

INSPECTION REPORT

EAST HUNSBURY LOWER SCHOOL

Northampton

LEA area: Northamptonshire

Unique reference number: 121953

Headteacher: Mrs Rita Arundel

Reporting inspector: David Westall
2414

Dates of inspection: 18 – 21 February 2002

Inspection number: 243909

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 9 for most pupils, but 4 -11 for pupils with severe learning difficulties in the Designated Special Provision unit
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Penvale Road East Hunsbury Northampton
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Jonathan Price
Date of previous inspection:	29/9/97

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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2414	David Westall	Registered inspector	Science Art and design Design and technology Equal opportunities	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
1333	Elizabeth Forster	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
3856	Sandy Wellsted	Team inspector	English History Special educational needs English as an additional language	Attitudes, values and personal development
3349	Jacqui Ikin	Team inspector	Mathematics Physical education Religious education	How good are curricular and other opportunities?
15666	Kathryn Oram	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Geography Music	
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

East Hunsbury Lower School has 365 pupils on roll, including 36 in a Designated Special Provision (DSP) unit for pupils with severe learning difficulties. Pupils generally start at the school at the age of four and continue until they are nine. However, pupils in the DSP unit continue at the school until they are 11. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average, while the proportion speaking English as an additional language is higher than in most schools. The percentage of pupils with statements of special educational needs is well above average, given that all pupils in the DSP unit and two in the mainstream classes have statements. On entry to mainstream classes in reception, there is a broad spread in children's standards. However, relatively few demonstrate above average standards and a significant minority are below average, including in communication, language and literacy and in their mathematical understanding.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school. It is well led by the headteacher and has a committed, able staff. Pupils generally benefit from effective teaching which enables them to make good progress in their learning, and the school provides very well for their personal development. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are particular strengths, and the provision for pupils with severe learning difficulties in the DSP unit is very good. Overall, the school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The quality of teaching is good across the school and is particularly strong in Years 1 and 2 and in the DSP unit.
- The school provides well for pupils with special educational needs in mainstream classes and very well for pupils in the DSP unit.
- Standards are above average in art and design, across the school, and in design and technology in Year 2.
- The headteacher has good leadership and management skills, and is providing the school with a clear sense of direction.
- Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships are all very good.
- Good provision is made for pupils' spiritual development and very good provision is made for their moral, social and cultural development.
- The school is a caring and inclusive community where pupils' welfare is a high priority.
- Very good links have been established with parents, and they hold the school in high regard.

What could be improved

- Most co-ordinators should monitor their subjects with more rigour.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has rectified nearly all the weaknesses identified in the last inspection. The manager of the DSP unit now has more time to monitor teaching and learning in the unit, and is making good use of this time. The school has responded to criticisms about library provision by constructing an attractive and spacious new library, using space previously occupied by an internal courtyard. The book provision has been very significantly improved and pupils have regular access to the library. In addition, pupils from the DSP unit now have

more opportunities to integrate socially with their peers from mainstream classes during break and lunchtimes, and are able to attend lunchtime clubs. However, the school has not extended membership of these clubs to pupils in Years 1 and 2, as recommended by the last inspection.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
Reading	D	D	D	C	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Writing	D	C	C	C	
Mathematics	D	D	D	C	

The table shows the school's results in 2001 were below the national average in reading and mathematics, and in line with the national average in writing. The results were average when compared with the results of similar schools. These results include the standards achieved by Year 2 pupils with severe learning difficulties in the DSP unit and, as a consequence, the overall results do not fully reflect the school's achievements.

Currently, standards are broadly in line with national expectations in reading, writing and mathematics in mainstream classes in Year 2, and are also average in these subjects in Year 4, which is the final year at the school for all pupils except those in the DSP unit.

Standards are above average in Years 2 and 4 in art and design, and are also above average in design and technology in Year 2. Standards in design and technology in Year 4, and in all other subjects in Years 2 and 4, are average.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy coming to school, are keen to learn and to do their best.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour is very good, throughout the school day.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils form very constructive relationships with adults and with each other. They work together amicably on shared tasks and respect each other's opinions. They respond positively to opportunities they are given to take responsibility.
Attendance	Attendance is in line with the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 and 2	Years 3-6
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	Good

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

Overall, the quality of teaching is good and enables pupils to make mainly good progress in their learning from their starting points on entry to the school. The most effective teaching is generally in Years 1 and 2 and in the DSP unit, where a significant minority of lessons observed were very good. Lessons are characterised by very positive relationships between teachers and pupils, thorough planning, clear explanations of tasks and good organisation. The teaching motivates pupils well and they try hard to meet their teacher's expectations by concentrating and persevering with their tasks.

In English, the teaching is mainly good, and is sometimes very good, in Years 1 and 2 and is at least satisfactory in Years 3 and 4. Mathematics teaching is good, across the school, while teaching in science is good in Years 1 and 2 and is satisfactory in Years 3 and 4.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The school provides a wide range of worthwhile opportunities for the pupils. The good inclusion policy is implemented well.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs who are in mainstream classes. The provision made for pupils in the DSP unit is very good.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The school makes sound provision for these pupils.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for pupils' spiritual development is good, and the provision for their moral, social and cultural development is very good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school is a caring community where pupils' welfare is a high priority.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The strongly committed headteacher has good analytical skills and is providing effective leadership which gives the school a clear sense of direction. She has good management skills which enable the school to function efficiently. The deputy headteacher is highly conscientious and makes a valuable contribution to the management of the school. While the co-ordinators for English and mathematics fulfil their roles well, most co-ordinators do not monitor their subjects with sufficient rigour.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The school benefits from a committed governing body which plays an important part in establishing school priorities. The governors with particular responsibility for literacy, numeracy and special educational needs are well informed; and statutory requirements are fully met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The results of statutory and non-statutory tests are analysed carefully by the headteacher, the assessment co-ordinator and the governors. In addition, lesson observations and the scrutiny of pupils' completed work enable the headteacher and the co-ordinators for English and mathematics to develop a clear view of the strengths and weaknesses in these subjects, and to target areas for improvement accurately. However, in other subjects, procedures to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning require further development.
The strategic use of resources	The school budget is analysed thoroughly and financial planning is appropriately linked to the priorities in the school improvement plan. Overall, the school makes good use of its resources.

The governors debate expenditure carefully, and apply the principles of best value when making spending decisions. There are sufficient teachers and they have the expertise and experience to meet the needs of their pupils. The school accommodation is bright and attractive, and there are sufficient resources for learning.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<p>The vast majority of parents:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• believe the school expects children to do their best;• believe the staff are easy to talk to;• believe there is a high standard of teaching and that children make good progress;• believe children behave well and are encouraged to be mature and responsible;• believe the school is well led and managed.	<p>Some parents would like:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• more opportunities for extra-curricular activities.

Inspection findings fully support parents' positive views about the school. There is a good range of lunchtime clubs but membership is restricted to pupils in the older half of the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. On entry to the school, there is a broad spread in children's standards. However, relatively few demonstrate above average attainment and a significant minority have yet to reach the expected stage of development for their age. In the reception classes, children generally achieve well in relation to their starting points, across the required areas of learning. Despite this effective progress, which results from the good teaching children receive in reception, overall attainment is a little below average when pupils start Year 1 including in communication, language and literacy, and in their mathematical understanding.
2. The results of the statutory assessment tests (SATs) in Year 2 in 2001 were below the national average in reading and mathematics and were in line with the national average in writing. These results were average when compared with the results of similar schools. However, these results include the standards achieved by Year 2 pupils who attend the DSP unit for pupils with severe learning difficulties. In 2001, these pupils represented about eight per cent of the Year 2 pupils and, naturally, tended to reduce the overall school results. As a consequence, the SATs results do not fully reflect the school's achievements, and current standards in the main school are higher in reading and mathematics while similar in writing. No significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls were evident during the inspection.
3. In English, most pupils in Years 2 and 4 attain average standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing. However, there are relatively few pupils in either year group who attain above average standards. Nevertheless, when account is taken of their starting points at the school, pupils' achievements are mainly good, and reflect the sustained effort of pupils and their teachers. Pupils listen attentively, across the school, and most are able to use a range of appropriate strategies to work out how to pronounce unfamiliar words. Over time, most develop a reasonably secure grasp of basic punctuation, and their handwriting skills are good. However, the vocabulary of a significant minority of pupils is rather limited and this has a negative effect on their writing. Although these pupils are eager to write and sometimes have good ideas, their writing often lacks impact and precision, and words and phrases are not always organised in an order which best communicates their ideas.
4. In mathematics, pupils generally achieve well in relation to their starting points, and pupils' standards are mainly in line with the expected level in Year 2 and 4. Most pupils have satisfactory numeracy skills and knowledge about shape, space and measures. In science, inspection findings are not quite as favourable as the 2001 statutory teacher assessments, which were very high in relation to the percentage reaching the expected level, and were well above the national average in relation to the percentage exceeding this level. They show that current attainment is average, overall, in Years 2 and 4. In Year 2, most pupils can make sensible predictions about the best materials to use on an umbrella, and achieve well when learning about the importance of healthy eating. They achieve the nationally expected standard when identifying the important properties of common materials, and make good progress when learning why some materials are particularly suitable for specific purposes. In Year 4, pupils can create simple electrical circuits and can interpret basic electrical diagrams to decide whether they will operate properly. Most have a satisfactory grasp

of the principle of fair testing for their ages. In Years 1 and 2, pupils generally achieve well as a result of good teaching in science, while sound teaching in the older classes means pupils' achievements are satisfactory in Years 3 and 4.

5. In information and communication technology (ICT) current standards are average in Years 2 and 4, but are rising. Teachers are making effective use of improved resources for the subject and pupils are now making good progress in their learning in ICT. In geography and religious education, pupils' achievements are sound, and standards are average in Years 2 and 4. In physical education, pupils demonstrate average standards in games and dance in Years 2 and 4, but there is insufficient evidence to judge their standards in other elements of the subject. In music, overall standards are average in Years 2 and 4. However, pupils achieve well in singing, across the school, and their standards are good in this important aspect of the subject. In history, insufficient evidence was available during the inspection to judge pupils' standards in Year 2. However, standards are average in Year 4. In design and technology, pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2 and demonstrate above average standards in Year 2. In the older classes, pupils make satisfactory gains, and achieve average standards in Year 4. Standards in art and design are a significant strength in the school, and are above average in Years 2 and 4. Pupils achieve well in the subject, across the school, as a result of good teaching.
6. When the school was last inspected, in 1997, standards were judged to be above average in all subjects, except in geography and history where they were average. There is no evidence to show that pupils' overall progress in learning has diminished; indeed, as in 1997, pupils are making mainly good progress in English, mathematics and science. However, all available evidence suggests the attainment profile of children on entry to the school is a little less favourable than in 1997, including in the school's own assessments when pupils start in reception. This is likely to account for the differences in pupils' standards in Years 2 and 4 in the two inspections.
7. Pupils in the main school who have special educational needs make good progress in their learning. When account is taken of their starting points, their results in both statutory and non-statutory tests represent good achievement. The most able pupils make sound progress overall and generally achieve above average standards. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make good progress overall, and sometimes make rapid gains. Those in the DSP unit for pupils with severe learning difficulties make good progress in relation to the targets in their individual education plans. While standards are understandably well below average for these pupils, they represent good achievement for these pupils and result from effective teaching.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. Pupils of all ages and abilities come willingly to school and quite clearly enjoy the time they spend there. When asked their views, they put their enjoyment of learning first. They also take great delight in social activities such as playtimes and lunchtimes when they can play with their friends, while many of the older pupils also speak enthusiastically about the various clubs they attend and the visits they make to interesting places. It is clear, from the positive comments they make, that they feel secure and happy within the school environment. They know that the staff care for them, and they, in their turn, care for others and have very positive attitudes to their work.
9. In almost all lessons, pupils concentrate well, listen politely to staff and to one another, and take turns fairly. Most pupils soon develop the confidence to contribute

to discussions, and most older pupils are at ease asking, as well as answering, questions. Almost without exception, pupils work hard, try to apply what they have been taught and, within their capabilities, make what use they can of the resources prepared by teachers to help them. They take particular care with their handwriting and with the presentation of their work. They can be trusted to work without direct supervision when necessary, for example during parts of numeracy and literacy lessons. They share resources fairly, work sensibly together when asked to do so, and are very good indeed at supporting one another. The very positive policy of inclusion promoted by the school is reflected wholeheartedly in pupils' own attitudes and behaviour: regardless of ability, background, ethnicity or special educational needs, pupils work together well in the classroom and interact as well as can be expected of any such diverse group of children in the playground. The relationships forged between mainstream pupils and pupils from the DSP are natural, warm and supportive. The pupils in the DSP are regarded by other pupils as full members of the school; both groups of pupils work together in very positive ways that contribute substantially to their personal development. They have fun together, laugh together and learn together, fulfilling the school's aspirations for them.

