

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **WEST BLATCHINGTON INFANT SCHOOL**

Hangleton Way, Hove,  
East Sussex BN3 8BN

LEA area: Brighton and Hove

Unique reference number: 114425

Headteacher: Mrs Carol Grey

Reporting inspector: Mrs Jo Storrs  
11038

Dates of inspection: 1<sup>st</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> July 2002

Inspection number: 245024

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 – 7 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Hangleton Way Hove East Sussex
Postcode:	BN3 8BN
Telephone number:	01273 770777
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Appropriate authority:	Brighton and Hove
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Denise Pettet
Date of previous inspection:	29 <sup>th</sup> January 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
11038	Jo Storrs	Registered inspector	Foundation Stage Science Art and design Music	Information about the school; the school's results and pupils' achievements; teaching; curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils.
9053	Viv Phillips	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values, and personal development; how well the school cares for its pupils; how well the school works in partnership with parents.
22778	Anne Shannon	Team inspector	English Design and technology History Geography	Autistic facility; Special educational needs
20142	Malcolm Childs	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Religious education Physical education English as an additional language Equal opportunities	How well the school is led and managed

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# REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>11</b>
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>AUTISTIC FACILITY</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>29</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

This is a small infant school for boys and girls aged three to seven years and situated on the edge of Hove. It has 177 children, greater than during the last inspection, with slightly more girls than boys. Fifty children attend the nursery class in a part-time capacity and six children from outside the school's catchment area are based in the autistic facility. Children are from a variety of backgrounds; some are disadvantaged. Children have a wide range of skills on entry, but overall their attainment is below the local authority average. Twenty-two children are from ethnic backgrounds, mainly Bangladeshi and Black African heritages. This is above average and slightly higher than during the previous inspection. Sixteen children speak English as an additional language; most have a good command of English. Only nine children are at an early stage of English language acquisition, mainly in the nursery and Reception classes. Twenty-four per cent of children are entitled to free school meals, slightly less than at the time of the previous inspection, but still above average. An average proportion of children (18.6 per cent) have special needs, mainly moderate learning, speech and communication difficulties, and the percentage of children with statements of special educational need for autism has increased to well above average (3.4 per cent). Due to promotion or retirement, there has been a high turnover of teaching staff; nearly all the teachers have been appointed within the last two years.

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

West Blatchington is an improving school with many very good features. Standards are rising in reading and writing and are satisfactory in all other subjects. The leadership of the governors, headteacher and deputy has provided a clear focus for developments and staff have a shared commitment to improve. Curriculum planning and teaching are now very good and the school has all the ingredients to improve further. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage<sup>1</sup> provides the children with a good start to their schooling; as a result they make good progress and achieve average standards in most areas of learning.
- The very good teaching, learning and curricular planning in Years 1 and 2.
- Very good relationships across the school and teachers' behaviour management foster children's enthusiasm for school.
- Very good procedures for promoting academic and personal achievement.
- The excellent provision for children attending the autistic facility. Very good provision for children with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, who make very good progress.
- The school makes very good provision for the pupils' moral and social development.
- The headteacher, deputy and key staff together with the governing body provide highly effective leadership.

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

- Standards in reading and writing, although improving, still need further development.
- Attendance and punctuality.

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

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<sup>1</sup> The Foundation Stage includes the nursery and Reception classes.

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has addressed all the key issues for action identified in its last inspection in 1996, and is considerably better than it was. Standards in history have improved and now meet national expectations. A curriculum framework has been developed that ensures there is a broad and balanced curriculum. Timetables are regularly monitored by the headteacher to ensure coverage of all subjects and full use of the accommodation and to fully integrate children from the autistic unit. Policies, guidelines and schemes of work underpin teachers' highly effective planning. Assessment procedures have been improved recently and are now very good; they are beginning to impact positively on the children's achievement. Ongoing assessment ensures activities are generally carefully matched to the children's needs and abilities. Teaching has improved and is now a strength of the school. The headteacher has provided effective training so co-ordinators have a secure understanding of their roles and provide good leadership in subjects. This is a significant achievement given that nearly all the present staff are new to the school. Staff and governors are now planning and evaluating at a high level on the basis of identified curriculum and other priorities. This key issue has been met well.

## STANDARDS

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

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

*\*Similar schools are those whose pupils come from similar social and economic backgrounds to those at West Blatchington.*

Results, based on average points, improved in the National Curriculum tests at age seven in 2000. In 2001, they continued to rise in mathematics to very high when compared with all schools nationally and when compared with similar schools. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection due, the school suggests, to the valuable support received from the local authority to develop mathematics. In reading and writing in 2001, however, results dipped to well below the average of all schools, but were average and below average respectively when compared with similar schools. In addition, teacher assessments in science at this time indicated standards were below the expected levels nationally, but matched those of similar schools. This signifies a dip in standards in reading, writing and science since the previous inspection. The key factors adversely affecting the children's standards in these subjects were limitations in planning and disruptions in staffing.

When children entered the present Year 2 classes, their attainment was below average. They have made at least satisfactory progress. Inspection observations indicate that standards in reading and writing have improved, although are still below average. In science, standards are now average. This is because of improvements to curriculum planning and the high quality of teaching. Standards in mathematics are now average. This apparent dip since the last inspection reflects the composition of this particular group of Year 2 pupils. Standards in all other subjects of the National Curriculum meet national expectations. Progress is good in the Foundation Stage

and children's attainment meets expectations at the end of the Reception year, apart from in literacy, where the children's skills are lower. Children with special educational needs, including those who attend the autistic facility, and those who speak English as an additional language, make very good progress.

### PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. The children are very enthusiastic about school and motivated to work hard.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. The children behave very well in and out of lessons and play together well. There are no exclusions.
Personal development and relationships	Good. The children enjoy helping their teachers. Relationships are very strong.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. It is below average, even with recent improvement. Too many children are absent or late for no good reason.

### TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Very good	N/A

*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, teaching is good in the Foundation Stage and very good in Years 1 and 2. This is an extremely positive picture and a significant improvement since the last inspection. The quality of teaching is consistently good across the school. Teachers have a secure understanding of subjects and high expectations of children's standards of work and behaviour. This ensures that all children learn well and generally make good progress; those with special needs and those who speak English as an additional language make very good progress. Higher attaining children are often well challenged. Literacy and numeracy skills are taught well and teachers use appropriate strategies to raise standards in reading and writing. Particular strengths in teaching include very good planning of imaginative and interesting activities that are assessed well, very good pupil management and highly effective use of time, resources and teaching assistants. Marking is an area for further development.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. It is broad, rich and relevant to the children's interests and needs. Planning is consistently of a high standard across the school.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Unobtrusive but effective support enables children with special educational needs to play their full part in lessons. There is excellent support for pupils in the autistic unit.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Very good. The children receive high quality support and make very good progress towards the targets set for them.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Good. The provision for the children's personal, moral and social development is a strength of the school. The provision for the children's spiritual and cultural development is appropriate for their ages.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good procedures to check on children's welfare and how they are doing. Good use of assessment. The children's academic and personal achievements are supported well. The school has a fruitful relationship with parents and in most respects works effectively with them.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The recently established senior management team is offering very good leadership, which is a significant factor in the quality of education now provided by the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. The governors exercise their responsibilities very well and make an important contribution to the school's improvement. They have identified the correct priorities for development in partnership with the school's management team and apply the principles of best value well to maximise children's learning.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. Recently the school has developed thorough procedures to evaluate its performance.
The strategic use of resources	Good. There is a very good match of staff to meet the demands of the curriculum and accommodation is good. Resources are sufficient, of good quality and used well to support lessons.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Children like coming to school; they are making good progress, are expected to work hard and behave well.</li><li>• Teaching is good.</li><li>• The school works closely with parents.</li><li>• Parents are kept informed how their children are getting on in school and feel comfortable approaching the school with questions or a problem.</li><li>• Parents feel the school is helping their children to become mature and responsible.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The range of activities outside lessons.</li></ul>

*44 parents responded through the questionnaire and 13 parents attended a meeting held for them before the inspection.*

The inspectors endorsed parents' positive views. Inspectors did not agree with parents' views about the range of activities outside lessons. The school provides French and tennis clubs, violin lessons and a range of whole-school activities such as a book week, an arts week, sports days, concerts and organises workshops and visits to support children's class-based learning.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Children have a wide range of skills on entry to the Reception classes, but overall, their attainment is below the local authority average. In 2000, results based on average points improved in the National Curriculum tests for seven year olds. In 2001, they continued to rise in mathematics to very high when compared with all schools nationally and with similar schools<sup>2</sup>. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection, which, the school suggests, was due to the valuable support received from the local authority to improve mathematics. In reading and writing in 2001, however, results dipped to well below the average for all schools, but were average and below average respectively when compared with similar schools. In addition, teacher assessments in science at this time indicated standards were below the expected levels nationally, but average in comparison with similar schools. This signifies a dip in standards in reading, writing and science since the previous inspection. The key factors adversely affecting children's standards in these subjects were limitations in planning and disruptions in staffing.
2. The inspection of lessons, analysis of pupils' work and the sample of the children's reading indicate that when the children entered the present Year 2 classes, their attainment was below average overall, but they have made at least satisfactory progress. By the end of Year 2, the children's standards of speaking and listening are satisfactory. They use a good range of language to talk and write about what they discover in lessons. Standards of reading and writing compared with other schools have improved since 2001 and, although rising, are still somewhat below average. In conjunction with the local authority, the school sets challenging targets in aspects of English; the unconfirmed results of the most recent tests indicate the school has achieved these targets. In reading, however, many children have not built up a satisfactory range of strategies for tackling unfamiliar texts and their understanding is often limited. In writing, the children attempt a good range of creative and imaginative writing, including poetry. Seven year olds use legible, often joined-up script, with mostly well-formed letter shapes. They write in different styles for a range of purposes and whilst spelling is improving, it does not yet meet the standard typically expected at this age. Many children find it difficult to undertake the required physical effort to write. In addition, some are not supported at home to develop their skills and others arrive late so miss vital literacy support. The school provides a range of valuable additional help to enable these children, and those with special needs or who speak English as an additional language, to make good progress. The support offered to children in the autistic facility is excellent and their progress is very good.
3. Although standards in mathematics appear to have declined since 2001, this year, from a low baseline, the children have made good progress in Year 2 and attained average standards. The unconfirmed results of the most recent national tests support these findings. Year 2 children's understanding of numbers is close to that of their peers nationally. They are confident in counting on and back and in identifying missing numbers in a sequence up to ten. Children apply their number skills well to practical settings. They work out simple money problems and understand the main properties of two and three-dimensional shapes. Most calculate simple measures of time accurately and regularly practise mental mathematics, which helps them in their number work. Lesson observations and the work seen reveal average standards in all areas of science. Children have a secure understanding of living things, physical processes such as electricity and

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<sup>2</sup> Similar schools are those whose pupils come from similar social and economic backgrounds to those at West Blatchington.

forces, and how materials differ. A strength of science is the recent emphasis placed on the development of children's investigative and thinking skills. There is satisfactory attainment for boys and girls in all other areas of the curriculum.

