. Homework projects for children in the nursery are excellent and are fully supported by parents. The team has looked at pupils' annual reports and considers them to be informative and to set realistic targets for pupils' progress.

## PART B: COMMENTARY

### HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

#### The school's results and achievements

1. The school opened a year ago with 54 pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 and 26 children in the nursery. Many of the pupils who started at Bure Park came from neighbouring schools outside the designated catchment area. As the headteacher commented, *'Many parents saw the opening of a new school as an opportunity to provide a fresh beginning for their own children who were experiencing either learning, behavioural or attendance difficulties in their former schools.'*
2. Since then, the number of pupils on roll has grown to 177 in the primary section and 52 children attending the nursery on a part-time basis. Many 'new' pupils have joined from other schools in different parts of the country as a result of relocation for their families. The level of attainment of pupils who have joined the school has been very diverse. Many of the older pupils in Key Stage 2 have specific learning needs and joined the school because their parents felt they were not receiving sufficient support in their previous schools. Other 'new' pupils have joined the school in the nursery or reception classes and are working their way through Key Stage 1.

#### Children under five

3. After several weeks in the reception class children are assessed to find out how much they know about language and books, their understanding of number, how well they tackle new learning and about their ability to mix and work with other children. Since the school opened just over a year ago, assessments show that most of the children starting at Bure Park attain results in line with those expected of children at this age, and some attain higher than this level.
4. Children under five make sound progress in the nursery. They benefit from very skilled, caring and supportive staff and from very well-planned lessons and activities. There are also 18 children in two mixed-age classes for reception children and Year 1 pupils. The school adopted this type of organisation because of the demand for places. Children under five in the reception classes make sound progress, although the school has not yet fully balanced the practical requirements of the Foundation Stage<sup>1</sup> for children under five with those of the National Curriculum for pupils in Year 1. The progress that children under five make means that almost all are on course to attain the Early Learning Goals<sup>2</sup> by the end of the reception year and some are on course to exceed those.

#### Key Stage 1

5. The results of the 2000 tests and assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 showed that the percentage of pupils reaching Level 2<sup>3</sup> and above was well below the national average in reading, below average in writing and mathematics and average in science. The percentage of pupils attaining Level 3 was above average in reading and writing, average in science and below average in mathematics. However, compared with results in similar

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<sup>1</sup> The Foundation Stage - This was introduced in September 2000 and forms a separate stage of education for children from the age of three until they reach the end of the reception year

<sup>2</sup> Early Learning Goals - These are targets for learning for children by the end of the reception year. They refer to personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy skills, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, and physical and creative development.

<sup>3</sup> Levels - by the end of Key Stage 1 pupils are expected to attain Level 2 in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Those who attain Level 3 are, therefore, attaining above nationally expected levels.

schools, standards at Bure Park were very low in reading and mathematics, and in writing and science they were well below average.

6. During the inspection standards in Years 1 and 2 were judged to be above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. Differences in the judgements made on standards during the inspection and those attained by pupils in the end of key stage tests are because they refer to different groups of pupils and there are differences in ability. The high attainment of pupils in Years 1 and 2 during the inspection also shows the positive impact of the very good teaching throughout the key stage, and particularly in Year 2.
7. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are making good progress. Many pupils in Year 1 are achieving standards in English and mathematics that one would expect to see in many Year 2 classes in other schools. For example, in mathematics pupils are familiar with the properties of a 'cube' and a 'cuboid' and some can name other three-dimensional shapes, such as 'spheres' and 'cones'. In English, they put their extensive vocabulary to good use when they think of unusual words, such as 'fleece' and 'flutter', when they are working on consonant blends. They read with enjoyment and already add extra expression to stories in response to question and exclamation marks. In Year 2, many pupils are already accomplished readers and have preferred authors. They write lengthy descriptions and stories in neat, legible handwriting with few spelling mistakes.

### **Key Stage 2**

8. Only two pupils took the 2000 tests at the end of Key Stage 2 in English, mathematics and science. It is not possible to make comparisons with national results or those in similar schools on the basis of such a small sample. During the inspection standards were judged to be below average at the end of Key Stage 2 in English, mathematics and science. The current level of attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 reflects the diverse range of ability and attainment of pupils who have transferred to Bure Park since it opened. Even so, the progress that pupils throughout Key Stage 2 have made since they joined the school is never less than satisfactory and in many cases it is good when compared with the standards they had attained when they joined Bure Park.
9. Their progress, and that of pupils throughout Key Stage 2, is a result of the school's very good implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and good teaching, especially the high quality teaching in Year 6. It is also the result of the way the school has very quickly introduced very good assessment procedures to find out what pupils know and then to set challenging targets for them to improve. Teachers monitor pupils' work carefully on a frequent basis to make sure they are making steady progress so that they can set work that builds logically and progressively from term to term and year to year. The school's hard work in compiling a portfolio of pupils' work, with standards agreed by all staff, is already proving to be beneficial.

### **Across the school**

10. Although it is a very early stage in the school's development, and most pupils have attended for less than a year, it is clear that the school is having a positive impact on pupils' progress in several distinct ways. Firstly, it is helping to improve the attainment of pupils who have joined Bure Park because of some dissatisfaction with their previous schools. Ninety-six per cent of parents agree that their children are making good progress at school. At the pre-inspection meeting and in their written comments, many parents remarked on what they saw as a big improvement in their children's standard of work and the progress they were making. This is partly because many pupils now enjoy school more than before and this is reflected in their desire to do well. Pupils who have

moved from other schools in Bicester because they have moved house, and from other parts of the country, have settled quickly into their new school and their progress has not suffered. All the pupils that inspectors spoke to say that they have been made to feel welcome and that they enjoy their work.

11. The school does not accept low standards of work or behaviour from pupils. It has not *'blamed'* the significant variations in pupils' previous attainment as a reason for poor achievement. Almost all pupils are doing the best they can and are keen to do well. The school is also very good at ensuring that pupils who join Bure Park at a very early stage in their schooling make steady progress. It makes good provision for children under five and has high expectations of what they can achieve. The school's targets for seven-year-old pupils in the 2001 end of key stage tests are significantly higher than the results achieved last year. Throughout the school the most important factors in pupils' progress and standards of work are the quality of teaching and teachers' expectations, and particularly so at the end of both key stages. There is every indication that pupils' results will go on improving with time.
12. The school's strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy are having a positive impact in both key stages. The structure of the strategies has helped teachers to focus on particular aspects of these subjects and the shared approach to planning has had a real impact on improving standards. Standards in literacy in Year 2 are above average. They are apparent when pupils read for pleasure, in the ways they tackle unfamiliar words, in the wide range of vocabulary they use in their writing, and in the accuracy of their grammar and spelling in their stories and descriptions. In Year 6, standards are below average overall. This judgement is more to do with the small number of pupils and their attainment in literacy when they joined the school than any failure on the school's part to teach the National Literacy Strategy effectively. It is clear that higher-attaining pupils achieve good standards in reading and writing. Lower-attaining pupils have made sound progress since they joined the school and in some areas, such as their reading, they have made good progress.
13. As the school develops, the opportunities for pupils to use their writing skills in other subjects increase. For example, in Year 2, pupils in science write about changing variables to alter the sound of their *'shakers'*. *'We can change the materials; we can change how hard we shake it; we can change what we put in it; we can change the size'*. Pupils in Year 6 hypothesise in science about separating salt from water. *'I think that you **can** separate salt from water, because if you think about it much of the water we drink today comes from the sea which has salt in it. So it's possible'*.
14. Standards in numeracy are above average in Year 2 and below average in Year 6. The National Numeracy Strategy is having a marked impact on improving pupils' mathematical vocabulary and speeding up their recall of number facts and times tables, although there are few opportunities for them to use their mathematical knowledge in other subjects. For example, there is only limited evidence of links between mathematics and information and communication technology in data handling. Pupils in both key stages cover a wide range of work covering all aspects of numeracy. Emphasis is quite rightly placed on increasing accuracy and an increasing level of difficulty. Mathematical topics are covered in sufficient depth and concepts and ideas are expanded well, showing good progress. Targets set by the teachers, and made explicit to the pupils, provide realistic, yet challenging, objectives for improvement. Pupils are encouraged to write in their mathematics books how they will achieve these targets and this motivates them still further to want to do well.
15. Standards in science follow the same pattern as in English and mathematics. They are above average in Year 2 and below average in Year 6. In Key Stage 1, pupils make good

progress in developing an accurate and extensive scientific vocabulary. In Year 1, they make good progress in recording their work, in making predictions and in classifying materials. In Key Stage 2, pupils cover a wide range of topics, including 'forces', 'sound', 'light' and 'electricity', although in one or two topics there is not sufficient depth to their work. Opportunities for developing pupils' investigative skills are good. They make good progress in predicting what will happen, writing hypotheses and analysing results.

16. In art and design, history and music at both key stages, pupils make sound progress and attain expected levels. Standards are above expectations at both key stages in physical education. In Key Stage 1, pupils attain expected levels in design and technology and geography, but pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 do not achieve expected levels in either subject. In information and communication technology (ICT), pupils make sound progress and attain expected standards. Many pupils have considerable experience of ICT at home. At present ICT is not consistently planned to support other subjects, for example in literacy and numeracy. Standards in Key Stage 1 meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus in religious education. In Key Stage 2, they are above the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus.
17. The progress made by the majority of pupils with special educational needs is good at both key stages. Some pupils make very good progress and require progressively less support because they are attaining in line with their classmates. Pupils with special educational needs are identified early in their school careers and the school is very proficient at supporting them for as long as it is needed. Pupils' individual education plans contain precise, specific targets for improvement in literacy, numeracy and, sometimes, behaviour. The school's action plans for supporting pupils with challenging behaviour are exemplary and are made known to teachers, pupils and their parents. Overall provision for pupils with special educational needs is very well organised by the special educational needs co-ordinator. The support provided by learning support assistants in classrooms and in small withdrawal groups is very good. Additional support for pupils on Stages 2 and 3 of the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice<sup>4</sup> is targeted precisely at their specific needs. Learning support assistants are well trained and work well with these pupils. However, some pupils are withdrawn for additional support during lessons, such as physical education or art. Although the school is aware of this, pupils are regularly missing opportunities in other important subjects.
18. Pupils with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress overall. There are hardly any pupils who are at an early stage of learning English. Most of the pupils are already in Key Stage 2 and have transferred to Bure Park from other schools in the area. The predominant language is Punjabi. Many of these pupils make the same rate of progress in subjects as other pupils in their classes. One or two have been identified as having special educational needs, as well as needing support to develop their spoken English, and this is provided in small groups. As yet the school does not record how it provides specific support for those pupils identified with special educational needs or with English as an additional language to ensure that they are fully included in the school's overall provision.
19. Currently the school does not have any specific procedures for identifying gifted and talented pupils, nor does it plan any separate provision for them. The school plans work well for pupils of differing ability, including higher-attaining pupils, but it does not include opportunities for pupils who might show outstanding ability in areas other than the 'traditional' range of primary subjects. During the inspection there was no apparent

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<sup>4</sup> [Code of Practice – this gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act. Stages of special educational needs range from Stage 1, when limited additional support is provided for pupils entirely from within the school, to Stage 5, which ensures that a pupil has a statement outlining his or her needs and shows what additional and specific support that pupil will receive. Stages 3, 4 and 5 involve external specialists as well as staff within the school.](#)

difference in the attainment of boys and girls. It is too early in the school's development to identify any discernible trend in the relative attainment of girls and boys in national tests.