10. Pupils' behaviour is very good. They show respect for their own and others' property, and they are polite and courteous. They greet one another, staff and visitors in a friendly, open way, and they are always keen to offer help, for example by opening doors or simply by engaging in conversation. They understand, and abide by, the Children's Charter and the class behaviour codes that they have helped to develop. Incidents involving bullying are very rare, and pupils are seen to intervene constructively during playtime, for example to develop the self-confidence of younger pupils who are sometimes on their own. As they mature, children develop a strong sense of social and moral responsibility. For example, during a personal, social and health education (PSHE) lesson in Year 4, pupils took part in role play about stealing. Their contributions to the discussion that followed showed, quite clearly, their strong moral stance on this issue.
11. At all levels, relationships are very constructive, supportive and friendly. Pupils care about one another, care about others' feelings, and are quick to empathise with others. For example, pupils in Year 2 considered the life of a boy in Victorian times and wrote sensitively about the hardships he had to endure. In class discussions and in assemblies, pupils listen with interest to the views of other pupils, clearly identifying with their thoughts and feelings.
12. Pupils of all ages respond well to the opportunities they are given to take responsibility. All pupils can be trusted to behave responsibly indoors during wet playtimes and lunchtimes. Even the youngest pupils enjoy taking messages or returning the registers to the office, while older pupils develop a degree of self-assurance and deal competently with adults when they 'man' the school telephone. Whether looking after the overhead projector during assemblies, helping in the playground or reading with less advanced readers than themselves, pupils take pride in their responsibilities and perform their duties very well.
13. The attendance rate at the school is satisfactory, with the majority of absence being due to sickness, particularly in the DSP unit. Levels of unauthorised absence are satisfactory, being in line with the national average. Registration procedures fully comply with statutory requirements. Pupils arrive at school well before the start time which ensures a prompt beginning to the morning session.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

14. Overall, the quality of teaching is good, across the school, and enables pupils to make mainly good progress in their learning. When the school was last inspected, the teaching was of a similarly good quality and, in both inspections, unsatisfactory teaching was very rare indeed. The most effective teaching is generally in Years 1 and 2 and in the DSP unit, where a significant minority of lessons observed were very good.
15. Teachers have at least secure knowledge in all subjects and are often well informed, particularly in English, mathematics, science and art and design. Their planning is thorough and usually effective, with clear objectives in relation to pupils' learning. In the best lessons, teachers explain these learning objectives to their classes at the beginning of lessons and provide opportunities for pupils to discuss their achievements at the end of sessions. On occasions, however, opportunities are missed to develop pupils' knowledge of their own learning in this way. All teachers have positive relationships with pupils and manage their classes well. They provide clear instructions and explanations, and motivate their classes effectively. As a consequence, pupils listen attentively to their teachers, concentrate on their tasks and try hard to meet their teachers' expectations. Teachers are careful to ensure that all pupils receive fair attention and there is no evidence of gender stereotyping. Good behaviour is praised, and teachers ensure that pupils have a clear understanding of what is expected of them. Learning support assistants are well briefed by teachers and deployed sensibly. This helps them to provide good support for the pupils. Sound use is made of homework to reinforce and extend what is learned in school.
16. In the reception classes, effective teaching means children make a good start at the school. The teachers ensure that a range of stimulating and worthwhile activities are provided for the children, and cater well for their personal, social and emotional development as well as for their more academic learning needs. The teachers plan their lessons effectively, using national guidance, and create a learning environment in which children quickly feel confident and achieve well in relation to their starting points. Lessons are usually well managed and involve children fully. A very rare exception was a lesson when reception children used the hall for physical education, and children needed clearer guidance in order to make sufficient progress.
17. In English, the teaching is mainly good, and sometimes very good, in Years 1 and 2 and is at least sound in Years 3 and 4. Teachers ensure that activities are matched to the needs of all pupils, and are skilled at selecting teaching methods which capture pupils' interest. For example, when pupils from the mainstream class are taught with pupils from the DSP unit, role play is used to good effect to bring a story to life and to make sure all pupils in the group can play a full part in the proceedings. The language intervention programme taught to some pupils in Year 1 is having a marked impact on pupils' standards and, overall, pupils' progress in English is mainly good as a result of the quality of teaching in the subject. However, there is scope for teachers to give more emphasis to the development of pupils' general vocabulary and writing skills. Pupils would benefit from more opportunities to read and discuss more challenging texts during literacy lessons and sometimes need specific guidance to help them with the structure and organisation of their speech and writing.
18. In mathematics, the teaching is good across the school and results in pupils making good progress from their starting points. Teachers use a good range of effective methods to ensure that pupils are fully engaged in their lessons. For example, in whole class work they target questions to different groups of pupils, ask pupils to write

their answers on individual whiteboards, and ask them to work with response partners. In the most effective lessons, teachers use questions skilfully to encourage pupils to solve problems. In these lessons, pupils are able to sustain their strong concentration for extended periods, and work at the edge of their current capabilities. On occasions, however, teachers need to challenge pupils more strongly to explain their mathematical ideas with sufficient clarity and logic.

19. In science, the teaching is good, overall, in Years 1 and 2 and is sound for older pupils. All teachers generally plan well but, on occasions, work is not well matched to pupils' scientific learning needs in the older classes. Overall, the teaching enables pupils to make good progress in Years 1 and 2 and sound progress in Years 3 and 4 in the subject.
20. In art and design and information and communication technology across the school, and in design and technology in Years 1 and 2, the teaching is good and enables pupils to progress well. The teaching in art and design is a particular strength, and pupils benefit from the expert tuition from visiting artists as well as from their enthusiastic and well-informed teachers. Teaching was also good in the lessons observed in music and physical education, across the school, and in history in Years 3 and 4. In religious education, the teaching is mainly sound but sometimes good, and enables pupils to make sound overall progress in the subject. Insufficient evidence was available to judge the overall quality of teaching in geography, across the school, in history in Years 1 and 2 and in design and technology in Years 3 and 4.
21. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs in mainstream classes is good. Medium-term planning by teachers within year groups is strong, and the needs of all different ability groups are given careful consideration at this stage. Where appropriate, teachers are also able to draw on the expertise of the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO), of staff in the DSP unit and of outside specialists to plan work for pupils with special educational needs. Overall, the quality of planning for pupils with special educational needs in mainstream classes is good. Learning support assistants are deployed appropriately to make sure that as many pupils as possible receive the help they need, whether on a one to one basis, in small groups or within a mainstream class. Class teachers ensure that pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all activities and make certain that learning support assistants know exactly what the pupils are intended to do and to learn. In their turn, learning support staff monitor the progress made by special educational needs pupils closely as they work. The records they keep are passed on to the relevant class teacher and to the SENCO, and the information gathered is used well when new work is planned and when pupils' targets are reviewed. Learning support assistants are well trained, conscientious and hard working and make a significant contribution to the progress and attainment of all pupils with whom they work. Individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are both precise and rigorous, with challenging but achievable targets.
22. The few pupils in the school for whom English is an additional language are supported appropriately within mainstream classes. During parts of the literacy and numeracy lessons, those pupils in the earlier stages of acquiring English are often included in small groups where they benefit from the focused attention of the teacher or of a learning support assistant. Effective use is also made of staff from the local authority service who make regular visits to check on the pupils' progress and to work with them for short periods of time.

23. The teaching of pupils in the DSP unit is always good and is sometimes very good. Teachers have high expectations for the pupils, plan very effectively and use a range of good teaching strategies to ensure pupils make good progress. They use a range of multi-sensory stimuli to make things clear to pupils, and learning is often reinforced by practical experiences, including when pupils are able to go out into the community in the unit minibus. The consistent use of Makaton signing by all staff consolidates learning well. The pupils in the DSP unit are also taught well when they work alongside their peers in mainstream classes. This was particularly evident during the inspection in English and music lessons, and when pupils from the unit worked alongside reception pupils in mainstream classes on a range of activities. Overall, the quality of teaching provided for pupils in the DSP unit is a key strength of the school.

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

24. The quality of the curriculum is good for pupils in reception and provides a secure basis for the National Curriculum. There is thorough planning which is in line with national guidance, and there is a strong emphasis on the basic skills of literacy and numeracy from an early stage. A rich environment for learning has been created and good organisational arrangements ensure an appropriate balance between teacher-directed and child initiated tasks. Reception class teachers maintain effective links with colleagues in the DSP unit and all pupils benefit from this combined expertise. Appropriate opportunities are used well for DSP unit pupils and reception aged pupils to work and play alongside each other, for example in music, when practising early number games and in practical activities such as role play.
25. In Years 1 to 4, the curriculum for mainstream pupils is broad and balanced, and meets statutory requirements. The school successfully incorporates drama and PSHE into the curriculum and these subjects make a significant contribution to the quality of the school's provision. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are used well to help pupils progress in English and mathematics. However, pupils would sometimes benefit from more opportunities to read and discuss more challenging texts in literacy lessons. When the school was last inspected, pupils needed more opportunities to access the library. This is no longer the case, and pupils are making effective use of the greatly improved library provision. An interesting range of clubs is provided at lunchtime. The last inspection identified the need for pupils in the DSP unit, and younger pupils in the main school, to have access to extra-curricular activities. While appropriate opportunities are now given for DSP pupils, no action has been undertaken to include pupils in Years 1 and 2 in these activities. The school benefits from its links with the local community. A number of artists visit the school to work with pupils and make a significant contribution to pupils' learning in art and design. Other visitors include members of the local police, the theatre and the church.
26. The resources of the community are well used to provide first hand experiences and a broadening of pupils' horizons. Visits are made to the local park, churches and library, and pupils also meet elderly residents when they sing carols for them at Christmas. The school's vibrant street carnival was featured on the local radio; and pupils are involved with discussions on how to care for and improve the local park. The school has been successful in obtaining business sponsorship to improve the outdoor environment; and pupils have opportunities, from time to time, to learn through visits to local shops and to a shoe factory.

