

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **WILLIAM AUSTIN INFANT SCHOOL**

Luton

LEA area: Luton

Unique reference number: 109584

Headteacher: Lynn Alexander

Reporting inspector: Michael J Cahill  
19623

Dates of inspection: 11 - 14 February 2002

Inspection number: 243636

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Culverhouse Road Luton Beds
Postcode:	LU3 1PZ
Telephone number:	01582 595198
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Stan Boelman
Date of previous inspection:	6 October 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
19623	Michael Cahill	Registered inspector	Science Information and communication technology	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? a) The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
9744	Peter Brown	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b) 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?
28320	Robert Willey	Team inspector	Equal opportunities Mathematics Art and design Geography	How good are the curricular and other learning opportunities offered to pupils?
31862	Julia Coop	Team inspector	Special educational needs English History	
27240	Tony Hooper	Team inspector	English as an additional language Design and technology Music	Provision for and standards achieved by pupils with English as an additional language
21103	Val Ives	Team inspector	Foundation stage Religious education Physical education	How well is the school led and managed?

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London WC2B 6SE

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

This infant school educates 352 full time pupils (167 boys and 185 girls) from four to seven; it is larger than the average school of its type. There is also a reception class for 30 children who attend in the mornings only. When children join the school, they often do not speak much English and have very little experience of learning with others. Because of this they have not learned as much as most children of their age when they join the school; their attainment is well below national expectations. About three-quarters of the pupils are learning English as an additional language, including over 80 who are at the very early stages of learning; many come from Pakistan, Kashmir or Bangladesh. The proportion of pupils on the school's register of special educational need is below the national average. The percentage of pupils who claim free school meals is about the national average.

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

This is a good and improving school where children gain confidence in their ability to learn and most make good progress. The school is very well led and managed and provides good opportunities for pupils to learn; it succeeds in helping the children to behave well and to get on well with each other and with adults. The quality of teaching is good and the school has a very pleasant, purposeful and welcoming atmosphere. This effective school provides good value for money.

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

- The school provides an interesting and well-planned curriculum for all its pupils; the Foundation Stage provides children with a good start to their full time education.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- The overall quality of teaching is good; this results in pupils, many of whom are learning English as an additional language, making good progress.
- The leadership of the school is strong and is sharply focused on improving standards.
- The school is successful at promoting good attitudes and behaviour in its pupils; relationships among pupils and between adults and pupils are very good.
- There is a good standard of care; the school tracks pupils' progress well and gives them good support in their educational and personal development.
- There are good links between the school and parents; parents are very confident that the school is doing its best for their children.

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

**The school has many strengths and is committed to continual improvement. It recognises the need to:**

- Improve pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science.
- Develop the support given to the increasing number of pupils who are learning English as an additional language.
- Move forward on its plans to involve pupils more in setting learning targets.
- Improve the attendance of those pupils who are away for long periods.

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

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

The level of improvement since the last inspection in 1997 has been good. The school has dealt effectively with the issues identified at that time and has also considerably improved the overall quality of teaching and learning. The strong partnership between the governing body, headteacher and staff and the good level of involvement of parents provide a very good basis for further improvement.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
Reading	E	E	E	D
Writing	E	D	D	C
Mathematics	E	D	E	E

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

Schools are described as similar when they fall into the same band for free school meals, in this case between 20 and 35 per cent. At present 22.4 per cent of pupils claim their entitlement.

Children in the reception classes make at least sound progress from a well below average starting point. By the time that they enter Year 1, many achieve in line with national expectations in personal, social and emotional, creative and physical development and in some aspects of their knowledge and understanding of the world. In communication, language and literacy, many children are still working at a level that is well below national expectations, and in mathematical development they are below national expectations on entry to Year 1, even though they have made sound progress.

The school is successful in enabling around three-quarters of its pupils to reach the national standard for seven-year-olds. Results in 1999 and 2000 showed significant improvement; in 2001 they dropped, largely because of increases in the proportions of pupils with either low levels of skills in English or with special educational needs. The overall trend in the results from 1998 to 2000 was upwards in reading, writing and mathematics.

The inspection team judged that attainment is below national expectations in English, mathematics and science. In art and design, geography, history, music and physical education, attainment is in line with expectations; in religious education pupils' attainment is in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. In design and technology and information and communication technology (ICT), pupils exceed national expectations. The school makes very good use of its computer suite and uses ICT particularly well in the teaching of design and technology. Pupils make generally good progress as they move through Years 1 and 2.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils are keen to come to school and enthusiastically involve themselves in all activities. Their attitudes to school are good.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils behave well in lessons, especially when they are interested and fully involved. Behaviour around the school and in the playground is also good.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are very good. Pupils relate very well both to each other and to adults. They welcome opportunities to take responsibility; their personal development is good.
Attendance	Attendance is unsatisfactory because of the very high level of authorised

	absence.
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Relationships are a strength of the school. Pupils have very good attitudes towards each other due mainly to the very good example set by the adults in the school community.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching of the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education is good. During the inspection, the teaching in many lessons was at least good, including a substantial amount that was very good; there was no unsatisfactory teaching. This represents a considerable improvement since the last inspection. The teaching of English, including literacy, was at least good in two-thirds of lessons. In mathematics, including numeracy, teaching was nearly always good or very good.

The teaching has many strengths, including the way that teachers and their assistants work together and with the children. There is a good mix of whole class, group and individual work and a good use of questions to revise and extend learning.

Pupils show interest in their work and make good gains in their knowledge, skills and understanding. They respond well to encouragement and support, work hard and concentrate well. Pupils become increasingly confident in communicating with others and see themselves as successful learners.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a good range of interesting and well-planned learning opportunities which include all the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. Provision for the areas of learning in the Foundation Stage is good. The curriculum is enriched by a good programme of lunchtime clubs and by visits and visitors.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	There are effective procedures for identifying pupils with special educational needs and good support is provided for them. As a result they achieve well and are fully included in all school activities.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The level of staffing is insufficient to meet fully the needs of pupils who are learning English as an additional language. The school does the best it can with limited resources and most pupils make good progress as a result of dedicated staff support. It is not enough to enable them to achieve national standards by the end of Year 2.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	This is a strength of the school. There is very good provision for moral development - pupils have a clear sense of right and wrong. Provision for social development is good, the school uses a good range of strategies to encourage pupils to work and play together. Well-planned assemblies support pupils' spiritual development. Provision for cultural development is sound.
How well the school cares	The school is a safe and secure place in which adults provide good support

for its pupils	and guidance for pupils. There are good procedures for keeping track of pupils' progress and for providing them with appropriate work.
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Relationships with parents are good and are securely based on openness and good communication.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The very good leadership of the headteacher provides a clear vision for future development that is sharply focused on raising standards. The senior management team is well motivated and has clearly defined responsibilities. Together they make a dedicated and hardworking team who share a common agenda of school improvement.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are closely involved in monitoring the school's improvement programme and its current work, and make a good contribution to forward planning. Governors fulfil all of their statutory responsibilities.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher and senior staff have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and have identified clearly areas for future improvement. These have been included in the school development plan. Monitoring of teaching and learning has already led to improvements in quality.
The strategic use of resources	Development and financial planning are very good. The school manages its budget very well and uses all of its specific grants very effectively in raising standards. The school very actively seeks to obtain the best value from its financial resources.

The overall levels of staffing, accommodation and learning resources are good. Teaching assistants and administrative, caretaking, cleaning and lunchtime staff make essential contributions to the success of the school. There is inadequate provision for teaching English to all the pupils for whom it is an additional language. A few classrooms and play areas are too small. A particular strength of the school's leadership and management is the shared commitment of the headteacher, staff and the governing body.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The views of the 130 parents who returned completed questionnaires and of the 11 who attended the pre-inspection meeting with the registered inspector were taken into account. Percentages refer to questionnaire returns.

What pleases more than 90 per cent of parents	What some parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like school and make good progress.</li> <li>• They are set the right amount of homework.</li> <li>• Teaching is good and the school has high expectations of children.</li> <li>• Behaviour is good and the school helps children to become mature and responsible.</li> <li>• The school is well managed and led and works closely with parents who are comfortable about approaching it with questions or problems.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The range of activities outside lessons (13 per cent).</li> </ul>

The inspection team agrees wholeheartedly with the positive views expressed by parents. But it also considers the range and quality of extra-curricular activities, including lunchtime clubs, to be good.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. The attainment of most children on entry to the reception class is low compared with what is expected for their age. Many speak little or no English and until last year there was very little pre-school provision in the area. The recently introduced 'Flying Start' initiative, which brings younger children into the school after Christmas and Easter to provide extra time before formal entry the following September, is having a positive effect on children's learning and progress. It is too early to judge its likely impact on national test results at the end of Year 2. Children are happy to come to school and the Foundation Stage provides them with a good start to their education. They make at least satisfactory progress overall, because they have useful opportunities to broaden and consolidate their knowledge in all areas of learning. On entry to Year 1, many children achieve national expectations in personal, social and emotional, creative and physical development, and in some aspects of knowledge and understanding of the world. In communication, language and literacy, many children are still working at a level that is well below national expectations, and in mathematical development they are below national expectations. There is evidence that groups of girls achieve less well than other girls and less well than boys.
2. The school's National Curriculum test and assessment results for pupils Year 2 in 2001 show that pupils' attainment was below average compared with the national average in writing and well below average in reading and mathematics. There were significant differences between the performances of some groups of girls, and between girls and boys generally. The school's performance was well below average in comparison with similar schools in mathematics, below average in reading and in line with the average in writing. In the previous year's tests the comparisons were above average in both reading and writing and average in mathematics. The reasons for the differences are at least three-fold. First, the results of assessments made when children entered school show that the year group that started in the reception classes in 1998 (and left Year 2 in 2001) had a high proportion of pupils who either failed to register a score or achieved the lower levels. This was particularly the case in number and the use of mathematical language. Second, the 2000 year group benefited from support in English, mathematics and science lessons from an experienced bilingual teacher, funded from the Ethnic Minorities Achievement Grant. This grant was subsequently cut because results had improved from 1998 and 1999. As a consequence the 2001 year group had less of this specialist support. Third, one-third of pupils had taken extended holidays, while a further quarter had joined the school during Year 1 or Year 2.
3. Assessment on entry to the school indicates that both the current Year 1 and the current Year 2 include a small group of more able pupils. These pupils are known well to staff and are making good progress from their higher starting points. They contribute to the better overall standards of attainment now seen in the school. The school provides well for pupils with special educational needs and this has a positive impact on their progress and achievement, which matches the learning of their peers. Pupils are well supported by teaching assistants with whom they have good relationships. Teaching assistants lack up-to-date training, to increase their skills. In Year 2, the arrangements for setting literacy and numeracy lessons enable pupils to be taught in smaller groups. This is a positive strategy and enables teachers to set work that is well matched to pupils' needs. Additional support for less able pupils ensures that all pupils, regardless of ability or ethnicity, take a full and active part in all aspects of school life.
4. Inspection evidence indicates that the attainment of pupils at the age of seven is in line with national expectations in art, geography, history, music and physical education. In English, mathematics and science it indicates that attainment is below national expectations, but not well below as shown by the most recent national test results. In design and technology and information and communication technology (ICT) pupils' attainment is above national expectations. In religious education pupils achieve in line with expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. The school sets realistic targets for its pupils and is making good progress towards achieving them. (For further

details of pupils' achievements and progress in the Foundation Stage and in the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education, see paragraphs 72 – 148).