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

20. Pupils' very good attitudes to work and to school contribute positively to their learning and personal development. In nearly eight out of ten lessons observed, pupils' attitudes to work are very good. They work hard and pay attention in lessons. They treat school resources with care. Pupils enjoy coming to school, including some whose attendance at their previous schools caused concern. In their pre-inspection questionnaires, 100 per cent of parents who replied said that their children like coming to school. Inspection evidence supports these very favourable comments.
21. Behaviour is very good. Pupils are polite to adults and each other and willingly talk about their work and life in school. There is a very calm atmosphere in classrooms, corridors and around the school. This reflects the teachers' high expectations of good behaviour and encourages pupils to recognise the impact of their actions on others. Ninety-five per cent of parents in their pre-inspection questionnaires agree that behaviour in school is good. There is no evidence of bullying, sexism or racism. There have been no exclusions since the school opened.
22. Pupils' personal development is good overall, although the school recognises that there are further opportunities it could provide to extend pupils' responsibilities, for example forming a school council. Ninety-two per cent of parents who responded feel that the school helps their children to become mature and responsible. All pupils are eager to accept responsibility and display initiative; for example, pupils in Year 6 have a range of duties as monitors, and other pupils check the safety of physical education equipment. In a class of reception and Year 1 pupils, a pupil shut the classroom door during '*circle time*' when noise from outside was spoiling other pupils' concentration. Class teachers in other year groups ensure that all pupils share duties appropriate to their age. These include taking registers to the office and preparing the classroom resources for lessons, for example preparing books and paint brushes.
23. Pupils take part in a number of fund raising activities for charities. During the inspection many pupils talked about the recent Indian earthquake and asked what they could do to help. In an assembly, the teacher discussed this disaster and the efforts of the international rescue teams. Good international links with overseas schools are developing by e-mail and surface mail.
24. Attendance is good. It is better than the national average for primary schools. Most of the absence is due to ill health. Unauthorised absence is low. There are a small number of pupils who return to their family's country of origin for extended periods. The school discourages this, pointing out the loss of important education opportunities. Punctuality remains a challenge for a very small number of pupils. However, few arrive after the registers close.

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

25. The quality of teaching promotes good and often very good standards. Teaching is never less than satisfactory. In fact, teaching is at least good in almost nine out of every ten lessons. It is very good, and occasionally excellent, in almost a third of lessons. This is high quality teaching that is found throughout the school. Teaching is very good overall in the nursery, in Year 2 and in Year 6. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is good in both key stages and has a significant impact on the attainment of pupils of all abilities.

Teachers are particularly good at using a variety of ways to involve pupils in the lesson introduction and in their expressive reading of the text to capture pupils' imaginations. Ninety-five per cent of parents in their pre-inspection questionnaires thought that teaching was good. Teachers work very hard and are committed to the success of Bure Park. They have very quickly established a good rapport and work well as a *'team'*.

26. Teachers' very good planning is one reason for the high quality of teaching overall. Teachers plan very carefully to ensure that their lessons are well matched to pupils' abilities. Work is purposeful; it challenges pupils and keeps them fully occupied. Teachers make sure that a good range of resources are available for activities, that the lesson builds well on what pupils already know and that they acquire knowledge they did not have before. Teachers' medium-term planning is very thorough and forms a strong basis for short-term activities. Planning in literacy and numeracy has benefited from a shared approach. Planning in parallel classes with the same age pupils provides equal access to subjects for pupils. In the best lessons, the *'learning intention'* is made clear to pupils and is often written on the board and occasionally referred to as the lesson progresses. This helps to focus the main points of the lesson in order to help pupils understand; it helps to establish what resources will be needed and it helps the teacher to find out whether pupils have learned what was planned at the beginning of the lesson.
27. Teachers use *'on-going assessments'* very effectively to find out what pupils know. In their lesson introductions they are very good at finding out what pupils have learned from previous lessons. During the lesson they might stop to revise what has been done and to make further assessments of what pupils understand. They might then use that information to revise a point that pupils have not understood or move the lesson on at a faster pace knowing that pupils understand.
28. Teachers' very good use of questioning forms a very important feature of their *'on-going assessments'*. Lessons invariably start with a brisk question and answer session in which teachers pose searching questions to find out what pupils know. For example, in a very good numeracy lesson with young pupils the teacher used the verse, *'Ten Naughty Monkeys'* to actively involve them and base questions and answers on it. For example, *'I'm thinking of naughty monkeys. How many are there now?'* As one *'naughty monkey'* fell over the teacher asked, *'How many are left now? Double that number and tell me what your answer is.'* Her rapid questioning and the involvement of all pupils ensured that the pace of the lesson was brisk and that all pupils were interested and wanted to contribute.
29. Teachers' *'on-going assessments'* form an important part of the main part of the lesson. For instance, in a very good numeracy lesson the teacher constantly questioned to find out whether pupils understood the difference between *'analogue'* and *'digital'* clocks. The questioning started with a simple, *'Who knows the difference?'* but as the lesson progressed the questions became much more searching and specific, such as, *'If this clock says quarter to four what does this one say?'* Extra support was then given to pupils whose answers demonstrated that they found difficulty in understanding. In a very good literacy lesson the teacher's questioning was not only brisk and searching, but often a pupil's answer was met with another question. For instance, *'What did the tiger want?'* *'Did he manage it?'* *'What was he like?'* *'Fierce?'* *'How do we know he's fierce?'* As an added refinement to the assessment process the teacher occasionally encouraged the pupils in pairs to discuss answers. In an excellent literacy lesson, the teacher used the well-planned plenary session to question pupils to revise and confirm their understanding of the work they had been doing. *'When might we use **consequently** in a sentence?'* *'Just have a guess and we can put a sentence together.'* *'Is it a cause or a result?'* In foundation subjects, teachers' interventions to challenge with questions such as, *'How do you think you could?'* or *'Do you think that..?'* make pupils think very carefully about the

assessment of their own work. Their very good use of praise goes hand-in-hand with this on-going assessment. *'Excellent!'* *'Well done.'* *'Spot on!'* *'You have worked really hard'*, are all frequently used to reward pupils and to inspire them to greater efforts.

30. In lessons where teaching is satisfactory, but not as effective, there are times when the lesson pace drops and the element of urgency in question and answer sessions is often missing. In those lessons there are fewer demands on pupils to take part and they are able to *'relax'* knowing that they can avoid answering if they wish.
31. Teachers' management skills are usually very good. They use learning support assistants well to carefully support planned activities. Teachers deploy them very effectively to provide help where they are most needed; for example, sitting next to a pupil who finds it difficult to maintain concentration during an oral session. The ways in which they are meant to support individual pupils and small groups are carefully identified in their plans. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour very well. They insist on correct procedures, such as not calling out and not talking when others are talking. They use sand-timers to add urgency to lessons and to impose visible time limits on pupils. Some teachers send a pupil around the class with a token to remind them that there are two minutes left to complete their work. Other teachers very effectively play *'quiet music'* for a minute or so during *'tidy up'* time to settle pupils for the plenary session.
32. Teachers' marking is satisfactory overall. The best examples of marking reflect the support that teachers provide in their verbal comments to pupils during lessons. These comments are often humorous, such as, *'Well done! You have captured the tone of a news reporter brilliantly. Do I see a journalist in the making here?'* and always refer specifically to the content. Occasionally too much emphasis is placed on marking inappropriate aspects of pupils' work, for example correcting spelling and grammar in a written science hypothesis, rather than concentrating on the science content of the work.
33. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs in classes and in small withdrawal groups is good, and sometimes very good. It is effective because of the variety of activities that reinforce and extend pupils' knowledge and understanding; for example, using board games to motivate pupils to identify and use phonics. Learning is made fun and pupils enjoy the element of *'winning'*. It is also effective because the activities are closely linked to targets for improvement in pupils' individual education plans. Regular and accurate assessments are used well to plan work that matches their needs. Despite the effectiveness of the school's arrangements for teaching pupils with special educational needs, there are occasions when pupils are withdrawn from other lessons for additional support. This means that they are not included in the school's full curriculum. The teaching of pupils with English as an additional language is sound. Most of these pupils do not require additional support and make progress that is comparable to that of their classmates. Some require additional support in class and this is provided through teachers' carefully planned work for different levels of ability. One or two require specific support and this is provided by learning support assistants who concentrate on specific weaknesses in their language.
34. The school's provision for homework is good and supports the work pupils have done in school. Fifteen per cent of parents in their questionnaires indicated that they did not think their children receive the right amount of homework. However, some felt there was too much homework, while others thought that there was too little. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting said that they knew the school's procedures for setting homework and knew what the school expects them to do to help and supervise. They felt that the school's *'reading diaries'* and *'homework diaries'* provide good contact and dialogue between the school and home. Homework set in both key stages was seen to support work started in school. For instance, pupils in Year 6 were asked to read a certain



number of pages from their reading books and identify 'connectives' as a follow up to their work in class. Pupils frequently use their computers at home to find information about their topics. Children in the nursery have 'topics' to complete at home with their parents.

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

35. The school has worked very hard in a short time to offer a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum to all pupils. It meets the statutory requirements laid out in the National Curriculum for all subjects, with the exception of sex education. It has been a decision of the governing body that sex education should not be taught until they have drawn up a policy. They have yet to do this. The curriculum for religious education meets the statutory requirements laid out in the locally agreed syllabus.
36. In the short time that it has been open the school has made great strides in developing a curriculum appropriate for all pupils. Whilst not all subject policies are in place, teachers have worked extremely hard to develop planning documents for each subject. One minor weakness during the inspection was the arrangements made for the mixed-age reception and Year 1 classes. Teachers' planning in these classes is thorough and pertinent for each age group. However, the current day-to-day organisation for these groups of pupils leads to some difficulties in allowing the practical elements of the Early Years' curriculum to be delivered in the best possible way. The school has made some provision for this by using learning support assistants, but this facility does not continue for the whole school day. Pupils with special educational needs are not always included in the full range of subjects when they are withdrawn for additional support.
37. The dedication and hard work that teachers have given to curriculum planning is evident in the good lessons that their pupils receive. Their termly plans are being used to form the basis of detailed schemes of work in each subject enabling skills and concepts to be taught in an even and systematic way. There is a slight imbalance in the time allocated to some subjects. Whilst classes teach all the curriculum subjects, too little time is currently planned for science, music and geography at Key Stage 2. The recently introduced 'Curriculum 2000' document now provides clearer guidelines for the school to follow in planning foundation subjects. The topic approach that the school has adopted means that areas of study are blocked into units of work. The analysis of pupils' work in one or two classes suggests that when these subjects are taught, the time allocation does not allow for sufficient depth of study. Also there are pockets of time at the beginning and end of the morning sessions where pupils are not always engaged in purposeful tasks.
38. High priority has been given to the teaching of literacy and numeracy and the school has implemented the National Literacy and National Numeracy Strategies effectively. Thorough medium-term and short-term plans enable teachers to plan work in an appropriate sequence that builds systematically on pupils' previous learning. Good use is made of literacy skills to support other areas of the curriculum. For example, in geography pupils were using the skills of note taking to gain information from a television programme about services in different settlements. They were later using these notes to make comparisons between the four places. Although numeracy skills are used to support some areas of the curriculum, these links are less well developed than those in literacy. In the better examples, pupils use rulers to measure the elasticity of materials in science work, whilst in geography they draw graphs and use spreadsheets to record the weather.
39. The provision for ICT is good. The well-equipped computer suite enables a whole class to gain access to the same computer software at the same time, although there is potential to increase pupils' access to this resource. The use made of information

technology to contribute to other areas of the curriculum, and in particular numeracy, literacy and science, is less well developed. A particularly good example of the use of technology in literacy and history is with pupils in Year 6 who used a publishing programme to produce a newspaper focusing on an aspect of their work on 'Ancient Greece'. Pupils have successfully written a text and combined their writing with pictures from a graphics programme in the style of a modern newspaper.