27. The school has established sound links with local pre-school settings and nurseries, with the staff making visits to see children at play before they start at school. The school provides accommodation for mother and toddler group meetings twice a week and for a privately run 'Before and after school club'. Pupils have a variety of opportunities to meet with others in town-sponsored events such as dance festivals and carol services and in sharing activities with the other nearby lower schools. There are sound links with middle schools to ensure a smooth transfer for pupils.
28. The school's strong inclusion policy is interpreted into very positive practice: all pupils with special educational needs, whether registered in mainstream classes or in the DSP, are able to play a full part in all activities, including assemblies and lunchtime clubs. Arrangements for mainstream and DSP pupils to work together in a mainstream classroom, or within the DSP base, serve well to raise the self-esteem of all pupils involved as well as providing valuable learning experiences. Good provision is also made for DSP pupils to join mainstream pupils for snacks and for lunchtime break in the playground.
29. Pupils learning English as an additional language have full and equal access to the whole curriculum and benefit from the advice and support of the local authority service. When appropriate, they work within small groups. The school is building up its bilingual resources and also engages in regular dialogue with pupils' parents in order to make sure that pupils' needs are being met appropriately. Sound provision is made for these pupils.
30. The school places a strong emphasis on providing for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, and this was also evident when the school was last inspected. Overall, the school makes very good provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural development, and good provision for their spiritual development.
31. Spiritual dimensions are well developed through assemblies and other aspects of the curriculum. The programme for collective worship meets statutory requirements and makes a positive contribution to pupils' spiritual development. Through assemblies, pupils learn to reflect on issues including caring for others, thinking about those more needy than themselves and the rights of children, wherever they may live. There are good opportunities for pupils to recognise the wonder of the world through art, music, dance and literature, and through events such as the whole-school Carnival Celebration. Pupils are encouraged to develop an understanding of their own views and feelings about their experiences through activities such as class discussions and PSHE lessons. The school promotes teaching styles which value pupils' questions and give them time to consider their contributions. For example, when teachers ask pupils questions such as "How does the painting make you feel?" during an art and design lesson on Piet Mondrian, pupils are beginning to think about their own responses, all of which are valued.
32. Moral provision is very good and there is consistent reinforcement of the difference between right and wrong. This is implicit throughout the school day and contributes to the school's positive atmosphere. There is a strong culture of inclusion which promotes a recognition and respect for equality of others whatever their background or belief. There is a system for dealing with unacceptable behaviour which is well known by pupils. They know how they should behave and remind each other about good attitudes and work habits. Pupils generally have high expectations of themselves and there is a suitable reward system to encourage improvement and good effort. Class discussions and assembly themes help to raise moral issues and instill good values such as fairness, kindness, sharing and happiness. The

importance of honesty is emphasised, and pupils respond well to opportunities to reflect on situations in which they have not always been honest or fair.

33. Social development is very good and high priority is given to developing social skills. Adults provide good role models and give consistent messages about what is acceptable social behaviour. Pupils begin to know what is expected of them from an early age. In the reception classes, as an important part of their introduction to school, children are shown how to conform to daily routines, how to be independent and to follow the rules of sharing, taking turns and working co-operatively. All classes give pupils opportunities to take responsibility for clearing away resources and actively involve them with routine jobs that help them to take on increasing responsibility as they move up through the school. There are very good relationships between children in the school. Pupils can be trusted and trust each other. Pupils regularly take part in raising funds for Children in Need and other children's charities. There is a strong bond between pupils from the DSP unit and those in the mainstream classes which helps to develop the social skills of both groups of pupils. The use of Makaton signing by adults and children in assemblies and, wherever possible, in singing lessons helps to promote good communications in the school between all pupils.
34. Cultural development is also very good. The school provides enrichment through visits to places of interest and promotes pupils' cultural understanding through art, drama, music, history and geography. Pupils study different countries and times, for example Africa, the Greeks and Vikings. In music, pupils learn about non-European music and have benefited from a drumming workshop. Displays around the school promote celebrations in other countries such as the Chinese New Year. Pupils have access to high quality artefacts from other countries, such as an excellent range of fabrics, toys and utensils from Africa, to help them gain an understanding of cultures beyond their own. During the inspection, for example, pupils made careful interpretations of elements of African art, and developed an obvious appreciation of the skills and creativity it shows. There are good links with visitors to the school to extend pupils' understanding of the local culture. Books for the newly established library have been carefully considered to be without stereotypes and to reflect positive images of our multicultural world.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

35. The school is a community where the importance of care and the fostering of high self-esteem underpin the effective and sensitive support which it provides for all pupils. Adults know the pupils well and relationships throughout the school are invariably based on respect, care and high expectations of behaviour and attitudes to learning. All staff are good role models for the pupils, and the positive and caring atmosphere they promote, throughout the school, encourages all pupils to have the confidence to strive to do their best.
36. The staff are very successful in promoting pupils' good behaviour and a pride in the school community. Weekly assemblies are used well to celebrate pupils' good work, positive attitudes or significant improvements. Where, occasionally, pupils find it more difficult to maintain these high standards, action is quickly taken in consultation with parents to agree a behaviour plan to help them. This strategy generally produces speedy and effective results. There was one fixed-term exclusion last year. Pupils' attendance is monitored regularly and reasons for absence are invariably sought. Certificates for consistent attendance are used to emphasize the importance of regular attendance to parents and pupils.

37. The quality of the pastoral and learning support is good. There are clear procedures to ensure that all adults involved are well briefed about pupils' needs and understand the importance of good communication between staff and with parents. Adults who supervise lunchtimes are similarly well informed and watchful that pupils are safe and happy mixing with others. Appropriate use is made of outside specialists to support particular educational or medical needs. Child protection issues are well handled in the school. All staff have had training in awareness and are mindful of the need for particular vigilance when supporting those pupils who might find it more difficult to communicate their concerns to adults.
38. The school covers many aspects of personal and social education, such as sex education, through the science curriculum. Pupils benefit from regular visits from the police and fire service who promote the importance of keeping safe on the roads and in the home. Learning about healthy eating is appropriately covered but there is scope to put theory into practice in the provision of more healthy mid-morning snacks and drinks. Pupils have regular opportunities to discuss their feelings and listen to others' points of view; this helps them develop a sensitivity to the needs of others so that all pupils feel equally valued and respected.
39. The school has well-established procedures for medicines, accidents and emergencies and maintains detailed supporting documentation. The health and safety policy is implemented effectively through regular site inspections, and pupils are reminded about the importance of safe practice in lessons. Pupils in the DSP unit benefit from regular visits each week using the school's own transport, and detailed guidelines on the appropriate ratio of adults to pupils needed are followed. To ensure pupils' safety, no visit is undertaken without a risk assessment having been carried out. Care is also taken to ensure the safe arrival and collection of pupils using school transport before and after school. The school buildings and grounds are very clean, tidy and well maintained, and provide a safe and secure environment for the pupils.
40. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory. Basic assessments are used as soon as the youngest pupils enter the school to identify their specific learning needs, including special educational needs. National Curriculum tests for seven year olds, as well as non-statutory tests in Years 3 and 4, are used effectively by the headteacher and the assessment co-ordinator to build up an overall picture of pupils' progress throughout the school. The school has started analysing pupils' attainment to set half-termly group learning targets for pupils, for instance, in writing and mathematics. The school has much useful information on pupils and is making mainly sound use of this to highlight what needs to be improved in the curriculum.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

41. The headteacher and staff have built up a very effective partnership with parents and this is a strength of the school. Parents have very positive views about the school and are particularly complimentary about the caring attitudes of staff. From their first contact with the school and their initial individual interview with the class teacher, the staff successfully encourage parents to feel they share a partnership in their children's education. The home/school books are well used to maintain good communication about any matters that need to be shared. Parents feel that the staff are easy to talk to and that any areas of concern will be quickly recognised and addressed.

42. Parents are given clear documentation about school expectations, homework, procedures and activities; and regular newsletters keep them informed about school events. Parents are invited to class and other special assemblies and are keen to see the results of their children's efforts during open evenings. Information on the topics to be studied is sent home at the beginning of each term and additional detail about curriculum plans is clearly displayed outside each classroom. The initiative to encourage parents to learn about areas of the curriculum by inviting them to participate alongside their children was particularly successful last year when the majority of parents joined in an art workshop during school time.
43. Parents are given regular opportunities, through the year, to talk to teachers about their children's progress. The school provides alternative appointment times and crèche facilities on these occasions, and this ensures that a very high proportion of parents attend. Annual written reports give appropriate information on children's attainment and include specific targets for improvement.
44. For their part, parents provide good support for the school and their children's learning at home. Some parents and grandparents give regularly of their time to help in classes, accompany visits and share their particular skills in art and design and in design and technology with the pupils. The school consults parents on changes or initiatives and this ensures that there is a shared view about priorities for improvements. The active parents' association raises significant amounts of money to support agreed initiatives such as the creation of the new library and information technology areas. This very effective partnership has a positive impact on the work and resources of the school, and also has a beneficial impact on pupils' attitudes.
45. The school works hard to establish positive links with the parents of children with special educational needs. They are informed of their child's needs when these are first identified, and are subsequently informed when the child's progress is reviewed and new targets are set. The majority of parents support the school well in its efforts to help their children and value the work done by staff. Most parents help their children with reading and with homework, and some help their children with work specially related to their targets.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

46. The school benefits from a committed governing body which makes a positive contribution to the life of the school. A range of appropriate committees is established and function efficiently. The governors with particular responsibility for literacy, numeracy and special educational needs take a keen interest in the school's work in these areas, and are well informed. The governors discuss the results of statutory tests carefully and have a sound awareness of the school's performance. They have worked with the headteacher and staff to establish priorities in the school improvement plan, and play an important part in shaping the direction of the school. The governors have a secure understanding of the school's financial position and ensure that the priorities in the improvement plan are properly costed. The school has appropriately increased its spending in the current financial year, which will considerably reduce the substantial 'carry forward' figure which has been accumulated in recent years. Evidence suggests these funds have been used effectively to enhance the accommodation, equipment and learning resources. The governors debate expenditure carefully and ensure the principles of best value are applied when using financial resources. Overall, the governing body provides sound support for the leadership and management of the school, and ensures that statutory requirements are fully met.

47. The headteacher took up her post in April 2001, following a period from September 1999 when the school was managed by acting headteachers. She is highly conscientious, has good analytical skills and is providing effective leadership which gives the school a clear sense of direction. The headteacher is particularly rigorous in analysing the results of statutory and non-statutory testing, and her feedback to staff and governors clearly identifies relative strengths and areas for improvement. This helps to raise the school's expectations of its future achievements, and to focus the work of teachers. The headteacher has ensured that procedures have been improved to track pupils' progress in English and mathematics, and that pertinent individual targets are set for them in these subjects. She examines teachers' planning, observes lessons regularly and provides teachers with useful advice which benefits their professional development. The headteacher has worked very effectively with the co-ordinators for English and mathematics to enhance their monitoring skills and to create action plans for their subjects. She ensures the day-to-day management of the school is good, routines are well organised and there is an orderly atmosphere in the school. The deputy headteacher is highly conscientious and fulfils her role well.
48. The school improvement plan has been formulated through good leadership by the headteacher and the effective involvement of staff and governors. It is well organised, providing detailed planning for initiatives in the current year and outline planning until 2004. The plan identifies relevant priorities, is a valuable management tool and is making an important contribution to school improvement.
49. The co-ordinators for English and mathematics have developed a sound awareness of the quality of teaching and learning in these subjects through their effective monitoring procedures. They analyse pupils' test results thoroughly, observe lessons and scrutinise examples of pupils' completed work. As a consequence, they are able to devise action plans for their subjects which target areas for improvement with appropriate precision. However, the monitoring roles of most subject co-ordinators are underdeveloped. While all co-ordinators look at teachers' planning for their subjects, willingly give advice to their colleagues and organise resources effectively, their procedures for monitoring pupils' standards and progress generally lack sufficient rigour. Not enough use is made of the analysis of pupils' completed work to judge achievements in most subjects, across the school, and only the co-ordinators for English and mathematics have observed lessons. The school appropriately recognises the need to enhance the monitoring roles of co-ordinators, and there are sensible plans to provide them with opportunities to observe lessons, over time. In the same way as the co-ordinators for English and mathematics have received support from the headteacher to develop their monitoring roles, other co-ordinators would benefit from in-service training, for example to help them to make effective use of work sampling.
50. When the school was last inspected, the teacher with particular responsibility for the management of the DSP unit for pupils with severe learning difficulties needed more time to carry out regular monitoring of teaching and pupils' progress. This is no longer the case, and the DSP manager uses the time effectively to monitor these important elements.
51. The SENCO is responsible for the day-to day management of provision and is very effective in her role. She is well qualified, having undertaken substantial training in many aspects of special educational needs work, and she keeps up-to-date with developments in this field through professional contacts with local authority support

groups and staff from specialist agencies. As a member of the school's senior management team, the SENCO also works closely with the headteacher to determine how best to manage special educational needs funding and to deploy the support staff. Funds are used wisely, and the deployment of support staff is effective. The SENCO works closely with all class teachers and with the support staff, and is a valuable resource to the school in terms of knowledge and advice on special educational needs issues. What she does not know she will find out. Her working relationship with outside agencies is based on mutual trust and respect, and works well to serve the best interests of all children with special educational needs. In her monitoring role, the SENCO checks the quality of all the individual education plans prepared for pupils, samples pupils' work and, with class teachers, closely monitors each pupil's progress. Running records of progress kept by learning support assistants are used to good effect by the SENCO and class teachers when pupils' progress is reviewed and new targets set. Together with the manager of the DSP, the SENCO makes a significant contribution to the planning of work for pupils with special educational needs. The very good teamwork amongst all staff involved in special educational needs work is a major factor in the success of the inclusion policy. The special educational needs governor is supportive of the school's work and keeps abreast of all developments. He meets the SENCO to review progress, and is rigorous in his pursuit of the best provision for all pupils. All statutory requirements related to special educational needs provision are met.