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

5. Pupils of all ages, including those in the reception classes, display very positive attitudes to the school. They are enthusiastic in class, in the playground, and in the various extra-curricular activities. Pupils hold the adults in high regard, and parents rightly consider the school provides a very safe and secure place for their children to learn and develop.
6. The behaviour of pupils is good, both in and outside the classroom. When teaching is particularly good, pupils' behaviour and level of involvement are also very good. Pupils are attentive in class and show courtesy and respect to both teachers and their peers. They display care and compassion to others less fortunate than themselves, as witnessed during an assembly which highlighted responsibility to 'care and share'.
7. Pupils with special educational needs generally behave well and enjoy school, especially when teaching is carefully matched to their requirements. When teaching is slow and pupils are expected to sit for long periods listening without active involvement, the more immature pupils get distracted and unsettle the rest of the class.
8. Pupils within the different age groups behave equally well outside the classroom. Movement around the school is quiet and orderly, with due respect being paid to members of staff, visitors and fellow pupils. In the playground, behaviour is good with pupils relating very well, both to each other and to their adult supervisors. Older pupils, in particular, collaborate effectively in play activities and use their time constructively without the need for excessive control and direction. During the inspection, behaviour was occasionally lively but never oppressive, and no incidents of bullying, sexism or racism were observed or reported. There have been no exclusions in the past year.
9. Pupils throughout the school display a very high level of regard for the feelings, values and beliefs of others. They fully appreciate the differences which exist within a multi-ethnic and multi-cultural school community and respond to these with sensitivity and understanding.
10. Pupils demonstrate a good level of initiative and responsibility that is fully appropriate to their age. They enthusiastically undertake any tasks delegated to them and show initiative; for example, with the purchase of equipment for wet lunchtime play. Year 2 pupils help with the distribution of milk, collect litter, and play music tapes for lessons and assemblies.
11. The level of authorised absence is unsatisfactory and significantly exceeds the national average. A major contributory factor to this high and unacceptable level is the number of extended visits during term time, particularly to the Indian sub-continent. It significantly hinders pupils' progress. Punctuality is generally satisfactory, although there is a small hard-core of regular latecomers.

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

12. The overall quality of teaching is good. During the inspection it was good or better in 62 per cent of lessons, including 21 per cent that were very good or excellent; there was no unsatisfactory teaching. This represents a considerable improvement since the last inspection, when 11 per cent of teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory and only three per cent was very good. Reasons for the overall improvement include the successful adoption of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy and effective monitoring by the headteacher.
13. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is always at least sound with nearly half of lessons being good or very good. It was good or better in more than two-thirds of lessons observed in the infant classes, where a quarter of lessons were very good. The teaching of English, including literacy, was at least good in two-thirds of lessons. In mathematics, including numeracy, teaching was nearly always good or very good.

14. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good, with some very good practice observed. Teachers have a good understanding of how to set work to meet the needs of less able pupils. Basic skills are taught well, especially spoken language. Teachers and teaching assistants are not always sure how to teach the basic skills of phonics and spelling to pupils with more specific learning difficulties who need a more multi-sensory approach. There are good procedures for assessing and monitoring pupils' progress and for setting individual education targets. However, the latter are not always specific enough and are currently not shared with pupils so that they can be aware, in simple terms, of what they need to do to improve. Teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning in whole class lessons and in small group and individual work. This ensures that all pupils are fully included in the life of the school and make similar progress to their peers.
15. Particular strengths of the teaching include the positive and encouraging way that teachers manage their pupils and the good expectations that they have of them in terms of both work and behaviour. Teachers try hard to prepare work for pupils that is interesting and matches their prior learning and language skills. As a result of this and the very good relationships between adults and pupils, there is a pleasant and purposeful working atmosphere in classrooms. Pupils show a lot of interest in what they are set to learn, concentrate well and work hard. This was the case in an excellent literacy lesson in Year 1 where pupils were engrossed in the task of writing an advertisement for a lost teddy. There was very good development of vocabulary and many pupils said that they did not want to stop at the end of the lesson. The teacher used very interesting resources and a wide variety of teaching strategies within a context of very good teamwork. This ensured that all pupils were really motivated and developed confidence throughout the lesson.
16. **Other features common to the good or better teaching seen during the inspection included:**
- clear identification of what pupils were to learn and sharing this with them at the start of the lesson;
  - good use of questions to revise what had been already learned and to check on and reinforce learning at the end of the lesson;
  - a brisk pace and a good balance of whole class, group and individual work and of different activities – speaking and listening, writing, practical;
  - very good teamwork between teachers and teaching assistants, particularly in relation to meeting the needs of pupils who are learning English as an additional language.
17. **Where teaching was less successful, although still satisfactory, the reasons included:**
- planning not sharply enough focused on what pupils were to learn in the lesson or not making this clear to them;
  - pace too slow or too much time spent on one activity;
  - too little time was allocated to the lesson or was not managed well with the result that there was insufficient time for checking and consolidating learning.

### **Learning and progress**

18. Pupils of all abilities, including the many for whom English is an additional language, are skilfully helped to become confident learners. The quality of learning closely matched that of the teaching. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to their work were judged to be good in most lessons and were never less than satisfactory. Most pupils develop good work habits, taking pride in what they do and being ready to volunteer answers and suggestions. They are helped to develop good skills of group work and of working independently.

### **The quality of marking**

19. The quality of teachers' marking of work in books varies between classes and subjects. At best it includes comments that clearly show pupils what is good about their work or how it can be improved. Much marking does not include written comments because of pupils' relatively under-

developed language skills. Marking with pupils is often an oral activity and some opportunities are missed for providing written comments that might be useful to the teacher, pupil or parents afterwards.

## Homework

20. Homework is set regularly and is making an important contribution to the achievement of pupils and to the involvement of parents in their children's education. Parents are pleased with the amount and type of homework set. (For further details about the quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage and in the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education, see paragraphs 72 - 148).

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

21. The previous report stated that the school's curriculum was broad and generally balanced. Statutory requirements for all subjects were met except in science, geography and history. There was a need to improve the effectiveness of planning to ensure progress in pupils' learning. Curricular issues have been addressed effectively. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is good, well planned and organised. The school now fully meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. The curriculum is now planned in line with the latest national guidance. All subjects have policies and schemes of work and year group curriculum leaders support subject co-ordinators. All pupils have full access to the school's curriculum and this reflects one of the school's main aims. The school has implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies well. The introduction of sets for literacy and numeracy has improved the quality of learning. Computers are being used effectively to support a number of subjects. In particular there are good links with art and design and with design and technology. An improving area of curricular provision is the increasing skill with which subjects are being linked together to make best use of time and to strengthen learning.
22. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and has improved since the last inspection. Pupils are now fully included in lessons and the setting arrangement in Year 2 enables work to be better matched to ability. Pupils are occasionally withdrawn for specific help, for example, for additional reading support. This does not affect their access to the curriculum, and is a positive strategy that develops their confidence and means they are more willing to contribute in lessons. There is good liaison with outside agencies to support and guide the learning of specific pupils. Pupils with statements of special educational needs are catered for well and specific additional support is used effectively.
23. Good provision is made for health education and drugs awareness. This is incorporated effectively within aspects of the science curriculum and within a developing personal, health and social education programme. The school is part of the 'Healthy Schools' project supported by the local authority. The project incorporates many aspects of the programme for personal, health and social education. The governing body reviews provision for sex education annually and the current policy is to answer pupils' questions as and when appropriate.
24. A good range of extra-curricular activities is provided for all pupils. All activities take place at lunchtime. Apart from weekly recorder groups and a summer term dance club, activities relating to the *Tops* physical education scheme operate at lunchtime. The *Tops* scheme contributes significantly to resources in physical education. Activities make a very good contribution to the development of personal and social skills and contribute significantly to learning in music. The curriculum is enriched by visits. These include a visit to Wardown Park for history, the Roald Dahl museum for literacy and Bekonscot model village for geography. A number of local walks are also made, often to support geography and art and design. The school has satisfactory links with the community. An education-business partnership is currently being explored with regard to reading and to attendance awards. The school takes part in Harvest and Christmas festivals supported by local clergy. The school has a number of visitors during the year who contribute to all aspects of the curriculum. The fire brigade, charity workers, a local vicar and theatre groups have visited the school during the current year. In addition there has been a display of falconry and a presentation of poetry and music.

25. The school has established very good links with other schools, including the adjacent junior school. Headteachers, teachers and specialist staff from William Austin and the adjacent junior school meet regularly so that transfer of pupils is as seamless as possible. There are very good links with a pre-school group. A recent initiative has established a link with a similar infants' school in Luton to focus particularly on strategies to promote reading.
26. Building upon the findings in the previous report the school promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. This is a strength of the school and reflects the values expressed in the school's aims; it has a strong influence on pupils' learning.
27. Evidence from visits to assemblies and lesson observations indicates that good provision is made for pupils' spiritual development. There are regular well-planned assemblies, and visitors include a Baptist pastor as well as other local clergy. The planning document, identifying themes and focus for delivery of spiritual development, is excellent. In one assembly pupils played the roles of children on a picnic. Some of the children were supposed to have no food while others had a lot. The simple message was that of sharing which was endorsed effectively by a quotation from Gandhi. A time for reflection enabled pupils to recall the moral as well as the spiritual aspects of what they had heard. Another source of reflection is the opportunity for pupils to add a 'special leaf' to a tree in their classroom. This records their thanks to someone or recognises something special. Although few religious education lessons were seen, planning suggests good support for pupils' spiritual development.
28. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. There is a system of rewards that is not exclusively for academic success. 'Reward' assemblies acknowledge pupils for effort, achievement, good behaviour, politeness and good deeds. Classroom and playground rules are well understood; pupils clearly know the difference between right and wrong. In a Year 2 lesson about the boy who cried wolf, pupils understood the results of his actions and recognised that they were a direct consequence of his behaviour. Pupils listen well and respect the views of others. Personal, social and health education lessons help pupils to develop an understanding of citizenship through discussion and support for charities. Pupils' understanding of service to others was enhanced in a Year 2 lesson on 'people who support us'. They contributed well to a lesson on being unwell and knew of the role of doctors, nurses and dentists and their contribution to society.
29. Provision for social development is good. Pupils in Year 2 assist the daily running of the school through helping with preparations for assembly. They carry out their responsibilities well. They enjoy doing their jobs and discharge them commendably. They enjoy helping their teachers. Pupils learn to care about their environment and to value the people within it. Pupils with special educational needs are well integrated and take a full and active role in the life of the school. In a Year 2 class a pupil with special educational needs undertook an important role taking round a dummy microphone to indicate who was to speak.
30. Provision for cultural development is good. History contributes well to an understanding of other cultures. Pupils learn about the past through artefacts and teacher re-creations, for example of a Victorian kitchen. Pupils learn about the school environment through local walks. They compare different places when they study an African village and the places visited by Barnaby Bear. Pupils learn about famous artists such as Monet, Rembrandt and Van Gogh. They hear music from western traditions and listen to music performed by visiting musicians. Through religious education, they learn about other faiths, beliefs and traditions: for example, they learn about the Chinese New Year. However, they do not visit places of worship or enjoy visitors from other than the local Christian churches. A good focus on different foods and clothes enhances pupils' awareness of the cultural diversity within their community. There are many displays covering all areas of the curriculum. Many focus on key vocabulary and ask questions which contribute well to pupils' cultural development. The school fosters harmony between ethnic groups and provides a sound basis for the development of mutual tolerance and responsible citizenship.