40. The school's provision for pupils to develop socially is sound, and for their cultural development provision is good. The local education authority's programme for the development of pupils' personal, social and health education has been adopted, but not yet fully implemented. However, the school has introduced a period for discussion called '*circle time*' which allows pupils the opportunity to discuss a wide range of issues, including drug awareness in Year 6. Opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively are frequent within lessons although, as yet, there are only limited opportunities for older pupils to take responsibilities and develop independence throughout the school.
41. A wide range of after-school clubs is available to pupils. These include football, minibeast study, games, computers, the school newspaper and craft clubs. The curriculum is supported by a limited number of visits to places of interest. Pupils in Year 4 have visited the Roald Dahl Museum and Roman Museum as part of their topic work and pupils in Year 2 have visited the Botanical Gardens. A few visitors to the school have shared their experiences of their differing cultures. For example, the recent visit of an Islamic parent allowed pupils to ask questions and handle artefacts from the Muslim faith and pupils in Year 5 enjoyed a '*Traditional Greek*' day. One of the school's aims is to develop the pupils' international awareness and this has begun in the form of links with schools in other countries. Visiting teachers from Latvia and Dublin have begun to correspond with pupils using e-mail facilities. Pupils are exposed to a wide variety of texts to support the teaching of literacy which offer a multi-cultural perspective. Provision for pupils to appreciate their own culture through the study of the local environment is sound. Good links exist between local and partnership schools.
42. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. Assemblies provide a good focal point and various themes and stories from a range of cultures adequately support time for reflection. The school meets statutory requirements for collective worship. Pupils appreciate each other's personal achievements during assemblies. Credit points for behaviour and work are accumulated and a series of awards are presented. Pupils also celebrate each other's perseverance, as in the assembly where pupils who had been learning musical instruments gave a short performance and answered questions about the skill they had learned. Literacy and religious education lessons also provide a good occasion for promoting pupils' spiritual and creative development.
43. The school's provision for moral development is very good. It provides a very strong moral code of behaviour throughout. Pupils are well mannered and always polite. They co-operate with each other and learn to take turns. The strong behaviour policy sets the tone and ethos of the school. Staff are very good role models and deal with incidents in a calm and fair manner. Pupils are well aware of the differences between right and wrong. Their behaviour in lessons is very good, and frequently outstanding.

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

44. The school has adopted a very good policy for finding out about what pupils can do. Teachers keep detailed records of pupils' academic and personal achievements in individual portfolios. The methods for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are strengths of the school. The school's systems for identifying pupils with special educational needs are very good. Pupils are identified as early as possible and their particular learning needs are precisely targeted in class lessons and in small groups. The way in which the school identifies behavioural difficulties and draws up an action plan to address them is outstanding.
45. A sample of work in literacy, numeracy, science and ICT for each pupil is taken on a termly basis and from this teachers assess what National Curriculum level the pupils have achieved. They also use this information to plan future work. The written comments made by the teachers about each piece of work are very detailed and indicate that they know their pupils very well. A very good example of recording and annotating pupils' achievements was in the nursery. The children were asked to take a soft toy to the outdoor area to *'show them around'* whilst the learning support assistant was making perceptive jottings about their physical and social capabilities. For example, *'He struggled with this activity. He reluctantly walked round the path with his bear. The rest of the group showed their 'animals' the outdoor area well. They walked and talked and played with their animals on their tricycles.'* These *'jottings'* were then collated and added to the children's individual portfolios.
46. The school uses National Curriculum tests in Years 3, 4 and 5 to monitor the progress that pupils are making from year to year. Targets are set for pupils to achieve and are recorded on individual and year-group tracking sheets. This means that teachers are predicting the level they think that pupils will achieve during the academic year in which they are responsible for them. National Curriculum record sheets are also used to record pupils' attainment in literacy, numeracy, science, information and communication technology, history and geography. Teachers also analyse the results from statutory and non-statutory tests to see whether additional emphasis should be placed on teaching aspects which pupils find difficult to understand. For example, an analysis of English tests by the subject co-ordinator revealed that there was a whole-school problem with pupils' ability to use *'inferencing'* in stories to establish their meaning. This has now become a school target and is referred to in most literacy lessons.
47. Teachers are very good at assessing what their pupils know. They use formal and informal ways of evaluating the things that pupils can do. They use questions well at the beginning of lessons to assess previous learning. At the end of a lesson they find out what pupils have learnt. Plans are adjusted and targets are set according to the outcomes of these assessments. Each class has a particular target for literacy, numeracy and sometimes science, which it works at together to achieve. Pupils also have individual targets based on academic and personal achievement. A particularly good example of how teachers highlight areas for development can be found in the *'First of the Month'* writing book. At the beginning of each month all pupils write freely in their books, focusing on their targets. These targets are then reviewed and new ones set if necessary. The teacher's comments about the pupils' writing are detailed. They give each aspect of work a level, highlight the strengths and weakness and provide the next targets for learning.
48. There are satisfactory procedures for the protection of children and for their health and safety. Staff know the pupils well and their well-being is seen as a priority. The governors recognise the need to develop the health and safety policy and to increase first-aid training as numbers of staff and pupils increase. There are sound procedures to

treat and record accidents and to inform parents of any concerns. Pupils who are not well wait for their parents or guardians in the school office, but there is no bed for them to rest on.

49. The headteacher is the designated member of staff for child protection. He is scheduled to attend an advanced training course in April. The school follows the guidelines published by the area committee. All staff take part in some training in health, safety and child protection when they join the school. The training is satisfactory, but is not recorded and does not include sufficient detail.
50. There are very good procedures to monitor and promote good behaviour and support the calm atmosphere in school. Parents and pupils are confident that the school will take quick and effective action if any bullying occurs. The school's code of behaviour gives guidelines for pupils and their parents. Staff have guidelines on the use of awards and sanctions, and school rules are clearly displayed in classrooms. Pupils receive points for good behaviour, effort and achievement. They maintain their own records and receive certificates reflecting their points score. Pupils greatly value these certificates.
51. There is only a limited range of opportunities for pupils to take responsibility around the school. For example, the monitor system is not fully developed and there is no system of paired readers or playground friends. The narrow range of visits outside school and the small number of visitors to school so far restrict opportunities for pupils' personal development.
52. Morning and afternoon registration is quiet and orderly, except for a polite response to the teacher. It meets legal requirements. In the nursery, children follow the teacher's lead and count the number present to help complete the register. This is a good example of using registration time to advance learning. Administrative and teaching staff work closely with the headteacher to ensure that any attendance or punctuality concerns are resolved swiftly. The school writes to parents who cannot be contacted by telephone and contacts the education social worker when necessary.

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

53. The school decided that one of its first priorities was to work closely with parents and the community. It has been very successful. Many pupils have come from other schools because their parents have relocated, or because there was some dissatisfaction with their previous schools. The parents comment very favourably on their children's progress and happiness since joining Bure Park. Inspection evidence, including pupils' enthusiasm for the school, supports this view. In their pre-inspection questionnaires, 99 per cent of parents said that they feel happy approaching the school with any questions or problems. Ninety-four per cent agree that the school works closely with parents.
54. The school places a high priority on the quality of information that parents receive. The home-school agreement sets out in clear terms what is expected from parents and pupils. It also states the school's commitment to support pupils and to keep parents informed. There are good quality newsletters, coded blue, and *'this and that'* letters, coded yellow, for social matters. The school prospectus meets statutory requirements. There is no governors' annual report to parents as the school has not been open for a full academic year.
55. Teachers distribute carefully prepared letters for each key stage informing parents about curriculum and topic matters. The letter to parents of children in the nursery is excellent, clearly explaining how children learn through play. It also explains the new *'Early Learning Goals'* in clear, user-friendly language. These letters also give advice to parents

about the ways they can help their children to learn at home. Parents value the two formal meetings each year to discuss their children's progress. During the parents' meeting many parents commented on the good information contained in annual reports and the pupils' clear targets for improvement. Inspection evidence supports their views.

56. The school values the voluntary help from many parents in classrooms. Parents at home support the work of the school by completing the pupils' reading and homework diaries. Many parents attend information meetings and there is a good co-operative ethos aimed at supporting pupils' progress. There is a strong parent-teacher support group. The '*Bure Park Buddies*' group was founded very soon after the school opened, initially to support adults in a new environment. It has grown into a successful fund-raising organisation with a wide range of activities.

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

57. The leadership and management of the school are very good and are strengths of the school. The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide very good, strong, effective leadership and they are well supported by all staff. Together they provide clear educational direction for the work of the school. A firm vision for the future has been fully established in a short time. Almost all parents in their pre-inspection questionnaires agree that the school is well led and managed. A positive school ethos and a strong sense of purpose have been fully established and are shared by all members of the school community. The school has clear and appropriate aims, which are reflected in its daily life as well as being evident in documentation and development priorities.
58. Since the school opened a year ago, the headteacher has been successful in appointing an effective team of teachers who are enthusiastic and very hard working. There is a whole-school approach to teaching and learning that is shared by all staff and is effective in raising teachers' expectations of what their pupils can achieve. The school has very good ways of finding out what pupils have learned and use this to plan the next stages of work. Pupils with special educational needs are identified early. They receive good support and make good progress.
59. The headteacher and staff have been successful in making Bure Park a school that children enjoy coming to. Children respond very well, making the most of every lesson and opportunity by being keen learners with very good behaviour throughout the day. Through the open approach of the headteacher, parents are always welcome and they, in turn, fully support the school's work. A great deal has been achieved in the very short time that the school has been open. There is a shared commitment by all to become successful in all areas of development.
60. The involvement of the governing body is good. Governors are knowledgeable and enthusiastic and ably support the school. They have made good use of their experience of management outside the world of education in personnel, finance, communication and management decisions. They have established an effective committee structure to oversee the work and life of the school. Meetings are well structured with agendas and minutes. They take a keen interest in the work of the school and their understanding of their roles and responsibilities is developing well. They are well informed about the work of the school, recognising areas of strength and prioritising areas to be developed or improved. They have not yet written a policy for sex education. This is a statutory requirement and its omission is a weakness affecting the delivery of the science curriculum and the important personal and social education programme.
61. The headteacher and governing body together have a clear strategic view of the school as expressed in the good school improvement plan. It contains suitable priorities for a

new school, all linked closely to providing a successful education for all its pupils. All items are costed and have a completion date and criteria for judging success. There is an ongoing review of the targets and all staff are aware of what is intended and the extent of everyone's responsibilities.

