

INSPECTION REPORT

WILLIAM BOOTH INFANT SCHOOL

Sneinton, Nottingham

LEA area: City of Nottingham

Unique reference number: 122444

Acting headteacher: Mr Andy Mattison

Reporting inspector: Mr David Carrington
15414

Dates of inspection: 13th – 16th May 2002

Inspection number: 245520
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 and nursery

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 - 7

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Notintone Street
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Nottingham

Postcode: NG2 4QF

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr David Mellen

Date of previous inspection: 23rd February 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
15414	Mr D Carrington	Registered inspector	Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Information and communication technology	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well pupils are taught How well the school is led and managed
19557	Mrs E Halls	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well the school cares for its pupils The partnership with parents and carers
22805	Mrs J Greer	Team inspector	Science Music Physical education Areas of education for children in the Foundation Stage English as an additional language Equal opportunities	
25623	Mr J E Cox	Team inspector	English Geography History Religious education Special educational needs	The curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
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	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	10
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	13
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	16
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	18
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	20
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	21
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	24
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	25
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	29

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

William Booth Infant School is situated in the Sneinton district, just to the east of Nottingham city centre. There are 74 boys and 90 girls on roll with 96 part-time and 9 full-time children in the nursery. Pupil mobility is high and in recent years up to a fifth of the pupils have joined or left the school part way through their infant education. Over a half of the pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is well above the national level. There are a small number of pupils from asylum-seeking families and just over a half of the pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. A well above average proportion of pupils speaks English as an additional language and over 50 children are at an early stage of learning English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is well above average, though there are no pupils with statements. Of these pupils, most have emotional and behavioural needs or moderate learning difficulties. The children have well below average levels of skills and knowledge when they start in the nursery. Because of the illness of the headteacher, the school is currently led by the deputy headteacher who is serving as acting headteacher.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

William Booth Infant School is a very effective school. It builds very successfully on children's starting points and every pupil is treated as a valuable individual whose needs are met with conspicuous success. Pupils make good progress through the school and achieve respectable standards by the age of seven. The acting headteacher leads and manages the school very well, expectations are high and all staff make a full contribution to the education of the pupils. Whilst standards are not as high as found in many schools, they are improving at a good rate and the inspection team has every confidence in the measures being taken to raise attainment levels. There are four areas where continued improvement will most contribute to the process of lifting standards. All those in school are ready for the challenge that lies ahead and the school has a very bright future. It gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils make good progress through the school.
- The quality of teaching and learning is very good.
- Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language do very well in school.
- The all-round development of the pupils is very good, attitudes and relationships are a particular strength and there is very good racial harmony.
- The ethos of the school is unique and special; everyone celebrates the pupils as individuals and fosters their personal development very effectively.
- Leadership and management are very good.

What could be improved

- Whilst standards are improving at a good rate, they could be raised further.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

There were four key issues in the 1998 inspection report:

1. Raise standards in design and technology and information technology by improving staff confidence and the time spent on these subjects.
2. Enhance the systems of checking and evaluating standards, teaching and learning.
3. Improve the levels of attendance and punctuality.
4. Make sure that the school development priorities are fully costed.

Overall, the school has improved these things well and has lifted standards effectively since that inspection. It is in a very strong position to make continued improvements in the future.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by seven-year-olds (Year 2) based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

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

Key	
very high	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E
very low	E*

Similar schools are those schools with over 50% of the pupils entitled to free school meals.