52. A member of staff has recently assumed responsibility for the oversight of provision for those pupils learning English as an additional language. However, there is no written policy related to this aspect of the school's work, and staff have had no specific training. The co-ordinator is currently appraising herself of current research and thinking in this field, and is seeking to develop the school's bilingual resources. The school benefits from the support and advice offered by local authority service personnel who visit to assess pupils' progress in English and who also provide some useful resources.
53. The school is very successful in implementing its policy for inclusion so that it is embedded in practice and underpins all aspects of school life. This is also supported by a strong awareness of equal opportunities for pupils by teaching and support staff, based on appropriate training.
54. There are sufficient teachers. They are able and committed, and have the expertise and experience to cover the age and ability range of the pupils. The school's arrangements for the performance management of teachers were at a relatively early stage of development when the headteacher took up her post last year. However, sound progress has been made and performance management is beginning to benefit the work of individuals and to impact positively on whole-school priorities. The school has effective learning support assistants who make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning, across the school. They are well briefed by teachers and develop very constructive relationships with pupils, including those in the DSP unit. The efficient administrative officer and the well informed finance officer help to maintain the good day-to-day management of the school.
55. The accommodation provides sufficient space for pupils and is well used by the school. The environment is particularly stimulating, being enhanced by interesting displays of pupils' work. It is kept very clean by the conscientious caretaking staff, and has a beneficial effect on pupils' learning. Since the last inspection, when the library was unsuitably located, a new spacious, attractive and well-sited library has been created, using the space previously occupied by a courtyard area. Books are

well organised in the library and have been very considerably improved since the last inspection, when they were unsatisfactory. The school ensures pupils use the library regularly, and the provision is clearly benefiting their learning. Classroom sizes are adequate for pupils in the DSP unit, but toilet areas are small and have no curtained off area or trolley spaces to allow pupils dignity and discretion in dealing with hygiene matters. Resources for learning are sound, overall, across the school.

56. Overall, the school makes effective use of its resources and provides good value for money. This judgement is informed by the effective teaching in the school which enables pupils to make mainly good progress in their learning. In addition, the school's provision for pupils' personal development is a strength, and is reflected well in pupils' positive attitudes and behaviour.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

57. In order to improve school evaluation procedures, and to raise standards further, the headteacher and governors should:

- ensure that all co-ordinators monitor their subjects with sufficient rigour, including through the careful analysis of samples of pupils' work, to identify strengths and weaknesses in their subjects, and to target areas for improvement accurately. (see paragraphs 49, 105, 110, 115, 119, 123, 128, 138 and 144)

58. In addition to the key issue above, the governors should consider the following, less important, issues for inclusion in the action plan:

- In order to raise standards further in English, give pupils more opportunities to read and discuss more challenging texts during literacy lessons; and ensure that teachers consistently provide pupils with specific guidance to help them improve the structure and organisation of their speech and writing. (see paragraphs 3, 17, 25, 88 and 89)
- Consider including Year 1 and 2 pupils in some lunchtime clubs. (see paragraph 25)
- Explore strategies for improving toilet provision for pupils in the DSP unit. (see paragraph 71)

THE DESIGNATED SPECIAL PROVISION UNIT

59. The DSP unit offers very good provision to its pupils and they progress well in relation to the targets in their individual education plans. Achievement in the unit is not necessarily related to age but rather to individual need and some pupils in the youngest class actually achieve as well, for example in counting, as pupils in higher classes.

60. Significant progress is made in pupils' communication skills throughout the unit, with pupils gradually becoming more confident in extending their sentences from single word to more complex utterances. When pupils enter the unit, they do not always understand what is said to them, and respond to questions with a simple 'yes' or 'no' or just a nod of the head. By Year 6, however, most pupils listen carefully and are able to explain simply the outcome of a science experiment, or make a straightforward hypothesis about why things happen as they do.

61. Some pupils begin to read simple stories during their time in school, with the Oxford Reading Tree books proving very popular. They learn the names of the characters and some enjoy the stories in the early level books. Many more pupils are able to read with the help of Rebus symbols which staff use to create worksheets, notices and timetables. The recent acquisition of the appropriate software to create this sort of material is having a beneficial impact on pupils' progress.
62. Progress in writing is more difficult for the majority, but some pupils learn to write their names by the time they are seven, and some can do more by the time they leave the school. Even when pupils are unable to master the intricacies of writing, they know that writing conveys a message and can dictate what they want to say. With adult help, many can use the Widget software to write notes or keywords for things they want to remember.
63. Pupils' progress in mathematics is good. Pupils in the youngest class are confident at counting up to five, but are not always able to enumerate items carefully. By Year 6, pupils can generally count and identify up to five objects, reading the symbols accurately, and a few can work with far higher numbers, doing basic addition and subtraction, counting on and back and managing simple money sums.
64. In other curriculum subjects, pupils also make good progress. They are beginning to grasp the concept of 'a long time ago' in history, and understanding how materials can be separated out by sieving in science. In physical education, pupils from Year 2 learn to start or stop running in response to a signal, making good improvement in motor co-ordination as they do so.
65. Pupils nearly always work enthusiastically in lessons. They listen carefully, behave and concentrate well. Where there are instances of challenging behaviour, it is because of children's intrinsic difficulties rather than deliberate defiance, and such problems are managed calmly and effectively by staff. Unit pupils are fully accepted into the mainstream school and, when they integrate into mainstream lessons, school pupils are often seen helping them or showing them how to do things.
66. Teaching in the unit is always good and is sometimes very good. Teachers are very experienced and committed. They have high expectations of what pupils can achieve, are very focused in their objectives, plan carefully and record in detail the progress pupils make. Because numbers are small, they are able to focus closely on the targets in pupils' individual education plans and monitor progress in detail. They all use a range of multi-sensory stimuli to make things clear to their pupils, and learning is often reinforced by practical experiences when pupils go out into the community in the unit minibus. The consistent use of Makaton signing by all staff consolidates learning well. There is very good teamwork between teachers, nursery nurses and learning support assistants, which ensures that lessons run smoothly and that pupils have plenty of opportunities for individualised learning.
67. The DSP curriculum is carefully planned along the same lines as that of the mainstream, but adapted and modified to suit the pupils' needs. It is beneficial for unit pupils to be covering similar themes, for example in history, as their peers in the main school, as they can then participate fully in mainstream visits and assemblies.
68. Opportunities for inclusion have been much increased since the last inspection, and pupils integrate at lunchtimes, some playtimes and into some mainstream lessons such as English, art and design, physical education and music. Some DSP pupils also participate in some extra-curricular activities such as drama or computer club.

Pupils are encouraged to develop independence by taking responsibilities such as delivering the register to the office or folding up their clothes when they change for physical education.

69. Partnership with parents is a very strong feature of the unit's work. Parents are always sent academic reports well before annual review dates and almost always attend the review and parents' evenings, where their views are welcomed. They also receive regular updates of individual education plan reviews and are invited to comment. Staff send home information on how parents can help with aspects of progress towards pupils' targets. Home-school books are checked daily and help school and parents to keep in touch about day-to-day activities. A support assistant in the unit organises a monthly meeting and regular social events for parents which provide valuable support and an opportunity to share views and concerns. Links with the schools which pupils attend after Year 6 are well developed, and visits and exchanges for both pupils and parents are established securely.
70. The provision is well led by a well-organised and respected manager who is also assistant headteacher. The governor with particular responsibility for special educational needs is very involved, and the headteacher is supportive and keen to promote the inclusion of unit pupils in every aspect of school life. Since the last inspection, the DSP manager has had a day a week for her administrative role which gives her the opportunity to liaise with outside agencies and parents, to monitor teaching, and to fulfil her role in the school's senior management team. She makes effective use of this time, and also regularly leads or supports training for staff and support assistants in special educational needs matters in both the mainstream and the DSP unit.
71. Although classroom accommodation in the unit is adequate, toilet areas are small and have no curtained off area or trolley spaces to allow pupils dignity and discretion in dealing with hygiene matters.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	89
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	28

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	15	49	23	1	0	0
Percentage	1	17	55	26	1	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	n/a	365
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	n/a	11

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	n/a	38
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	n/a	109

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	9

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	16
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	28

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.5
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.5
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	31	30	61

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	21	23	27
	Girls	28	28	28
	Total	49	51	55
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (83)	84 (86)	90 (86)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	23	27	27
	Girls	28	28	29
	Total	51	55	56
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (86)	90 (86)	92 (88)
	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	6
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	5
Indian	8
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	344
Any other minority ethnic group	1

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	1	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	18.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.8
Average class size	21.5

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	17
Total aggregate hours worked per week	485

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000-2001
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	£
Total income	970,349
Total expenditure	937,903
Expenditure per pupil	2,310
Balance brought forward from previous year	124,640
Balance carried forward to next year	157,086

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	2.1
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0

Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

365

Number of questionnaires returned

118

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	69	27	2	0	2
My child is making good progress in school.	60	36	1	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	53	43	1	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	38	51	5	2	4
The teaching is good.	62	34	1	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	42	45	11	1	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	77	20	3	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	64	35	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	53	38	8	1	1
The school is well led and managed.	51	44	2	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	58	38	2	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	28	29	20	8	15

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

72. Children are admitted to the reception class in the September of the school year in which they become five. Induction arrangements are good and include teacher visits to the nurseries and pre-schools in the area, prior to the term of entry to school as well as opportunities for the children to visit the school before they start. A particular strength of induction arrangements is the early opportunity that the school gives to parents to meet teachers individually. There is a range of very well organised opportunities for parents to find out about the school and the curriculum both before and after their children join the school. Most children have attended some form of pre-school provision prior to starting school, including local pre-school playgroups and nurseries. The school has good links with these groups and there are plans to extend them by adopting a common record keeping system.
73. There is a wide spread of attainment on entry to the reception classes, but the personal and social, language, mathematical and physical skills of a significant minority of children are below that expected for children of a similar age. Children make good progress in relation to their starting points whilst they are in the reception classes, to reach standards that are, overall, a little below those expected for their age by the end of the reception year. The majority of pupils are well prepared for the curriculum for five to seven year olds. This is because of the good teaching they receive. The school provides a well-planned curriculum for reception children, which is soundly based on national guidance. There are good arrangements to ensure that children gain the basic skills of literacy and numeracy.
74. The school makes good use of its accommodation and a rich environment for learning has been established for reception aged pupils. The two adjoining classrooms are augmented by a shared practical area, which accommodates a wide range of activities. In addition, there is a partly covered courtyard that is well used throughout the year to enrich learning in all areas of the curriculum. The children in reception classes also benefit from access to a very well equipped outdoor play area attached to the DSP unit.
75. The teachers in the main school reception classes work in close partnership with reception teachers in the DSP unit. All teachers work closely with teaching assistants and nursery nurses and this ensures that all pupils benefit from the combined expertise of these highly effective teams. Appropriate opportunities are taken for DSP unit pupils and those in mainstream reception classes to work together, and all pupils benefit from this.