62. There is a good programme for monitoring teaching. It involves the headteacher, deputy headteacher and all teachers with a subject co-ordinator role. The headteacher and deputy headteacher monitor the teaching and learning through direct observation, a careful study of the curriculum planning, work sampling and discussions with the children. The deputy headteacher has recently started to monitor the work of learning support assistants. Monitoring by the governing body representatives has been identified for development. However, governors are well briefed on literacy, numeracy, special educational needs and the Foundation Stage. The subject co-ordinators are given time to monitor teachers' plans and the pupils' work and have undertaken some monitoring of the teaching, particularly in literacy and numeracy. The role of subject co-ordinators has developed well in a short time. As staff have been appointed to the school they have taken responsibility for managing curriculum areas. The school recognises that further development is important to establish effective leadership and support for the curriculum. The subject co-ordinators play an important part in the development of their subjects. They have written good planning documentation, but some subject policies are still in draft form.
63. The management of special educational needs is very good. Pupils' individual education plans are very precise with clear targets that can be assessed to see whether progress has been made. The co-ordinator is responsible for the effective deployment of learning support assistants. They have a significant impact on pupils' progress. The governor for special educational needs is very involved in special educational needs provision and gives very good support to the school. She and the co-ordinator meet regularly to discuss provision and she has made a short presentation to the governing body about special educational needs provision in school. As yet the school does not record how it intends to ensure that all pupils have access to a full curriculum.
64. The school is making the best possible use of all available resources to achieve the good standards of progress seen and the good provision of high quality teaching. The governing body is well prepared to set the budget for 2002, despite the fact that there are no previous spending patterns or data to provide guidance. The finance committee is ably chaired and the support and guidance given by the local education authority are invaluable. The governors are aware of the need to evaluate value for money and look to informal feedback, as well as their own observations, to monitor and evaluate the school's work. The governing body is fully conversant with '*best value*' principles.
65. The governors supervise finances effectively. They receive up to date financial information from the school's computerised systems. The school receives grants under the standards fund for staff training. These are used well for the purpose intended and staff appreciate the positive impact they have on their teaching and pupils' learning. Day-to-day financial control and administration are very good. The administrator is very able and efficient and provides a most welcoming first contact with the school.
66. Overall the provision of staff, accommodation and learning resources is satisfactory and contributes positively to pupils' academic progress and personal development. There is a good match of teachers to the needs of the curriculum. There are a generous number of learning and classroom support staff who work closely with class teachers. The governing body established a priority to engage staff who would make good '*team members*'. This policy is successful and there is an ethos of hard work and mutual support. The majority of teaching staff have responsibilities as subject co-ordinators.

They play a significant part in raising pupils' attainment. Appraisal of the headteacher and deputy headteacher is in place. Both have targets to move the school forward. The two newly qualified teachers receive appropriate mentoring and non-contact time to aid their professional development. The headteacher conducts an induction course for all new teachers. This process requires additional detail in the areas of pupils' welfare and child protection. Administration staff provide exemplary support for staff and parents.

67. The accommodation is satisfactory overall. The building is attractive and clean, classroom sizes are adequate and specialist rooms, such as the ICT suite, provide generous accommodation. Effective use is made of the work areas outside classrooms, for example, for the withdrawal of pupils with special educational needs. However, these areas are infrequently used for other purposes and during the inspection the library was not used for personal research. The size of the hall limits the number of pupils who are able to join in team games, and it is not big enough for parents to be able to attend whole-school events such as concerts or assemblies. The community has donated a very attractive adventure play area and the school has a wild life area, which is used for science lessons.
68. Some areas of the external accommodation are unsatisfactory. There is ineffective drainage for the playing field. There are potholes in the playing field area. An attractive copse of standing trees provides shelter and a division at the end of the playing field area, but it is unsafe because of a number of tree stumps. These faults limit pupils' access to the field and the school has been advised not to accept the grounds until the developers correct them. There are two good quality hard surface playgrounds with good marking for games. However, they are on two levels that are divided by a flight of steps. The school is concerned about the risk of pupils falling down these steps and is considering measures to minimise this.
69. Overall, resources for teaching are satisfactory. Resources in the Foundation Stage are good in classrooms and for outside play and development. For the core subjects of mathematics and science they are good. Resources for English are very good, but the content and use of the library is only satisfactory. The range of modern equipment in the information technology suite is very good. Resources for other subjects are satisfactory.
70. Taking into account the length of time the school has been open, the children's attainment on entry, the good quality of teaching provided, the good progress of the pupils and their attainment at the end of Key Stage 1, the school's hard work to offer a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum to all pupils and the quality of leadership, the school provides good value for money.

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

71. In order to build on the hard work that the school has done in a very short time and to improve the quality of education further the governors, headteacher and staff should:

**(1) ensure that planned subject policies and schemes of work are put in place as soon as possible so that teachers have detailed guidance for their planning;**

**(paragraphs 30, 35, 60, 121, 125, 128, 129, 147, 151, 155 of the main report)**

**(2) review the ways in which the school ensures equal access to a full range of activities by:**

- a. ensuring that grouping and teaching arrangements, such as the withdrawal of pupils with special educational needs and those who have additional music tuition, do not deny them equality of access and opportunity to a full curriculum;
- b. ensuring that the school documents the specific provision it provides for pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language;
- c. ensuring that all classes plan for pupils to enjoy a full range of subjects, such as music;

**(paragraphs 17, 18, 33, 36, 37, 63, 139, 146, 147 of the main report)**

**(3) review the opportunities for pupils to take on additional responsibility by:**

for example, setting up a school council, extending the monitor system, and encouraging independent library research time that would help to develop pupils' communication and decision making skills;

**(paragraphs 22, 40, 51, 67, 90, 134 of the main report)**

**(4) review the arrangements for making visits out of school to places of interest and inviting visitors to school in order to enrich the curriculum;**

**(paragraphs 41, 51, 118, 135 of the main report)**

**(5) improve the condition and safety of the school field in order that it can be used for games and playtimes.**

**(paragraph 68, 151 of the main report)**



## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	47
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	31

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
9	23	53	15	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	25	177
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		7

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	20

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	8

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	38
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	2.7
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	12	11	23

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	8	10	9
	Girls	8	11	9
	Total	16	21	18
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	69	90	77
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	10	10	10
	Girls	11	10	11
	Total	21	20	21
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	90	86	90
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	6
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	126
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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

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

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

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

### **Teachers and classes**

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20
Average class size	25

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	70

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	33

Number of pupils per FTE adult	12
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	1999 / 2000
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	£
Total income	118,439
Total expenditure	72,159
Expenditure per pupil	N/A
Balance brought forward from previous year	N/A
Balance carried forward to next year	46,280

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 66%

Number of questionnaires sent out	177
Number of questionnaires returned	117

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	63	37	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	50	46	1	1	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	47	48	3	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	37	39	12	3	9
The teaching is good.	57	38	1	1	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	44	44	10	0	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	74	25	1	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	63	30	3	1	3
The school works closely with parents.	50	44	5	1	0
The school is well led and managed.	62	33	0	1	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	50	42	4	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	32	46	5	5	12

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**

72. The quality of education for children under five is good and provides them with a good grounding for the next stage of their education. Children under five are taught in the nursery and in two mixed-age classes in the school. They start in the nursery at the beginning of the term after their fourth birthday on a part-time basis and transfer to one of the reception / Year 1 classes in the term after their fifth birthday.
73. The induction into the nursery and the reception classes is a very good feature of Bure Park. Parents and children are very well prepared for starting school. Meetings and visits to the nursery and school are well organised and purposeful. The nursery staff begin to build very good relationships with the children and parents during this time. Consequently, children and parents have the confidence to come and begin the home-school partnership necessary for successful learning. An excellent feature of the nursery is the information prepared for parents about the term's topic. It carefully explains to them the focus to be covered in each area of learning, some of the activities to be offered and how they can prepare and extend the children's learning at home.
74. The nursery and reception teachers, and the nursery nurse and learning support assistant, work as a caring, thoughtful team. They share expertise and resources. There has been little overall monitoring so far of the effectiveness of the Foundation Stage as a whole. There is no written policy for this stage, although the co-ordinator for the Foundation Stage has already begun to address this weakness.
75. The curriculum offered is very good. It is broad and balanced, comprehensively covering all areas of learning in the nursery. In the reception/Year 1 classes, the curriculum is based firmly on the Early Learning Goals, but also includes parts of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Baseline tests are carried out on children within the first seven weeks of starting in the reception classes. They show that children have a wide range of abilities, but generally their attainment is in line with that expected when they enter school and for some it is above. Overall, children make sound progress, while those with special educational needs and those with English an additional language make good progress. All children benefit from the caring, supportive environment and the well thought-out, structured learning opportunities provided. All children make very good progress in their personal, social and emotional development and they are taught the necessary skills and attitudes for learning. Most children are on course to reach the early learning goals. Some children will exceed them, especially in speaking and listening and in their personal, social and emotional development by the end of Foundation Stage.

**Personal, social and emotional development**

76. Children make very good progress in personal and social development, particularly in the nursery. Nearly all are on course to attain at the level expected nationally by the end of the reception year and many will exceed that level. Children are always well behaved, learn to take turns and share resources. Through the constant encouragement and caring support given by the teachers, children settle quickly into the new environment of school life. They have a positive attitude to school and want to take part in the exciting range of activities and learning. They work well as part of a group and independently. The staff establish a supportive, caring ethos and the setting up of routines helps to promote independence. During the nursery session children choose when they wish to take their snack and decide what they would like to eat and drink. They pour drinks from a jug into a beaker and return the empty mugs to the sink. They chatter away quietly so

as not to disturb the other children at work on various tasks. They are most considerate. Children have a growing awareness of the difference between right and wrong. In the reception classes, children form an orderly queue and remember their table manners at lunchtime. They are always polite and play well together in the playground. The teaching and learning programme devised for personal and social development is very good in the nursery and the reception classes. All staff involved with the Foundation Stage provide good role models and the necessary support for the children to grow in confidence. They really enjoy teaching this age group and a close bond is developed. Staff and children share fun, humour, worries and concerns with each other.