In 2001, pupils at William Booth Infant School achieved very low standards compared to those found nationally in reading, writing and mathematics. When these results are compared to those in schools where over half the pupils are entitled to free school meals, standards were below average in reading and well below average in writing and mathematics. Last year, standards in science were above average in the teacher assessments. In recent tests, boys have tended to do much less well than the girls in reading and writing. The above test results disguise the true quality of education in the school. Children start school with well below average levels of skill and knowledge and they make good progress from the start of nursery to the end of Year 2. Inspectors judge that overall standards are below, rather than well below average. There are several key factors that influence the pattern of standards – there are well above average proportions of pupils with special educational needs and pupils who speak English as an additional language. Many children have little or no English when they start school. Pupil mobility tends to be high and this also affects progress. The school tries hard to ensure that pupils do as well as can be expected and is usually very successful. Its next challenge is to raise standards further by targeting the needs of the top achievers amongst other things.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Most pupils have very positive attitudes and are fully involved in all aspects of school life. They respond well to school rules and the excellent climate for learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Most pupils listen attentively to staff and behave well. In social situations pupils are co-operative and caring. There were seven temporary exclusions during the last full school year; all for fully justified reasons.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Most pupils are keen to take responsibility and carry out their duties willingly. They are confident and friendly. Relationships are very good throughout the school.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. The level of attendance is well below average. However, the school is working hard to improve unauthorised absence rates and is having much success.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is very good and is a strength of the school. About a third of all lessons are of very good or excellent teaching quality and most of the rest are good. Inspectors' scrutiny of pupils' work showed that teaching and learning is just as effective in weeks outside the inspection. Particular strengths of teaching are subject knowledge, expectations, the role of support staff, the teaching of basic skills, the management of pupils and the quality of everyday assessment. Whilst still good, there could be improvement made to planning for the needs of higher attaining pupils. There is very good provision in nursery and reception classes, though some group work in reception could be more focused on the planned development of skills and knowledge. The teaching of pupils who speak English as an additional language and those with special educational needs is very effective and the bilingual support for pupils with very little English is of particular benefit. Overall, the basic skills of literacy and numeracy are very well taught. The pupils work hard, they build skills and knowledge at good rates and they develop independence and responsibility well. They have good knowledge of how well they are doing and are very pleased with their own successes and those of other pupils.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. The school provides a high quality range of learning experiences for its pupils. The local community makes an excellent contribution to pupils' learning.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. The needs of these pupils are very well taken care of and the support provided is of very good quality. They make very good progress and achieve respectable standards.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Very good. This is a strength of the school. Pupils grow in confidence and accuracy in their use of English by the age of seven because staff take great care of their needs. The contribution of the bilingual support staff is very good.
Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. The school excels in providing for pupils' moral development and makes very good provision for their spiritual, social and cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. All staff show high levels of care and concern for all pupils. Very good systems are in place to ensure their health and safety and protection. Procedures for monitoring attendance are very good. There are very good systems for assessing and monitoring individual pupils' progress though they have not yet had time to be fully effective.
The partnership with parents	Very good. Most parents have a central role in the education of their children and they think highly of the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The acting headteacher has vision for the school and is a very effective leader and manager. He motivates the staff team very successfully and there is excellent shared commitment to improvement. The roles of subject leaders could be improved, though they are already hard working and successful managers.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governors take a good role in the management of the school and are well informed about its performance. They ensure that the school meets all that is expected of it and they increasingly check and compare that it is competitive and consistent in what it does.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school has good systems to check standards and progress. Targets are set for individual pupils and these are tracked to ensure that pupils achieve what is expected of them, though school managers are keen to refine and improve this process.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The budget is very carefully managed and money is spent wisely to ensure that pupils get a good deal and achieve well. Additional funding for pupils with special educational needs or those who speak English as an additional language is used very effectively. There are no shortages of accommodation, resources or staffing and the site staff keep the school in immaculate condition.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching quality is good and their children make good progress. Expectations are high and behaviour is good. Their children like coming to school. The school works closely with parents and they feel well informed of their children's progress. The school is well led and managed and all staff are easy to approach if parents have concerns. There is an interesting range of activities outside lessons. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A few parents think that homework levels could be improved.

The inspection team agrees with parents on all the positive things above and considers homework levels to be appropriate.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The previous inspection report stated that standards were broadly average and pupils made good progress. The exceptions to this picture concerned design and technology and information technology, where standards were below average. In recent years, Year 2 national test results in reading, writing and mathematics have been well below average and the school has adopted a number of successful measures to improve levels of attainment in all subjects.