Personal, social and emotional development

76. Pupils have a wide range of personal, social and emotional skills on entry to the school and, for a significant minority, their development in these areas is not as high as that expected for children of similar ages. Many find it difficult to share with each other, to take turns and to operate independently of adult support when they first enter school. As a result of the good teaching they receive, pupils make good progress and the majority achieve the standards expected by the end of the reception year. Pupils rapidly gain in confidence because of the supportive and caring ethos and the wide range of interesting activities, which are provided. They settle quickly into established routines and procedures. A range of interesting and stimulating activities is provided

and this results in them being eager to learn from an early stage. They learn how to take care of their own needs and begin to make informed decisions and choices about the activities that they take part in. They begin to learn the language of feelings and emotions during the course of whole-class sessions when all are given a chance to speak. The development of pupils' social skills is good. Children are encouraged to use the conventions of courtesy and politeness from an early stage; and activities which help them to get to know each other are encouraged. A particularly notable feature is the way in which pupils from the DSP unit are welcomed into lessons by their mainstream classmates and are fully integrated into a range of appropriate activities. As a result, pupils with special educational needs make good progress with their personal and social skills. The teachers role model the language of social conventions and consistently encourage co-operation and politeness through a range of activities which promotes co-operation and collaboration through play and talk. At a very early stage, children are given responsibilities around the classroom and they respond well to this. Behaviour is good. They make good progress in learning the difference between right and wrong, and are developing an understanding of the consequences of their actions on others.

Communication, language and literacy

77. When account is taken of their starting points, children in reception make good progress in developing communication skills. As a result of effective teaching, they receive a secure foundation in initial literacy which leads them through the 'stepping-stones' of the Foundation Stage curriculum and which also prepares them well for the early stages of the National Curriculum. Nevertheless, by the time they are five, few children attain standards which are above average for their age, and a significant minority demonstrate standards which are a little below average.
78. Most children listen attentively to their teachers, to other adults and to one another, particularly when sharing a story or taking part in a discussion with an adult within a small group. In such settings, most children observe the conventions of turn-taking and are also confident enough to speak up in order to answer a question or pass a comment. For example, children talking to their teacher about the story of 'The Rainbow Fish' convey their understanding of the events and are able to talk simply about how the rainbow fish felt. They are beginning to be aware of 'book language' and can identify different 'characters', explaining, for example, that, while the octopus had a 'deep, loud voice', the voice of the blue fish was 'squeaky'. In larger groups, however, for example when invited to tell their friends about their particular 'teddy bear', several children quickly forget about taking turns to speak and call out inappropriately, while a significant number either lack the confidence to speak in front of others or respond very quietly, with short, often incomplete statements. Nonetheless, children have made good progress, overall, in speaking and listening since entry to the reception classes. The one pupil in reception for whom English is an additional language is making rapid gains: she is already able to respond appropriately to instructions, can answer questions logically and communicate effectively with his peers and with adults.
79. All the children know that print carries meaning. They thoroughly enjoy listening to stories and looking at the illustrations in books. They know that print reads from left to right and that pages need to be turned, moving from the front to the back of a book, to 'unravel' a story. Most children 'join in' enthusiastically when they hear a familiar story read aloud. Higher attaining children can predict what might happen next and can talk about 'hidden' meanings such as the relationships between various characters. One or two can already read simple texts on their own. Most children recognise some key

words on sight and are able to match letters and blends with the sounds they make. Some children, with support, can read parts of a story aloud but do not always fully understand what is meant. Lower attaining children can match some initial letters to sounds and strive to learn from books by following the pictures and 'retelling' the story or by identifying with soft toys representing the characters and 'acting out' the events. Most significantly, however, children of all abilities are learning to enjoy books and are developing positive attitudes to reading.

80. The children's handwriting is developing well. Children of all abilities have learned to form most letters accurately and legibly. All enjoy using writing to communicate their ideas and are learning to use their phonic knowledge to build simple words. While the writing of the lower attaining children is still at an 'emergent' stage, the highest attaining children compose meaningful sentences, leave appropriate spaces between words and are beginning to introduce full stops and capital letters.

Mathematical development

81. When children enter the school at the age of four, there is a broad spread in their stages of mathematical development but, overall, attainment is below average. As a result of effective teaching, they make good progress so that by the end of the reception year the majority attain the level expected for their age. However, a significant minority are still below the standard expected, and few are above average. Children enjoy jumping from number to number, counting as they go, when they play hopscotch in the courtyard. They count down accurately from five to zero and then ten to zero as they sing songs such as 'Five currant buns in a baker's shop' and 'Ten little bears bouncing on a bed'. Some pupils confidently count to at least ten: a significant minority can count beyond that, although they are not yet fully secure in recognising numbers beyond ten, and combining numbers of objects. Most children can recognise numerals from one to nine and write them with reasonable accuracy. Many children have a limited mathematical vocabulary when they start school. By the time they reach the end of the reception year they are beginning to talk about how they arrive at the answer to simple number problems such as 'one more' or 'one less' than a given number up to ten. A few children can tell the time on the hour using simple clocks. Many children can identify simple two-dimensional shapes such as a square, circle and triangle and recognise the language of size as a result of their work on 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears'. They are beginning to develop their awareness of space and the language to describe position in the course of their work in physical education. When working in sand and water they begin to develop an understanding of capacity and to use the language of full and empty. They create simple patterns, for example, using beads on a lace, to depict different number sequences and patterns.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

82. Children make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world as a result of good teaching. For instance, in learning about weather patterns, they find the appropriate pictures and words each day for the weather board. Children have good opportunities to explore and investigate places around the school and further a field. Good use is made of walks around the school to encourage children to describe their journey, through the gates and around the local area. They explore plans of roads, building houses and talking about journeys in small world play. Children are developing an understanding of shops and can talk about where to buy tools and fruit. Children know how to operate tape recorders for listening to stories. They are developing keyboard and mouse skills on the computer by using programs linked to

the topic on Teddies. They are able to select items of clothing for the teddy and drag and drop these into place. Other pupils can activate music and sounds in a story about PB Bear by clicking on pictures.

83. Although there were no direct observations of lessons with a 'historical' element, evidence from displays and from teachers' planning shows that children in the reception classes have ample opportunities to develop an understanding of 'past' and 'present'. For example, they consider changes in their own lives since they were babies. Using first hand evidence such as the development of younger brothers or sisters, photographic records of their own childhood and family stories of significant events, they soon learn to distinguish between 'then' and 'now'. Discussion arising at the time when a 'baby clinic' was held in school helps them to appreciate the way babies spend much of their time - sleeping and feeding. Comparing this stage of life with their own, they reflect meaningfully on the changes in their own lives since they were born. They realise, for instance, that 'now', they are very much more accomplished than they were 'then', and they record activities such as playing, coming to school, learning, running, talking, jumping and - for some - riding a bicycle, amongst their current achievements. On a day-to-day basis, the children have opportunities to talk to adults and to one another about significant events in their own lives, to reflect on the passing of time within stories and to note the changing hours, days, dates and seasons.
84. Children make good progress in the development of their scientific knowledge and understanding. For example, they study the natural environment carefully and benefit from planting bulbs and seedlings and observing their growth. They also achieve well when developing their design and technology skills, and are able to create models using construction kits and recycled materials which represent sound standards. During the inspection, good teaching enabled reception children to create a range of model beds for the three bears, and this motivated them strongly.

Physical development

85. The physical development of children varies widely on entry to the school. Whilst many are at the level expected for their age, a significant minority are below. They make good progress whilst they are in the reception classes as a result of the good teaching they receive and the regular opportunities that they have to develop their coordination and physical skills. They benefit from suitable opportunities to develop their manipulative skills when using construction toys, and when painting, drawing and cutting. Appropriate use is made of the hall and playground for physical education, which involves the children in more formal activities in preparation for the curriculum in Year 1. There are regular opportunities to work and play in the outdoor courtyard where children develop their hand/eye co-ordination by playing such games as hopscotch and throwing and catching. They also have regular opportunities to use wheeled toys and climbing apparatus in the playground and DSP unit. This contributes well to the development of children's larger movements and their understanding of time, distance and speed. Although most children listen carefully and respond appropriately to instructions a significant minority find this difficult when working in whole-class sessions in the hall. As a result, overall progress in one lesson observed was unsatisfactory. However, as a result of patient reminders of what is required, pupils usually respond appropriately and show a developing control over their bodies as they move over and under apparatus in various ways and directions. They show a growing awareness of their own space in relation to others, and are beginning to control the speed of their movements and to develop confidence when balancing.

Creative development

86. Children have good opportunities to express themselves musically and join in known songs and games, such as 'When Goldilocks went to the house of the bears' and 'Twinkle, twinkle little star'. There are good opportunities to make music alongside pupils from the DSP unit when both classes join together. The session was well led by the teacher from the unit, who used signing and actions to songs so all children are able to participate. In this lesson children were able to identify sounds getting louder and quieter using voices and instruments. They sing confidently and enthusiastically together and are keen to join in. Children make good progress when using paint and pastels, and create vibrant self-portraits. They benefit from regular opportunities to use a good range of art mediums, and from well informed teachers and classroom assistants who promote their artistic learning effectively.

ENGLISH

87. On entry to Year 1, few pupils demonstrate above average attainment in communication, language and literacy, and a significant minority demonstrate standards which are a little below average. Most pupils in Year 2 attain standards in reading, writing and speaking and listening which are broadly in line with those expected nationally of pupils aged seven. In Year 4, the standards attained by most pupils are broadly average for their age. There are few pupils in either year group who attain standards which are above average for their age. Nevertheless, when account is taken of their starting points, pupils' achievements are mainly good: they reflect sustained effort on their own part and on the part of all staff who work with them. As a result of effective teaching, many pupils attain higher standards in lessons than they might reasonably be expected to achieve when working entirely on their own, for example in national tests.
88. There are some common strengths and weaknesses in pupils' performance in all age groups. For example, from Year 1 onwards, pupils listen attentively to their teachers and to one another and sustain concentration well when working independently. Most pupils read aloud audibly and expressively and, for their respective ages, use the cues presented by punctuation appropriately. They know, for instance that commas and full stops indicate the need for a short or longer pause, and they know that question marks, speech marks and exclamation marks demand a change of tone. Higher attaining pupils become skilled at interpreting character by adopting particular tones of voice when reading direct speech. Most pupils are able draw on a range of suitable strategies to decode texts suitable for their age and to work out how to pronounce unfamiliar words. They have a growing repertoire of key words they can recognise on sight, make appropriate use of their developing phonic knowledge, scan illustrations to find clues as to meaning and, within their capabilities, use the context and their knowledge of grammar to help them make sense of what they read. Most pupils know how to use the library and how to look up information in reference books, while some pupils are also adept at finding information using CD-ROMs and the Internet. Pupils enjoy communicating their ideas in writing. Over time, most develop a fairly secure grasp of basic punctuation when writing, while the standard of handwriting and presentation of work is good overall, and often very good. There are, however, some common weaknesses in pupils' performance in the various skills which contribute towards achievement in English. For example, whilst higher attaining pupils use spoken standard English when appropriate, and also draw on a wide vocabulary, a significant minority do not. Instead, they tend to use the colloquial terms and grammar of their everyday speech, sometimes inappropriately, and their vocabulary is often rather limited. These limitations in pupils' spoken language also

have an effect on their writing. For example, although pupils are eager to write and sometimes have good ideas, their writing lacks impact and precision, and words and phrases are not always organised in an order which best communicates their ideas. Relatively few pupils are able to achieve overall coherence in the grammar and content of pieces of extended writing, and many lower attaining pupils struggle to combine ideas successfully within complex sentences. Spelling is particularly weak in the work of average and lower attaining pupils in Years 3 and 4. This said, the few most able writers in each age group produce well crafted written work in many curriculum areas; they are able to adapt their vocabulary and the style of their writing to its intended purpose, and their work has an overall coherence which is missing in the work of lower attaining pupils. Where pupils experience difficulties in reading, these are often associated with understanding the deeper meanings in texts.