4. Progress is good in the Foundation Stage. By the end of the Reception year, children attain the expected standards in all areas of learning apart from the development of early reading and writing skills, which are improving but are below average.
5. Children with special educational needs, including those who attend the autistic facility, and those for whom English is an additional language, achieve very well in relation to their prior attainment. They have good attitudes to the school and work hard during lessons. This is due to the excellent teaching in the autistic unit and the quality of support they receive from the very skilled teaching and bi-lingual assistants in lessons, or when withdrawn for special help. The targets in the individual education plans are well structured. The pupils respond well to the teachers and support staff and work steadily towards achieving their targets. Their efforts have borne fruit in the high proportion of children attaining the national expectations. A few children miss out on some of this valuable help when they arrive late for school. The school has satisfactory strategies to raise the achievement of the higher attaining pupils and has plans in hand to make further improvements in this area.

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

6. The children's good behaviour and attitudes to learning, described in the last inspection report, have improved well.
7. Attitudes are good. The children are very enthusiastic about school and their teachers. They enjoy learning and are happy to work hard, particularly when they find tasks interesting. The children want to please their teachers and are keen to have a go with well-explained activities. When they are not quite sure what to do, or face tasks that are not as well matched to their needs as usual, their attention wanders. This is because they depend on high quality teaching to kindle their eagerness to learn and their ability to concentrate. In the best lessons, children give their whole attention to what the teacher asks them to do, whatever their individual strengths and weaknesses. For example, in a Year 1 religious education lesson, stimulating opportunities to think, talk and write about what caring means and how a nurse helps people, resulted in great concentration and lively responses from the whole class. In a Year 1 literacy lesson, the routines were so well established that children were very alert when the teacher made deliberate mistakes in writing on the board. They were thrilled and proud to correct them promptly.
8. The children's behaviour is very good in and out of lessons. This is as a result of the careful steps taken by adults to teach them exactly what conduct is expected in school. The children try very hard to listen well and do as asked; this makes a significant difference to the amount of work they do and the progress they make in lessons. They talk about their classroom rules and know what is expected of them. Consequently, children respond very well when staff use signs cleverly to remind someone to listen or wait for their turn. The children are usually very polite to each other and to adults, including visitors. They have learned to play together well, with help from adults who have taught them the rules of traditional playground games that reinforce skills such as taking turns and sharing very well. They are very active at playtime but not rough or rowdy. No bullying or racism was seen. They get on well together in school. They take care of school property and of each other, for example, as Year 2 playground buddies. There are no exclusions.
9. The children's personal development is good. Although the youngest children have limited social skills and experience of the world, the school's hard work ensures that by Year 2,

children are involved well in its daily routines, enjoy being together and grow in confidence. The children notice when someone is unhappy or unwell. They respond well to the chance to help, for instance, by giving out stationery or collecting in work. They use initiative well in seeking help with work they find hard. The children work well on their own when they are clear about what to do and interested in the task, for example when writing special memories on paper shapes to make a patchwork. They have a good understanding of how their actions affect others and show good levels of respect for the feelings and views of others. In a Year 2 personal and social education lesson, children listened closely to what others recalled of a friend who had left the class and in turn, gave happy and funny special messages to send to him.

10. Throughout the school, relationships are very good and make an important contribution to children's personal and academic achievements. This is because children feel happy and secure. They are eager to please and like working and playing with each other and with different adults in the school. This results in a high degree of harmony, whatever people's background circumstances. The children are actively interested in learning about each other's traditions and cultures, which they find intriguing. This was obvious from their questions in Year 2 lessons about overseas visits and about different family groups, such as grandparents or foster-parents caring for children.
11. Attendance is unsatisfactory. Although there have been some recent improvements in attendance levels, the rate is still below average. As a result, children lose chances to fill gaps in their reading, writing and counting skills. Punctuality is not good enough. Sometimes children miss crucial instructions, and latecomers interrupt the lesson. Not all parents offer convincing and justifiable reasons to explain why children fail to come to school on time, every day. Too many children are absent or late for no good reason. This limits the progress they make.

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

12. All the teachers are new to the school since the last inspection. During the inspection one Reception teacher was not present for one day and the other was taken ill and absent for two and a half days. Two supply teachers took the Reception classes for these days and the permanent Reception class teacher took both classes, supported by the headteacher, for one afternoon.
13. Overall, teaching is good in the Foundation Stage and very good in Years 1 and 2. During the inspection, 14 per cent of teaching was excellent, 34 per cent was very good, 38 per cent was good and the remaining 14 per cent was satisfactory. This is an extremely positive picture and a significant improvement since the last inspection. The quality of teaching is consistently good across the school, with individual teachers having particular strengths. Highly effective teaching has developed a positive climate for learning. Monitoring of teaching by the local authority and headteacher indicates the steps that have been taken to raise teaching to this high level.
14. The quality of teaching in the Foundation Stage is good overall. The supply teachers working in the Reception classes were effectively briefed so children's learning was not impeded. The new co-ordinator has a very good understanding of child development and the learning needs of young children. She uses this expertise well to support the planning of effective learning opportunities across the Foundation Stage. The striking feature of teaching in the nursery class is the attention given to meeting individual needs, and the children respond with great enthusiasm to the range of high quality tasks. The concentration the children give to their work is good for their ages. Teachers across the Foundation Stage have good procedures for assessment and are using the results to plan future learning. They are developing procedures to track children's progress more

effectively and to meet the needs of higher attaining children more precisely. The teaching of personal, social and emotional development is particularly good in the nursery class as it focuses on the development of communication and language skills.

15. Throughout the Foundation Stage, most children have been taught successfully to listen and take turns in discussions, but a few still find it difficult to interact and share. Early literacy skills are soundly taught but, on occasions, children sit still too long listening to the teacher in literacy lessons. Basic mathematics is effectively taught through interesting activities related to the children's daily lives, such as telling the time. Children with special educational needs are identified early, and those for whom English is not their home language are very well supported. However, for no good reason, one child at an early stage of English language acquisition arrived at school 25 minutes late, so missed most of the time a bi-lingual assistant had come to work with her during a literacy lesson.
16. Teaching is very good and sometimes excellent in Years 1 and 2. Teachers have a secure grasp of the subjects to be taught and high expectations of the children's standards of work and behaviour. Particular strengths in teaching include the very good and consistent planning of imaginative and interesting activities that are assessed well. Teachers manage children very well and use time, resources and teaching assistants highly effectively. This ensures all children make progress in lessons. Daily plans provide a very clear structure to lessons; learning intentions are clear, activities build systematically upon previous learning and plans describe how children and tasks will be organised. The use of assessment in lessons has improved since the last inspection, although some assessments are still too broad, for example in science, and do not have different expectations for all groups of children, particularly for the most able. The provision of subject documentation and joint planning across the years has had a profound impact on the quality of teaching and the consistency with which children are taught in the different year classes.
17. High quality resources, including ICT, are used effectively when appropriate. For example, a group of lower attaining children taped their findings in a science lesson and others use the computer confidently to find information. The children know what they are to learn at the beginning of each lesson and evaluate their learning against the lesson intentions at the end. The skilful use of questioning encourages children to provide extended answers and give reasons for their opinions. Unobtrusive support by teachers and teaching assistants during group work ensures every child does their best. The quality of relationships between teachers and children is a further strength. This encourages the children to be adventurous and independent in their work. All teachers have high expectations of the children's work and behaviour, and presentational skills are often high. All work is regularly marked, but does not always relate to the learning intentions or provide children with the next steps in learning.
18. The strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy are good. In literacy, the quality of teaching and learning is good and sometimes excellent. The children are interested in their lessons and stimulated by the enthusiastic teaching. The teachers have a secure understanding of the National Literacy Strategy and use a wide variety of methods to promote speaking and listening, reading and writing skills. They are beginning to give children opportunities to use their writing skills in other subjects, such as in ICT. Teachers are skilled in teaching numeracy and work hard to implement the National Numeracy Strategy successfully. As a result, standards in mathematics are improving overall. Although standards appear to have declined in the national tests at the end of Year 2 this year, this reflects the composition of this particular group of Year 2 pupils. The subject makes a considerable contribution to the standards being achieved in science, ICT, design and technology and geography.

19. All teachers provide very good support for children with special needs, or those for whom English is not their home language. Special needs staff provide invaluable support, and play a vital role in managing and guiding the children in activities. Relationships are very good between all staff and children, and staff offer unobtrusive but effective help that enables children to be successful. Lower attaining children receive suitable support to develop their spelling and reading skills from teaching assistants.
20. Across the school, teachers sustain a stimulating and aesthetically pleasing environment for learning. In the nursery and one Reception class, very attractive role-play areas enable children to use language imaginatively to recreate roles.
21. A particular feature of teaching is the recent focus on developing children's abilities to think about their learning and to work independently. All children enjoy investigating problems, and opportunities to work independently. Some are good learners; they work hard and acquire skills, knowledge and understanding at a good pace. Others find learning more difficult, so lessons are very carefully structured to provide interesting small steps and fitting support. This approach allows all children to work at a suitable rate so they can perceive success. The interest and enthusiasm of the children for their work are strong features of many lessons; they sustain concentration and persevere with tasks. The children usually have a fair understanding about how well they are achieving in lessons but not always from teachers' marking. Teachers offer sensitive support during lessons but few took the opportunities to work with particular groups to extend their learning during the inspection. Children with special educational needs, and those for whom English is not their home language, apply themselves very well to their work, particularly in the autistic unit, because of the very good support they receive. They feel confident in tackling challenging tasks and are proud of the outcomes.