2. The 2001 national test results, taken at face value, do not do justice to the progress that pupils make in school or the efforts given by staff to ensure pupils do as well as they can. Set against the national picture, pupils at William Booth Infant School achieved very low standards (E*)¹ in reading, writing and mathematics. Compared to the standards found in schools where over half the pupils are entitled to free school meals, pupils achieved below average levels (D) in reading and well below average levels (E) in writing and mathematics. Last year, standards in science were above average (B) in the teacher assessments.

3. There are several significant factors that impact on the final level of skill and knowledge as assessed in the national tests. The first is the well below average (E) level of skills and knowledge that children have when they start in the nursery. The school's initial appraisal of children's attainment indicates that many are not used to working or playing in a formal situation with other children, few have been away from their parents or carers for extended periods and many find communication very difficult. The high quality provision in the nursery ensures that most children settle well and grow in confidence. However, some children take much longer to adjust to the demands of school. The very effective links with parents of nursery children are instrumental in helping the least confident children to settle to learning. The settling-in process takes more time than in many schools and is further complicated by the following factors, which are apparent throughout much of the remaining time spent in school.

4. Many children in the nursery have little or no English when they join the class. For some, the experience is bewildering and this further contributes to the time it takes for them to settle and start making advances in their learning. Throughout the school, the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is much higher than is usually found. The most common other languages spoken are Mirpuri-Punjabi, Urdu, Punjabi and Bengali-Gujerati. A small number speak Somali, Cantonese, Arabic, Bosnian, French or Portuguese. There is a programme of targeted support for these pupils with one teacher and two bilingual support assistants employed to meet their needs. The school makes very good provision for all pupils whose first language is not English, with conspicuous success where bilingual tuition is available. Inspectors observed a number of high quality occasions when the bilingual staff spoke quietly in the pupils' language to explain or encourage them to respond. These pupils then replied in English, often haltingly, showing that they understood the work and that they were building knowledge and skills effectively. Their continuing difficulties in speaking, reading and writing English arrests their learning, though these pupils make very good progress and many are quite fluent in English by the age of seven.

¹ The results in National Curriculum tests are graded on a seven point scale from A* (very high) to E* (very low). C grade is average.

5. The well above average proportion of pupils with special educational needs is the third key factor that affects the standards in national tests. Emotional and behavioural needs and moderate learning difficulties are the two most significant factors amongst pupils on the school's register of special needs. Some of these pupils find the rigours of school life difficult to cope with and their concentration levels are low. The staff are very adept at handling these pupils to ensure that they benefit from the good learning that takes place. The *Shooting Stars* initiative where pupils with emotional, behavioural or social needs are withdrawn for small group support has an excellent impact on the education of these pupils and contributes strongly to improved progress rates. More than this, such provision ensures that other pupils are not unduly affected by the demands of the few pupils whose behaviour is not of the best. In all, the school's provision to support pupils with special educational needs is very good because all staff know every pupil's individual needs and the programme of individual work is very carefully planned and very successfully delivered. Thus, pupils with special educational needs make very good progress towards the targets in their Individual Education Plans. Learning support staff provide valuable individual attention for pupils with special educational needs and this makes a significant contribution to the progress that these pupils make.

6. The mobility of pupils is another influence on progress. Pupil turnover is high at around a fifth of the school population each year. Thus, a significant number of pupils join or leave the school part-way through their time at the school. Some who join have very little or no English and most have well below average levels of skills and knowledge. Family difficulties are often at the root of the mobility of pupils at William Booth Infant School and the insecurity they experience makes it difficult for these pupils to adjust when they start at the school.

7. Irregular attendance patterns affect some pupils. After the previous inspection, the school appointed a member of the administrative staff to focus on improved attendance levels. This has worked very effectively but attendance levels are still below those usually found. A number of pupils have extended time away from school as their families take holidays abroad. In one class during the inspection, 15 per cent of the pupils were either away for this reason or had just returned to school after a long absence. These pupils had missed or were missing key elements of their education. A few pupils are regularly late for school, which affects the start of their school day and has a compound effect on their building of basic skills as literacy and numeracy work is usually well under way when these pupils turn up. However, the school is taking very effective measures to stem the impact of irregular attendance and punctuality.