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

31. The school provides a safe and secure environment in which pupils develop well both academically and socially.
32. All members of staff are fully aware of their health and safety responsibilities and these are discharged with diligence and commitment. Good health and safety procedures have been established and are followed meticulously. Organisational arrangements for health and safety are carefully monitored by the governing body. Its responsibility is very effectively exercised through a governor who has been delegated specific accountability. There is a health and safety policy which comprehensively details specific responsibilities and organisational arrangements. Further information is contained in the staff handbook.
33. The quality of risk assessments is good. Classroom teachers are responsible for assessing health and safety risks in classrooms. Fully documented risk assessments are carried out before pupils go on educational visits. First aid procedures are fully adequate, and all accidents, however minor, are properly recorded. More serious incidents are appropriately investigated. Fire prevention and control procedures have been established and are clearly understood by adults and pupils. Health and safety issues are incorporated effectively into the curriculum. In a design and technology lesson considerable emphasis is placed on the safe use of tools. Appropriate emphasis was placed on the importance of washing ones hands prior to preparing food.
34. Procedures for child protection are good. The headteacher is responsible for child protection and teachers have been made fully aware of their roles. There is an appropriate child protection policy. Staff responsibilities are further detailed in the staff handbook.
33. Arrangements for monitoring pupils' academic performance and personal development are good. Teachers have a good understanding and knowledge of pupils, which allows them to respond effectively to their personal needs. Pupils' personal development is closely monitored and mechanisms for recording progress are fully in place.
34. The school has worked hard to develop its assessment and monitoring procedures. This has led to a good level of improvement since the last inspection. It now has good procedures to assess and monitor pupils' academic achievements. A careful analysis of assessments on entry is used well to identify children with special educational needs, children's level of language acquisition, and their attainment in the six areas of learning of the Foundation Stage curriculum. In Years 1 and 2, regular half termly assessments, portfolios of levelled work, and careful and detailed analysis of national assessment data, are used to track progress and to set class targets for improvement. The progress of individual pupils is carefully tracked in most subjects. Assessment information is not used to set individual short-term targets for improvement, nor is it shared with the pupils themselves. Individual educational targets, set for pupils with special educational needs, vary in quality. Many are too broad and cannot easily be shared with pupils or parents. The school has correctly identified these as weaknesses and targeted them as the next area for development in its assessment procedures.
35. The use of assessment to adapt teaching and learning has improved significantly and is now very good. Assessment analysis has provided the school with a powerful tool with which to identify the attainment and progress of different groups of pupils; for example, by ethnicity and gender. The school quickly identifies differences in attainment, and its response is varied and effective. For example, pupils are now set by ability in Year 2 for English and mathematics, and the good allocation of staff ensures that less able pupils are taught in smaller groups. Additional resources have been bought and staff trained to support and encourage reading and writing across the curriculum; this is beginning to have a positive impact on standards. The school has also identified a group of underachieving girls who lack confidence in their ability. Relevant additional support is being given which is slowly developing the girls' willingness to learn and participate in activities.
36. Educational and personal support given to pupils is good. Teachers provide effective feedback to pupils on their academic progress and personal development. Members of staff are approachable

and are effective in providing advice and counselling. The headteacher is readily available to provide comfort and support to pupils.

37. Procedures for monitoring attendance and promoting good attendance are satisfactory. Records are carefully analysed, and unexplained or excessive absence followed up by letter, by telephone or by personal visit. The school liaises effectively with the Educational Welfare Officer who is responsible for making home visits. Registration is carried out efficiently and without fuss.
38. The school's effective management systems promote high standards of pupils' behaviour. Pupils respond well to the strategy of positive rewards which operates throughout the school. Where sanctions have to be used they are fair and appropriate. Written procedures are clear and concise, and they are implemented fairly and consistently throughout the school. Guidance relating to oppressive behaviour meets the needs of the school and is well understood by all members of staff.
39. The school has good systems for identifying and assessing special educational needs, and this information is used effectively to set targets on individual education plans. The effort and commitment of support staff make a positive contribution to pupils' progress.

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

40. Parents hold the school in very high regard. They consider that it provides education of good quality for their children in a safe and secure environment. Teachers are seen as competent, approachable and helpful, with very effective support being provided by teaching assistants. Parents believe that behaviour is good and that the school is very effective in dealing with all forms of oppressive behaviour, including racism and bullying. Parents state that the school keeps them very well informed, particularly with respect to their children's academic and social development. They consider that the headteacher and governing body manage the school well. Parents' opinions are fully endorsed by the inspection team.
41. Links between the school and parents are good. Members of staff are friendly and relaxed. Teaching staff are readily accessible, both before and after school. This provides parents with opportunities to raise problems or queries at an early stage. The school makes strenuous and effective efforts to overcome language differences. It does this by using interpreters and translation to ensure that all parents and carers are kept fully up-to-date with developments.
42. The partnership between the school and parents is formalised and consolidated effectively through a home-school agreement which details the responsibilities of the school, the parents and the pupils themselves. A majority of parents have signed and returned this agreement.
43. Parental involvement in the school is good and makes a positive contribution to the quality of learning and to the personal development of pupils. Parents regularly assist in the classroom and provide a valuable resource to teachers. Practical assistance is given with school visits, fund-raising events and with charitable activities. The Friends Association is very effective in raising money for the school and provides a social forum which brings together members of staff and parents.
44. The school provides a range of good quality information to parents. Newsletters are frequent and informative. The school brochure is well presented, comprehensive and 'reader-friendly'. The governors' annual report to parents provides a good summary of activities and results and meets all statutory requirements.
45. Reports of pupils' progress are sent to parents annually and provide a good and detailed summary of pupils' aptitudes and attainment. They highlight pupils' personal development and opportunities for further academic progress. They are clear, concise and easy to read.
46. A parents' evening is held each term. It provides a good opportunity for parents to discuss children's progress with the teachers. In addition, parents are invited to 'information' evenings which

familiarise them with current approaches to teaching basic skills, such as literacy and numeracy. These evenings help parents provide additional learning opportunities, particularly in reading, for their children.

47. The school provides appropriate information for parents of pupils with special educational needs. Parents are actively involved in annual reviews and the special educational needs coordinator ensures that all parents are informed of their children's individual education targets. The school has relevant plans to develop further the policy and links with parents in line with a revised code of practice.
48. Parental support for learning at home is generally good, with pupils being given effective help and encouragement with reading. In some cases, parental support is limited because of difficulties with language.
49. The family worker improves considerably liaison between school and home. Visits from her assist in resolving many attendance, behaviour and learning problems. She encourages parents very effectively to help their children learn and play constructively. She does this in a mother and toddlers' group which is held at school under the 'Flying Start' programme (see paragraph 74).

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

50. The headteacher provides very good leadership and is very well supported in all her work by the deputy headteacher and senior management team. Together, they have clearly identified the school's areas for improvement and are implementing an effective programme with a strong focus on the need to raise standards. This includes the monitoring of teaching and learning, monitoring of pupils' progress and intervening with appropriate support whenever a pupil falters in his or her learning.
51. The school has successfully addressed all the issues raised at the last inspection and has made good improvement since then in many aspects of its work. Improvement has been made in developing pupils' literacy skills across the curriculum. Standards in design and technology and ICT are now above national expectations for pupils' ages. Curricular planning has improved. The reading scheme has been updated and a more stimulating range of reading material has been purchased. The quality of teaching has improved.
52. The headteacher is very good at delegating responsibilities to staff. A team approach is well developed, and all staff recognise the need to improve standards and the quality of education provided by the school. All teachers have responsibility for some aspects of the work of the school. Their work in monitoring standards of pupils' assessments, and monitoring teaching in their subject, is well planned. They are given time away from the classroom to carry out these tasks. Provision is made for feedback to teachers and the whole staff where issues for improvement are found.
53. The headteacher works closely with the governing body which contributes well to shaping the future direction of the school. Governors are very well informed and led by an able chairperson. The governing body is well aware of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. This understanding means that it is well placed to support further improvements in the quality of education provided and the standards achieved. A range of its responsibilities is delegated to specific governors who are usefully involved in the monitoring of the work of the school. Several governors make focused visits to the school in term time. They report back to the governing body with a clear view of priorities to improve provision. The governing body appropriately fulfils all its statutory responsibilities. It ensures that the school provides daily assemblies and opportunities for pupils to reflect effectively on their beliefs and those of others.
54. Development planning is very good. The headteacher and staff evaluate progress during the previous year and agree new priorities for planned improvements. The governing body usefully moderates and approves the priorities. The current development plan is well structured, with clear

targets. Decisions are based on clear educational priorities, to improve the quality of learning and raise standards.