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

22. Since the last inspection, the curriculum has improved significantly. The recently developed curriculum framework ensures a broad and balanced curriculum that meets statutory requirements and provides a range of imaginative and challenging activities for all children. Policies, guidelines and schemes of work underpin teachers' highly effective planning. Planning and timetables are regularly monitored by the headteacher to ensure: coverage of subjects; that subjects are organised to integrate the children from the autistic unit, when appropriate; and that good use is made of the hall and outdoor areas. Ongoing assessment ensures activities are generally carefully matched to children's needs and abilities. The literacy and numeracy strategies have been effectively introduced. Provision for the children's cultural development now meets expectations. Effective use is made of links between subjects to extend the children's horizons.
23. The curriculum provided by the school is very good overall. It is rich and stimulating and includes the full range of learning areas at the Foundation Stage and subjects in Years 1 and 2. Religious education meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus, and parents are informed of their right to withdraw their children from religious education lessons and assemblies. The provision for personal development, and for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is good overall. It is very good for personal, moral and social development. Provision for all children in the nursery and Reception classes is good. All staff use ICT very well to support their planning and other administrative tasks. This enables all teachers to access the planning and assessment records of their colleagues.
24. The quality and range of learning opportunities are good overall for children in the Foundation Stage and very good in Years 1 and 2. The school bases its schemes on the

nationally recommended schemes that are being refined to meet the school's aims and values. Planning across the school is now highly effective and is positively affecting the progress children make. Overall, it ensures equality of access and opportunity for all pupils. This is particularly evident in the quality of provision for autistic children and the way they integrate in the main school. Another feature is the integration of lower attaining Year 2 pupils with the children attending the autistic unit for numeracy. On occasions, higher attaining children could be given greater challenges in their work. The curriculum is enhanced by effective use of the local environment, visits and visitors. These features provide children with opportunities to learn from first-hand experiences and relate learning to their everyday lives.

25. The school implements the literacy and numeracy strategies successfully. Planning is of a very high standard, and lessons are well structured and have clear learning intentions, shared with children. At the end of each lesson, teachers carefully reinforce children's learning. Recent developments to the literacy curriculum are beginning to improve the children's spelling and understanding of the books they read. The school has focused on improving the children's mental skills in mathematics, which is helping their understanding of numbers. High priority is given to developing the children's basic skills across subjects, to helping them to think about possible outcomes to problem and to giving them the responsibility for their learning. The personal, social and health education programme is good but, as the school knows, it is in need of review. The school recognises the need to incorporate all the best features of its informal support for children's personal development into a programme that is tailored to their needs and meets current curriculum requirements. Sex education and drug abuse is taught well in accordance with the governors' clear policy.
26. Some parents did not feel the school provided enough activities outside lessons. Inspection findings judged that the quality and range of activities outside lessons were satisfactory. The school provides French and tennis clubs, violin lessons and a range of whole-school activities such as a book week, an arts week, sports' days and concerts, and organises workshops and visits to support children's class-based learning. There are useful documents to enable children to continue their learning at home, but not all parents support this initiative. The school uses its immediate and wider community well to extend children's experiences and understanding, although displays do not always reflect the richness of the work they do in the local area. Links with partner institutions are good and strengthening all the time. For example, the infant and junior schools are exploring ways of involving parents more in their children's education.
27. Provision in the Foundation Stage for children with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their home language is good and in Years 1 and 2 it is very good. The requirements of the new Code of Practice for special needs are fully met. Procedures are well organised and teaching groups are organised so children have the same access to the curriculum. As a direct consequence of this and the good teaching observed across the school, both children with special educational needs and with English as an additional language make good progress in the Foundation Stage and very good progress in Years 1 and 2. In addition, children with special educational needs make very good progress towards the targets set for them. The six children with a statement of special educational needs are monitored regularly to review children's progress towards their learning targets and to set new ones. The co-ordinator works very effectively with all members of staff.
28. The overall provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. The children explore well-considered themes during circle time<sup>3</sup>. The sensitivity of children's reflections and special

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<sup>3</sup> Circle time provides time for children and teachers to sit together and talk about things that are special to them in an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect.

memories about their families and people who help them, heighten their spiritual awareness. The children are given opportunities to consider the beliefs of others and time to reflect on their experiences, which enhances their spiritual development. Similarly, there are moments in music and art lessons when children appreciate something beautiful that adds to their understanding of those things that make the human spirit special. Opportunities for spiritual development are not so well developed in subjects other than religious education and personal, social and health education. The daily act of collective worship complies with statutory requirements and is broadly Christian in nature. They are well planned with meaning, purpose and values as central themes; for example, in one, children reflected on the ways in which postmen help them and other people.

29. Arrangements for the children's moral development are very good, and the children are developing their understanding of right from wrong. The school promotes honesty, fairness and justice very well, and the children are learning to value and respect truth. Equality of opportunity and personal entitlement are well developed across the school. The moral development of the children is very well planned. In all classes, circle time gives children time to reflect and express their views. In a Year 2 class, for example, children found positive things to say about other children, and in a religious education lesson, boys and girls spontaneously comforted another child who began to cry as he remembered how special his pet hamster had been.
30. The provision for the children's social development is very good. All staff and other adults are significant role models. The children recognise the importance of taking responsibility for their own actions, and, generally, they support and look after each other well. They devise school and classroom rules with their teachers and are keen to maintain them. Nearly all children are self-disciplined and behave well around the school and at play and lunchtimes. The high quality of relationships within the school makes a considerable contribution to the exceptional atmosphere that is evident throughout the school day. Older children have a good attitude towards the care of younger ones. There are many opportunities for the children to show initiative, and they enjoy doing so. The children from the special unit, and other children with special educational needs and English as an additional language, are fully integrated into the life of the school. This is a positive indicator of the effective way in which social skills are developed. Children in the special unit have been taught how to play games and take turns. This has been introduced into the main school and has had a positive effect on children's enjoyment and ability to play together at play and lunchtimes.
31. The provision for the children's cultural development is satisfactory. Most children understand the value of their cultural traditions and appreciate the cultural diversity of British society through a satisfactory range of activities. There are regular opportunities for children to appreciate art, literature and music from western and other cultures. The children's understanding of other cultures is enhanced through their work on Australia in geography and on Hinduism and Judaism in religious education. It is further enhanced by activities such as the French club, violin lessons, book and arts weeks, and opportunities to enjoy visiting musicians and to take part in concerts. Across the school, children of different ethnic backgrounds are positively valued and play their full part in the life of the school.

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

32. As at the last inspection, the school successfully provides a secure and happy environment for its children. Assessment systems have been improved considerably and the school has dealt very well with the key issue that required teachers to use assessment to inform their planning.
33. The school has very good procedures to ensure children are well cared for, safe and protected from harm. It is quick to recognise when patterns in their responses or attendance indicate cause for concern about their personal well-being and achievement. Its arrangements for child protection are good. Staff are well aware of what to do, but would benefit from a brief, written outline of key points to back up their good practice and to act as a checklist for new colleagues. Teachers know their pupils very well, which is a key factor in the high quality of care offered. The school also has well-structured daily routines that show clearly the priority given to children's health, safety and well-being. Its procedures for promoting good behaviour and dealing with bullying and racism are very good. They include directly teaching children how to work and play together using clear, agreed rules, such as those for playground games. Very good relationships between staff and pupils help as the children are highly motivated to follow the positive example set by adults whom they trust and respect.
34. The school monitors and supports the children's personal development very well. Adults are very well aware of the children's personal and emotional needs, to which they respond very carefully. They use every opportunity to build the children's confidence and their social skills so children enjoy being at school. The school has a very strong commitment to educational inclusion; all children are welcomed and valued. It offers very good opportunities for different groups to work together, including an integration programme that benefits the children in the main school and those from the autistic unit.
35. Children with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their home language are well supported. Individual education plans contain appropriate targets that are informed by detailed assessment of pupils' difficulties. This information is used effectively to plan appropriate work and has a positive effect on the children's progress. The school works closely with the local education authority's support services, for example the speech therapist, bi-lingual assistant and educational psychologist.
36. The school monitors attendance carefully in line with local guidance. It has good procedures to identify and follow up unexplained absences and lateness that have resulted in a small reduction in absence. However, attendance levels are still not high enough to ensure that all children make suitable progress. The school has scope to be even more rigorous, for instance by checking with families on every child's first day of absence. In addition, parents lack frequent and precise information about the number of literacy and numeracy lessons missed and crystal-clear links between absence and lack of achievement in progress reports. In governors' reports, attendance rates are not given in a way that is likely to make sense to parents. This is a missed opportunity to highlight the significant gap between the school's attendance level and that achieved nationally, and to stress parents' responsibilities for eliminating unnecessary absence and lateness.
37. The school monitors children's academic performance well. It has developed very good assessment procedures that are used as an integral part of weekly planning to identify and meet children's individual needs. The new, systematic approach to monitoring teaching and learning in lessons is providing speedy revisions to the curriculum and how it is taught. The school identifies how well different groups of children, including those with special educational needs, are progressing in English and mathematics, but the progress of the most able children is not always recognised in science. Teachers have a secure grasp of

the knowledge, skills and understanding required for each level of attainment. This helps them to diagnose what individual children need to do to make further progress and, as a result, teachers and their assistants offer good support to the children. The quality of help given to each pupil, subject by subject, is improving rapidly as clear, individual targets are identified and shared with support staff and children. These are not explained clearly enough in reports to parents. Equally, there has not been enough time yet for the significant improvement in assessing and monitoring the children's achievement to have an impact on long-term progress.

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

38. Satisfactory links with parents have been maintained since the last inspection. Parents feel that the school is doing a good job and believe that the teaching is good. They are particularly pleased with their children's enthusiasm for school, their progress and their good behaviour. The school works closely with parents when their child is put on the register for special educational needs. The parents' views and opinions are sought and considered when targets are drawn up for the child to achieve. Generally, parents feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems, even if not wholly convinced that the school works well with them. Staff make themselves available, particularly at the end of the day, and it is clear that parents usually get on very well with their child's teacher. Office staff offer a very warm welcome.
39. The school's relationship with parents is satisfactory and reasonably productive. A few committed and involved parents regularly help in school, hear pupils read, or work as governors. Some parents help on particular visits or with events such as discos and the summer fair. Attendance at consultation evenings is good. However, when the school organises workshops or tries to introduce initiatives such as a 'drop-in' for parents, responses are disappointing. The school has yet to find ways of fostering an active partnership with parents that help them support their children's work more consistently. Imaginative ideas are helping to bring home and school closer together, such as sending home 'Skippy' and 'Daisy', the puppets, so families are involved in helping to shape what children write in class diaries about the puppets' experiences. A modest number of families are very conscientious about helping children with reading, which makes a real difference to their progress. Not all families do as much as they can to help their children. This is clear from the number of children who are often late or absent without good reason and, as a result, are not doing as well as they could.
40. The school gives parents quite a lot of useful information about its life and work, including regular newsletters. The overall quality of this information is satisfactory. However, the school does not always match the style and content of what it sends to parents to their needs. For example, the governors' report to parents covers what is required by law, but has no lively descriptions of school life and children's achievements to catch parents' interest. The new home school agreement is a step in the right direction with its clear language and use of colour. The prospectus has a bright cover but it lacks examples of children's experiences and illustrations of what they enjoy. Equally, the 'parents' corner' in the school entrance has very little up-to-date information, apart from the prospectus, and no inspiring examples of children's recent work and achievements. This is a missed opportunity.
41. Reports give a reasonable idea of the children's progress in English and mathematics. Unfortunately, staff are not careful enough to ensure that by using new technology to write reports, their comments relate clearly to the individual child and tell parents what that child has learned and can do. It is obvious that the same descriptions of progress are given for many children, with references to 'him' and 'her' within the same report. This is a pity because teachers have a very good idea of what each child knows, understands, can do

and now needs to do to improve. Teachers have a golden opportunity to use this information to produce high quality reports to explain achievements, state whether these are appropriate for the child's age and abilities, and to say how parents can help. The school gives children the chance to describe their own achievements and space for parents to comment, which is good practice. In the best reports, very clear targets are given that are easy for parents and children to understand and follow, but this is not always the case. As a result of all the information provided and day-to-day contact with the school, parents are involved adequately with its life and contribute reasonably to their children's learning at school and home. This has a satisfactory effect on standards.