89. The teaching of English has many strengths. In Years 1 and 2 teaching was good in most lessons observed and was otherwise very good. In mainstream lessons in Years 3 and 4, teaching was at least sound, and was good in lessons where pupils from the DSP were included. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject are very sound, and their teaching is generally confident. The planning of lessons is thorough and detailed and makes very clear what pupils are intended to learn. Activities and resources are well organised, and teachers make sure that work is matched to the needs of different ability groups, including those pupils who have special educational needs and the few pupils for whom English is an additional language. Teachers are skilled at choosing teaching methods that appeal to the pupils. For example, when pupils from a mainstream class are taught with pupils from the DSP, role play is used to good effect to bring a story to life and to make sure that all pupils in the group can play a full part in the proceedings. All teachers work hard to help pupils develop independence as learners. For example, they frequently remind pupils to use resources such as word-banks, thesauruses and dictionaries and, from a very young age, pupils are taught to find information by skimming through a text. They also equip pupils with the means to check their own progress. For example, pupils are made aware of particular targets which will help them to improve their writing and they are taught to re-read their work to check for meaning and accuracy. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good in all classes and, as a result, pupils want to do well: they work hard, whether directly supervised or working for short periods on independent tasks, and their behaviour is very good. All adults provide good role models as readers and writers. Learning support assistants are well informed about what pupils are intended to do and to learn, and they have a very positive impact on the progress and attainment of all pupils with whom they work, whether within, or outside, mainstream lessons. The language intervention programme taught to some pupils in Year 1, is having a marked impact on their standards and, overall, pupils' progress in English is mainly good, as a result of the quality of teaching they receive. However, there is scope for teachers to give more emphasis to the development of pupils' vocabulary and their writing skills. Pupils would also benefit from more opportunities to read and discuss more challenging texts during literacy lessons, and sometimes need more specific guidance to help them with the structure and organisation of their speech and writing.
90. The monitoring of planning, teaching and of pupils' progress is well established in English. All staff have been trained in the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, and this is evident in the quality and consistency of the teaching seen. The co-ordinator is a very good role model as a teacher of English and has already made a significant contribution to the development of the school's work in the subject. Assessment procedures are sound, and appropriate use is made of information gleaned from routine assessments and from test results to plan the next stages in

pupils' learning within broad ability groupings. Resources are satisfactory, overall. The new library, developed since the last OFSTED inspection is well appointed and is used to good effect to promote reading and develop pupils' research skills.

MATHEMATICS

91. On entry to Year 1, pupils' overall mathematical attainment is a little below average. As a result of effective teaching, pupils generally achieve well in relation to their starting points, and overall standards in the subject are in line with national expectations in Years 2 and 4. Pupils were also making good progress when the school was last inspected, but standards were found to be above average in Years 2 and 4. Evidence suggests the attainment profile on entry to the school is a little less favourable than when the school was last inspected, and this is likely to account for the differences in pupils' standards in the two inspections.
92. The good progress that pupils make is evident in their work, and is a result of a sound grasp of basic numeracy skills and a secure factual knowledge of number, shape and measure. Their satisfactory knowledge of mathematical facts, such as addition and subtraction up to 100, odd and even numbers and place value, and their ability to count in a range of different ways, contributes to the speed and accuracy of their calculations. For example, written work was seen where pupils in Year 2 applied their skills in solving word problems involving time. They accurately calculated times of arrival and departure from school given the number of minutes that pupils were either late or early. In a Year 2 lessons they took numbers apart and put them together again when carrying out mathematical investigations to find different ways of arriving at '10' for an answer. They used their powers of logical reasoning well in this work, and became engrossed in the activity as they explored increasingly complex patterns and relationships between numbers, for example, $15 - 6 + 1 = 10$; $16 - 7 + 1 = 10$; $17 - 8 + 1 = 10$. Although pupils can demonstrate their methods well practically, often they are insufficiently skilled in articulating their mathematical thinking.
93. Pupils' sound knowledge of the properties of shapes is evident in their accurate drawings of two-dimensional shapes and their ability to distinguish the different properties of simple three-dimensional shapes by identifying the shapes of their faces and the number of sides and vertices. Pupils in Year 4 use their knowledge of angles and measurement well to draw accurate repeating patterns on the computer. Pupils' skills in using their knowledge of mathematics in other areas of the curriculum is sound. Older pupils accurately read simple scales for length, mass and capacity and know how to show information in the form of simple graphs. Pupils in Year 2 used this knowledge, together with their knowledge of negative numbers, to read sub zero temperatures on a thermometer in the course of their science work. They know how to carry out simple surveys, for example on favourite drinks and eye colour. They record their finding accurately using block graphs and are able to make use of a computer database.
94. The achievement of pupils who have special educational needs is good in relation to their prior attainment as a result of work, which is matched well to their needs, and the good support that they receive from classroom assistants. The school has recognised the need to aspire to higher attainment for more able pupils and the recent improvements to its target setting system are beginning to make an effective contribution to this. Occasionally their achievement is constrained by both the retention of targets that they have already reached and worksheets that require practice and consolidation of skills that they have already grasped. Where teaching is most effective, additional activities are provided to move learning on and deepen

pupils' understanding. Targets are then reviewed and adjusted to reflect the good progress that pupils are making.

95. The quality of teaching in mathematics is generally good and is a major factor in the good progress that pupils make and the standards that they achieve. Teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the subject and this results in clear planning and well-structured lessons, which help pupils to build upon what they already know to acquire new knowledge and skills. For example, in a Year 1 lesson on estimation the teacher began by asking the question, "How can I find out how many cubes there are here?" This was very effective in establishing pupils' level of understanding about strategies for estimation and in informing the questions and explanations in the work that followed.
96. In the best teaching, the structure of the lesson gives opportunities for pupils to recall their mathematical knowledge and skills prior to more demanding tasks which require either the application of skills in the course of real life problems, or the investigation of the patterns and relationships between numbers by taking them apart and putting them together again in different ways. This is highly effective in consolidating pupils' deeper level of understanding and ensuring long-term retention of important basic skills. Teachers value pupils' ideas and, in the best lessons, engage pupils in 'mathematical conversations', which promote logical thinking because pupils do most of the talking about the mathematical processes and the strategies that they are using. Highly skilled teachers prompt their pupils, for example, using open questions, speculating along with them, trying out pupils' own ideas and suggesting alternatives. In these lessons, pupils are fully engaged in learning and sustain intense concentration for extended periods of time. They work at the edge of their capabilities, sometimes achieving at higher levels than planned for in the lesson. Where teaching is less effective, there is insufficient intervention to help pupils explain their mathematical ideas, clearly and logically.
97. Teachers use a range of methods effectively to ensure that pupils are fully involved in lessons. For example, in whole-class work they target questions to different groups of pupils, they also ask pupils to write their answers on individual whiteboards, hold up number cards to show their answers or ask them to work with response partners. The work that is given to groups of pupils is matched well to the numeracy targets that have been set for them. For example, in a Year 4 lesson, which focused on the skills of vertical addition, some pupils worked with numbers up to 100, others on numbers up to 1000 and others on numbers up to 10,000. These different activities ensured that all pupils worked at a level that was in line with their understanding of place value. They concentrated well because they were interested in what they were learning and believed that they could succeed. There is satisfactory use of homework to support pupils' ongoing work at school.
98. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and manage their pupils very well. As a result of this, pupils' behaviour throughout lessons is very good. Firmly established routines and procedures ensure that the maximum use is made of the time that is available for learning. In the best lessons, whole-class teaching sessions involve short sessions of teacher input, followed by discussions in which pupils have a major input, and then short opportunities for pupils to try out ideas for themselves. Pupils sustain concentration because they play an active part in the learning process.
99. Mathematics is currently being managed well by the deputy headteacher. She has taken over the subject recently and has a good overview of the strengths and weaknesses of the subject as a result of the analysis of test results, observation of

lessons and scrutiny of pupils' work. This information is being used well to inform the school's efforts to improve standards. Resources for mathematics are satisfactory.

SCIENCE

100. On entry to Year 1, the scientific understanding of most pupils is broadly average. However, the understanding of few is above average and a significant minority have not reached the expected stage of development for their age. Inspection findings show that pupils make mainly good progress in Years 1 and 2, and the vast majority achieve the nationally expected standard in Year 2. In Years 3 and 4, pupils make sound progress, overall, and their standards are mainly average for their ages in Year 4. Across the school, pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their starting points, and the most able pupils make sound progress. When the school was last inspected, in 1997, standards were judged to be above average in Years 2 and 4, and pupils were making at least satisfactory progress. Evidence suggests the attainment profile of pupils on entry to the school may be a little lower than in 1997, and this is likely to account for the difference in pupils' standards in Years 2 and 4 in the two inspections.
101. In Year 1, pupils are able to recognise and name the main external parts of the human body. They can identify a range of sources of light and sound, and make good progress when deciding the most suitable kind of paper to use to wrap a present. In Year 2, pupils can make sensible predictions about the best materials to use on an umbrella, and achieve well when learning about the importance of healthy eating. They achieve the nationally expected standard when identifying important properties of common materials, such as glass and plastic, and make good progress in learning why some materials are particularly suitable for specific purposes.
102. In Year 3, pupils have a satisfactory understanding about magnetism, and make sound progress when conducting simple experiments to decide the relative hardness of different kinds of rock. However, they derive little benefit from inappropriate work about the technical characteristics of rocks, or when naming minor bones in the human skeleton. In Year 4, pupils can create simple electrical circuits and can interpret basic electrical diagrams to decide whether they will operate properly. Most demonstrate a satisfactory grasp of the principle of fair testing when conducting experiments to test the thermal insulating properties of different materials.
103. The quality of teaching is good, overall, in Years 1 and 2, and is sound for older pupils. In the last inspection, teaching was good or very good in Years 1 and 2, and was never less than satisfactory in the older classes. All teachers have secure subject knowledge, and their planning is thorough. They are clear about what pupils are expected to learn but sometimes need to develop pupils' understanding of their own learning by explaining the purposes of lessons at the outset, and encouraging pupils to review their achievements at the end. All teachers have positive relationships with pupils and manage their classes well. They provide clear instructions and motivate pupils effectively. As a consequence, pupils listen attentively to their teachers, concentrate on their tasks and strive hard to meet their teacher's expectations. Teachers usually take care to introduce and reinforce appropriate scientific vocabulary, for example to help Year 2 pupils to use the word transparent to describe some materials and to enable Year 3 pupils to take about 'fair tests' when planning investigations. However, sometimes vocabulary which is too advanced for pupils' stage of development is introduced. For example, it was unsurprising that, in a Year 3 lesson observed, hardly any pupils could recall the terms metamorphic, igneous or sedimentary - which were the inappropriate focus for pupils' earlier writing in their

books. In similar vein, Year 4 pupils have spent too much time copying diagrams of the human skeleton and internal organs which include detail which is unnecessary for pupils of their age.

104. In most lessons, teachers use skilful questions to probe pupils' understanding; and the valuable contribution made by learning support assistants to pupils' scientific learning is evident across the school. In general, pupils have good opportunities for active involvement in science lessons but sometimes pupils are required to sit and listen for too long. This was evident in a Year 4 lesson when the pace of pupils' learning suffered as a result.
105. The science co-ordinator is conscientious and willingly provides her colleagues with helpful advice. She has analysed the results of the statutory assessments in Year 2, and looks at teachers' planning. In addition, she organises resources for the subject, recently conducted a useful audit and has ordered more equipment. However, the co-ordinator has yet to analyse samples of pupils' work from across the school with sufficient rigour to develop a clear view of the effects of teachers' planning on pupils' progress and standards. She has not observed lessons in science but there are appropriate plans for this in the near future. She appropriately recognises that her monitoring role needs to be developed, and is keen to address this requirement. She has overseen the introduction of the good scheme of work for science, provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority; and teachers are generally using this guidance effectively. However, sometimes inappropriate tasks are set which are not included in the scheme, and this limits the time available for more worthwhile tasks, particularly in Years 3 and 4. Resources for science are adequate at present.