### **Communication, Language and Literacy**

77. Children are on course to attain the expected standards by the end of the reception year and some will exceed them. In all classes they listen well and with increasing understanding, and talk confidently in formal and informal situations; for example, children fluently re-tell events in their lives. They take note of the individual or group they are talking to, including the teacher, nursery nurse, support assistant, visitors to the school or other children and respond appropriately. Children speak clearly and have a developing vocabulary. Children listen attentively and enjoy story time. Staff carefully intervene in children's imaginative play, particularly in the nursery, to ensure that children use language correctly. Children were seen pretending to be 'Goldilocks' in the 'Three Bears' house, using language based on the story, for example 'too hot, too soft'. Children recognise and write their own names. In the nursery, children recognise their name and remove it from the 'snacktime' chart once they have finished their fruit and drink. In the reception classes they must record when they are out of the class going to the toilets.
78. They are taught the skills necessary for reading in a structured way in the reception / Year 1 classes. Parts of the literacy hour strategy are followed, although the length of time the children sit is too long and their attention wanders. Children know about authors, titles and illustrators and what appears on front and back covers, and enjoy using the technical language of literature. Many are beginning to form upper and lower case letters with a reasonable degree of accuracy. Most communicate meaning in pictures, letters and some words. Children with special educational needs are well supported. The use of computers and tape recorders encourages them to enjoy writing and reading. Staff provide a wide range of practical and purposeful activities that encourage children to express their ideas and observations; for example, they look at items brought in by other children and ask questions to find out more such as, 'How long have you had your Barbie radio?' The good range of well-planned and imaginative activities helps children to have confidence in communication.

### **Mathematics**

79. Teachers support learning in mathematics with a wide variety of mathematical resources. Children make good progress in counting skills, number recognition and mathematical language. In the nursery many are able to count further than five. Some children can count to 15, but most have difficulty in counting numbers further than ten. They know the names of common shapes, such as 'square', 'triangle' and 'circle'. In role-play activities, such as the post office, children use mathematical terminology, for example 'twos' and 'money terms'. Sand and water play reinforces the concepts of capacity and volume well and this activity is one of the children's favourites. In the nursery, the teacher has a very good understanding of the needs of young children and provides interesting mathematical experiences to ensure that children practise the essential skills of counting, pattern making, measuring and the exploration of shape. In the reception classes, children continue to learn to count, practise simple addition and are introduced to money, weight

and measurement. They make good progress and many are on course to exceed the expected levels by the end of their reception year.

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

80. Many very good opportunities are provided for the development of children's knowledge and understanding of the world; for example, early morning, breaktimes and lunchtimes are used as an opportunity to talk about their families, homes and past and present activities in their lives. Children show some understanding of the wider features of their community, such as local shops. Nursery children have visited the bakery of their local supermarket and watched bread being made, as well as helping, before enjoying some doughnuts! They investigate objects that stick to magnets and become completely absorbed in the activity. They marvel at lollipops melting, wishing they could have eaten them in their frozen state. In spring and summer they grow seeds, broad beans and sunflowers. Children watch them grow, and harvest the broad beans. Staff show how the beans change once they are cooked and encourage children to taste them. In the reception classes, children learn about the postman and the journey of a letter from writing to receiving it. Children have experience of using technology. They freely use the computer and demonstrate how to use a mouse to draw pictures. The best possible use is made of parents from different cultures and countries. The teachers organise days when cultures other than British are celebrated; for example, during the '*Japanese day*', children listened to parents talking about life in Tokyo and then learned to eat Japanese noodles with chopsticks. Teachers constantly provide opportunities for children to understand their world through well-planned creative activities that stimulate their senses. Most children are on course to achieve the expected standards by the end of the reception year and some will exceed them.

### **Creative development**

81. Children explore sound by making musical instruments such as shakers and filling them with different items to create different sounds. Children in the nursery class keep a rhythm steady when singing, '*When Goldilocks went to the house of the bears*'. Joining in with actions proves to be a challenge most children can cope with well. In a good range of creative activities, children show evident enjoyment and developing skills in their responses to what they see, hear, touch and feel. They explore a wide range of materials, for example sand, paint, clay, crayons and glue, when they draw, colour and stick. Children use their imagination well and use paint boldly in their pictures. In the reception classes, they understand about different types of materials after studying them in science and use different techniques with paper, such as rolling, folding, scrunching, tearing and cutting, and use these to compose a '*paper picture*'. There are many opportunities for children to experience role-play and they do so imaginatively, often reflecting stories they have heard, for example '*Goldilocks and The Three Bears*' or '*The Flower Shop*'. The teachers link this area of learning very closely to the topic book or book being studied. Children are on course to achieve the expected standards by the end of the reception year.

### **Physical development**

82. Nursery children have immediate access to the outdoor play area. Children in the reception classes take part in the school's physical education programme and go into the nursery outside play area on a daily basis. At present the children also have the use of a spare classroom and they have erected an igloo and a climbing frame with a slide and put other activity toys in there for wet days. The children's ability to control their limbs and movements is well developed and teachers provide good experiences for them to explore the body's potential, such as climbing and jumping. Outside activity is always well supervised. By the time they are five, most children can run, jump, climb and skip safely

and confidently. They use climbing frames well to jump from, and stretch and balance on. They are aware of space and do not bump into each other. Their control of the wheeled toys is excellent as they manoeuvre them around obstacles at speed. Most show reasonable control of small equipment, such as balls and ropes, and staff plan daily opportunities for children to develop these skills. In the nursery, children carefully use scissors and different materials to finely join boxes and paper together, although their hand control for writing and for intricate creative activities is less well developed. Children are on course to achieve the expected standards by the end of the reception year.

## Teaching

83. The teaching of children under five is good overall and it is very good in the nursery. It helps most children to make sound progress. Those with special educational needs and with English as an additional language make good progress. There are very good working relationships between staff and children. Staff provide good role models and have appropriate expectations of children's work and behaviour. Activities are well planned and tasks well matched to the needs of the children. However, in the mixed-age classes of reception children and Year 1 pupils, because of the different methods of teaching these two groups of children, the reception children are not always provided with the practical elements of the Foundation Stage. The school is aware of this minor weakness and has begun to address the issue. Staff frequently record what children can do and this information is used very effectively in the nursery to identify individual targets and to inform planning. Activity plans have clear learning objectives that build well on what children already know and can do. The teachers, nursery staff and learning support assistants work effectively as a team and this strongly promotes children's confidence and independence. A good range of resources is available and used to good effect. The nursery is well organised by the teacher in charge and staff work hard to provide an attractive and stimulating learning environment. Teaching promotes the Early Learning Goals and provides a good foundation for the National Curriculum.

## ENGLISH

84. Standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 are above average and all pupils make good progress. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards of attainment are below average. However, pupils make at least satisfactory, and often good, progress compared with their prior attainment. In the 2000 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1, the percentage of pupils attaining Level 2 was well below the national average in reading and below average in writing. The percentage of pupils attaining Level 3 was above average in reading and writing. However, standards in reading were very low, and in writing they were well below average, compared with those in similar schools.
85. In the 2000 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2, only two pupils took the English tests. The current level of attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 reflects the wide range of ability and attainment of pupils who have transferred to Bure Park since it opened. Even so, the progress that older pupils have made since they joined the school is never less than satisfactory and in many cases it is good, when compared with the standards they had attained when they joined Bure Park. Their progress is a result of the school's very good implementation of the National Literacy Strategy and the high quality teaching in Year 6. Many pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making good progress.
86. Differences between the judgements made on standards during the inspection and those attained by pupils in the end of key stage tests are because they refer to different groups of pupils and there are differences in ability. The high attainment of pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 shows the positive impact of the very good teaching in Key Stage 1 and,



especially, in Year 2, and the success of the school's implementation of the National Literacy Strategy

87. By the end of both key stages pupils' speaking and listening skills are very good. Almost all pupils listen attentively to teachers and to others in discussion. They enjoy listening to stories and join in eagerly, using different accents and characterisation to good effect. Most pupils express themselves clearly and in good English. This is apparent with young children and develops well with older pupils. For example, children in the reception class were describing the shape of large wooden blocks. One described a curved piece as, *'looking like a piece of a bridge'*. Another commented that, *'It also looks like a rainbow'*. In Year 2, as part of a homework project, a pupil had prepared a talk to give to his class about glass. This formed part of their science topic about materials. A question from one of them about, *'What would the world be like without glass?'* prompted a very considered and thoughtful discussion. Pupils listened in silence and admiration in assembly to pupils in Year 6 talking about their personal achievements, such as, *'playing the oboe'* or, *'doing the splits'*. Across the curriculum pupils show good understanding and use of correct vocabulary. For example, pupils in Year 2 are able to offer sensible scientific hypotheses, such as, *'We found out that if you lift the ramp too high the car would crash'*. Pupils in Year 6 use correct vocabulary, such as *'condensation'* and *'evaporation'* when discussing the water cycle, and describe in detail how to separate substances by *'filtration'*. The high standard of their English helps them to express their knowledge and understanding well, both orally and in writing.
88. Standards of reading are above average at the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils of average and above average attainment read fluently and expressively and enjoy talking about books, mentioning favourite authors and stories. For example, one pupil said she liked stories by C.S. Lewis because, *'They're a bit like fairy stories. They are adventurous and there are always nice people in them.'* Much debate centred around how old they thought children needed to be before they could appreciate the *'Harry Potter'* stories! Most lower-attaining pupils, including those with special educational needs, read appropriate texts accurately, but with less fluency and expression. They, too, have a good understanding of how to tackle unfamiliar words.
89. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards in reading are below average. Pupils of average and above average ability are enthusiastic and accomplished readers and will choose to read books whenever and to whoever they can. For example, one pupil said that she reads late into the night, *'under the bed covers with my Winnie the Pooh torch'*. Another confessed that she, *'likes reading to my teddies'*. Pupils read expressively and with very good intonation and can give detailed explanations of why they like the plot and characterisation. They evaluate text well and use inference and deduction to support their ideas. They already have firm ideas about favourite authors and give subtle reasons for their choices. For example, one pupil preferred Enid Blyton to J.K.Rowling, *'because it takes too long to get into Harry Potter stories'*. Pupils are developing the ability to reflect on different authors' choices of language and vocabulary and are also open to reading a range of material, such as poetry and magazines. However, the majority of pupils attain lower standards in reading than this and have not yet developed all the skills expected of pupils at the end of Key Stage 2. Lower-attaining pupils tend to read hesitantly, although they are developing the ability to use ideas from the story to help them read unfamiliar words. Many do not particularly like reading, have not really developed preferences for authors and do not fully appreciate aspects, such as humour, in stories.
90. Pupils' ability to find information at both key stages is well developed, but not necessarily through books. Many pupils in both key stages understand the purpose of different parts of books, such as the contents, index and glossary pages. They are also aware that

there is a vast range of sources where they are able to locate information. For example, a pupil in Year 1 said that he *'finds information in an encyclopaedia'*. However, many pupils have access to, and prefer to use, the Internet to locate and then print off information about any areas of interest. While higher-attaining pupils are very assured when looking through non-fiction books to find information, they are not aware of the Dewey system for locating books, and during the inspection there was no evidence of the use of the library for private research.