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

42. The quality of leadership and management by the headteacher, deputy headteacher and key staff is very good. Together with a very effective governing body they have clearly and appropriately mapped out the future direction of the school. School improvement is a management priority, and there is a very strong, shared commitment to this. Considerable success has been achieved in building a high-performing team this year, and the way in which staff work together is a very significant strength. A high priority is placed on the inspiration and motivation of staff, and the leadership of the headteacher and deputy headteacher provides a very good example for others to follow. The explicit aims and values of the school are fully reflected in its work. The headteacher's delegation of management responsibilities to staff is effective and has enabled new and relatively inexperienced staff to undertake curriculum leadership and management responsibilities successfully. The management team is aware of the school's priorities for further development, and all staff always set high standards. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection.
43. The relatively new and inexperienced governing body discharges its duties to a high standard and fulfils its statutory duties well. Governors are fully involved in making important strategic decisions to positively affect future direction. They have a keen understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, and take a positive part in setting targets for school development and improvement. The school's priorities for development are accurately chosen to meet the needs of staff and children. The steps taken to meet the school's targets for improvement are very effective. The management team has a strong capacity to succeed and is committed to school improvement. Effective use is made of specialist skills and expertise to support the school. The governors monitor school improvement regularly through reports, test results, regular contacts with the school and by observing a range of school activities, including lessons, which they report in writing to the governing body. The headteacher works very closely with the governors and a strong and positive relationship based on mutual respect and trust has been established. Governors regularly appraise and set performance targets for the headteacher and they have responded very well to the findings of the previous inspection.
44. Governors and staff monitor and evaluate the school's performance regularly. Teaching is developed effectively through the monitoring and evaluation by the headteacher and subject co-ordinators. Teachers support each other well and share their strengths to further improve standards. Written assessments of lessons are discussed with teachers to identify strengths and areas for further improvement. Staff development has improved since the previous inspection. There is an effective strategy for appraisal and performance management, and performance targets are clearly understood by all of the teaching staff. Teachers and support staff work exceptionally well together as a team. The induction procedures for new staff are detailed and effective.

45. The strategic use of resources, grants and other funding is good. Educational priorities are supported effectively by the school's careful financial planning. The money carried forward from last year is being saved to sustain small numbers in the Reception classes. The financial administration systems are very efficient, and most of the recommendations made in the most recent auditor's report have been acted upon. The school administrator provides secretarial skills of a high standard and regularly informs the management about the school's finances. The school uses specific grants correctly for their designated purpose. It regularly monitors the effectiveness of its spending, and ensures that the outcomes of expenditure match current objectives. The principles of best value are applied well to maximise the opportunities open to the children. This is because the chair of the finance sub-committee of the governing body has a good understanding of the costs incurred by other schools. The school always engages in competitive tendering, and staff use resources well. There is wide consultation on further improvements and major expenditure decisions, including with parents and carers when this is appropriate.
46. The management of special educational needs is very good. The school's approach is well organised and designated funds are used appropriately. All elements of the new Code of Practice are in place and good records are kept. Co-ordination of special educational needs provision is very good, all staff work closely together and are conversant with the procedures and teaching assistants are deployed successfully to meet the needs of the children. Parents are kept well informed and are invited to all reviews. A suitably trained and active governor oversees this aspect. She meets regularly with the special needs co-ordinator to monitor how effectively spending in this area meets children's needs and reports her findings to the governing body. The special unit is very well led and managed; the integration of its children into the school, and the effect that it has had on the general life of the school are very positive.
47. The management of the provision for children with English as an additional language is of high quality. The support teacher, provided by the local education authority, has limited time but she ensures that her teaching and that of the bilingual language assistant provide focused learning experiences to help these children to play their full part in lessons. She also checks that the work relates to what happens in the classroom, and that teachers are fully informed of the progress being made.
48. The overall range of teachers' skills and staffing levels are well matched to the requirements of the children. There are above average numbers of staff to teach the children, so class sizes are small. This is a school priority as it helps children to make progress and attain appropriate standards. There are effective recruitment strategies to attract new staff. The demands of the curriculum and teachers' experience are well matched. Teamwork is a very significant feature; teachers and assistants work very closely together. There are good arrangements to cover classes if teachers are absent. Job descriptions for teachers and co-ordinators support performance management and ensure staff understand their roles and responsibilities. All staff are well deployed and good use is made of their talents. The school administrator provides a good first point of contact for visitors and the caretaker maintains the school to a high standard.
49. The quality and condition of the accommodation and outdoor facilities is good, and the staff make good use of the amenities. The children benefit from the well-organised, large classrooms in which a wide variety of activities may be undertaken. There is a modest library, a number of rooms for small group work and a cookery area. The large hall and outdoor areas for games and physical education, a covered area, decorated by parents for wet-weather use, a pond area and a secure play area for children in the Foundation Stage all contribute to the teachers' ability to plan a broad curriculum. The children use the adjacent field belonging to the junior school for sports' days and other functions. Children's work is effectively displayed around the school.

50. The range of resources is satisfactory overall; resources are good for the Foundation Stage, music and ICT. Resources are stored and deployed appropriately and are easily accessible. They are well matched to the ages and cultural needs of all children. The range and condition of books in the library and classrooms are satisfactory. Children are encouraged to use the library resources. The provision of computers, robotic devices, digital cameras and audio and video equipment is good and these are used well to provide interesting learning opportunities. Effective use is made of museums, places of worship and other community resources to support the curriculum.

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

In order to take the school forward in its development, the governors and staff should:

- (1) Raise standards in reading and writing by continuing to:
- engage children more actively in their learning in the Reception classes;
  - improve the range of strategies children use to read unfamiliar words and understand texts;
  - help parents to support children's literacy skills at home;
  - improve children's spelling.
- (Paragraphs 2, 15, 39, 63, 71 and 72)
- (2) Raise attendance levels and punctuality by:
- checking with families on children's first day of absence;
  - informing parents, in progress reports, about the number of literacy and numeracy lessons missed and the links between absence and lack of achievement;
  - in governors' reports, highlighting the significant gap between the school's attendance level and that achieved nationally to stress parents' responsibilities for eliminating unnecessary absence and lateness. (Paragraphs 5, 11, 15, 36 and 63 )

In the report, there are some minor areas for improvement by staff and the governors including:

- Meeting more closely the needs of most able children. (Paragraphs 5, 16, 24, 38 and 86)
- Further improve teachers' marking of children's work. (Paragraphs 17, 21 and 75)
- Quality of reports and documents sent to parents. (Paragraphs 38, 40 and 41)

## OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES

### Autistic Unit

51. The special educational needs unit caters for children with autistic spectrum disorder who are of mainstream academic ability. When it is appropriate, the six children currently on the unit's register are integrated into the mainstream classes for literacy and numeracy and for some other lessons such as music. In the afternoons they join suitable mainstream classes to participate in as many activities as possible with the help of their teachers and assistants. This is planned very carefully and in full consultation with parents and mainstream teachers to ensure continuity and success. The unit also plans what the school terms 'reverse integration', which is when children from mainstream join children in the unit for some lessons. Children benefit from this practice and from the individual attention they receive. As a consequence, they make good progress and attain high standards in relation to their prior attainment.
52. The unit is an excellent resource where pupils are valued and their successes recognised. The children benefit from a rich curriculum that is broad and balanced and follows the same programme of work as in mainstream. In addition, children have activities that are designed to develop their social skills so that they will be able to play a full part in society after school. The children make very good progress in relation to the targets identified on their individual education plans. These relate to the development of literacy and numeracy skills, as well as their targets for verbal communication and social interaction. During the inspection the development of children's social skills and their confidence in speaking were particularly good. The children were observed learning to raise their hand when they wanted to answer a question and not shouting out an answer, taking turns when playing a board game and accepting that sometimes someone else could win the game. They were also observed practising their conversational skills, learning how to answer the telephone in a pleasant way and how to carry on a conversation, a skill that they find difficult.
53. Overall, teaching in the unit and when the children join mainstream lessons is very good, with some exemplary lessons observed. The teacher in charge, the second teacher and the learning support assistants know their pupils very well and show them that they are valued. Teaching takes the children through the small steps required for them to be successful. The teachers and support assistants are very patient and sensitive in the support they offer. The children are well supported in lessons. Planning is a particular strength of the teaching, and addresses the individual needs of the children. Very good use is made of ongoing assessment to enable the children to progress well. The staff work very effectively as a team and all members make very good contributions to pupils' educational development. Expectations of the children are high in terms of effort and co-operation.
54. The children respond well to the teaching within the unit. They work hard and often maintain high levels of concentration. They are well motivated and enthusiastic. They begin to develop skills in working co-operatively, sharing resources and taking turns, but these skills can only be improved in small steps. During playtimes the children from the unit join in with the children from mainstream and it is a measure of the unit's success that there is full integration and that all children play well together. The teacher in charge of the unit has set up a very successful buddy system whereby each child in the unit is paired with a mainstream child who acts as a friend at playtimes. This has been very successfully extended to out of school and has resulted in the maintenance of inclusion for the children from the unit.
55. The unit is very well managed. All paperwork is maintained according to the requirements of the special educational needs Code of Practice. The teacher in charge is

knowledgeable and manages her team very effectively to promote the progress of the children in their care. External agencies such as the speech therapist work well with the unit staff and provide very good support for the children. The unit is housed away from the main building and is used very effectively to support children's learning. It includes one main classroom and designated toilet facilities and a small room for administration purposes that is also used as a quiet room when a child needs to be away from the group.