ART AND DESIGN

106. Pupils achieve well in art and design and their standards are above national expectations, including in Years 2 and 4. The school has maintained the same high standards in the subject which were evident when it was last inspected.
107. In Year 1, pupils make good progress when using printing techniques to create impressions of the sky, and are aware of a range of different interpretations of the sky by famous artists. They achieve well when using pastels, making collage pictures and mixing their own paint colours. In Year 2, pupils have painted bold abstract pictures which reflect their discussions about the work of Kandinsky, and have created expressive portraits of famous people, using paint, crayons, pastels and chalk. During the inspection, Year 2 pupils were able to respond to the work of Paul Klee with thoughtful comments and used paint, collage and computer programs to create their own pictures which reflected elements of the artist's work very well.
108. In Year 3, pupils achieve good standards when learning to draw faces, and are able to use a simple grid system to ensure that key features are correctly positioned. Their pictures of Vikings are strong and demonstrate good use of pastels, while their interpretations of volcanoes and of a range of animals show their effective colour mixing skills with paint. In Year 4, pupils demonstrate good skills when making coil pots, benefiting from the expert guidance of a visiting artist, who regularly works in the school. Year 4 pupils also demonstrate above average skills in drawing, and this was particularly evident during the inspection when they created a range of interpretations of African artefacts.
109. Overall, the teaching is good and enables pupils to make good progress in art and design across the school. Teachers are enthusiastic about the subject and motivate

their pupils very well. All have at least sound subject knowledge and some are well informed. They provide pupils with a rich range of learning opportunities in art, including to learn about the work of artists as well as to create their own art work. For example, in lessons observed in Year 2, skilful questions by teachers enabled pupils to think very carefully about the work of Mondrian; and well-judged support and guidance enabled pupils to achieve well when creating their own pictures, in the style of the artist, using a good range of mediums. The teaching is enriched by visits from artists. For example, the school is fortunate in having two professional artists who have children or grandchildren at the school, and generously give their time to help the pupils. These artists worked very effectively with pupils in Years 3 and 4 during the inspection. In addition, displays of pupils' work show very clearly the benefits derived from occasionally employing an 'artist in residence' for short blocks of time in the school. The large textile pictures, created after pupils had studied buildings in the town with the expert help of an 'artist in residence', are of particularly high quality.

110. The art and design co-ordinator took up her role in January this year, following the promotion of the previous co-ordinator. She is enthusiastic about the subject and is keen to maintain the good work which has been established in the school. A scheme of work, carefully prepared by the previous co-ordinator, helps to ensure that pupils' key skills and knowledge are developed systematically as they move through the school. However, formal systems for monitoring the subject are yet to be established, and there are appropriate plans for the present co-ordinator to develop this element of her role. The school is well resourced for art and design.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

111. Pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2, and their standards are above average in design and technology in Year 2. In Years 3 and 4, pupils' achievements are sound, and their standards are broadly in line with national expectations in Year 4. When the school was last inspected, standards were generally above average, across the school.
112. In Year 1, pupils achieve well when creating simple jack-in-the-box models, and when using recycled materials to make model vehicles and houses. They are able to use a basic sliding mechanism to facilitate movement in their card pictures, and make good progress when evaluating the success of their finished products. They benefit from good opportunities to develop skills in food technology, including by preparing salads and learning how to use kitchen utensils safely. In Year 2, pupils have made good designs for finger puppets, after looking carefully at a range of commercially made puppets. They create 'mock ups' of their designs, in paper, and evaluate these well before starting on the final stage of the process, using fabric and threads. Pupils who have completed their puppets have mainly good skills in creating and using paper templates to form patterns, and are able to cut and sew carefully. Evaluation continues to be a strong feature of their work, and pupils are able to reflect thoughtfully on their work. For example, in a lesson observed, a pupil remarked "I like the way I've sewn the eyes but I should really have made a bigger space inside the puppet for my thumb".
113. In Year 3, pupils have created good designs for model Viking ships, which show the materials to be used and identify some joining techniques. In a lesson observed, pupils demonstrated sound skills when beginning to make their ships, using paper, card, string and textiles. They also make sound progress when investigating different forms of packaging, and create satisfactory designs for their own packaging - for example, to contain a cake. In Year 4, pupils demonstrate sound skills when making

- pop-up pictures, and are able to use their secure knowledge about electrical circuits to create designs for simple torches.
114. The quality of teaching is good in Years 1 and 2, and enables pupils to make good progress in the subject. Insufficient lessons were observed in the older classes to make a secure overall judgement about the quality of teaching in design and technology, but an analysis of pupils' work shows it enables them to make sound progress. In the last inspection, teaching was at least satisfactory, across the school and was often good. In Years 1 and 2, teachers have a good understanding of pupils' learning needs in the subject, and have high expectations. They provide pupils with good, specific advice to develop their designing and making skills and manage lessons very well. In a constructive way, teachers are able to encourage pupils to identify ways of improving their work. The support provided by classroom assistants is beneficial to pupils' learning in design and technology, across the school, and this was particularly evident in a Year 3 lesson which was observed. In all lessons seen, pupils were deeply involved in their tasks and behaved very well.
115. The design and technology co-ordinator took on her role in January 2001 and appropriately recognises there is scope to increase her own knowledge in the subject. The previous co-ordinator had introduced the useful scheme of work provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, and ensured that teachers enhanced the scheme with their own ideas. However, strategies for monitoring pupils' standards and progress in the subject are not established, and the new co-ordinator is keen to develop this aspect of her role. Resources for the subject are satisfactory.

GEOGRAPHY

116. Standards in geography are broadly average in Years 2 and 4. During the inspection, it was possible to observe only two lessons, so no judgement can be made about the overall quality of teaching in the subject. Evidence from the lessons seen, from a scrutiny of completed work and discussions with pupils, shows that pupils make mainly sound, but sometimes good, progress in the subject. When the school was last inspected, standards were judged to be good in Year 2 and at least satisfactory in Year 4.
117. In discussion, pupils are able to talk about the geography they have studied and pupils in Year 2 have a reasonable knowledge of significant places and environments. They can talk about the local area and key features of the journeys to school. They are able to talk about differences between Northampton and areas they have visited such as visits to Wales, comparing cities to rural areas. By Year 4, pupils have a satisfactory basic knowledge about Africa, and have a good understanding of the local area through a linked history study which looks at village settlers.
118. In lessons, teachers make good use of resources to help pupils make effective progress in geographical knowledge and skills. A good range of appropriate maps, atlases and globes meant that seven year old pupils could independently find information and plot routes to different locations. In this Year 2 class, the teacher made good use of pupils' knowledge to help others when asking a pupil to describe how to use an index to locate information within an atlas. She allowed time for pupils to think about their ideas about how long it would take to reach various countries. In a Year 4 class, a lesson about Africa helped pupils to develop skills in accessing information on climate and culture from books, computer and photographs. Good links are made with other subjects with the use of an wide range of artefacts from Africa for an art lesson. Teachers give clear explanations and check on pupils' understanding by the use of questioning. Research skills are developed in lessons

where teachers have high expectations of pupils' independence to interrogate books and maps and present their findings to the class.

119. No overall judgement can be made on teaching because of the small number of lessons observed. The subject co-ordinator has given useful guidance to other staff about the subject and is currently updating resources. Overall, however, the monitoring role of the subject co-ordinator is underdeveloped and she has not established sufficiently rigorous strategies for judging the strengths and weaknesses in the subject, including through careful analysis of sample of pupils' completed work from across the school. The scheme of work is suitable and it has been usefully agreed by the schools in the town to help the smooth transfer of pupils between schools. Appropriate links are made with other subjects and using ICT to support teaching in this area. Resources for geography are adequate.

HISTORY

120. Only three lessons could be observed during the inspection, one in each of Years 2, 3 and 4. Although further evidence is drawn from the scrutiny of pupils' work, from displays and from teachers' planning, secure judgements cannot be made about the standards attained overall by pupils aged seven, or about the overall quality of the teaching Years 1 and 2 as a whole. Nevertheless, the one lesson seen in Year 2 was taught very well and, as a result, pupils made effective progress. The range of evidence available in Years 3 and 4 shows that pupils make good progress. In Year 4, pupils attain standards which are broadly average for their age. When the school was last inspected, standards were broadly average in Years 2 and 4.
121. Pupils' understanding of chronology develops as they move up through the school: from an early age they are familiar with different periods of history, with specific, significant dates, and with timelines on which they locate events that are important in relation to the topics they are studying. Their skills in historical enquiry are at least sound, and higher attaining pupils sometimes achieve above average standards in this aspect of their work. In Year 1, pupils find out about toys in the past by assembling a 'toy museum' in the classroom and by filling in questionnaires based on answers given to them by parents and grandparents about the toys they played with as children. In the lesson seen in Year 2, pupils were 'transported' by their teacher back to the time of Christopher Columbus. In their role as potential crew, they examined drawings of his flagship the Santa Maria, learned about its strengths and weaknesses as a vessel, and, more importantly, learned what it meant to live life at sea in the 15th century. In Year 3, pupils engaged on their daily duties as 'monks' in an Anglo-Saxon monastery listened with awe as their teacher talked them into 'seeing' Viking invaders approach from the sea; and in Year 4, pupils were given responsibility for their own learning when they used a variety of secondary sources to undertake research into different aspects of life in ancient Greece. When questioned during their work on topics such as these, pupils reveal a secure understanding of the many kinds of evidence used to find out about the past. They are also aware that there may be different interpretations of past events, depending on the viewpoint of the 'observer' or 'commentator'. In work seen in Year 4, pupils proved themselves capable of organising and communicating their research findings directly to an audience of fellow pupils, although, on this occasion at least, their verbal reports were rather lacking in depth and detail.
122. The quality of teaching is good overall in Years 3 and 4, and was very good in the one lesson seen in Year 2. Teachers enjoy history themselves, and, as a result, they communicate their enthusiasm to their pupils in lively lessons. They are secure in

their own knowledge and understanding of the subject and are therefore able to teach lessons in which there is an appropriate balance of teacher-initiated activity and enquiry by the pupils. Lessons are planned in considerable detail. Resources are prepared well and activities in lessons are varied and interesting. It is very clear what pupils are intended to learn, and due thought is given to the needs of pupils with special educational needs, the more able pupils and, where relevant, the few pupils for whom English is an additional language. Pupils of all abilities are encouraged to ask, as well as answer, questions and are invited to present their work. When appropriate, pupils from the DSP unit join their mainstream peers for lessons, visits and other activities. For example, pupils in Years 4 and 5 in the DSP unit joined a Year 4 visit to the Viking section of the local museum and, at the time of the inspection, were preparing to take part in a Viking assembly for the whole school. Work in class is routinely enriched by visits to places of historical interest, including much-valued local museums. Members of the local community sometimes visit school to talk to pupils about their own experiences, for example of World War II, or give presentations about aspects of history in which they have a personal interest. Books from the school library are used to good effect to enhance work in history, and the use of CD-ROMs and of the internet is gradually being developed. To date, the use of data handling in history is rather limited, and this is an application of ICT which might usefully be developed.