91. At the end of Key Stage 1 standards are above average in writing, and progress is good. A scrutiny of pupils' written work reveals a good range and quality of ideas and expression. Their writing shows a clear development in style, vocabulary and maturity. It shows good development in the use of punctuation, and spelling becomes more accurate. Pupils develop good sentence writing. In Year 2, they write complex sentences easily and vary their length for effectiveness. Good writing is begun in the reception and Year 1 classes, where pupils use capital letters, full stops and speech marks increasingly correctly. For example, at the beginning of the school year one pupil wrote about her experiment in growing cress seeds, *'I think they are going to grow into a vurie big flower'*. Later that term she wrote in more detail about her route to school, *'I get to school by A bike, and my mum and my brother and I see the park by my heosus'*. Very recently she wrote about the dark with increasing accuracy, *'We went into the cupboard and we turned the light off. When we got in the cupboard first we tried the torch on to see if it was brit anuf, then we tried our teacher's watch'*. Pupils in Year 2 build on the development of these early skills when they write descriptions of a lychee.  
*'The colour is red and brown on the outside.  
It has spiky bits on the skin like a cone.  
The stone is a chocolate brown colour and it is an oval shape.'*
92. At the end of Key Stage 2 the majority of pupils attain standards in writing that are below average. It is clear from their work, however, that many are making good progress. There have been many improvements in their ability to write for a range of purposes and in the accuracy of their spelling, grammar and sentence construction. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 learn about prefixes and suffixes, connectives, comparatives and superlatives. They write news reports, biographies and descriptions. The development of written work in Key Stage 2 is well-planned and the quality and sophistication of pupils' work gradually develops, as well as their mastery of vocabulary. In Year 3, pupils use *'ing'* words in descriptions, such as *'sausages sizzling'*, *'jelly wobbling'* and *'spaghetti twirling'*. In Year 4, they use short, sharp sentences to capture the tenseness of the moment in their adventure stories. *'It was the middle of the night. I heard my Daddy snoring, my sister talking in her sleep and my friend Katy moving around in bed. I looked to see if she was awake. She was. We heard a crunch in the garden. We gave each other nervous looks and moved towards the window'*. The ways in which their writing develops in quality are apparent in Year 6, when they write a *'personification'* verse about the *'Winter Wind'*.  
*'He grabs the world with his hands,  
At first just cooling it down.  
Slowly he gets stronger,  
Slowly he gets colder.  
He grabs the world more tightly,  
His bulging muscles frozen,  
His ice breath blowing stronger  
His ice breath blowing colder.'*
93. Standards of handwriting vary considerably throughout the school. In Key Stage 1, pupils are learning a distinct style that has been adopted by the school. Their letter formation is good and in Year 2 they are developing a neat, legible handwriting style that is well

presented. Many older pupils joined the school with a handwriting style already established and bad habits already secure. Untidy writing and their inability to apply known rules and techniques, such as punctuation and spelling, to their writing sometimes spoil the presentation of their work.

94. Pupils respond very well in English lessons. Their behaviour is very good and they are anxious to learn and make progress. The very good relationships with their teachers and amongst themselves promote interesting discussions and good collaboration in paired and group work. They enjoy the National Literacy Strategy and it has developed their interest in all aspects of English. Pupils are proud of their poems, stories and other writing and readily discuss their enjoyment of reading with visitors.
95. The quality of teaching is very good overall. Teachers plan very effectively and take careful note of what pupils have learned in previous lessons. They have a very secure knowledge of the literacy hour and the high quality teaching has a positive impact on pupils' learning and attainment. Teachers read texts with dramatic input, which holds pupils' interest and motivates them to succeed. They have high expectations of pupils' work and their behaviour, which contribute to the progress pupils make. They have good relationships with pupils and encourage them to succeed. Very good use is made of learning support assistants. They work with pupils with special educational needs in lessons and in small groups to provide specific support to improve their literacy skills. In lessons they ensure that pupils listen carefully and stay on task to complete their work. In small group work they use a variety of strategies planned by teachers, such as board games, to focus on improving specific phonic skills, which have been identified in the pupils' individual education plans.
96. The successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy is very well monitored by the subject co-ordinator, who provides good leadership and sets an excellent personal example for implementing the strategy. Good records are kept to assess pupils' reading and writing. These help to ensure that pupils make steady progress in work that becomes gradually more challenging. Teachers are skilled at identifying pupils' levels of work and setting targets for improvement that pupils understand. The school's reading diaries provide parents with good information about their children's reading and in many cases there is good constructive dialogue between the teachers and parents.

## **MATHEMATICS**

97. Standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 are above average and all pupils make good progress. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards of attainment are below average and pupils make at least satisfactory progress. Often it is good compared with their prior attainment. In the 2000 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1, the percentage of pupils attaining Level 2 was very low. The percentage of pupils achieving Level 3 was below average. Standards were poor when compared to those in similar schools.
98. Only two pupils took the mathematics tests at the end of Key Stage 2 last year. The current level of pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 reflects the wide ability range of the pupils who have transferred to Bure Park since it opened. It does not reflect the school's very good implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy or the high quality teaching in Year 6. In fact, the progress that the older pupils have made since they joined the school is never less than satisfactory and in many cases it is good, compared with the standards they had attained before they joined Bure Park.
99. Many pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making good progress. The high attainment of pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 shows the positive impact of the

very good quality of teaching in these classes and the success of the school's implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. Differences between the judgements made on standards during the inspection and those attained by pupils in the end of key stage tests are because they refer to different groups of pupils and there are differences in ability.

100. By the end of Key Stage 1 many pupils are confident in their ability to use number as a part of everyday life. They can use mental addition and subtraction to work out calculations to 20 and many of them are able to work out the change from 50pence. They can double numbers and use this information to work out other numbers that are near doubles. They make good progress in measuring. Nearly all pupils are able to draw a line accurately in centimetres. In their work on time, they can write both the digital and analogue time every quarter of an hour.
101. Pupils in Year 1 use appropriate mathematical vocabulary very well to describe and name two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes. Almost all the pupils in one class can name a cube and state that all the faces and edges are the same. In Year 2, a significant majority of pupils are able to identify and construct two-dimensional shapes up to eight sides. A group of higher-attaining pupils in this class were successfully investigating the effects of using two rectangles to produce different shapes. Their eagerness to learn led them to seek the names of shapes beyond eight sides and their capacity to acquire new information introduced them to the term '*polygon*'.
102. By the end of Key Stage 2 few pupils are working at the desired level. However, their capacity to learn new information is good. They have a very good recall of the work they have covered since being in Year 6 and show that their ability to reason with numbers is good. In a discussion on decimals with a mixed ability group of pupils, their original concept of multiplying decimals was that the number gets bigger. When they related this to their understanding of fractions they were able to see that this was not the case and were able to explain their errors. Higher-attaining pupils in Year 6 use protractors accurately to measure angles and have a good sense of approximation when estimating the size of an angle. Knowledge and understanding of multiplication tables are not secure for many pupils in this year group.
103. Progress in lessons is good and sometimes it is very good. Pupils in Year 3 were learning to tell the time. By the end of the lesson nearly all could read an analogue clock to within five minutes and many were able to tell the time in minutes. Pupils in Year 4 were able to develop strategies for adding two two-digit numbers, which eventually enabled them to add these numbers mentally. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well by learning support assistants. Work is clearly matched to their targets in their individual education plans. A good example of this support was observed in lessons in Year 5 and Year 1, where the assistants were sitting next to pupils with special educational needs. During the introduction to the lesson they were guiding these individual pupils' thoughts to help them to join in with the other pupils in answering the teacher's questions.
104. The quality of teaching is good overall, and often it is very good. High quality planning is based on teachers knowing their pupils well and allowing for their different abilities when setting them tasks to do. Objectives are clearly stated and shared with the pupils at the beginning of lessons. Medium- and short-term plans reveal the teachers' thorough understanding of the requirements of the National Numeracy Strategy.
105. The ability that the teachers have to motivate and enthuse pupils has a direct impact on the good progress that pupils are making. The pace of lessons is generally good. However, in a few lessons observed, during the lesson introduction, the speed of work

was a little slow. Opportunities were missed in this session for pupils to practise counting and calculating at a more rapid pace. In two lessons observed, this resulted in a few pupils losing concentration and interest. Also, in most lessons observed, the final part of the lesson that draws together the main teaching points is often too short due to too little time being allowed. Therefore, pupils are not always being given the chance to explain the strategies they have used to solve their problems.

106. In the best lessons observed, teachers make good use of high quality resources, some of which they have made themselves. Through skilful questions they challenge their pupils and encourage the correct mathematical vocabulary to be used. Teachers have high expectations of pupils and they often refer to targets as a means of challenging pupils and assessing their progress. They make good use of detailed records of work and results from tests to set future targets for development.

## SCIENCE

107. Standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 are above average and all pupils make good progress. At the end of Key Stage 2 standards of attainment are below average. However, pupils make at least satisfactory progress and often it is good compared with their prior attainment. In the 2000 National Curriculum teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 1, the percentage of pupils attaining Level 2 was average. The percentage of pupils achieving Level 3 was also average. Standards were low when compared to those in similar schools.
108. Only 2 pupils took the science tests at the end of Key Stage 2 last year. The current level of pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 reflects the diverse ability range of the pupils who have transferred to Bure Park since it opened. It does not reflect the school's implementation of the science scheme of work or the high quality teaching in Year 6. In fact, the progress that the older pupils have made since they joined the school is never less than satisfactory and in many cases it is good, compared with the standards they had attained before they joined Bure Park.
109. Many pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making good progress. The high attainment of pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 shows the positive impact of the very good quality of teaching in these classes and the success of the school's implementation of the science curriculum. Differences between the judgements made on standards during the inspection and those attained by pupils in the end of key stage teacher assessments are because they refer to different groups of pupils and there are differences in ability.
110. At the end of Key Stage 1 pupils have a very good understanding of how to carry out a fair test. Nearly all the pupils in the current Year 2 class can explain the ways in which they have made their experiments fair to test the properties of materials. They use the correct terminology to describe materials, such as *'flexible'*, *'rigid'*, *'rough'* and *'smooth'*. Many can make reasonable predictions about the outcome of a test. For example, when testing the elasticity of different fabrics, one pupil explained that *'This material will stretch more because it's like elastic and it's got holes in it'*.
111. Pupils in Key Stage 1 make good progress in science work. The youngest pupils are encouraged to make simple predictions about the outcome of events, such as how well their seeds will grow. In Year 2, when testing the force needed to make a toy car move, pupils predicted that if you lift the ramp the car would travel further along the carpet. These pupils were also able to analyse their results. One pupil remarked that if you tipped the ramp too far the car would crash instead of travel.