8. Because of local admissions policy, some pupils have no reception year experience. The youngest children each year go straight from nursery to Year 1. School records show that up to 25 per cent of the pupils in Year 1 have not had experience in the reception classes. Because of their many needs, some cited above, these children are very immature Year 1 pupils and find the early days very trying. The teachers and support staff do an admirable job to support these pupils and they make good progress through the year. However, they have much ground to make up and not enough time in order to reach the expected level of skills and knowledge by the time they move to Year 2. The school has clear plans to ensure changes are made from Easter 2003 to give the youngest children their full entitlement in the Foundation Stage.

9. In recent national tests, as in many schools, boys have tended to do less well than the girls in reading and writing. The acting headteacher has led moves to analyse closely the different learning styles amongst the pupils and has introduced a number of very well thought out innovations to maximise concentration and interest levels, in part to counteract boys' lower attainment in English. Inspectors observed a number of lessons, for example in a reception class literacy session, where pupils stopped work, stood up and counted to ten out

loud. This led to re-doubled effort and attention and was a successful move to keep the pupils focused on their work.

10. Despite all the above factors, the school makes very effective provision for its pupils and none of the listed elements is allowed to stand in the way. Expectations are high and pupils are given every opportunity to achieve well. Inspectors judge that overall progress through the school is good and that standards are below average (D) overall by the age of seven. Standards in English remain well below average (E) at the end of school because there is so much to be accomplished. However, standards are below average (D) in mathematics and science and average (C) in the other eight subjects. Indeed, in subjects such as design and technology, information and communication technology (ICT) and physical education (particularly swimming) there is evidence of some above average standards (B) in part of the subject.

11. There are two aspects of provision that the school recognises and accepts could be improved in order to maximise progress and attainment. The higher attaining pupils are given appropriate work for much of the time, but there are occasions when their interests and understanding could be taken on further. There is inconsistent identification of the pupils with the potential to be the very top achievers and planning does not always indicate the expectations of their work. The school is ready for the challenge of promoting the needs of the higher attainers more effectively.

12. Secondly, there are times in reception classes when the group work does not consolidate enough or extend skills and knowledge for all pupils. Some of the activities following whole-class sessions are too unstructured and do not always relate to the topic introduced in the first part of the lesson. The opening of the lesson is usually much more focused on skills and knowledge and expectations are clear. Planning now needs to take account of the specific learning outcomes during group work, whether subject based or free-choice activities. Ongoing assessment and evaluation also needs to be directed at the learning of all children, not just those in the focus groups, to ensure all are learning what is expected.

13. For the majority of time, all staff work hard to make sure that pupils rise to meet their potential as effective learners. Successes in meeting the needs of pupils are ensuring that the standards achieved are, in fact, eminently respectable for the different groups in school. What remains is to sharpen provision for the higher attainers and the group work in the reception year. Together with honed systems of target setting and tracking, as discussed in the leadership and management section below, these improvements will go a long way to fulfil the very good prospects the school has to raise standards further.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

14. Most pupils like coming to school and settle quickly in lessons and activities. They show very positive attitudes to their learning and behave very well in and around the school. At the meeting prior to the inspection and in the questionnaires, parents were happy with the attitudes and behaviour of their children. Most children, including those with behavioural and special educational needs, respond very well to the school's rules and emphasis on positive behaviour. They are friendly and well mannered, kind and considerate. In lessons, behaviour is good and often very good. A small minority of the pupils have behavioural difficulties and there were seven fixed period exclusions in the last full school year, all for justified reasons. There have been no permanent exclusions. Pupils develop good personal skills and work well both independently and co-operatively in groups. These aspects make a significant contribution to their progress. Since the last inspection the school has successfully

maintained the standards of behaviour and continues to fulfil its aims to develop children's self confidence and enthusiasm for learning.

15. Relationships are very good throughout the school. The pupils form very strong relationships with one another and the staff of the school. They are supportive of each other and are co-operative, caring and sensitive. They respond very well to the help and guidance available to them and to being valued. Bullying or harassment is very rare and pupils report that any incidents that occur are dealt with promptly and effectively eliminated.