56. Parents are encouraged to be very involved with their child's education. A home-school diary in which they can raise queries or express concerns and communicate events from home is sent home every day. This is a valuable form of communication as many of the children are taken to and from school by taxi, so their parents are not in school on a daily basis.
57. West Blatchington Infant School is fortunate to have the unit attached to the school as the partnership between the school and unit has led to valuable practices developed in the unit being taken up by the school. For example, cue cards are used as a reminder to the children of the behaviour that is expected from them in class. It is a credit to the school that at no time during the inspection did a member of staff make reference to difficulties in integrating children from the unit into mainstream activities. The part played by the unit in the life of the school is impressive.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	50
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	7	17	19	7	0	0	0
Percentage	14	34	38	14	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	50	127
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	43

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	23

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	16

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	19
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	18

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.0
National comparative data	5.6

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	2.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	25	31	56

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	20	23
	Girls	23	28	28
	Total	41	48	51
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	73 (84)	86 (86)	91 (98)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	21	23
	Girls	23	28	27
	Total	40	49	50
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	71 (80)	88 (98)	89 (93)
	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	0
Black – African heritage	4
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	6
Chinese	0
White	106
Any other minority ethnic group	11

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

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

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

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

### **Teachers and classes**

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	12.9
Average class size	25

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

Total number of education support staff	13
Total aggregate hours worked per week	225

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	25
Number of pupils per FTE adult	12.5

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2001-2002
	£
Total income	419,016
Total expenditure	421,417
Expenditure per pupil	2,494
Balance brought forward from previous year	37,286
Balance carried forward to next year	34,885

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	5
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0

Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

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

**Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	140
Number of questionnaires returned	46

**Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	76	20	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	74	24	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	65	35	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	49	40	7	0	4
The teaching is good.	67	30	2	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	43	48	9	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	76	22	2	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	63	30	4	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	33	61	7	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	54	33	11	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	61	35	4	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	33	22	30	4	11

**Summary of parents' and carers' responses**

The inspectors endorsed parents' positive views. Inspectors did not agree with those parents who were critical of the range of activities outside lessons. The school provides French and tennis clubs, violin lessons and a range of whole school activities such as a book week, an arts week, sports' days and concerts and organises workshops and visits to support children's class-based learning.



## **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**

58. Provision is good. The Foundation Stage provides children with an effective framework for their future learning and is a strength of the school. The importance of play as a tool for learning is emphasised particularly well in the nursery class, and reflects the curricular guidance for teaching children from three to five years of age. At the time of the inspection, there were two Reception classes and two nursery classes, each of 25 children, one morning and one afternoon session each day. The percentage of children with special needs is about the same as for the rest of the school, but a considerable number have poor personal and social skills and limited language on entry. For a significant proportion of children, English is not their home language and some are at an early stage of English language acquisition. Across the Foundation Stage, teaching and the support offered to children by teaching and bi-lingual assistants are good.
59. The children in the nursery are encouraged to enjoy learning through the wide range of high quality experiences offered. They are learning to play together constructively and understand that it is important to take turns and share materials. They play confidently and mostly co-operatively with large wheeled toys and are thoroughly absorbed when the weather is suitable for them to use the excellent outdoor area, for example, when they were using magnifying lenses to study plastic animals hidden in damp bark and 'painting' the school with water and large brushes. They count the beads to make bracelets, develop language skills as they talk to adults and chat about stories, and enjoy finding out about the plants and animals in their outside areas. All children make good progress.
60. By the time they enter the Reception classes, the children have very positive attitudes towards school and most are eager to learn. At the time of the inspection all children attended school full-time. The results of assessments in the autumn term show that attainment on entry was below average overall; some children's skills were above average, a few were average but a significant proportion had low skills in most areas of development. Until September, the curriculum was planned within the National Curriculum subjects. The new co-ordinator immediately introduced very effective planning to cover the six areas of learning to meet the needs of these children more closely. She has suitable plans to develop the Reception curriculum further to ensure greater consistency between the two classes, to provide more opportunities for structured play activities, including the use of the outdoor areas, and to involve children more actively in learning and assessing their work. On occasions, the children spent too long sitting listening to teachers and undertook too many tasks before they reviewed what they had learnt. On the evidence seen, it is clear that all children make good progress in relation to their prior attainment and overall meet the expectations described in the early learning goals, with the exception of early reading and writing skills, which are low overall. Teaching and bi-lingual assistants make a major contribution to the children's learning, especially for those children who find it difficult to learn or sit still, and for those for whom English is not their home language.

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

61. Teaching in this area is very good, particularly in the nursery class. The nursery staff provide and manage a rich environment to support children's independent learning through a range of adult-led or child-initiated activities. Most important is the high profile of play as an essential element in children's learning. As children enter the class they happily select an activity, some led by the staff, for example sewing beads onto a large collage they have printed. Often they work for sustained periods on co-operative activities as seen when two

boys counted items on the computer screen and took turns to select the correct number. The sensitive, non-intervention management policy is a very skilful strategy as it encourages children to develop initiative through exploring materials and experimenting with different ways to use objects. For example, the role-play area changed as one group used it for a home whilst the next as a police station.

62. Across the Foundation Stage, relationships are very good between adults and children. Adults provide good role models for the children as they develop an awareness of other people's needs. The good progress the children make in the nursery classes is carefully built on when they enter the Reception classes. Teachers develop the children's social awareness by interweaving a sense of caring for their environment and the community to which they belong. An example of this was when the children visited the school pond and discussed its features and the welfare of the plants and animals living there. The children are encouraged to think and talk about what they have learned and to discover the need to support each other and build sensitive relationships, for example, in the older children's writing that showed an understanding of making and keeping a promise.

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

63. A range of assessments, including home visits, indicate the wide range of children's skills and experiences in this aspect; a significant number have low skills for their age. It is important, therefore that children access the support offered to them. Some children arrive at school late and for no good reason such as one child with limited English language skills who arrived 25 minutes late and missed half of one literacy lesson and most of the support of a bi-lingual assistant. Teaching and the support given across the Foundation Stage are good. Consequently, nearly all the children make good progress in literacy so that by the end of the Foundation Stage attainment has risen, although it is still below that expected for their ages overall. Nevertheless, an average proportion of children attain at the higher level; for example, they write simple sentences, are happy to read their own written work and one insisted on giving a resume of the life cycle of a frog! Basic skills are developed well through the integrated programme of play activities, then elements of the literacy strategy are introduced and, at the time of the inspection, whole literacy sessions were being undertaken. The sessions are well planned and effectively structured and organised, but on a few occasions children were sitting inactive for too long listening to the teacher. Children develop speaking and listening skills through talking about their activities and listening to others, enjoying stories, poems and songs and retelling them in the correct sequence, linking sounds to letters and using their phonic knowledge to write simple words or sentences. All children enjoy reading; some read well, but most require significant support with very simple texts.

### **Mathematical development**

64. Teaching is good. The curriculum is effectively planned and activities develop the children's mathematical skills across the Foundation Stage, whilst retaining a focus on active learning and some structured play activities. Nearly all children count to 12 and recognise the numerals on a clock face. They understand that one more than eight, for example, is nine, and that one less is seven. They use language such as *circle* and *rectangle* to describe clock faces and the shape of the school pond. The children enjoy counting games and number rhymes and the older children recognise the simple relationships between numbers, which they use successfully to solve problems. Many children register time at o'clock and complete diagrams showing the required times accurately using the big/hour and small/minute hands. Activities are carefully matched to the children's ages and abilities so children make good progress across the Foundation Stage and attainment meets the level typically expected at the end of the stage.

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

65. Teaching is consistently good and children have a good knowledge and understanding of the world in which they live. Planning focuses on children exploring and investigating objects and materials and thinking about what they find out. Across the Foundation Stage, the children look closely at living and non-living materials to discover and ask questions about them. They plant seeds and watch them grow. The older children recognise and name small animals, such as pond skaters and snails, and know simple similarities and differences between them. They build imaginative areas out of large blocks in the nursery classes and competently make models of aeroplanes and playground equipment from three-dimensional materials. All children use the computer confidently to support many areas of the curriculum, such as art and numeracy. A visit from an elderly lady helped children to learn about events in her life and how household items, such as irons and washboards, were used. The older children have a good understanding of the natural features of the school pond and make simple maps to show visitors how to find it.

## **Physical development**

66. Teaching is satisfactory overall and good in the nursery classes. Provision is of a high standard and children in the nursery classes enjoy a range of good opportunities in the outdoor area. For example, there is a purpose-built area that includes a rope bridge, stepping-stones and a balancing bar, and a very good range of wheeled toys they use in the older children's playground. These activities enable the nursery children to improve their co-ordination and control, but are under-used by the Reception children. At 'snack' time the children are encouraged to eat and drink healthily. All Foundation Stage children are aware of the importance of keeping healthy and recognise the changes that happen when they are active. The older children use a range of large and small equipment in the hall with confidence and imagination. They travel around, under, over and through balancing and climbing equipment safely and with an awareness of themselves and others. Lessons are carefully planned and Reception teachers work well as a team, each taking a share of the lead. There are suitable activities to warm up and develop children's skills.

## **Creative development**

67. Very little teaching was observed but from the few lessons seen, independent activities, photographs and samples of children's work, attainment at least meets expectations at the end of the Foundation Stage. The children explore colour and texture, carefully selecting tools suitable to the task and using them safely. For example, a girl in the nursery chose a pair of specially designed scissors to cut the shapes she required for a collage she was making, whilst discussing the colours she had selected, and why. By the end of the Foundation Stage, the children use a wide range of media to draw, paint and print from direct experience and creatively. This aspect particularly developed children's cultural awareness, for example, when they studied Diwali and Asian hand painting. Children sing simple songs from memory, recognise repeated patterns and use their imaginations to express and communicate their feelings, for example to represent actions in the tape 'I think we'll catch a dinosaur'. During the inspection children had limited opportunities to compose, practise and refine their own music.

## **ENGLISH**

68. Over the past few years, standards in reading and writing improved steadily but declined in 2001 to well below the national average for all schools, but average and below average

respectively when compared with similar schools. This signifies a dip in standards in reading and writing since the previous inspection. The key factors adversely affecting children's standards in these subjects were limitations in planning and disruptions in staffing.