55. The school's commitment to equality of opportunity for all and good relationships is reflected through its work. This is seen especially in the way in which the very high proportion of pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs are fully integrated into all aspects of school life. Their needs are identified through early assessment and all staff take responsibility for ensuring that these pupils are appropriately supported. Funding for pupils with English as an additional language has been drastically reduced for this school year, resulting in the unsatisfactory provision for the growing number of these pupils. This is having a negative impact on their achievement.
56. The management of special educational needs is good. There is a good overview of the provision for pupils with special educational needs. Staff understand pupils' needs well and as a result they are appropriately supported by class teachers and teaching assistants. This ensures that the school complies with the Code of Practice and fulfils its statutory requirements. The governor for special educational needs is kept fully informed and provides appropriate support. The governing body receives useful reports on the effects of provision for special educational needs.
57. The implementation of the school's aims, values and policies is good and is clearly supported by the pupils, the parents, the staff and the governors. The school effectively promote positive attitudes, the development of self-confidence, self-worth and the skills and qualities required to be caring and fulfilled members of society. The school's aims are incorporated effectively into all aspects of the school. This is shown through the positive behaviour of the pupils and through their good levels of interest in their work. The school is a happy community because all the adults share a high commitment to developing the potential of the pupils. Throughout the school there is a strong sense of commitment to learning.
58. The school makes adequate use of information technology in its administration: for example, to provide updates of the school budget for the governing body. There is the potential for more use to be made of programs that would support many of the school's systems and make them more efficient. These include the storage and retrieval of information relating to special educational needs, assessment, planning and target setting.
59. The school is appropriately staffed and there is a good balance of experience and expertise. The presence of bilingual teachers and teaching assistants is of particular benefit to the school. The procedures for inducting new staff have been effective. As a result there is a strong team spirit, shared commitment and confidence in the school's procedures. Newly qualified teachers follow a very good induction programme during their first year.
60. Accommodation is currently satisfactory but will be upgraded when new buildings are opened in the very near future. The main school building is attractively designed, spacious and maintained in good condition by the site agent and his staff. The external temporary classrooms are less satisfactory but are soon to be replaced. The playground areas, although safe and secure, are small, particularly the one for Foundation Stage pupils.
61. Learning resources are good. Books are plentiful and fully meet the needs of the curriculum. Other learning material is in good supply, appropriate to needs and sensibly deployed throughout the school. The new information and communication technology base, which houses four computers, is good and used well.
62. Very good financial planning ensures that educational priorities are well supported. The governing body's general purposes committee, which includes finance, is led effectively and maintains a clear view of both long- and short-term budget issues. The governors are prudent in their budgeting and their strategic planning is good. Resources are carefully allocated according to the priorities identified in the school development plan. As a result, the school's budget is managed well, and financial control and administration is good overall. The full governing body agrees budget allocations annually. Governors monitor expenditure regularly in order to check that actual

expenditure matches the agreed budget. Clear financial information is made available by the headteacher to all governors. At present the school has a large budget surplus but this will disappear when bills for the new building are paid.

63. The school makes very good use of the specific grants to support pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs, and for the training of teachers and teaching assistants. Extra funding has to be allocated from the school's budget to cover the support of pupils' with English as an additional language. The governing body, together with the skilful support of the office manager takes very good care to apply the principles of best value when obtaining goods and services: competitive quotes and tenders are sought. This ensures prudent spending. The school's administration is very efficient and routines are very well established. The school is effective and efficient and provides good value for money.

#### **THE PROVISION FOR AND STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS WITH ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE**

64. The school has a very high percentage of pupils who are learning English as an additional language. Currently, the figure stands at nearly 74 per cent, which is a marked increase from the figure for the previous year of just over 63 per cent. Of these pupils (264 in all), 82 are at an early stage of learning English, which is just over 31 per cent of the group and about 23 per cent of the total school population. The first language of all these pupils is one of the languages spoken in Bangladesh, India or Pakistan.
65. Until the school year 2000-2001, Year 2 pupils were supported by a co-ordinator for Ethnic Minority Achievement, who was fluent in several languages spoken in the local community. This support in National Curriculum subjects, particularly science, made a substantial contribution to improving the results achieved by Year 2 pupils in national tests in 2000. The school's plan to build on this success had to be changed due to the sad and unexpected death of the deputy headteacher. The support teacher had to take over the Year 2 class. This limited the help she was able to provide across the year group and adversely affected the 2001 test results, particularly in science.
66. The school tried to appoint a replacement teacher with the necessary skills, but as there was so little time, it was not possible to do more than employ a number of short-term teachers, few of whom had expertise in community languages. In April 2001 when the budgets were made known, the school was told that its funding for the support of pupils with English as an additional language would be cut as the improved results in the year 2000 meant that there was less necessity for the support. The school appointed a teacher who had previously worked as a support teacher in the school as co-ordinator in April 2001. However, she is only employed for about three-quarters of a timetable. There is now less specialist home language support than there was under the previous arrangement. Several of the teachers, teaching assistants and nursery nurses are fluent in one or more community languages which means that the situation is not as difficult as it might seem. However, there is only one Bengali speaker, which means that only one year-group can receive support on a regular basis in this language.
67. Most of the co-ordinator's time is taken up by providing support to pupils in the Year 1 classes. Since she is not a full-time employee her opportunities for innovation are limited. All of the teaching observed in this area was satisfactory and some was better than satisfactory. Pupils who are at an early stage of acquiring English receive support in their classrooms during lessons. With such large numbers this is the only practical approach and prevents the disruption that would be caused by periodically removing small groups from classes. It also ensures that these pupils remain well in touch with the topics being taught in every lesson. This support cannot always be targeted sufficiently closely. Pupils with needs other than the development of proficiency in English are often included in these groups and this dilutes the usefulness of the support. The mixed nature of the group means that very often, help is given to individuals in turn, rather than to a whole group. This is not the best use of the skills of the support teachers and staff.
68. The co-ordinator, with the help of class teachers and support staff, keeps very full records of the progress made by individual pupils. These records are hand-written and it is not easy to see

whether specific groups have particular needs. The records include when targets have been achieved. This information is not always used to inform planning and set the next target. The co-ordinator discusses with class teachers how planning the curriculum can meet the needs of these pupils but she has little time to do so.

69. Pupils with English as an additional language are the largest proportion of the school population. These pupils, like the rest of the school, make overall good progress from the time that they enter until the time that they leave, although their attainment in many respects is still below national expectations. Time constraints mean that support staff are not able to develop the more advanced language skills that pupils need to realise their full potential.

70. The governing body, headteacher and staff recognise that to improve provision for pupils who are learning English as an additional language the following need to be done:
- Increase the amount of time that the co-ordinator has available so that she can make the support staff more effective;
  - Develop the use of ICT in record keeping and assessment so that data can be retrieved and analysed more effectively;
  - Use efficiently the skills of the one member of staff who speaks fluent Bengali;
  - Arrange suitable training for members of staff who are new to teaching pupils in small groups.

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

71. **In line with its existing agenda for school development, the governing body, with the headteacher and staff, should plan to:**

**(1) Further improve pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science by:**

- maintaining and building on the present setting arrangements for literacy and numeracy in Year 2;
- providing as much focused, specialist, bilingual support as possible;
- teaching them to develop a cursive style of handwriting at an earlier stage than at present;
- planning more opportunities for using ICT to support and extend learning in these areas of the curriculum.

See paragraphs 64 - 70, 87 - 111, and 142.

*This area for improvement already features in the school's development planning*

**(2) Develop the support given to the increasing number of pupils who are learning English as an additional language by:**

- seeking urgently funding to provide adequate specialist support for the increasing number of pupils who need it, including those who have reached a basic level of competence;
- building on the existing good contribution of teaching assistants, by developing their skills in teaching reading and organising group work;
- increasing the provision of home language print and electronic resources;
- improving the storage, retrieval and use of assessment data through the use of ICT.

See paragraphs 55, 64 - 70, 88, 91, 107.

*This area for improvement already features in the school's development planning*

**(3) Move forward on its plans to involve pupils more in setting learning targets by:**

- clearly identifying what pupils are to learn in all lessons and sharing this with them;
- providing opportunities for pupils to discuss their progress towards specific targets, and encouraging them to set their own targets within a clear learning framework.

See paragraphs 16, 34, 98.

*This area for improvement already features in the school's development planning*

**(4) Improve the attendance of those pupils who are away for long periods by:**

- Impressing upon parents the importance of their children's regular attendance in order for them to make at least satisfactory progress.

See paragraph 11.

*This area for improvement already features in the school's development planning*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	61
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	51

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	12	25	23	0	0	0
Percentage	1.6	19.7	41	37.7	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than 1.6 percentage points

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	367
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	79

Special educational needs	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	45

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	264

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	37
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	37

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	9.8

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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*Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.*

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	55	64	119

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	43	42	45
	Girls	47	53	54
	Total	90	95	99
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	76 (78)	80 (82)	83 (90)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	44	44	43
	Girls	54	51	45
	Total	98	95	88
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (83)	80 (87)	74 (86)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

## Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	12
Black – African heritage	2
Black – other	2
Indian	14
Pakistani	123
Bangladeshi	44
Chinese	0
White	28
Any other minority ethnic group	13

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

## Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

### **Teachers and classes**

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	16.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.6
Average class size	29.1

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

Total number of education support staff	23
Total aggregate hours worked per week	589.5

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2000/2001
	£
Total income	868731
Total expenditure	822127
Expenditure per pupil	2252
Balance brought forward from previous year	107679
Balance carried forward to next year	154283

This large budget surplus has been set aside to meet bills in connection with the present building work

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	6

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

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

37%

Number of questionnaires sent out

352

Number of questionnaires returned

130

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	71	29	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	52	42	3	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	62	30	6	1	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	43	52	5	0	1
The teaching is good.	62	33	2	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	55	36	5	2	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	59	37	2	1	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	63	37	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	58	35	5	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	60	36	1	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	56	42	0	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	35	38	11	2	14

Some rows in this table do not add up to 100 because of rounding

### Other issues raised by parents

They appreciated the many opportunities for parents to be involved in the work of the school.

They also liked the open invitation to see lessons at any time, have lunch with their children or attend assemblies.

## **PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM AND SUBJECTS**

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

72. At the time of the last inspection, no clear judgement was made about provision for children under five years old, but they were achieving broadly in line with expectations by the time they were five. The provision for learning for children in the Foundation Stage is good. The detailed planning and organisation includes an effective system for recording the children's attainment in each area of learning; this has a positive impact on the children's learning in the reception classes.
73. All the children enter the reception classes in the September after their fourth birthday. In addition to this, there is a 'Flying Start' initiative, which brings in younger children after Christmas and Easter and provides extra time in school before formally entering in the following September. Many children now starting in the reception classes have attended the recently opened, privately run pre-school, situated in the school grounds. There are strong liaison links between the school and pre-school through the school's family worker and reception staff. There are good induction procedures for settling the children thoughtfully and sensitively into school routines. For example, various staff make very worthwhile home visits before the children start school.
74. Children's attainment measured by assessment on entry covers a wide range, and is well below average overall. The majority of children starting school have no English or have under-developed English language and social skills. The children in the reception classes make satisfactory progress overall, because they have useful opportunities to broaden and consolidate their knowledge in all areas of learning. Those children with special educational needs are identified quickly and fully integrated into the class. They make progress at the same rate as the other children. Good use is made of assessment, which at times is made in the children's mother tongue. The information gained when the children first join the reception classes is used effectively to plan learning activities for them. Continual observations and assessments are made of each child's progress to ensure that work continues to match their needs and build on their previous learning. All the staff, including the nursery nurses and other teaching assistants, work extremely well together and collaborate very effectively to plan activities and assess children's needs.