16. Most pupils with special educational needs have good attitudes to work in all aspects of school life. They are treated as equal members of the school. However, a small number find it difficult to maintain concentration in class lessons. They are easily distracted. The school makes special arrangements to teach these pupils in small groups so that they learn how to relate to other pupils and adults. This is a very successful initiative.

17. Many children entering nursery have little self-confidence, are shy and timid; a few are boisterous, disruptive and not co-operative. All teachers and support staff quickly develop a good knowledge of each child. Children are helped to develop self-esteem through praise and encouragement. In nursery, timid children are gently coaxed to join in a small group with an adult they trust. More boisterous children learn to be calm and quiet. Children in the nursery and reception classes learn to share, take turns and help each other. One child spontaneously helped another lift the dolls' pram over a log barrier, several children co-operated in building towers, and children on the climbing frame waited their turn to slide without pushing. Children learn to concentrate for short periods during circle and story times.

18. Pupils make very good progress in their personal development. They are eager and willing to take responsibility in class and in activities around the school, for example putting on the music and drawing the curtains for assembly. Pupils are encouraged to take some responsibility for their own learning and show awareness of how they are doing. Year two pupils show great maturity in carrying out their duties as dinner helpers. The school has made very good progress since the previous inspection in promoting pupils' personal development.

19. Attendance overall is unsatisfactory and is well below the national average. A few pupils are repeatedly late for school though most pupils attend school regularly and arrive at school on time. However, a significant minority have unsatisfactory attendance due to sickness or holidays taken during term time. The school's efforts to encourage good attendance has had a significant impact in reducing unauthorised absence though absence remains an issue that senior managers are keen to tackle.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

20. In the 1998 inspection report, teaching was judged to be good overall. This good quality extended to the teaching of English and mathematics and to children aged under five, pupils with special educational needs and those who spoke English as an additional language. However, in subjects where skills development was uppermost, such as design and technology, information technology and music, there were a number of weaknesses even though the overall quality of teaching in these subjects was satisfactory. The report also flagged that the support staff made a good contribution to pupils' learning.

21. The school has had conspicuous success in improving the quality of teaching. Today it is very good overall. About four out of five lessons show teaching quality to be good or better – this is a much higher proportion than is usually found. A third of all lessons is of very good or excellent teaching quality. There was no unsatisfactory teaching during the

inspection. All teachers taught some good lessons and most showed they could teach very well. This calibre of teaching is reflected in pupils' response. As discussed in the standards section, there are a number of factors that influence the progress made in lessons. Teachers have to work successfully at William Booth Infant School in order to ensure that all pupils move ahead with their learning. Thus, the very good teaching quality gives rise to good learning and progress.

22. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is very good overall. Teaching is better in nursery where some excellent practice is seen. Teaching in reception is generally good. Teachers in each year plan together to ensure equality of opportunity. Planning is shared with teaching assistants so they understand what skills, knowledge and understanding are to be learned and support children towards achieving these.

23. In nursery, morning and afternoon sessions follow the same pattern so all children have equal provision. Children whose birthday occurs in July or August attend both sessions to compensate for lack of reception experience. Planning for these children is specific to provide extra challenge and avoid repetition. Each session has two periods of whole group activity with a focus on literacy and numeracy development. A theme is chosen each term; during the inspection the focus was on animals. Literacy, numeracy and a number of free choice activities are linked to the main theme. Teachers select stories and rhymes related to the topic and provide information books appropriate to the age of children.

24. All activities are planned to promote a particular learning objective or development within the six areas of learning. There is a good balance between free choice and direction. When teachers want to focus on individual children to assess their attainment and progress, or when a child makes limited choices or avoids certain activities, they are encouraged to participate in a particular activity. An especially good feature is the careful planning for outdoor activities. The outside area is an outdoor classroom in the true sense.

25. All staff are very aware of the different needs of individual children. They are alert to what children are doing and intervene subtly to extend language skills, draw attention to detail or encourage further development and growing independence. In this way children learn to share, take turns and help each other. Observations of significance are noted and collated each week into individual profiles. Children for whom English is an additional language benefit from a very experienced bilingual support assistant. The happy, safe, purposeful environment encourages them to learn English quickly, integrate successfully and make rapid progress. All children make very good progress in all areas of learning.