69. When children entered the present Year 2 classes, their attainment was below average. They have made satisfactory progress and inspection observations indicate that standards in both aspects have improved in relation to schools nationally. This is because of improvements to curriculum planning and the high quality of teaching and has enabled the school to achieve its target of twice the numbers of children achieving the higher Level 2. However, standards, although improved, are still somewhat below those typically found in most schools. All pupils make satisfactory progress in all aspects of their work. Those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make very good progress.
70. Many children join the school with very poor language skills so the school concentrates on improving children's speaking and listening skills from an early age. This is successful and provides the children with an adequate working vocabulary. The children make steady progress and by the end of Year 2, standards of speaking and listening are satisfactory. Children listen attentively to their teachers and they speak clearly. They practise their speech through, for example, creating scripts to perform with the puppets they make in design and technology lessons and share their ideas with a 'talking and listening' partner during whole-class discussions. All of these strategies are helping to raise the standards of speaking and listening skills.
71. By the end of Year 2, the children's reading skills are below average overall, although about a quarter achieve at Level 3, higher than the average. This represents an improvement since 2001, but a significant minority of lower attaining children do not achieve the level expected nationally. Higher attaining children read fluently and expressively with few errors. Most children, however, have not built up a satisfactory range of strategies to tackle unfamiliar words and texts, and their understanding is often limited. Library skills are satisfactory. The children know the terms such as *author*, *illustrator*, *index* and *glossary* and use these to select books. They retell stories and describe characters fairly accurately. Most take pleasure in reading, and many can name a favourite author and talk about favourite stories. Teachers keep accurate records of children's reading progress and children have a home-school reading notebook that is used as a link between the parent and the teacher. Some parents are supportive of their children's reading and regularly listen to them at home. The school makes good provision for children who do not receive this support from home, which has a positive impact on the standards achieved. The school makes excellent use of volunteers from the local community, who come into school on a regular basis to hear children read and work with children who need the extra support.
72. The school is pleased with the improvements in the children's writing. Whilst the proportion of children achieving Level 2 has remained the same overall, a greater proportion has achieved at the upper end of this level. This has been achieved by teaching writing strategies, such as when the whole class writes a story together with teachers guiding and scribing. Basic skills of punctuation and grammar are also taught and learned in this way. Most children sequence stories correctly, often using effective descriptive words. They write in a range of styles for a variety of purposes, producing, for example, stories, descriptions, lists, instructions and poetry. From the beginning, children learn to form letters correctly and develop a style that is legible and well presented. They use capital letters, full stops and question marks fairly accurately. Standards in spelling do not reach those typically expected. The children usually spell basic words accurately, although a significant minority make errors with simple spellings.

73. The quality of teaching and learning is good and sometimes excellent. As a result, children take a keen interest in their lessons and are stimulated by enthusiastic teaching. Teachers have a secure understanding of the literacy strategy and use a wide variety of methods to promote speaking and listening, reading and writing skills. They are beginning to provide opportunities for children to use their writing skills in other subjects. For example, in a Year 1 class, the children imagined they were sailors on Captain Cook's ship *The Endeavour*, writing home to tell of their adventures. ICT is used effectively to develop children's skills in, for example, word processing and listening to stories on tape recorders.
74. Teachers plan together in each year group to ensure all pupils have similar opportunities. Daily planning includes detailed notes on how each group will be taught. This ensures that the needs of all pupils are met and is a strength of the teaching. Assistants skilfully support pupils with special educational needs in the classroom to achieve their learning goals. Children who speak English as an additional language also receive high quality support and so make good progress in extending their use and range of suitable words and phrases. All pupils apply themselves well, and evidence from books indicates a clear and sustained development of literacy skills. Because tasks are at an appropriate level for each group, children work independently, maintain concentration and gain in confidence. The children are eager to please their teachers and respond to praise.
75. Lessons are well structured and have a suitable pace. Teachers follow the guidance in the National Literacy Strategy carefully and use high quality resources to interest children in their learning. Whole-class introductions to the lessons effectively recap previous learning, and lesson objectives are shared with the children so that they know what is expected of them. This enables teachers to assess the children's knowledge and to intervene when necessary. During the lesson, teachers refer back to the learning objectives, which keeps the children focused on their tasks. The ends of lessons are used effectively to discuss what has been learned. All teachers regularly mark the children's work but not many provide written comments that give points for further improvement and show children, particularly the more able, how well they have achieved the learning goal.
76. The subject manager has a very good understanding of the school's achievements in English and a clear vision of how the subject needs to be developed. The school makes very good use of the results of tests and teachers' observations to assess pupils' performance and monitor their progress. Each child has a tracking book that charts the progress being made. This is leading to improved standards throughout the school. Funds for literacy have been used well to purchase high quality resources.
77. There is a small area set aside for use as a library. This houses non-fiction books but is too small to allow a whole class to use it and there was no evidence during the inspection that children go there to browse and enjoy choosing a book. Fiction books are available in classrooms so that children have easy access to them. The headteacher and subject manager monitor the effectiveness of teaching through observing lessons, and regularly check the progress being made by the pupils. English makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Teachers encourage pupils' personal response to stories and poems.

## **MATHEMATICS**

78. Over the past few years, the children's performance in national tests in mathematics improved notably; in 2001 the school's results were very high when compared with all schools nationally, and represented a significant improvement since the last inspection. The school suggests this improvement was due to the valuable help it received from the local authority.

79. During the inspection, standards were in line with national expectations and broadly in line with the 2001 national average, which is a similar position to that found at the time of the last inspection. However, when children entered the present Year 2, their attainment was below expectations. This was due to several changes of teacher in Year 1. The children have made good progress in Year 2 in relation to their prior attainment. In recent years, the school has worked hard to raise standards by focusing on improving children's mental skills, and the successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy.
80. Progress is good in Years 1 and 2. Considerable emphasis is placed on using and applying mathematical skills and knowledge to promote the children's ability to think mathematically. Mental arithmetic is a regular feature of numeracy lessons. The children's numeracy skills are developed systematically in all aspects of mathematics. A good pace to learning is maintained and, generally, children are highly motivated during these sessions. In both year groups, there were good examples of tasks that challenged children. For instance, in both Year 1 classes, children worked hard to identify factors of numbers up to 15. Most children showed secure understanding of the properties of odd and even numbers and higher attainers understand that calculations such as  $2+2+2+2+2+2=14$  could be written more simply as  $7 \times 2 = 14$ . Year 2 children show a secure understanding of fractions and identify halves and quarters of a range of shapes in a variety of ways. Higher attainers identify halves and fractions of a more complex nature, using a computer program. Scrutiny of work indicates the children know simple properties, such as the number of sides and corners of common two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes, and classify objects in tables and charts. A particular strength of all lessons was the support offered to children with special educational needs or with English as an additional language that enabled them to take a full part. Assistants have a secure understanding of their task, and this affords these children individual attention based on their particular needs. Most children with special educational needs make very good progress towards achieving their targets. All children are expected to work at a demanding level, with work targeted well to their different levels of prior attainment.
81. The children's attitudes and behaviour are consistently good, and often very good. They are mostly enthusiastic and sustain their concentration at a high level throughout the planned tasks. The children respond very well to questioning, and answer confidently when referring to facts previously learned. They enjoy their lessons and respond with enthusiasm in mental arithmetic sessions. They share ideas, work together co-operatively and use equipment responsibly. These attributes make positive contributions to their moral and social development.
82. The high standard of teaching is having a positive effect on standards, notwithstanding the decline in standards at the end of Year 2 noted above. It is nearly always very good or excellent; only in one lesson was it satisfactory. In this lesson the pace was slower and tasks lacked challenge so children's progress was only satisfactory. The quality of teacher planning is very high, and formal and ongoing assessment of children's progress is rigorously used to inform planning for future lessons. The teachers have consistently high expectations and this is reflected in the generally good or better progress observed in lessons. For example, in an excellent lesson in Year 1, the teacher used a variety of strategies to help the children develop ways of counting a large number of dots as efficiently and accurately as possible. The pace of teaching was brisk and challenging, and resulted in a high level of motivation; consequently, children of all abilities learned very well. In all lessons the classroom computers are used skilfully by teachers to support their teaching, and confidently by children when their turn to use them comes. While teachers regularly discuss and review children's work with them in lessons, written marking lacks constructive comments and there is no indication to the children of what they have to do to improve.

83. The subject co-ordinator is providing high quality leadership, which ensures a clear sense of direction for the subject and shared high expectations. The subject is well managed, and the good policy and scheme of work support all aspects of the National Curriculum programmes of study and the National Numeracy Strategy. There are sufficient resources that are easily accessible and of good quality. Skills learned in mathematics lessons, such as data handling, are used in design and technology, geography and science.

## SCIENCE

84. In the 2001 teacher assessments in science, standards were below the expected levels nationally, but average in comparison with similar schools, which signifies a dip in standards since the previous inspection. The key factors adversely affecting the children's standards in this subject were limitations in planning and disruptions in staffing.
85. When children entered the present Year 2 classes, their attainment was below average in science. Inspection observations indicate that standards have risen to average by the end of Year 2. The improvement is attributed to the increased focus on investigative and experimental science and to the high quality of teaching.
86. Lesson observations, discussions with pupils and samples of their work, indicate the children make good progress across Year 2 and attain appropriate standards at age seven in all areas of the curriculum. A key feature across the school is the emphasis placed on encouraging the children to think scientifically by predicting outcomes, collecting and analysing evidence and evaluating their findings. By the age of seven, the children describe their observations using the correct scientific vocabulary and compare plants and materials in lists, pictures and simple tables. They have a good knowledge of living things, such as frogs and seeds, and the conditions they need to grow and reproduce. They sort animals by their features, for example, how they move – fly, slither or walk. Higher attaining children identify ways in which an animal is suited to its environment and provide simple explanations for their findings. Most children recognise a range of common materials and understand ways in which some are changed by heating or cooling, for example, ice cubes. During the inspection, Year 1 children were studying sound and recognised that sounds diminish as they move further away. Year 2 children were studying electricity and already had a good understanding of safety factors in their environment.
87. Teaching in science is consistently very good. Planning is effective and teachers use suitable methods and organisational strategies that match the school's and subject's aims. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, children were investigating and constructing electrical circuits, but two circuits did not work. The teacher used this situation ably to lead a discussion to identify what the problems might be and how to test their theories systematically. The children demonstrated a good understanding of fair testing and only changing one variable at a time. They were jubilant when it was found to be faulty wiring! Throughout the school, teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of science and carefully evaluate the impact of each lesson on the children's learning. Relationships are of a very high standard and when teaching assistants, parents or other helpers are present, they are well briefed and make a valuable contribution to the progress children make. Each lesson has clear learning intentions that are shared with the children and evaluated at the end. Questions are used well to clear any misunderstandings, to deepen the children's understanding and to challenge their thinking. As a result of all of these factors, children make good progress. They thoroughly enjoy undertaking experiments and are responsive during discussions. They make sensible predictions and work together co-operatively, for example, when conducting an experiment to test their theories about

sound. In spite of the extremely windy weather, they worked hard with the staff to record their findings and complete the experiment.