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

75. By the end of the Foundation Stage, the majority of children achieve the expected standards in their personal and social development and they make good progress. They are beginning to form positive relationships and to communicate suitably with one another and with adults. Relationships are very good and the staff are very effective in creating a warm and caring atmosphere in which the children develop good attitudes to learning and become self-confident. They are taught the difference between right and wrong. For example, during a discussion on friendship, the children were asked to think about what to do if someone was unkind to them. Simple classroom rules are appropriately displayed for the children to appreciate; for example, 'Help each other.' The children are expected to clear away after completing the activities. Simple routines are being taught in which the children thrive and good progress is made. For example, the children move sensibly to their table activities and share resources well; they have many opportunities to select from a wide variety of activities. This successfully develops the children's social and personal skills, particularly increasing their understanding of individual responsibility and is a direct result of the sound teaching that they receive. The majority of children remain interested in tasks until completed, particularly when working with an adult. The purposeful atmosphere and the good provision of a wide range of experiences ensure that the pupils develop well in this area. The children come from a wide diversity of ethnic groups and cultures and good provision is made for them to learn about one another's cultures through celebrations of the various religious festivals.
76. The overall good teaching in this area has a positive impact on children's learning. When classrooms are well managed children are secure and confident. The teachers plan worthwhile opportunities for the children to learn and to concentrate on a given task. Praise and

encouragement are used very effectively to raise the children's self-esteem and give them confidence. By working very well together, the staff give the children good role models.

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

77. By the end of the reception year, the majority of children do not achieve standards expected for their age in communication, language and literacy. They make satisfactory progress from entry into the reception classes and are appropriately developing their skills in receptive English. Adults use appropriate questioning to encourage the children to express their ideas and increase their vocabulary. Children listen well to stories and are keen to learn. There are good links with other subjects. For example, in a mathematics lesson, everything is designed to promote the children's speaking and listening skills. Some teachers skilfully use the children's first language to explain the meaning of what is being read. Children are developing skills in writing, which are appropriate for their ability. For example, by the end of the Foundation Stage, most children write their own names and copy letters in recognisable script. The majority of children understand how books are written and know that pictures tell a story and words have meaning. Teachers successfully encourage all children to talk about the pictures in the books in order to promote improvement in their under-developed speaking skills in English.
78. Overall, the quality of teaching in this area of learning is satisfactory with some good aspects. Lessons are well organised and good cross-curricular links are made with the other five areas of learning. For example, adults interact well with the children, particularly in discussion, to exploit any opportunities to increase children's vocabulary. All the staff use praise well to build up confidence and self-esteem. Activities are successfully prepared that make children think and keep them focused with interest on them. Planning takes careful account of the 'stepping stones' of learning recommended in the curriculum for the Foundation Stage.

### **Mathematical development**

79. In this area of learning, the majority of children enter the reception classes with well below average number skills. They make satisfactory progress but do not achieve the nationally expected standard by the end of the Foundation Stage. The children enjoy many worthwhile experiences. For example, they count and correctly sort numbers to nine orally and sometimes beyond and identify missing numbers in a sequence to ten. They compare, sort and match every-day objects. They are appropriately introduced to mathematical language such as 'big', 'little', 'faces', 'cube', 'cuboids', 'cone' and 'zero'. Teachers use many opportunities to reinforce their knowledge and understanding of number through consistent repetition of ordering numbers, in the singing of various number rhymes and in counting those children present each day. Learning is effective because the children have many opportunities to learn from and with each other and at different rates. They are given appropriate challenge to build on what they have learned and provided with the practical resources to enable them to solve problems.
80. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory with some good aspects and has a definite influence on children's learning and the sound progress they make. This teaching is characterised by clear and precise explanation and instructions so that the children know what is expected of them. All the reception staff efficiently plan together and are well deployed. Activities are planned effectively to meet the needs of all the children and clearly identified objectives ensure that the children progress appropriately.

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

81. By the end of the Foundation Stage, the majority of children achieve the required standard in some aspects of their knowledge and understanding of the world and they make satisfactory progress following entry into the reception classes. Because the majority of the children have under-developed English language skills, achieving certain aspects of this area is hampered by the children's insufficient vocabulary. Good opportunities are provided for the children to gain a wide range of experiences in this area. For example, they successfully design and make vehicles to

improve the different techniques for joining materials. They handle a variety of tools carefully; for example, when playing with dough. Scrutiny of children's past work on display showed that they skilfully use clay tools and make hand patterns in clay. Visitors to the school provide opportunities for the children to develop an understanding of how people live and work and help us. For example, a visit from a 'Bird' man gave the children an exciting learning experience. They saw and handled birds of prey in a secure learning situation. Good opportunities are provided for them to observe changes when food is cooked; for example, when they make pancakes or popcorn. They explore light as they shine a torch to create shadows in an 'igloo'. These experiences effectively enhance the children's speaking and listening skills as they talk about them. The children's computer skills are satisfactory; they appropriately develop eye and hand co-ordination through controlling the mouse and the direction keys when following programs.

82. The quality of teaching seen is satisfactory. Relationships are good and staff work well together as a team. The nursery nurses and the teaching assistants are very able and make a valuable contribution to the children's learning by skilfully reinforcing the understanding and effectively supporting them. The staff plan activities from the Stepping Stones of the Early Learning Goals. For example, activities that develop and increase the children's manipulation and observational skills. Activities are well matched to the needs of the children and they are precisely explained and demonstrated. Resources are carefully selected and prepared prior to the lesson.

### **Physical development**

83. By the end of the Foundation Stage, the majority of children make good progress and achieve the expected standards in physical development. There are many planned experiences for them to control small tools. By the time they are five, the majority of children control and manipulate safely objects, such as pencils, glue spreaders, paintbrushes, construction apparatus, modelling tools and scissors. A physical education lesson each week enhances the children's physical development. They learn to dress and undress independently and are taught to listen to instructions. Children learn to take turns as they move safely through an arrangement of different pieces of apparatus. There is a good link to language development as they use a new vocabulary to describe their experiences. The children are keen and enthusiastic and react well to the teachers' high expectations of their behaviour and response.
84. Overall, the quality of teaching is good with some very good teaching. The teachers make good provision for the children's physical development. Effective teaching is characterised by clear and precise explanation and instructions so that the children know what they have to do. Lessons are appropriately planned and structured and include for a clear development of skills. All staff are well deployed and understand what is expected of them. They have a very sensitive awareness of children's safety.

### **Creative development**

85. By the end of the Foundation Stage, the children's creative development meets the required standard of the Early Learning Goals. They make satisfactory progress. Scrutiny of the children's past work shows that they have daily opportunities to express themselves. They draw, paint, engage in imaginative play, and handle malleable materials such as play-dough. They produce pictures using a suitable range of techniques and create collage pictures. For example, they produce pictures from a variety of materials such as charcoal, pastels and seeds. They learn to mix colours. Being expected to put equipment away at the end of an activity effectively contributes to them becoming independent learners. They have regular opportunities to sing and to use percussion instruments. They are given worthwhile opportunities to recall their experiences through a selection of role-play activities.
86. The teaching is satisfactory. Creative development is appropriately fostered through a suitable variety of activities. All the staff are well organised and use resources which are thoughtfully prepared. They regularly talk to the children and ask relevant questions to enlarge their vocabulary and support their efforts. Staff work closely together and make positive contributions to the

children's learning. For example, they help them to select the most appropriate materials for their models. Opportunities for assessing children's progress are an integral part of the planning.

## ENGLISH

87. The previous inspection in 1997 reported standards in reading and writing which were in line with national expectations. Results for that year's national tests showed that standards were below the national average. Standards in the 2001 national tests fell from the previous years results. They were well below national expectations in reading and below them in writing. The school's emphasis on writing throughout the curriculum meant that standards in this aspect were however in line with similar schools. This was an improvement on the previous year's results and was a positive achievement. Pupils in that year group were attaining poor standards in all elements of English when they moved into Year 1. A very significant proportion of the pupils were learning English as an additional language and were at the very early stages of language acquisition. In addition, one-third of pupils had taken extended holidays, while a further quarter had joined the school after the start of Year 1. These factors had a significant impact on the overall standards attained. Despite this, pupils made good progress. Careful analysis of the results, in terms of ethnicity and gender, indicates that pupils' achievement was better than the average for the local education authority, with African Caribbean and Bangladeshi pupils achieving significantly better than pupils in other schools.
88. Current inspection findings confirm that standards at the end of Year 2 remain below national expectations in speaking and listening, reading and writing. Again, a very significant proportion of pupils in the current Year 2 attained very poor results in the assessments undertaken when they started school in the reception class. Many have taken extended holidays abroad, during their time at the school and this resulted in a significant fall in their attainment by the time that they returned. The proportion of pupils learning English as an additional language has also risen over the last two years and is very high. The school has used its assessment information very well to identify underachievement and to provide additional help where it is needed. Setting arrangements in Year 2 have made it easier for teachers to meet the very wide range of needs. The school has identified that the development of speaking and listening skills is a priority, especially for the development of reading and writing. As a result, staff have developed good strategies to support this area of the curriculum. Unfortunately the more able pupils who are learning English as an additional language are not being challenged to develop their language skills further because they lack specific specialist support. This is having a detrimental effect on their overall level of attainment.
89. With the exception of a group of underachieving girls, pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, are making good progress overall. As a result of the input of additional support, these girls, although remaining shy and reluctant to contribute, are now making satisfactory progress. In addition, reading has been targeted, following the dip in standards last year. Reading resources have improved significantly and now provide more interest for pupils. These new initiatives, although positive, have not been in place long enough to have a significant impact on overall standards.
90. When pupils move into Year 1, the majority have poor levels of ability in speaking and listening. The school rightly places considerable emphasis on the development of speaking skills both in English and in other subjects. As a result, although still attaining below average standards at the end of Year 2, pupils make good progress overall. Pupils generally listen carefully in lessons. Teachers have received relevant training so that they can develop pupils' speaking skills. This is evident when teachers use a range of highly interesting and fun provoking activities. For example, in an excellent lesson in Year 1, pupils eagerly pointed out the mistakes that 'Percy Puppet' was making, while a 'lost and careworn teddy' motivated them to suggest phrases for an advertisement. Other activities, such as 'talking partners' and role-play behind a large teacher-made television, encouraged pupils to speak in a number of pretend situations. They did this without feeling pressured or uncomfortable. They grew in confidence and did not want the lesson to end. Similar fun activities were used again in a Year 2 lesson. A pupil dressed in a wolf's mask was questioned by others. The wolf had to listen and reply. The pupils, because of effective support, practised and prepared simple questions, which they demonstrated to the class at the end of the lesson. The class teacher encouraged pupils to extend and develop their questions so that they all made very good progress.
91. In all subjects, teachers ensure that any special vocabulary is explained and understood. For example, in a Year 1 history lesson, pupils recognised several phrases that they could use when

talking about the past. In a science lesson, bilingual staff provided particularly good support by ensuring that pupils understood the main ideas. In all lessons, teaching assistants are deployed well, though they lack recent training and are not involved in the planning of lessons. They are dedicated to helping pupils learn, but their skills are not used efficiently to support pupils at various stages of learning English as an additional language.