123. The history co-ordinator has great interest in the subject and communicates this well to her colleagues as well as to pupils. Since the last OFSTED inspection, she has developed a brief but relevant policy statement, reviewed and rationalised the scheme of work to include elements of guidance from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, alongside an agreed 'town-wide' plan, and developed the library resources for history. Resources for history are currently adequate. Plans are in hand to extend the range of reference books for pupils aged seven to nine, to improve resources for teachers, and to build up the school's own collection of artefacts. The monitoring role of the co-ordinator is underdeveloped and, as a result, there has been little evaluation of teaching and learning in history or of the implementation of the scheme of work. Inspection evidence shows that, while all key skills and concepts are certainly addressed at some point during a pupil's time in the school, there is no planned way of ensuring that each pupil will be able to refine each skill systematically and progressively over time. For example, while pupils have ample opportunities to use and to improve their enquiry skills, they rarely consider the causes and consequences of events, and they seldom examine similarities and differences between life in different periods of history.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

124. At present, standards in ICT are broadly average in Years 2 and 4, but are rising. The school has recently updated its computers and added a new computer suite. Teachers are increasing their skills using the new equipment and pupils are now making good progress in ICT. As a consequence, the school is well placed to raise standards further in the subject. When the school was last inspected, in 1997, standards were judged to be above national expectations.
125. Year 1 pupils use a range of tools in drawing programs to create pictures and write their names using a large brush, changing colours and effects. Other Year 1 pupils show skills in drawing butterfly pictures in preparation for a design and technology project. In Year 2, pupils build on skills in drawing by making additions on screen to the work of Piet Mondrian, carefully selecting the size and shape of brush to use and making the pictures their own. When pupils in another Year 2 class were introduced

to the programmable toy, Roamer, they quickly learnt how to estimate how far to move the toy to a given point. They were helped by the good use of visual reminders on how to sequence the instructions provided by the teacher. Pupils in Year 2 are able to add information on eye colours in the class to a data program and convert this into graphs.

126. Year 3 pupils are able to make pictures which show their skill in changing font size and colour, adding clipart pictures to good effect. In geography lessons, Year 3 pupils show a suitable understanding of how to navigate around an Internet site to zoom in from small to large-scale maps when locating the school from a map of the British Isles. Pupils in Year 4 demonstrate they can acquire new skills quickly and apply them when programming a series of instructions into the computer to produce a Greek square pattern.
127. Overall, the quality of teaching in the subject is good. Where teachers are confident of their own skills they move lessons along at a prompt pace and expect pupils to learn rapidly, applying their new skills independently within the lesson. Teachers using the computer suite are well organised and are gaining confidence with the new equipment. They make good use of the interactive whiteboard to teach computer skills and for lessons in other subjects held in the computer suite. Their planning, often created with the support of the co-ordinator, is clear and focused, showing objectives for the ICT and the linked subject. Teachers usually give clear explanations of what pupils need to learn and do. Teachers place high priority on developing pupils' skills across a range of programs and plan for them to work in pairs to support one another. They give frequent opportunities to pupils to discuss before answering questions, using the correct terminology and vocabulary. This enables all pupils to make good progress in learning, including those with special educational needs. Pupils enjoy working with computers and always concentrate and work hard. They work well together, discussing and deciding what to do in their joint efforts.
128. The co-ordinator has a very good understanding of the subject and how it can be used to improve pupils' attainment across the whole curriculum. She has set out plans to raise standards through improving teachers' skills and knowledge and helping them to work more confidently with pupils. The school is aware of the need to make sure the co-ordinator has sufficient time to monitor work and support colleagues further.
129. Good use is made of the internet in both key stages to access information and a start has been made on communicating by email. There are very effective links with other subjects particularly literacy, numeracy, history, geography and art. As a result, pupils apply their developing subject knowledge effectively and gain greater ICT skills in a practical and meaningful context.

MUSIC

130. Overall standards in music are broadly average in Years 2 and 4. However, standards in singing are above average across the school. In the lessons observed, pupils made good progress in their learning in music. When the school was last inspected, standards were judged to be above average in Year 2 and well above average in Year 4. Pupils' singing skills were particularly identified and praised.
131. In Key Stage 1, pupils sing well, showing good control of pitch and rhythm. All pupils showed an appropriate understanding for their age of variations, changes of tempo and dynamics when singing well remembered songs together. Pupils in Year 1 are

able to recognise the different timbre of percussion instruments, improving their listening skills as the lesson progressed. Pupils in Year 2 respond well when challenged to make appropriate sounds with percussion instruments to represent the changes of speed of things such as trains and rockets. In this lesson, pupils from the DSP unit took a full part and were well supported by staff. Year 4 pupils can compose musical accompaniment to poetry, making their own notation and working together to produce the desired effect. Singing is a strength of the school. Pupils sing with obvious enjoyment and are tuneful singing together and in rounds. The standard of singing with selected Key Stage 2 pupils in the choir is of a very high standard. They take a pride in achievement and perform regularly. Pupils of all ages have regular opportunities to listen to and comment on a range of music from various styles and traditions, for example in assemblies and music lessons.

132. In the lessons seen, teaching and learning were usually good. The teachers have secure knowledge of the subject, which they communicate well. The main elements of the music curriculum are covered well in lessons. There are opportunities for performing and composing, both with voice and instruments. Lessons are well planned to ensure pupils are actively involved in music making throughout the lesson, warming up and playing instruments as well as listening to others. Pupils are beginning to appraise their own work and that of others. Pupils enjoy music making and are keen to do well. They sing confidently and the warm relationships between pupils and teachers ensure they try their best. They show respect for the efforts of others and are beginning to offer constructive criticism in a sensitive way. The teachers show enthusiasm for music and this is infectious, motivating the pupils well. Pupils are taught the recorder at a lunchtime club which is well attended by Year 3 and 4 pupils from mainstream and by some pupils from the DSP unit. Pupils also have the opportunity to learn to play the cello and violin with teachers from the music service. Good use is made of resources, the specialist music room and hall for music lessons. The subject promotes understanding of other cultures well for example, with the wide range of instruments and recorded music from other cultures.
133. The subject is well led by an experienced and able co-ordinator. She has few opportunities to assess the quality of teaching and learning in music across the school although she has supported colleagues by providing good guidance through the scheme of work for music. Music resources are good, overall. Parents have recently purchased a good selection of instruments and these are used well.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

134. Evidence from the lessons observed shows that in games and dance pupils achieve average standards in Years 2 and 4. They made good progress in the lessons observed, but attainment is not as high as when the school was last inspected when standards were judged to be above average. No lessons were observed in gymnastics and so it is not possible to form a judgement about these aspects of the curriculum. Pupils' ability to remember, reproduce and explore a range of simple actions, such as balancing on different parts of their bodies and travelling in a range of ways, results in their developing controlled and co-ordinated movements during floor work in dance. In the course of selecting and linking their dance movements into a sequence, they begin to understand basic compositions of movement, for example the ways in which changes in direction and speed, body shape and level can add interest and variety to their movements. They also begin to notice the effects that physical exercise has on their bodies, for example that it causes them to feel warm and make their hearts beat faster. When working on games skills, younger pupils learn how to control the ball with a bat and work hard to improve their coordination

when travelling around the hall taking the ball with them along the floor. They have a sound knowledge of how to exercise safely and this results in an enhanced awareness of their responsibilities towards themselves and the effects that their own actions might have on others. For example, they move around the hall sensibly and ensure that they do not get in the way of others.

135. Pupils who have special educational needs receive good support from classroom assistants who work alongside them during lessons. Pupils from the DSP unit are included in physical education lessons and benefit from working alongside their mainstream classmates because they look to them as role models of how to work, and copy their movements. Mainstream pupils show genuine regard for pupils from the unit, holding their hand to help them and appreciating their efforts. This ensures that they are able to take part fully in lessons and achieve well in relation to their prior attainment.
136. In the lessons seen, the quality of teaching was good overall. Lessons are well planned with a clear focus for learning and this results in pupils having a clear understanding about the purpose of the lesson. The best teaching is innovative and makes effective links with other subjects of the curriculum. Activities build on previous learning and are appropriately sequenced to enable pupils to apply what they already know in creative ways, developing and exploring their movements and improving their skills. For example, in a dance lesson linked to a science topic on materials, the teacher reminded the pupils about curled, twisted and stretched balances and movements. Pupils then developed their own ideas in response to the teacher's instructions. Pupils then examined boxes of materials and were inspired to represent their understanding in dance. They responded well, performing a series of twisting and folding movements with their bodies, demonstrating sound standards.
137. There is skilful use of open-ended tasks, which allows all pupils to perform at their own ability level. Pupils who achieve higher levels of performance are encouraged to demonstrate their ideas and this inspires others to higher achievement. As pupils practise their movements, teachers give individual advice and coaching. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate their own performance and the performance of others and, as a result, they work hard to refine and improve their movements. Good use of praise and encouragement gives added incentive for pupils to persevere and do their best. There is good attention to health and safety, pupils are well managed and there are high standards of discipline. Consequently, lessons proceed smoothly, behaviour is very good throughout lessons, and the maximum use is made of the time available for learning.
138. The subject co-ordinator keeps an overview of the subject by looking at planning and giving informal support, and has worked hard to update and develop the scheme of work. Her role in monitoring and evaluating standards, teaching and learning in the subject, however, is underdeveloped.
139. The school has sufficient good quality resources for physical education and they are well organised to ensure easy access in the course of lessons. There is a reasonably sized hall, which is well used for all aspects of physical education. The school has a field and hard play area but they are not marked out for competitive sports.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

140. Pupils make sound progress in religious education and by the time they reach the age of seven attain standards that are in line with those expected for their age. They continue to make satisfactory progress in Years 3 and 4 and attain the standards that are expected for them by the time they leave the school at the age of nine. When the school was last inspected, standards in religious education were judged to be good.
141. The progress that pupils make is the result of a carefully planned curriculum, which is embedded in the values of respect and thoughtfulness for others. Work on Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Judaism results in pupils acquiring a sound understanding that religious traditions in the United Kingdom are mainly Christian and that other principal religions are also represented in their community. They celebrate the major festivals of the Christian year, such as Christmas and Easter, and know the main features of the stories behind them. As a result of their work on special books and special places, pupils begin to develop an understanding of the richness and diversity of religion and how believers express their faith in the way that they live their everyday lives. For example, in their work on the events leading up to Easter, pupils learn about why Christians often deny themselves something they like during Lent. In their work on rules they learn about the importance of the Ten Commandments to Christians and the Five Pillars of Islam to Muslims, and how they affect the ways in which they live their lives. Pupils in Year 4 have a good knowledge of the Bible.
142. Pupils benefit from visits to the local church and to other places of worship such as the Hindu Temple, which have helped them to understand ideas of religious ceremonies such as baptisms and weddings. Opportunities to handle and look at a range of religious resources result in pupils acquiring a satisfactory understanding of religious terminology, such as the names of holy books, particular traditions, and areas and artefacts within a church. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in religious education because they are well supported by classroom assistants, and teachers are skilled at asking questions and designing activities which ensure that they can take part.
143. Teaching in religious education is mainly sound and is sometimes good. Lessons are conscientiously planned and carefully structured with thorough preparation of materials and resources to illustrate ideas. For example, in an introductory lesson on special books, the teacher introduced a range of books that were particularly precious to her as a starting point. This was effective in helping pupils to understand that some books can play a very important part in people's lives and that the Bible is a particularly important book to Christians because it tells them how to live their lives. Teachers make sound use of open questions to check pupils' understanding, to help pupils reflect on what they have heard and to encourage them to contribute their own ideas. Teachers often share their own personal thoughts and experiences with pupils, for example in a Year 2 lesson on special places, the teacher explained why her settee was her very special place after a tiring day at school. This was effective in building an atmosphere of mutual trust in which pupils had the confidence to talk about their special places and to raise questions of their own. Teachers show that they value these ideas and suggestions by listening carefully. They then carefully build on them to extend pupils' understanding further.
144. The subject is soundly managed overall, although procedures to check standards of teaching and learning have yet to be developed. Much of pupils' work in religious education is done orally, particularly in Years 1 and 2, and as such it is even more difficult for the co-ordinator to keep a check on standards without monitoring lessons and talking to children. Assessment procedures are being developed well as a result of the subject co-ordinator's involvement with a town wide initiative.

145. There are sufficient good quality resources for the subject. They are stored and used efficiently, and effective use is made of them in lessons to support pupils' understanding. Good links with the local community, for example with the local church and a Jewish family, make a significant contribution to the religious education curriculum.