112. At the end of Key Stage, 2 pupils discuss in great depth the work they have recently learnt. Pupils in Year 6 use scientific vocabulary, such as 'evaporation', 'filtration' and 'condensation' confidently and accurately. They describe experiments they have carried out relating to the separation of substances and the water cycle. Pupils can describe in detail how to separate salt from water and how to clean dirty water. Many pupils can describe how we get rainfall using a three-dimensional model they have designed and made to explain the water cycle clearly. Opportunities for pupils to investigate open-ended questions are good, although some of the means of testing and recording results do not always reflect accuracy or fairness. For example, evidence from a wall display showed how some older pupils were testing the most appropriate materials for a gardening glove. These pupils were timing how long it took for a pin to go through the material. As most of the results were within one second of each other, these units of measurement were too small to produce any great accuracy. Also, the fairness of the test is questionable, as the amount of force that was used was not measured.
113. Pupils make good progress in recording their work. The youngest pupils are given opportunities to record their results in a logical way. As pupils progress through the school the recording becomes more sophisticated in terms of length, detail and accuracy. They use a mixture of text, tables, diagrams and charts to record their work. The use of graphs to compare data is rather limited.
114. The quality of teaching is good overall. At times it is excellent. Teachers' planning is very detailed and medium-term plans form the basis of a thorough scheme of work that builds systematically on pupils' previous learning. However, during the inspection, there was some concern that the evidence found in pupils' books and timetabling arrangements in the school meant that science is not taught often enough in some classes. Insufficient time is given to the depth of study in some aspects of science, for example the body and electricity. The school adopts a topic approach to science in Key Stage 1 and partly so in Key Stage 2. Units of work are 'blocked', which means that there are extended periods of time when pupils are not carrying out any science work. The evidence would suggest, particularly at the beginning of Key Stage 2, that this time is not made up during the terms when science is the main focus.
115. In the best lessons, teachers are very well organised and they know their pupils well. Learning objectives are made clear at the beginning and pupils work towards a class target. Teachers make good use of resources and they enthuse and motivate pupils to achieve their best. They ask skilful questions that encourage pupils to reflect upon their learning and make good use of their answers to make oral assessments. Work is marked on a regular basis, although in many instances teachers are marking the literacy content rather than the scientific objective of a piece of work.
116. Science is very well co-ordinated throughout the school. The co-ordinator has a clear vision of how the subject should continue as the school develops. There are plans for the immediate future to develop the aspect of investigative science with all teachers.

## ART AND DESIGN

117. Standards at the end of both key stages meet expectations. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. Pupils in all classes use a range of techniques, such as *'drawing'*, *'painting'*, *'printing'* and *'collage'*, with increasing skill. They use pencils, pastels, paint, clay and fabric carefully. They are beginning to evaluate their work and that of others and share their work with pride. They have started to use their sketchbooks on a regular basis; for example, preparatory sketches of their self-portrait pictures and for their tile designs. At Key Stage 1 pupils have begun to explore and develop ideas from first hand observations, such as their drawings of flowers, leaves, pineapples and peppers. They have used a combination of media, such as materials and paper, to create weaving patterns and fabric collages. In Key Stage 2, pupils develop an awareness of different contexts in art when studying Victorian portraits. They study the work of Henry Moore before attempting to make their own clay figures and they investigate ways of illustrating movement in art. At both key stages pupils have started to consider the use of computer generated artwork.
118. At present art plays only a modest part in contributing to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. As yet there have been no visits by artists to demonstrate different techniques. The school is very stark and functional in design and the potential to create a visually stimulating environment, which would have a positive impact on pupils' attitudes to learning, has not been fully exploited. This is mainly due to the short time the school has been open and the limited number of staff available to contribute to displays in such a large area. Work in other areas of the curriculum is well supported by artwork; for example, in Years 3 and 4 pupils link their history topic to a study of portrait painting by Victorian artists. In many classes, paintings and drawings accompany pupils' written work.
119. Pupils' attitudes to art are very good. They greatly enjoy their artwork and become very involved in what they are doing and can concentrate for long periods of time. They are enthusiastic about using different media. Younger pupils enjoy the instant success of a *'finished product'*, whilst older pupils can sustain their interest in a particular project over the course of several weeks. Pupils of all ages work together very well and share resources very sensibly and carefully. Pupils in Year 2 learn about different textures and enthuse about the way they feel by touching them.
120. The quality of teaching is good overall. Teachers provide suitable challenges and a good balance of direct teaching and opportunities for pupils to work independently. The quality of teachers' questioning is very good. It makes pupils think very carefully about how they are going to tackle their work. Questions such as, *'Do you think that...?'* and *'How do you think you could...?'* are posed at just the right time to make pupils reflect, but not to provide pupils with answers. For example, in Year 2, the teacher's questioning about *'How do we get different textures when we weave material?'* made pupils think carefully about the *'best'* materials to use without actually choosing the materials for them. Pupils are very well supported in lessons and teachers create a calm working atmosphere. Art lessons are well organised to make good use of the space available.
121. There is only a draft subject policy in place. The enthusiastic co-ordinator is aware of the need to extend the teaching of certain elements of art, such as three-dimensional art. She has already made a start to monitoring teachers' plans and lessons, and has a clear idea of how the subject could develop and the way in which art and display can have an additional impact on the internal environment.

## DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

122. No lessons were timetabled during the inspection. Judgements on design and technology are made on a scrutiny of a limited range of work available, displays around the school and discussions with pupils. Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is in line with expectations for their age and they make sound progress. Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is lower than expected for their age and they do not make the progress they are capable of. The low judgement at the end of Key Stage 2 in many ways reflects the lack of time that has been allocated to the systematic development of designing and making skills in their previous schools. They have only limited experience of a wide range of materials and of food technology and have no clear idea about designing for different users.
123. Pupils in Key Stage 1 have good opportunities to use a design sheet that itemises materials they want to use and the processes involved in making their '*wheeled vehicles*' and their '*musical instruments*'. They fix items with glue and string, make sound progress with the development of their cutting and sticking skills and learn the basic needs of simple designs. They also make a good start to evaluating their finished items, including suggestions for modifications and improvements; for example, '*I would change the base next time to make it stronger so it wouldn't break*'. Pupils in Key Stage 2 make good links between their design and technology projects with other subjects. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 designed '*Tudor*' houses for their history topic. Pupils in Year 6 made models to show the water cycle involving the use of syringes to pump water. However, their written evaluations of their work to design a '*recycling bin*' such as, '*instead of using string I will use rope to make it strong*', show little development in understanding compared with those in Year 2.
124. Pupils' attitudes to design and technology are positive. Pupils in Key Stage 1 talk enthusiastically about the work they have carried out and which aspects they found '*easy*' or '*difficult*'. Despite the limited opportunities to become involved in designing and making, pupils in Key Stage 2 have clearly enjoyed the work they have done, although they regard the activities more as craftwork, because they cannot see the link between the design, make and evaluation process.
125. Currently there is no permanent subject co-ordinator and no subject policy in place to guide the development of this subject.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

126. Standards of attainment in geography at the end of Key Stage 1 meet expectations. They are below expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. There are two reasons to account for the low attainment at the end of Key Stage 2. The first is due to the wide ability range and attainment of the pupils who have transferred to Bure Park since it opened. The second reason is the way that geography is organised within the curriculum. Units of work are blocked into topics and the school has established a good rolling programme to ensure that all the topics are taught throughout Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. However, there are significant gaps in the knowledge and understanding of geographical skills of a substantial number of new pupils who have joined the school at different times over the past year.
127. At Key Stage 1, pupils are making sound progress. They identify features on a map using a key and recall position on a grid using co-ordinates. Pupils in Year 1 can identify the land and sea on maps of the United Kingdom and recognise a plan view of different objects. In Year 2, pupils can name the countries that make up the British Isles and make good estimates in locating Bicester on the map of England. They have an awareness of the changes that are happening to their local environment and can name and describe



some of these features. One pupil in Year 2 said, *'When we go to granny's we go along the A41. The Romans built that road.'*

128. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils have not yet made the progress that would be expected of them. Some of the topics that have been taught have not been covered in sufficient depth. For example, a topic on the local area did not contain sufficient depth of study to identify the features that make up that area, or how the area reflects a rapidly changing community. Many pupils' knowledge and understanding of places are poor. They have little awareness of countries, continents, rivers and oceans of the world. Pupils have the capacity to learn new information. In Year 5, pupils are developing their understanding of different services in four different settlements. They are able to use the correct geographical vocabulary to describe features of these settlements and are beginning to make comparisons between them.
129. Insufficient lessons were observed to make a judgement on teaching. However, an analysis of planning documents suggests that teachers have a good understanding of the subject and have identified the necessary skills. However, the scheme of work is not yet complete and does not enable a judgement to be made about whether all aspects of the geography curriculum are being met. One concern that came to light during the inspection was when two different year groups are covering a particular topic; work is not always adapted to meet the needs of individual pupils. Pupils in both year groups were given identical pieces of work. The quality and range of resources needed to teach geography is insufficient.

## HISTORY

130. Pupils attain the standards expected at the end of both key stages and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making sound progress. History is organised as part of a topic in Key Stage 1 and is taught alongside science and geography. In Key Stage 2, it is organised as a separate subject. During the inspection no lessons were planned in Key Stage 1 and there was only one lesson in Key Stage 2. Judgements are made, additionally, from discussions with pupils and staff, a scrutiny of a limited amount of pupils' work, displays and teachers' planning.
131. Pupils in Year 1 study different types of transport and learn about George Stephenson. They recall the competition he won with his steam engine, *'The Rocket'*. Pupils in Year 2 compare past and current forms of transport and draw detailed pictures to illustrate the differences. They have a good understanding of *'now'* and *'then'*.
132. All pupils are beginning to understand chronology and undertake research for information to help them make sense of the time they are studying. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have a secure knowledge of the life of children in Victorian times. They describe the difference in clothes between the rich and poor. One pupil researched the clothes of Queen Victoria and wrote, *'Queen Victoria's white wedding dress set a fashion that many brides still follow today'*. The teacher wrote, *'I never knew that fact'*. They study the differences between Celts and Romans and observe differences in language, clothes, beliefs, art and farming. They compare the weapons of the two peoples. One pupil wrote when studying life in the Roman army, *'It was one of the best ways to improve your standard of living'*. Pupils in Year 5 study the Tudors and complete a list of the fate of all six wives of Henry VIII. In Year 6, in their work on Aztecs, they complete a time line of events comparing what happened to the Aztec and British nations. Pupils complete good research for this topic using information from the computer and CD-Rom.

133. Pupils' attitudes towards history are positive. They enjoy the discussions and behave very well, working independently or co-operatively in a group. They work assiduously and become absorbed in their history and the task set.
134. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. The teachers have good class management and organisation and they prepare interesting work for pupils. Some teachers make good use of a video as a starting point, freezing the tape and making relevant comments to maintain pupils' concentration and interest. Few opportunities are taken to encourage pupils to use their library skills to find books and sift for information. Instead, teachers take non-fiction books into the classroom. Pupils use the word processor to write amusing and interesting articles for their '*Greek*' newspaper.
135. There is no written policy for history, but the school uses the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority documentation to guide its work. There have been few occasions so far when historical visits or visitors have been used to '*fire*' pupils' imagination.

## INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

136. Standards of attainment meet expectations at the end of both key stages and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress. The school has invested considerable resources in the development of pupils' skills and understanding in information and communication technology (ICT). The computer suite is intended as an area in which skills can be taught on a whole-class basis and then developed in further lessons in the suite, and also in class lessons on individual machines. However, during the inspection hardly any pupils were seen using computers in their classrooms, although the suite was timetabled for all classes to use.
137. The great majority of pupils have access to a wide range of information and communication technology at home. Many pupils are familiar with a wider range of ICT than they use in school; for example video-cassette recorders, digital video disc players and digital cameras. Pupils of all ages regularly access the Internet to search for information. Some pupils said that they use the Internet to order compact discs and books. Several pupils described how they use the Internet on a weekly basis to order home deliveries of food from a national supermarket chain! Many pupils are able to use computers independently. They know how to load programs, how to use the menu, how to save and how to print.
138. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils use keyboard and mouse controls confidently, although their mouse control skills are better than their typing skills on the keyboard. They are able to '*log on*' and '*log off*' independently and can use the '*scroll bar*' to move around the screen. They use computers very confidently and speak as a matter of fact about using '*e-mails*' to correspond with friends and relatives. They have used data-handling programs to make graphs and are familiar with word-processing their writing. They successfully operate '*listening stations*' to enjoy taped stories. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils have well-developed skills in information technology, but these are often as much a result of their experiences at home as of their experiences in school. For instance, pupils use a spreadsheet to record weather conditions, such as wind speed and temperature, but many of them are already familiar with the use of the Microsoft Excel spreadsheet at home. They use the word-processor to write amusing newspaper headlines linked to their Greek history topic, such as, '*Heracles the Greek God saves the day! What a hero!!*' and many of them use their word processors at home to write stories, often to support their class topics or homework.
139. Pupils make sound progress overall throughout the school, although their rate of progress depends to some extent on the confidence and expertise of their teachers and their

experience of information and communication technology at home. Some teachers very sensibly capitalise on pupils' skills and knowledge in lessons by using them to work with less experienced pupils. The problem of equality of opportunity for all pupils is one that the school has not addressed completely in lesson planning and differentiation of work or the withdrawal of a few pupils for other activities, such as instrumental tuition. The school does not use computers well enough to support literacy and numeracy. There are few occasions when computers are used during these sessions in classrooms to support whole-class work. Pupils with special educational needs make sound progress developing their ICT capability, but programs specifically designed to improve their reading, writing and mathematics skills were not seen in use. Currently there are few planned links between ICT and other subjects; for example, the use of data handling in history and geography and the use of sensors in science.

140. Pupils' attitudes to ICT are very positive. Pupils of all ages seem to take ICT for granted. They are not worried about *'breaking'* equipment and they are very receptive to new ideas about its use. They usually work very well in pairs, taking turns and discussing ideas well. They use the equipment sensibly and carefully. These tasks are often carried out without direct teacher supervision. Pupils listen carefully to instructions and concentrate well. Because they are used to working with computers they regard them in a very *'matter of fact'* way and do not waste the time available.
141. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers are becoming increasingly confident about their ability to teach pupils about new programs. They are able to answer pupils' questions and solve minor technical difficulties without delay. Teachers are very conscious of the safety problems associated with Internet access and give very good advice to pupils about using it safely. In the best lessons, the teachers' personal knowledge of ICT is very secure. They know the scope and limitations of the hardware and they can often anticipate pupils' questions before they are asked. Teachers provide good levels of support during lessons, giving pupils immediate feedback, praise and suggestions for improvement. The very good work of the subject co-ordinator has been crucial to developing subject confidence and to the development of ICT work in school. Teachers are now in a good position to take on national training opportunities.

## MUSIC

142. Pupils' attainment in music at the end of both key stages meets expectations. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make at least sound progress, and in some lessons they make good progress.
143. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils' sense of rhythm is good. They can maintain a steady beat when accompanying a piece of music. Pupils in Year 2 are able to develop a repeating pattern, which they skilfully use to accompany a song. Pupils listen attentively and contribute their ideas confidently. Their progress is evident in their willingness to succeed and to try out different techniques. Most pupils are able to play percussion instruments with a degree of control.
144. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils have learnt to appreciate the features of different genres of music. For example, pupils in Year 6 were working on an operatic style of music. The progress of their success was evident in the work they were producing. Almost all the pupils could compare the style of opera with modern pop music. They were producing a short dialogue, namely a *'quarrel'*, which they were then accompanying with tuned and untuned percussion instruments. These pupils were able to perform their compositions confidently and carefully to the remainder of the class. Many pupils are able to evaluate each other's performances, although their knowledge and understanding of musical

terminology is very limited. Pupils in Key Stage 2 can sing tunefully, in time and with regard to diction.

145. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers use a published scheme to aid with planning and ideas. Their subject knowledge is good as they are able to guide pupils to perform and provide them with relevant teaching points to improve. They have the ability to enthuse and motivate pupils. This is evident in lessons where pupils' behaviour is very good and they are keen to learn.
146. The school employs the services of a visiting music teacher once a week, who teaches the recorder to some pupils. These pupils, together with others who learn musical instruments, join together to form a band. There is also a good opportunity for other pupils who do not learn a musical instrument to play percussion instruments. Although these pupils have only met on a handful of occasions, they are making good progress. They have learnt to maintain their own part whilst another part is being played. They are beginning to have some awareness of keeping time and playing loudly and softly. There is, however, an issue about pupils missing other lessons on a weekly basis to attend these peripatetic sessions. In some cases, pupils miss the same lesson each week and are not experiencing the full curriculum to which they are entitled.
147. Teachers are making detailed termly plans, which identify areas of learning clearly. These are being collated to form a scheme of work that develops the teaching of skills in a logical manner. However, not all pupils have equal access to developing their musical skills as music is not yet taught on a regular basis in every class. The school enjoys a wide range of resources and has a good selection of instruments from other countries. Opportunities to explore different cultures are sound. Older pupils had recently developed some composition work based on the Chinese New Year.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

148. Pupils make good progress and attain standards that are above those expected at the end of both key stages. There are some examples of very good progress in Key Stage 2 in gymnastic skills and performance. Pupils in Key Stage 1 learn to control their bodies and to be aware of space. In their gymnastic work they develop good skills and good body co-ordination. Pupils move into spaces and perform ways of travelling together using their hands and feet. They create imaginative ways to put together a sequence of movements. They move around the gymnasium in different directions and at different speeds without bumping into each other. They are quick to identify large and small body parts and '*patches and points*' to balance on. They make good progress in linking these together into a sequence of balance movements. In dance they make good progress. They are creative and imaginative in their movements, and consistently listen to the music to respond to the tempo and rhythm.
149. Pupils in Key Stage 2 make good progress. They develop a good range of ball skills. For instance, they can dribble a ball with a hockey stick, stopping the ball move immediately the teacher instructs them to do so. They are generally able to dribble and pass to a partner on the move. They make good progress as a direct result of their teacher's expertise in teaching skills and games techniques. When playing a mini-game they play with due regard to the rules and display sportsmanship and fair play. They know how to win and how to lose. In their balancing and stretching work in the gymnasium, their progress is satisfactory. Pupils show controlled landing when coming off the apparatus and develop a sequence of movements involving stretching and then a balance on a different level. Pupils know how to exercise parts of their body that need muscle strengthening to perform these movements. Safety is an excellent feature of gymnastic lessons. At all times pupils move safely on the apparatus and teachers praise pupils for

their sensible movements. In dance, pupils in Year 6 quickly learn the movements of the 'Dandia Ros' Asian stick dance. They listen carefully to the instructions and can follow the footwork and hand clapping with growing accuracy. Nearly all pupils can swim 25 metres and some exceed this standard by the end of the key stage.

150. Pupils respond very well overall to their lessons. They listen carefully to their teachers, and most are involved and follow instructions very carefully at all times. They show that they enjoy their lessons and have fun developing their skills with vim and vigour. They are keen and enthusiastic and put a lot of effort into their work, concentrating hard. When practising skills, pupils persevere and confidently know when they have succeeded. In playing team games, they understand the need to co-operate and work well together and demonstrate a good team spirit.
151. The teaching in both key stages is at least good, and occasionally excellent. Teachers have good subject knowledge and a clear understanding of how to present lessons that appeal to pupils and that develop their skills and ensure understanding of games. Teachers hold high expectations that by the end of the lesson confident pupils will be using skills appropriately. Their planning is clear and is drawn from assessments of previous work and is well matched to pupils' abilities. However, there is no written policy for the subject. All teachers are aware of health and safety, rules and routines. Pupils take part in a comprehensive programme that covers all the required aspects of the National Curriculum. An excellent range of extra-curricular sporting activities support and build upon the start given to the pupils in physical educational lessons. Unfortunately, the lack of a suitable and safe school field restricts the teaching and learning of games. The school hall is so small that it restricts the number of pupils playing mini ball games. During sports day last year pupils took photographs with the digital camera and put them on the computer to enjoy and look at carefully for areas of their performance to improve for sports day this year.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

152. Pupils' attainment at the end of both key stages is in line with the requirements of the Oxfordshire Agreed Syllabus. Only one very short lesson was timetabled in Key Stage 1 during the inspection. However, discussions with pupils and a scrutiny of teachers' plans and the limited amount of pupils' work available show that pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of the principal teachings of Christianity and Judaism. They know what festivals Christians and Jews celebrate, for example Christmas and Sukkoth. They discuss the parable of the 'Prodigal Son' from the New Testament. The meaning becomes clearer as the story is dramatised. The story of Moses is told with interest and accuracy and they know he is a special person to the Jews. However, special places of worship were less known and will be covered in future terms.
153. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a sound knowledge of the codes of conduct and lifestyles associated with the three religions studied, namely Christianity, Judaism and Hinduism. In a good lesson, pupils in Year 6 successfully research the festival of 'Janmashtami' whilst studying Krishna and why he is such a key figure in the Hindu faith. Some pupils wrote a song of Krishna. 'Whoever offers me a leaf, a flower, a fruit or water with love that offering of devotion I willingly accept from the pure heart', while others wrote of Krishna as a baby. 'When Krishna was a baby he was adorable. All the mothers wanted him as their own baby, he was the apple of everyone's eyes'. Pupils' produce good in-depth work on all three faiths. There are examples of good writing on Christian teaching and sensitive thoughts on meanings of some stories; for example, 'Jesus forgave Peter and he aims to make us forgive others'. Pupils make a 'Mezuzah' in design and technology and touch the box frequently to remind them of God. They wrote messages to go inside, such as, 'Always try your best', 'Look after other people'. Their

writing contributes substantially to the development of their literacy skills and their power of self-expression. Altogether, pupils' writing in religious education is a significant factor in their understanding of spirituality and their own and other cultures. Research using the CD-Rom is a good feature of learning in Key Stage 2.

154. Pupils' interest in religious education is genuine. They work well in lessons. They contribute readily to discussions and offer thoughtful and personal ideas and opinions. Written work is usually carefully presented and pupils in Year 6 made colourful, well-illustrated topic books on Hindu festivals. Pupils listen attentively to their teachers and to each other in discussion. They value others' points of view. Behaviour is very good and pupils work well to complete written tasks in the time allowed, even offering to take work home to complete when necessary. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language play a full part in the lessons and make satisfactory progress.
155. The teaching is good overall. Teachers have good subject knowledge and resources and artefacts are used very effectively. Teachers lead discussions well and give clear explanations. In one good lesson, the teacher helped pupils to understand the distinction between important people and important things, promoting very well the idea of irreplaceable items and sentimental value. They use questioning sympathetically to draw out pupils' personal ideas and beliefs. The planning is good and pace of lessons satisfactory. However, the drawing together of all pupils in Key Stage 1 for a very short lesson of 15 minutes is not appropriate. Pupils find it difficult to concentrate or feel part of such a large group. Marking of pupils' written work is mainly for English correction and not for their understanding of religious educational content. However, teachers use written praise well. There is no written school policy for the subject.