92. The school has made considerable improvements in the provision for reading since the last inspection. The reading scheme used within school has been replaced, and in addition a new scheme has been purchased to provide a wide range of books for reading at home. An increased range of dual language books (books which are written in two languages) has also been provided. The school is emphasising reading this year as a result of its analysis of last year's disappointing results. These initiatives are having a positive impact on pupils' motivation and standards. Pupils currently attaining Level 2, for example, are targeted for individual daily support. Girls are supported in pairs and those girls identified as underachieving and who are not supported at home, also receive additional, focused help daily. More able pupils in Year 2, as a direct result of these improvements, and the increased emphasis within lessons are already attaining standards in line with expectations. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, although attaining below average standards, are making good progress. The group of underachieving girls are also becoming more confident, and are making at least satisfactory progress as a direct result of the additional support they receive.
93. Pupils enjoy the good quality texts that they share in class. Good use is made in lessons of guided reading to stimulate their thinking and to develop understanding. The mechanics of reading are taught well and teachers for the most part read shared texts in a lively manner, and at a good pace. Consequently, pupils enjoy the stories and are beginning to recognise the key elements of the stories heard. Many average attaining pupils are reading key words; recall stories through the use of picture clues and with help can tackle unfamiliar words, using their knowledge of letter sounds. However, they find it difficult to discuss why they like their favourite books or to talk about different types of books. Less able pupils, those with special educational needs and those at the early stages of learning English as an additional language, enjoy looking at the pictures in books and benefit from additional support. Teaching assistants, however, although highly dedicated, currently lack a range of strategies with which to better develop pupils' reading.
94. Writing is the weakest element of the subject. This is a direct result of pupils' limited fluency in spoken English. Standards in handwriting have improved since the last inspection, as there is now a more consistent approach in the school, with time for regular practice. However, few pupils are using a joined up style and many still struggle to form letters correctly. In addition, for many pupils, the direction of their writing in English, for example, is different to their home language. As a result, many become confused, when they have to keep taking their pencils off the page to form letters. The development of a cursive style at an earlier stage would better support their handwriting skills.
95. Much of pupils' writing is of personal accounts, although more able pupils do write for a range of purposes. Teachers use questions well to help pupils remember the sequence of the stories and support this with simple pictures. Word banks on tables and interesting displays of words in classrooms help pupils to use more interesting words. Punctuation and spelling is generally taught well, although more able pupils do become confused with the variation in the English spelling codes, when writing at length and this impacts on the standards they achieve. In other subjects, pupils are encouraged more frequently to write in their own words, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Staff introduce 'key subject words', to help pupils when writing and this is a beneficial approach.
96. As indicated, teaching overall is good. This has improved since the last inspection and, as a direct consequence, pupils now make good progress overall. The National Literacy Strategy has been introduced successfully; lessons are well planned and generally maintain a brisk pace that motivates pupils. More successful teaching uses a wide variety of interesting activities that stimulate pupils' interest. Teaching assistants in these lessons are very effectively involved in all aspects of the lesson and make a very positive contribution to learning. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen, although in some lessons teaching lacked pace. Pupils were expected to sit for too long

listening to the teacher. Limited strategies were used to support learning. Pupils for example, spent over long learning one letter sound, and then spent time copying from the board. This led to unsettled behaviour. In Year 2 pupils are effectively organised into ability groups, which enables the literacy strategy to be better adapted to meet the wide range of abilities in the school.

97. The additional Early Literacy strategy is used well in Year 1. Pupils enjoy these additional lessons and make good progress as a result. Nevertheless, there is scope to further adopt this strategy and to further adapt the literacy hour, in order to even more effectively meet the needs of the very high numbers of pupils who start in Year 1 with very low levels of attainment.
98. The management of the subject is good. All issues reported in the last inspection have been effectively addressed, and careful monitoring has indicated further areas of development. A well-focused staff development programme has ensured that teaching has improved. Literacy is now a high priority in the school and good cross-curricular links have been developed. The school is clearly aware of areas for development, including further developing the literacy strategy to better meet the needs of all pupils in the school. Plans are also in place to introduce individual targets for pupils. This would be a positive strategy, to enable pupils and their parents to be more aware, in simple terms, of what is needed to improve. Care needs to be taken however, to ensure that these targets are quite specific, and written in terms that pupils will understand. This is because, currently, individual targets set for pupils with special educational needs vary in quality, and are often too broad for pupils and parents to understand.

## **MATHEMATICS**

99. Pupils entering the school have a poor level of mathematical skills, including poor number recognition and very limited mathematical vocabulary. Even though pupils make good progress throughout the school, their standards are still below average by age seven. Seven-year-olds' test results in 2001 were below average in relation to similar schools. Inspection evidence confirms this. However, over the past four years results in national tests have improved above the level of results nationally and this is encouraging.
100. By the time they are seven, pupils are developing a sound grasp of number facts and their skill at manipulating numbers mentally is developing well. Pupils recognise odd and even numbers, know the two, five and ten multiplication tables, and can divide by two. Through engagement in practical tasks, they are developing a good understanding of the mathematical ideas of multiplication and division as, respectively, repeated addition and subtraction. They identify many two-dimensional shapes and some three-dimensional shapes and explain some of their properties. Pupils understand some basic measures; for example, they tell the time on digital and analogue clocks and are developing a more secure understanding of simple fractions such as halves and quarters. Mathematical vocabulary is developing well; pupils understand and correctly use words such as 'subtract', 'minus', 'equals' and 'height'. Lower attaining pupils order numbers to 20 and have a basic understanding of tens and units. They add coins to a value of ten pence and understand the concept of halves. Skills in English hamper pupils' progress and teachers recognise this and structure lessons to maximise the mathematical learning. Teaching assistants are well briefed and deployed to help meet pupils' needs.
101. The overall quality of teaching is good. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection. Successful teaching emanates from detailed planning that incorporates clear learning objectives and is adapted for pupils of different attainment. Learning objectives are very often shared with pupils, which helps them understand the purpose of the work and reflect afterwards on how well they have achieved. Good questioning and use of ongoing assessment are also strong features of many lessons. For example, teachers give pupils many opportunities to explain the strategies they use and, from this, assess how well they have understood new ideas or acquired new skills. They then modify questions to individuals in order to provide relevant challenge and opportunities for all to achieve success. Other features of the good teaching seen included teachers' good subject knowledge, the maintenance of a brisk pace to lessons and the good deployment of the teaching assistants.

102. Examples of very good teaching include a Year 1 lesson where the teacher was very successful in promoting higher attaining pupils' understanding of how to represent the addition of three numbers in a written statement that incorporated mathematical symbols. Because the teacher deliberately came up with wrong answers, the pupils enjoyed correcting these. They remained totally focused as they looked for the next mistake. As a result pupils were able to understand, fully, what the mathematical statement, written in symbols rather than words, meant and were able to produce similar written statements themselves. In another Year 1 lesson the introductory mental work was shared between teacher and classroom assistant. This maintained the brisk initial pace of the lesson effectively and promoted sustained pupil interest well. As a result pupils were appropriately challenged, learning was good and pupils understood what the sum they were tackling meant, rather than merely learning a mechanical way of working it out on paper.
103. Throughout the school, teachers use and promote mathematical vocabulary very well. For instance, Year 1 pupils knowledgeably used the terms '*larger*', '*bigger*' and '*smallest*', whilst Year 2 pupils spoke of '*doubling*', '*halving*', '*total*', and '*equals*'. Teachers teach enthusiastically, make learning interesting and promote pupils' confidence well. This results in pupils developing good attitudes to the subject and their full participation in lessons. They answer questions and explain strategies, without fear of being wrong or ridiculed by others for giving wrong answers. Teachers make very good use of resources. In particular, teaching assistants make an effective contribution to teaching and learning. Teachers brief them well about their roles and check on the effectiveness of their input during lessons. Marking is good and homework supports work done in class. The only area that needs sharpening is the provision of more practical tasks to promote pupils' use and application of mathematics. Currently, much of the work in this area is set in the context of 'pencil and paper' problem-solving tasks.
104. Numeracy skills are also being effectively developed within other subjects. For instance, in art and design, pupils learn about symmetry, pattern and shape; in design and technology, measuring skills are developed. Information and communication technology is beginning to have an impact upon standards. Work on computers in relation to two-dimensional shapes as well in data handling was seen during the inspection. The school analyses data very well in terms of gender and ethnicity and tracks progress by different groups of pupils closely. The school is well aware of variations in performance between boys and girls and different ethnic groups and of the need to monitor this closely. Assessment is very good and has played a significant part in raising standards. Feedback sheets used by classroom assistants give a good indication to the teacher about what has been learned and by whom. The majority of teachers do lesson evaluations and this enables them to identify what pupils need to learn next. This is a very good feature. The school is aware that the next steps are to track pupil progress effectively and set realistic, mathematical targets for all pupils. The arrangements for setting pupils in groups by ability in Year 2 have been effective in raising standards. The six sets established in September have, unfortunately, returned to the previous five as a result of staff absence. It is envisaged that this will be re-established in the coming school year. The present setting system was introduced in order to raise standards particularly for higher achieving pupils. A recent joint initiative with the junior school is promoting parental help at home. The initial meeting was held during the inspection week and was well attended, and much valued, by parents.
105. The conscientious co-ordinator has worked hard to raise subject standards. She monitors teachers' planning and pupils' work and has observed teaching. She provides good leadership in the subject and has recently effectively raised the quality, as well as the amount, of teaching resources.
106. The school has made a number of improvements in the subject since the last inspection. The quality of teaching, planning, assessment and resources are all significantly better. These are beginning to have a positive effect on standards and pupils' achievement, bearing in mind children's poor level of attainment when they start school.