88. The subject is very well led. There has been a significant improvement in planning since the last inspection. Policies and documents are of a high standard and effectively provide the support teachers need to plan a broad, balanced and interesting curriculum that makes the best use of the allocated time and resources. They ensure progression across the school and provide a good range of challenging and interesting activities, and guidance about the number of ways children can record their findings, for example, by using a tape recorder. Assessments are regularly completed against levels in the National Curriculum, but activities seen did not always meet the needs of higher attaining pupils who showed that they knew the answer to the problem being posed and required more challenging work. Tracking children's progress against expectations of their progress has just started in the school. There is a good range of resources and the school pond and local area are used effectively to support class-based learning. An example is the trip to the local park to observe the effect of pushes and pulls on the playground equipment.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

89. Only two lessons were observed, both in Year 1. The quality of work observed in these lessons and that in sketchbooks, a portfolio of past work and displays around the school, indicate that, by the end of Year 2, standards in art are at least average, as in the last inspection.
90. Art is well represented in displays that reveal a suitable emphasis on teaching the basic techniques and skills. The children investigate a range of materials, sometimes using hand lenses, to produce interesting drawings using pencils and crayons. Their self-portraits and drawings of plants show a good understanding of line and colour mixing. Generally, however, there is not enough emphasis on the children recording from first-hand observation. Similarly, children have too few opportunities to work creatively or use their imaginations. A review of sketchbooks reveals that they are not always used well for children to record first-hand experiences and observations for later use in creative paintings or imaginative designs. The new co-ordinator is already rectifying this situation and the new programme will be ready in September.
91. The children look at pattern and texture and represent their feelings in collages and weavings. These make a sound contribution to the development of spiritual awareness. The children sometimes explore ideas and meanings in the work of artists and visiting craftspeople. For example, the daffodils painted in the style of Van Gogh depicted his arresting emphasis on colour with some understanding of how he worked. Computer-generated designs and pictures reveal a good use of colour and pattern. The children are building knowledge about art in other cultures in their hand paintings, supporting work about Diwali.
92. In the two lessons observed, the children showed a willingness to watch, listen and learn in order to perfect their models representing either a park or the seaside. They enjoyed the exercise and took great care to get the effects they wanted. This enabled children to think about the function of art in contemporary life. The children discuss the processes they use, but their skills to evaluate their work and decide how they might change, or develop it, are more limited.
93. Teaching in the two lessons seen was very good. Teachers demonstrated good subject knowledge, high quality planning and management of the lessons and children's behaviour. Explanations were very clear and successfully engaged the children's attention. Subsequently, teachers moved unobtrusively around the class supporting children and

challenging their thinking; questioning skills were very good. Teaching assistants and other adults were briefed and well deployed to support the children's learning. All children took great pride in their completed work.

94. The new co-ordinator joined the school only in September but has a good grasp of the subject. Planning at all levels is effective but her monitoring and evaluation indicated weaknesses in close observational drawing, creativity and the use of sketchbooks. She has good plans to rectify these weaknesses for the beginning of next term. There are good links with subjects such as design and technology in children's playground designs and with ongoing topics, where appropriate. Assessment is satisfactory and the school has improved resources to meet curricular needs. The school makes good use of visiting artists and craftspeople.

## DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

95. Only one lesson was observed, but this, together with evidence from documentation, children's past work and discussions with children, indicates that standards are broadly in line with expectations by the end of Year 2.
96. The curriculum provided for children in Years 1 and 2 is appropriately broad and effectively balanced. The children are given a suitable range of activities that develops their knowledge and skills so that they make satisfactory progress in designing artefacts for a set purpose and in using a variety of materials. In a Year 1 food technology lesson, for example, children made their own recipes using their favourite fruits, using kitchen tools to develop the skills of cutting, peeling, grating and squeezing as well as learning the importance of hygiene and safety. They also learned that fruit has a short shelf life. Year 1 children understand about keeping safe in the park playground. They visit the park, look at the shapes and materials and how the apparatus moves. In class they looked at structures and how to make them stronger using construction kits and art straws. They know that 'cross bars' add stability to a shape and that bundling a material together gives it greater strength. They then design a piece of equipment for a playground showing what materials they need. They talk about their finished models and discuss how to improve them. They decided that they would find out more about moving joints if they made them again. A good display of completed models in the corridor shows that the project was successful.
97. In Year 2, the children know about simple winding-up mechanisms and begin to think how they can make Incey Wincey Spider climb up the waterspout. They look carefully at objects with winding mechanisms and draw diagrams to show how they work. They know the vocabulary of *pull*, *axle*, *wind*, *turn* and *handle*, and use these terms in their diagrams. They draw plans of how the winder could move the rain, the sun and the spider. Then they construct their artefact using shoeboxes, string, hooks and other simple materials. They also design a vehicle for use on an island and learn what a chassis means. They evaluate their work effectively for example, one child wrote, "I needed to change the wheels because they wouldn't move." During the inspection, as part of their study on the 'Seaside' in their history and geography topic, the children were investigating how different puppets worked and how they were made. The children showed a keen interest in the good range of puppets provided by the teacher. In one very good lesson the children were observed practising the skills and techniques they needed to make their own glove puppets.
98. A strength of the good teaching in design and technology is that the children are taught the skills and techniques they need before they embark on making the artefact. In discussion with children it is evident that they enjoy their work in this subject and, from the photographs of them exhibiting their artefacts, it is clear that they are proud of their efforts.

Teachers make the purpose of their activities clear and enable children of all abilities to feel successful in their efforts. From the very good quality of planning and children's responses, it is inferred that teaching is good. Individual units of work are very well planned and are linked effectively with other areas of children's work. These units of work build progressively through Years 1 and 2 to provide a full range of appropriate learning opportunities and development of skills. There is an agreed procedure for assessing the children's attainment and progress and so teachers have information to support their future planning to ensure that children make at least satisfactory progress.

99. There is very clear leadership and very effective management of design and technology. The co-ordinator has made an impact on the teaching and learning in design and technology. She has drawn up a scheme of work for the Foundation Stage, which leads into the work planned for the children in Key Stage 1. She has also drawn up an action plan and evaluated the success of the units that have been taught and the standards in the school. She will use this information to make plans for future improvement.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

100. No judgement on standards was made at the time of the last inspection. Evidence gathered during this inspection shows that attainment is broadly average by the age of seven. The children, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress.
101. Children have a satisfactory knowledge of their own locality. Younger pupils look at the area around their school and draw simple maps of their route to school, successfully adding drawings of buildings and other landmarks they see on the way. They find out about Australia, which links with the history they study, and look at world maps and outline maps of Australia filling in important features, for example, major cities and deserts. Very good use was made of a visitor who came to talk to the children about life in Australia. Children recorded what they had learned from listening to her. One child wrote, "Now I know that a kangaroo can grow up to 2 metres."
102. The children, by the age of seven, have an awareness of the differences between geographical locations in the United Kingdom, such as living in a town or city on the mainland and living on a small island. They know that some areas of the world are hot and others cold, and use the technical vocabulary to describe weather conditions, such as *hurricane*, *temperature* and *climate*. They recognise that vegetables and fruit come from different parts of the world and have a good knowledge of the different foods eaten across the world. They use the Internet, maps, atlases and holiday brochures to research their topics.
103. One of the strengths of the teaching is the very good planning within year groups. Teachers tell the children what they are going to learn about and plan interesting activities to ensure effective learning takes place. Classes are managed well; the children listen to their teachers and pay attention. Lessons begin with good questioning that establishes what the children have already learned. The lesson observed in Year 2 moved along at a good pace, which had a positive effect on the progress being made. The teacher's high expectations of both behaviour and endeavour resulted in a high level of effort and concentration.
104. Teachers insist on good standards of presentation, and opportunities are made for the children to practise their reading and writing skills. They have a secure knowledge of the subject and impart their enthusiasm to the children. Relationships are very good between the children, teachers and classroom assistants so that there is a secure learning

environment for learning. Children behave well; they are keen and interested and work successfully together.

105. New schemes of work based on the national guidelines for the subject, used as working documents by the teachers, are contributing significantly to the good teaching. The scheme of work shows clearly what needs to be taught and also what needs to be assessed. The subject is very well co-ordinated and the new co-ordinator keeps a well-ordered file that shows the development plans for the subject through closer links with other areas of the curriculum. The co-ordinator has also compiled a portfolio of children's work that shows clearly the progression in children's knowledge and skills. Resources for the subject are of good quality and sufficient to teach the topics in the scheme of work.

## **HISTORY**

106. Only two history lessons were taught during the inspection, so judgements have been made by looking at past work, teachers' planning and talking to children.
107. Since the last inspection there has been an improvement in the standards children reach at the age of seven. This is mainly due to the introduction of a new scheme of work and significant improvements to the planning of lessons and the assessment of children's achievements. Children make satisfactory progress in all aspects of the subject. Those with special educational needs are supported well and make the necessary progress. Children with English as an additional language are well supported and they make satisfactory progress.
108. Through looking at old toys, the younger children begin to learn a sense of time and how things have changed. They are encouraged to examine old toys to search for clues. They identify an object as old or new, and higher attaining children are beginning to give reasons for their answers. The children communicate their findings in a variety of ways: pictorially; through simple written statements; captions; discussion; and demonstration. They study old schools and compare them with their own experience of school. They successfully use role-play to learn about a Victorian school day and know that children sat in rows, used chalkboards and stood to read. They are encouraged to think about and identify sources of information concerning the past and ask their parents and grandparents about their experiences of school life.
109. The older children studied the Great Fire of London and can put the main events of the story into chronological order. They understand what an eye witness is and know that Samuel Pepys saw the fire for himself, wrote about what he saw and that his diary is an eye-witness account of the event. They have a good understanding of why the fire spread so rapidly and why people took refuge in churches. They record their ideas in pictures and writing, reaching a satisfactory standard. History lessons are enhanced by visits to places of historical interest. A visit to the Royal Pavilion gave older children the opportunity to find out about life at the time of the Prince Regent. They then wrote good accounts pretending to be a guest at the Pavilion. For example, one child wrote, "He (the Prince Regent) lived in the Pavilion and it is in Brighton. He wanted to come to Brighton to get rid of his Dad because he bossed him about."
110. Higher achieving children by the age of seven record their ideas and opinions in well-written sentences, giving reasons for their opinions and illustrating their work effectively. Other children record mostly by drawing and then discussing what they have done with their teacher.
111. In an excellent Year 1 lesson, the planning was particularly good, as it built on what the children already knew and highlighted learning that was to be assessed. The pace of the

lesson was brisk with a variety of activities to keep the children's interest high. Looking at teachers' planning shows that all history lessons are planned in this way.

112. The subject is managed well and this has contributed to the improved standards. The co-ordinator has drawn up an action plan that should help to develop the subject further.