## **SCIENCE**

107. Pupils in Year 2 attain standards that are below those expected for their age. However, they have built well on their learning in the reception classes and their progress has been good. In 2001, teachers identified the standards of the seven-year-olds as well below the national average in terms of the proportion of pupils achieving the national standard of Level 2, although around three quarters of pupils did so. The proportion achieving the higher than expected Level 3 in all aspects of the science curriculum was in line with the national average. Given the high proportion of pupils who entered the school speaking little or no English these results represent good progress by pupils. During the previous year, when all pupils in Year 2 had been supported in their science lessons by an Urdu speaking teacher, the percentage of pupils who exceeded the expected level was, at 31 per cent, above the national average. The withdrawal of specialist language support, as a consequence of reduced funding, has had a detrimental effect on pupils' attainment.
108. At the time of the last inspection, the teaching of science was unsatisfactory and pupils made insufficient progress as they moved through the school; there were too few opportunities for pupils to develop knowledge and understanding, particularly in investigative work. The co-ordinator for the last five terms has been very effective in leading the school's response to these issues. Science is now taught well, pupils make good progress and there is strong evidence of regular and good investigative work. In addition, there has been a thorough review of how pupils record their experimental work in the light of the early stage of English language development that many are at. There is now a good development of both experimental skills and of recording skills throughout the school. The teaching of science provides well-planned opportunities for the development and practice of the skills of literacy and numeracy. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, are fully included in all learning activities and make good progress.
109. Pupils enter Year 1 having been encouraged to enquire and investigate in the reception classes. In a very well-prepared and presented lesson, pupils in Year 1 built well on earlier learning about how water can move a wheel round and they also explored wind as a cause of motion. The teacher used a videotape well to interest the pupils and stimulate discussion. The pupils watched intently and commented eagerly about the size of the sails of a windmill and how the wind blew them round. Follow-up work very effectively developed pupils' language skills with good extension of vocabulary as pupils discussed how moving air affected a parachute, house smoke and flags. Pupils looked at a number of pictures and tried to guess the direction of the wind from clues which were in them. The work was pitched at different levels to match different learning needs and provided good consolidation of learning. The teacher moved from group to group, stimulating discussion and further challenge, all the time skilfully developing scientific language and understanding. Examination of the recorded work of pupils in this year group shows that the higher attaining pupils have been sufficiently challenged. Lower achievers, often a mixture of pupils learning English as an additional language and those with special educational needs, have been supported well by bilingual teaching assistants and have made good progress.
110. Examination of records of work done in Year 2 before the inspection reveals good progress in developing pupils' observational skills and their understanding of the scientific method. To begin with teachers provide carefully graded worksheets to help pupils to record their scientific findings. As they become more confident in writing, pupils record their work independently and expressively. For example, a pupil predicted that 'the chocolate and cornflakes will turn hard and rough'. Teachers encourage an investigative approach. Pupils make good progress in gaining scientific knowledge; for example, about materials and changes, food from plants and animals and the uses and sources of electricity. During the inspection, pupils made good progress in understanding electrical circuits and how to incorporate a switch. A strong feature of both lessons observed was the good use of questions to help pupils to recap on what they had already learned and practise using the correct scientific vocabulary. Pupils benefited from the support of other adults, including a multilingual teaching assistant. This provision was very effective in enabling all pupils to have full access to the lesson. In a very good lesson with this year group, other features that contributed to the pupils making very good gains in their knowledge and understanding included the very sharp focus on a clearly defined learning objective, the very good pace and the effective use of time.

111. The overall quality of teaching is good and as a result pupils, including those with special educational needs, enjoy their science lessons and make good progress. The co-ordinator provides good support for colleagues through the well-planned scheme of work, well-organised resources of good quality and her own enthusiasm and expertise.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

112. The school plans for work in art and design to alternate with that in design and technology. During the inspection week little teaching in art and design was seen. Judgements are based mainly on displays of work, scrutiny of planning and discussion with pupils and teachers.
113. Standards at the end of Year 2 are in line with those expected of seven-year-old pupils, and have been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils gain experience in using a satisfactory range of materials including paint, crayon, pastels and those for collage. Art and design is used to complement the work in other subjects, in particular in design and technology. For example, in a Year 2 lesson about vehicles, painting, print and collage techniques learned in art and design lessons were used well. Pupils also experimented with mixing colours in order to get the exact shade they wanted. In Year 1, pupils have successfully developed good skills in drawing. The effective and frequent use of sketchbooks contributes well to development of skills in drawing and sketching. This then leads to good use of pastels and shading and 'smudging' techniques.
114. Teachers use the work of famous artists to focus on techniques. For example, they used works by Van Gogh and Rembrandt to enhance work in portraiture. Art and design contributes well to other subjects. Photographic evidence shows that pupils work in a range of media on large panels; for example, in geography and design and technology, when they made a collage about improving the playground. Entries in Year 2 sketchbooks include drawings of scenes relating to Diwali, still life and self-portraits. In their work, pupils are beginning to use colour, texture and pattern imaginatively to communicate what they see. There are few opportunities for pupils to explore modelling and three-dimensional art. The co-ordinator is aware of this and some opportunities are envisaged for the summer term when such work can be done outside.
115. Teaching in the only lesson observed was satisfactory. This was a joint art and design/design technology lesson. Resources were well prepared. Clear explanations by the teacher helped pupils to know how to approach the tasks. Good use was made of learning support assistants to enable all pupils, including those with special educational needs, to receive the help they required. All pupils therefore, made satisfactory progress in following their design brief and in the use of pastels and shading techniques in art. A calm working atmosphere enabled pupils to work with a high degree of concentration. Very good relationships built pupils' confidence as they explored a range of material media without fear of failure. A good range of tasks kept all pupils interested and provided a good level challenge. The teacher intervened with effective questioning and guidance that enabled pupils to reflect on their work and decide on improvements. They therefore made good progress in their skills.
116. The subject co-ordinator has been in post for just over a year and leads it with enthusiasm and a deep interest. She has developed a small portfolio of pupils' work in Year 1 and plans to develop a similar one for Year 2. Combining these and relating work to National Curriculum levels is intended to provide a portfolio of good examples of pupils' work and achievements in the subject and to help teachers with their assessments. The quality of displays in the school is satisfactory and often better. It has a positive impact on the atmosphere for learning and raises pupils' self-esteem.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

117. The standard of work produced by seven-year-old pupils is above national expectations. This is a good improvement since the last inspection. Judgements are made on the lessons seen, examples of work from the previous year and photographic evidence. Many pupils can generate ideas and recognise that their designs have to meet a range of different needs. They plan what to do next, based on their experience of working with materials and components. They use models, pictures and words to describe their designs. They select appropriate tools, techniques and materials, and use tools with some accuracy to cut and shape materials and join components in a variety of ways. They evaluate their work and suggest things they could do better in the future. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve a satisfactory level of finish in their work.

118. In Year 1, pupils designed fruit kebabs and were aware of health issues; for example, the need for clean hands and consideration of safety when using sharp kebab sticks. Pupils in this year group made bookmarks, decorated with stitched patterns. In Year 2, pupils made vehicles and used their design sheets to help with their planning. This project helped them develop research skills as they looked at various uses of wheels at home and in the wider world. Pupils make use of ICT to research their projects from CD-ROMs and to improve the appearance of their design sheets through the use of art programs. Teachers extend pupils' vocabulary using terms such as 'vehicle', 'axle', and 'evaluate'. This approach helps reinforce pupils' skills in literacy.
119. The quality of teaching is good. Pupils enjoy the subject and talk favourably about it. In the lessons that were observed they co-operated well as they worked. The subject makes a good contribution to their social development. Pupils practise their speaking and listening skills as they talk about their projects, evaluate what went well and discuss what they could have done better.
120. The co-ordinator has been in post for one year. She has adopted the nationally recommended scheme of work and has chosen appropriate topics for each year group. These have been supplemented by materials that the co-ordinator has prepared to make the teaching more accessible to non-specialist colleagues. The co-ordinator has made a collection of photographs to illustrate the range of work undertaken by pupils and to show the progression of skills as pupils move from class to class. The school recognises that there is a need to introduce a more formal system of assessment of pupils' work. Some resources are kept in each classroom and they are adequate in quality and quantity. To supplement these, there are other tools and materials in a central and accessible location. However, there is a need to increase the number of some tools; for example, bench hooks and saws. This will help pupils to broaden their range of techniques and skills.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

121. Scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with pupils and teachers indicate that standards at the end of Year 2 are similar to those found in most schools. This is an improvement since the last inspection when provision was unsatisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in all learning activities and make good progress.
122. Pupils in Year 1 carefully observed their surroundings and made simple maps to record their walk in the locality. They explored the parking problems near the school and conducted a traffic survey, showing their results in simple charts and graphs. Pupils become increasingly aware of the world beyond Luton through finding places visited by individual children and by a toy bear named Barnaby. A book containing postcards and photographs from Barnaby on a trip to Australia adds greatly to pupils' interest in geography. They investigate possible routes, as well locating Australia on a map of the world. By the end of Year 2, most pupils can describe similarities and differences as they study contrasting environments. They study life on the island of Struay through reading the stories of Katie Morag, and identify the man-made and natural features that exist there. Pupils produce diagrams to compare transport on Struay and in Luton. A Year 2 lesson about comparisons with life in a Kenyan village was greatly enriched when the teacher recounted some of her childhood experiences in South Africa.
123. Pupils are interested in other places and enjoy comparing them with their home environment. They use books and atlases with interest in support of this learning.
124. Due to the organisation of the curriculum, no geography lessons were seen in Year 1 and only one full lesson was seen in Year 2. This is because geography and history blocks of work alternate with each other on a half-termly basis. However, discussions with the teachers, scrutiny of planning, together with the standard of pupils' work, indicate that teaching is at least satisfactory. Teachers' planning follows national guidance to ensure appropriate coverage of the programmes of study and to build skills progressively over time. Teachers plan together across the year group and their work is supported by the subject co-ordinator as well as by the year group curriculum co-

ordinator. Marking of work in books is generally encouraging but rarely tells pupils how they can improve.

125. The curriculum co-ordinator also co-ordinates history. She has worked very hard since the last inspection to raise standards in both subjects. She is enthusiastic to develop the subject further and is beginning to monitor teachers' planning. There is good emphasis on specific subject vocabulary. Resources have been improved over the past four years. Computers are not well used but the co-ordinator is aware of this and development is planned.
126. There has been good improvement in geography since the last inspection. Resource, planning and subject co-ordination improvements have contributed to higher standards in pupils' attainment.

## **HISTORY**

127. Standards in history have improved since the last inspection and are now in line with national expectations. All groups of pupils make very good progress during their time in the school. This is largely due to the efforts of the co-ordinator who has developed the scheme of work, improved and developed resources and ensured assessments are used well to inform the planning of lessons matched to pupils' ability levels.
128. Pupils have clearly been motivated by the very good use of a range of interesting resources, focused open-ended questioning and a variety of interesting tasks that are clearly matched to their abilities. Lessons that focus on practical activities, challenge pupils to think about the subject and ensure they are motivated to learn. For example, in a very good lesson in Year 1, comparing present day home life to that in the past, all these elements were effectively combined. Using life-size washing equipment from the past, pupils were enthralled when their teacher dressed as an 'old fashioned washing lady' and asked for their help to wash clothes. In this way all pupils, whatever their ability, gained deeper understanding of the idea that life in the past was different and recognised the difficulties of washing by hand, using scrubbing boards and soap. More able pupils were clearly aware that the lack of electricity impacted on everyday life in the past. Pupils at the early stages of learning English as an additional language received very good support from bilingual staff, which ensured that they also understood the lesson and developed their understanding and their language skills.
129. In Year 2, pupils' understanding has progressed effectively. They have been learning about Florence Nightingale. Pupils clearly remembered details of this work and could explain in simple terms some key facts about her life. More able pupils could identify that knowledge about the past could be gained from different sources, such as newspapers and paintings, and recognised changes over time in hospitals.
130. Teaching, over time, is at least good overall. Very good use is made of this subject to develop pupils' spoken language. Teachers make considerable efforts to ensure that pupils not only understand the elements of the lesson but also learn different ways to talk about the past. This is a positive aspect of teaching and very relevant, given the large proportion of pupils who are learning English as an additional language. The practical nature of teaching ensures that all groups of pupils enjoy history and are motivated to learn. Teaching has much improved since the last inspection, and because of relevant assessments, tasks are now well matched to the wide range of abilities in each class.
131. The subject is very well led. The coordinator has worked very hard to ensure that all areas of weakness identified in the last report have been addressed. As a result, very good improvement has been made overall. Improved resources and visits effectively support the curriculum.

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

132. In the last inspection it was judged that pupils' attainment in ICT at the end of Year 2 was in line with national expectations, although some areas, such as control technology, were under-represented. Since then, national expectations of pupils' attainment across the new information and communication technology curriculum have been raised. A few sessions when pupils were taught in small groups by teaching assistants, were observed during the period of the inspection. From the evidence of these, conversations with pupils and teachers and examination of the portfolio of earlier work, the level of attainment of most pupils is on target to be above national expectations by the end of Year 2.
133. Examination of work completed before the inspection shows that pupils in Year 1 have built very successfully on their learning in the reception classes. For example, they have developed good drawing skills and improved their control of the computer mouse. Pupils have moved forward from using 'click' and 'drag' techniques to dress a teddy bear on screen, to creating planned communities of houses, shops and roads as part of a geography project. Pupils know the names of the parts of a computer and are helped in learning these by good and well-labelled displays in classrooms. They also extend their skills and understanding of the uses of ICT when they successfully learn how to operate a tape recorder and see their teachers using videotape as a teaching aid. Pupils use their developing ICT skills well to support their learning in design and technology when they use a simple program to sort fruit.
134. Pupils in Year 2 also used their ICT skills well in design and technology when they used a picture dictionary to support their efforts in designing a vehicle. The teaching assistants, who worked with groups of pupils in the small computer base, supported them well. Pupils showed themselves to be confident and competent computer users as they navigated successfully through menus and identified and printed a picture of a vehicle. Such short sessions are very well focused on development of skills.
135. Evidence from previously completed work shows that pupils from Year 2 have also investigated how to control a floor robot, giving instructions to make it move around a mat. They used the computer to draw a variety of graphs; for example, to show what they recycle and how they come to school. Pupils have successfully used a painting program to write their names, selecting a pencil, a paintbrush or a spray. Pupils in Year 2 during the last school year took part in an ICT and poetry project. Their word-processed and illustrated poems are of very good quality, showing very good use of different fonts, font sizes, layout and colour.
136. The school has moved a long way in improving its resources, organising their use and extending the use of ICT across the curriculum. The effective leadership of the past and present co-ordinators has contributed greatly to the improvement. The present post holder has rightly identified extending the use of ICT in English, mathematics and science as a priority for development. The teaching assistants use their bilingual skills and competence in ICT to work effectively with pupils in small groups. They contribute significantly to pupils' learning. Because of this good provision and teachers' good organisation and planning, all pupils have full access to the curriculum for ICT and are making good progress.

## **MUSIC**

137. During the inspection, all of the teaching seen in music lessons was at least satisfactory and one lesson was very good. Taking into account the evidence from these lessons, discussion with relevant staff and examination of records, pupils reach the expected standards by the end of Year 2. Thus, the standards are the same as those found in the last inspection. In assemblies, the pupils sing in tune and have an evident sense of enjoyment in music making. A recording of a piece of music is played while pupils come into assembly and this helps them to gain a wider variety of musical experiences. The teacher leading the assembly talks about the piece of music, the instruments played and the composer. The music coordinator runs a recorder group that enriches the musical life of the school. This group performs in the special 'Spring' assembly in front of the whole school as well as on other less formal occasions. Various groups of musicians from the

local music service visit the school and there are also visits from other players. Pupils from the junior school also visit in the summer term and perform for the infant school pupils.

138. In a Year 1 lesson pupils were able to grasp the difference between 'pulse' and 'rhythm' well, and demonstrate various rhythms using percussion instruments. In a very good lesson in Year 2 pupils learned how to combine sounds, work co-operatively as a group and follow a 'conductor'. They improvised patterns on tuned and untuned percussion instruments as background music to 'Jack and the Beanstalk' and they listened carefully to their own and others' playing. In this lesson the teacher took care to use the correct names for the various Latin American instruments. Pupils respond well to music lessons and the cooperative work that they do in groups fosters their social development well.
139. The enthusiastic co-ordinator for music has been in post for two years. She is aware of the difficulties experienced by non-specialist teachers and supports colleagues by helping them to be fully aware of the appropriate work for each age group. The school uses the government-approved scheme of work that satisfactorily covers all topics prescribed for the National Curriculum. The co-ordinator has devised lesson plans to supplement this, which helps her colleagues to teach the subject with more confidence. Planning for the subject is clear. The co-ordinator attaches importance to making it clear to all teachers what pupils should achieve in each unit of the scheme of work. Forward planning includes identifying opportunities for assessment at the end of each unit of work. Music resources are adequate for effective teaching. All classes have a basic kit of instruments that can be supplemented by further resources that are kept in a centrally accessible location. There are sufficient instruments to allow all pupils the chance to play an instrument in lessons. Pupils with special educational needs are supported appropriately and have full access to the curriculum for music. For example, there is a small recorder group for pupils who have difficulties with co-ordination. Although there is some use of CD-ROMs with younger pupils, the use of ICT in this subject is underdeveloped.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

140. Standards throughout the school are close to those expected for pupils' ages and are similar to those found at the time of the last inspection. Pupils make good progress. This is an improvement since the last inspection when pupils made satisfactory progress. Although it was not possible to see all aspects of the curriculum, it is clear from teachers' planning that the full curriculum for physical education is planned.
141. Physical education is well taught to all pupils and they are acquiring a good range of physical skills. Pupils, including those who have special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, achieve well and make good progress when taking account of their previous learning. The overall good teaching ensures that they build successfully on what they already know and can do. For example, In Year 2, pupils usefully learn to perform a sequence of movements that they competently transfer to the apparatus. In Year 1, pupils explore movements imaginatively by interpreting music through dance. There is a clear emphasis on safety, which is thoroughly discussed and explained, as was seen in all classes. Pupils are provided with useful examples for warm-up and cool-down routines and carry them out conscientiously and enthusiastically. They improve their performance through practice. Good use is made of pupils to demonstrate movements and to talk simply about what they are doing. However, there are no effective opportunities provided for them to evaluate their performances and the progress they are making, or to consider the progress made by their classmates.
142. The overall good teaching has a positive impact on pupils' learning. This is a different judgement from the last inspection, when teaching was judged to be sound. Teaching is often bright and stimulating and the lessons usually move forward at a good pace. Positive encouragement promotes the pupils' self esteem and confidence. This ensures that they sustain concentration and behave very well in lessons. Pupils are enthusiastic and careful in the activities they undertake. Teachers intervene appropriately to emphasise key skills and often effectively demonstrate what they want pupils to do. This enables pupils to build on the skills they have learned previously.

However, the pace of teaching often slows when pupils are putting out the large apparatus. This is because the pupils have not been sufficiently trained in handling this equipment. Teaching assistants are appropriately deployed by the teacher to support pupils who need extra help and encouragement. Staff provide good role models.

143. The curriculum for physical education is generally broad, balanced and relevant. The subject is co-ordinated knowledgeably, but the co-ordinator has been in place for too short a time to judge the impact of her expertise. The school uses a published scheme of work that shows how lessons will proceed, but does not include learning intentions so that the pupils know what they will learn by the end of the lesson. The school has an adequate range of equipment that is well stored and easily accessible. However, the mats are small and turn up at the edges, thus creating a safety hazard. The school has introduced a successful initiative during two lunchtime breaks that further enhances the subject. There is suitable outdoor accommodation, but this has been reduced in size with the recent building of extra classrooms.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

144. By the end of Year 2, the majority of pupils achieve the standards expected in the locally agreed syllabus. This is the same judgement as that at the last inspection. Owing to timetabling arrangements, only three lessons could be seen, one in Year 2 and two in Year 1. Additional evidence has been obtained from examination of the teachers' planning, scrutiny of a small amount of pupils' past work, discussions with the co-ordinator and with a group of pupils in Year 2. All pupils, including those who have special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress in religious, moral and social understanding. They are acquiring a positive understanding of similarities and differences among religions. The provision for religious education meets statutory requirements.
145. Scrutiny of pupils' past work shows that they are given opportunities to learn about themselves, other cultures and the roles of religious leaders. For example, one pupil wrote about the Imam saying, 'The Imam has to pray five times a day.' Another pupil wrote, 'I am unique because my voice is different.' Discussion with Year 2 pupils shows that they know about the Muslim faith and can recall a few facts about the Chinese New Year, such as its being the Year of the Horse. During a Year 1 lesson about the Creation, the very good teaching inspired the pupils; they were enthralled by the story and the pictures referred to in the book.
146. The overall quality of teaching is good, ranging from satisfactory to very good. Very good teaching is characterised by secure subject knowledge that is very skilfully communicated to pupils and enlarges their understanding; it motivates and challenges the pupils to try harder. There are worthwhile interactions with pupils and skilful questions encourage them to think and keep focused and interested in what is being said. The result of this is that the pupils are well behaved and attentive during lessons when they listen well to the discussions and contributions of others.
147. The effective use of collective worship and the appropriate lessons planned for personal, social and health education reinforce and enhance the pupils' understanding and their spiritual, social, moral and cultural development and make a good contribution to religious education. Pupils' individual needs are met and the teachers' caring approach builds up pupils' confidence and self esteem. The teaching of religious education contributes to pupils' literacy skills through, for example, writing simple sentences about Creation, Lent and Ramadan and using word books to help them to spell a word.
148. The subject is well managed. The teachers effectively collaborate in the planning that was scrutinised. The scheme of work takes account of the locally agreed syllabus to ensure that planning systematically builds on pupils' learning as they move from one year to the next. The school is well resourced with books and artefacts from different religious cultures. The co-ordinator monitors the teachers' planning and some teaching and learning to ensure that the subject is taught and carefully planned. Appropriate evaluation opportunities are built into the teachers' planning. The school has appropriately identified the need to incorporate assessment into the planning, at the

end of each unit. Information technology is not used sufficiently to support religious education and the subject could be further enhanced through more visits of representatives of other faith communities.