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

113. Standards in ICT at the end of Year 2 are in line with expectations, with children making good progress, both within lessons and over time. At the time of the last report, standards were also judged to be satisfactory. However, the National Curriculum requirements of this subject have increased considerably since then. Taking into account the current good provision and rates of progress observed, there has been good improvement since the school was last inspected.
114. Three ICT lessons were observed during the inspection, one in Year 1 and two in Year 2. Judgements are based on these lessons, together with evidence from a scrutiny of well-presented work and curriculum planning, discussions with children and the subject co-ordinator, and observations of children using ICT as part of their work in other subjects.
115. ICT skills are taught in specific lessons, which are very well planned using a well-written policy, and a scheme of work based on national guidance. These ensure progression across the school. A particular strength is the way in which technology is used to support lessons across the curriculum, such as art and design, design and technology, English, geography, history, mathematics and science. A strong emphasis is placed on children conducting research and posing and solving problems for themselves. This was directly observed when children in Year 1 were discussing how to represent information in a range of graphical forms, and in Year 2 as they considered the value of using a database to record and analyse information they had gathered about the different holidays taken by other children and their teachers. Photographic evidence and children's recording showed how much they enjoy programming a floor robot and how, by the end of Year 2, they plan a complex set of instructions to make the robot move to a specific destination.
116. The quality of teaching ranges from good to very good, and this results in good progress within lessons. Because of a high number of teacher changes last year, the children's skills were low on entry to Year 2. This has resulted in current standards staying at the level expected for Year 2 children.
117. Children make good progress in Years 1 and 2 because they are well taught in whole-class lessons and are then given opportunities to practise the particular skills learned. However, whilst the number of computers available is above the national average, there are only three in each classroom so practical work takes several days to complete. This inevitably slows the rate of learning, which is good, but less than it might be if a computer suite were available. The computers are modern and all have access to the Internet. In addition, good progress is supported by the above average provision of programmable floor robots, digital cameras and tape recorders, all of which are used by children. In addition a video camera is available for staff use.
118. Year 1 children are given a firm foundation for future learning. Most consistently use the correct terminology when discussing the use of the computer. They know the functions of the *enter*, *space*, *backspace* and *cursor* keys and use the keyboard confidently. By the end of Year 2, children have skills appropriate for their age across the breadth of the subject, and use their class computers regularly to develop and practise their skills through their work in other subjects. For example, they use graphics software to create artwork, databases to produce graphs and the Internet to help them with simple research.

119. The children enjoy their work in ICT. They treat equipment sensibly, are good at taking turns and work together with partners. In the whole-class lessons observed, they behaved very well. They were attentive and responded to teachers' questions with enthusiasm. High quality support from learning assistants ensures that children with special educational needs play a full part in these lessons. Similarly, children with English as an additional language are given planned support that ensures they are able to understand the content of ICT lessons. The way in which children listen to, and support and encourage, each other when working co-operatively makes a positive contribution to their moral and social development.
120. The co-ordinator is providing good quality leadership that has ensured that all staff are confident users of ICT for their lesson planning, in lessons and for other administrative tasks. Assessment procedures are rigorous and used well to inform the planning of future lessons so that the tasks set match the prior attainment of all children. The subject is managed ably and there are sufficient good quality CD-ROMs and other resources to support the curriculum. Planning and teaching are carefully monitored.

## **MUSIC**

121. Overall, children attain the standards expected for their age and enjoy their music-making activities. This matches the standards seen during the previous inspection. A key feature is the quality of the documentation and guidance produced by the headteacher as music co-ordinator. This broadens teachers' knowledge and understanding so they feel confident teaching this subject. As a result, all children make good progress.
122. The children listen carefully to music and to their teachers' instructions, and respond swiftly to changes in pace. All children, including those with special needs and those for whom English is not their home language, sing well showing a good control of pitch, dynamics and rhythm. They show an awareness of phrasing and remember the words of songs and hymns. The children concentrate hard and, when asked, think for themselves when suggesting interesting solutions. The older children successfully sustain their part of a round, starting and finishing on time. The children play their instruments with delight; some have poor dexterity or sense of pulse, whilst others accompany songs skilfully maintaining the rhythm. They create mood through the use of their voices and instruments in songs about the weather or from other parts of the world. The children accompanied songs or added effects but there were few opportunities for them to create, develop or review their own music.
123. In the few lessons seen, teaching was very good. Teachers are not necessarily skilled practitioners but they are ready to do their best. They find the well-planned musical programme and high quality weekly planning for each year group invaluable in structuring their lessons and in giving them a clear focus. The choice of music is geared to the interests of the children and matches carefully what is to be taught. In the best lessons, the lively teaching, sensitive discussions and use of prompt cards enabled the children not only to enjoy their lessons, but also to make fast gains in their musical understanding and skills.
124. The subject is very well led and supported by the headteacher. Planning at all levels is effective; it provides continuity and progression across the school and a good range of interesting and challenging activities. The focus is on children performing and enjoying music, which is successful. Assessment is satisfactory. Resources are good. Each class is equipped with a basic range of percussion instruments and the facilities to listen to tapes or CDs. In addition, a wide range of instruments, tapes and books is stored in the

hall. Good use is made of visiting musicians to perform and lead workshops for the children.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

125. Only one lesson was observed in Year 1 but video evidence of a very recent Year 2 lesson, a comprehensive range of photographic evidence and discussions with the co-ordinator and other teachers indicate children make satisfactory progress and attain standards appropriate for their age by the end of Year 2. This is a similar picture to that found at the time of the last inspection.
126. All children, including those who have special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. They develop increasing control and co-ordination when working with large and small apparatus in the hall and when practising bat and ball skills outside. By Year 2, they move in a variety of ways, using different parts of their bodies, with satisfactory posture and control. They link movements in a sequence and work with some precision, as they hold their balance and land carefully when jumping from apparatus. In games lessons, the children show a satisfactory level of skills when throwing and bouncing small balls on their own, and when working with a partner. In the one lesson seen, Year 1 children moved carefully, and mostly successfully, as they played a volcanoes and craters game to develop strategies to beat an opposing team. In the videoed lesson, Year 2 children worked well in pairs to extend their skills in control of a beanbag. Overall, both boys and girls of different levels of prior attainment (including those with special educational needs) achieve well. Positive factors in this are the evident enjoyment of the children and the good teaching they receive. Those who have a particular interest or ability in games have the opportunity to gain more tuition in the after-school tennis club.
127. Children of all ages enjoy the subject and approach lessons with enthusiasm and try hard. They listen well and are learning to evaluate their work. They behave well and work effectively on their own and with others. The quality of co-operation observed illustrated a positive contribution to children's moral and social development. In the Year 1 lesson, two children from the autistic unit were fully engaged by the activities and required no more support than other members of the class.
128. All the evidence available confirms that the subject is well taught. Teachers understand the subject and use suitable teaching methods; they teach the basic skills well. Children learn through a variety of interesting and progressively more challenging activities. Lessons are carefully planned and teachers have high expectations. Children review and discuss their work, which makes an important contribution to the development of their speaking and listening skills. They respond well, strive to improve and generally follow instructions carefully. Teachers assess children's progress in lessons to advise and encourage them to improve, and formal assessment procedures are used to match work to the prior attainment of the children. Teachers are vigilant about safety, particularly when working in the hall. They teach children how to organise themselves, and to use space and apparatus safely. The curriculum is well planned to meet national requirements. All aspects of the subject, including dance, are taught.
129. The recently appointed co-ordinator is providing effective leadership and is managing the subject well. She has observed some teaching in other classes and has led the staff in the production of the good quality policy and scheme of work. The very new scheme of work is detailed and follows national guidance but has not yet had time to have its full impact on standards. A comprehensive system of assessment and recording is well linked to the scheme of work. Resources are sufficient to teach all aspects of the subject, of good quality and easily accessible to both children and staff. The school makes good use of the playground and school field.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

130. By the end of Year 2, the children's standards are appropriate for their age and are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. No judgement was made on standards during the last inspection. The quality of learning is good over time and the progress made by the children in some lessons was very good. Children with special educational needs and with English as an additional language play a full part in lessons. They are given work at an appropriate level and additional support, so that they make progress similar to that of other children.
131. The children are introduced to stories from the Old and New Testaments, and retell them accurately. In Year 1, children have good recall of the story of Moses, and extend this to talk about the qualities of a leader. They know stories from other religions, such as that of Rama and Sita, and by age seven show a sound understanding of the part that religion plays in the daily lives of Christians. They understand the reasons for major festivals, and the key features of other faiths, including Judaism and Hinduism. During the inspection the focus of the children's work was on 'people who help us'.
132. Only two lessons were observed; teaching was satisfactory in one and excellent in the other. From all the evidence available, however, it can be implied that teaching is good overall. Where teaching was satisfactory the lesson was at the end of the day, the pace of learning was limited and the children were tired. Teachers prepare the content of their lessons thoroughly to give children a sound basis of factual knowledge. This knowledge is placed in a framework of moral values, and skilfully related to children's personal experiences. Teachers use questioning very well to encourage children to make connections with their prior learning. Such an opportunity in a Year 1 class led to a high quality discussion about the different ways in which the school nurse helps the children. The way in which children's speaking and listening skills were developed and the care taken to prepare the 'thank you' letters that they were going to write to the nurse after her visit made an important contribution to the development of their literacy skills. In an excellent lesson in Year 2, the teacher read 'The Patchwork Quilt' by Valerie Flornay exceptionally well so the children were sitting on the edge of their seats in anticipation. This acted as a wonderful stimulus for the children as they reflected on the special memory that they would like to record on their own patches on a quilt. Extremely sensitive questioning enabled children to share such deeply held memories as the death of a grandparent and a favourite hamster. Unobtrusive but effective support for a child with a statement of special educational need meant that he was able to be fully involved, while the skill of the teacher ensured that all the children, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language were able to share in the enjoyment of the story. There were many special moments in this lesson when the quality of reading and discussion, combined with the trust between teacher and children, led to expressions of total involvement on the children's faces that it is difficult to capture in words.
133. For many children, their first experiences of Christianity and other faiths have been provided in school. Most respond to these opportunities with sensitivity, a maturity beyond their years and genuine enthusiasm. The quality of work in this subject is making a very significant contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the children.
134. Opportunities to visit the local parish church and a local synagogue, plus regular visits from the parish priest, all help to enrich the children's understanding. This was further enhanced when Year 2 children accessed and used a 'virtual' synagogue on the Internet.

135. The co-ordinator has successfully supported all staff with this subject. She is providing clear and effective leadership and is managing the subject well, having ensured that a good policy and scheme of work have been put in place that meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus and national guidance. She has directly observed teaching, and closely monitors the very good planning and the work that results. Good assessment procedures are in place and these are used to ensure that lesson planning takes into account the prior attainment of all children. There are sufficient resources, including artefacts, and these are up to date, accessible, of good quality and used well in lessons.