26. In reception, direct teaching sessions are carefully planned so that learning is very effective. Where small groups of children are targeted for specific activities with a teacher or assistant this is also well planned and taught, and appropriate to the children's particular stage of development. There is insufficient planning for the other activities so that children do not always make the best use of resources or extend their skills, knowledge or understanding well enough. Teachers are not sufficiently aware of what children choose or avoid; some children spend too much time drifting during these times.

27. A typical lesson began with a very good whole class session where children recalled changes they had observed in tadpoles during the previous week. The children had been very observant and described in simple language what they had seen and what they knew. One little boy suggested that to stay alive tadpoles need oxygen. Teachers extended children's speaking skills very effectively by reiterating the responses in complete sentences or asking if other children could find another way of explaining or describing a monosyllabic answer. Together the class constructed the life-cycle of a frog using a well prepared visual aid. During this time the children were very alert and interested, responding to questions by putting up

their hands and not shouting out. All of them behaved very well. The subsequent activities were less well organised. Adults supervised three focus groups with well planned linked activities, but other children engaged in a variety of unfocused activities often with little purpose. No records were being kept of which children had participated in the focus groups or what activities any of them had engaged in.

28. Teaching quality in Years 1 and 2 is also very good. This evaluation is based on the observations made in lessons but also on the scrutiny of pupils' past work and talking with pupils. The evidence from all three sources demonstrates that the pupils have a very good deal in school and that they enjoy experiences throughout the year that are focused equally on their individual needs as learners and people.

29. No aspect of teaching judged by inspectors is anything less than good. Key strengths are teachers' subject knowledge, expectations, the methods used, the way that time and resources are used, the quality of everyday assessment and the teaching of basic skills. Overall, the skills of literacy and numeracy are very well taught. The management of pupils is excellent, and results in settled and productive learning conditions. Whilst still good, planning could be enhanced to take greater account of the learning needs of higher attaining pupils in the same way that the needs of other groups of pupils are highlighted.

30. The support staff are particularly successful in promoting effective learning. They form a good team with the teachers and are very well informed about their pupils and the work to be completed. Support staff take a significant and very good role in the ongoing assessment of skills and knowledge. They help pupils very successfully to complete their studies, pupils who otherwise might find learning demanding, for whatever reason.

31. In return, pupils work hard and they learn skills and knowledge effectively. The amount and quality of work produced is good and forms a very good record of what has been achieved. Year 2 design and technology books, for example, hold pages of pupils' work interspersed with group evaluations, photographs of the pupil and the product made and actual examples of their door bolts, fabric designs and other items. There is a great sense of pride in achievement in school that arises from the constant promotion of high expectations. On several occasions pupils were heard repeating inspirational phrases introduced at assembly and in lessons by the acting headteacher and the staff. The *joie de vivre* in learning is infectious and productive fun is at the head of the agenda for staff and pupils alike.

32. Pupils develop independence and responsibility well. They learn to take account of the needs of others in the class and there is a good level of co-operation in learning. The level of racial harmony in learning (indeed, in the school as a whole) is excellent and serves as a model for others outside school. Concentration levels are generally good, though for a few pupils this remains a challenge despite very effective measures to improve their attention span. Pupils also have good knowledge of how well they are learning. This is because teachers and support staff put their ongoing assessment to very good use in sharing successes and further challenges with their pupils. In every lesson, pupils show pleasure in learning and celebrate their own successes and those of the others.

33. Pupils who have special educational needs are taught very well. They are taught as part of the whole class group and in small groups to match their individual needs. Teachers know their pupils well and carefully plan activities that match their needs. Individual Education Plans contain well thought out targets for improvement that are clearly devised to meet the needs of each pupil. Pupils are taught very well when they are in small groups to improve their reading or to develop social skills. The well targeted support, very good quality teaching and work that matches the needs of pupils ensure that pupils with special educational needs make very good progress.

34. Teachers and support staff make a very successful contribution to the education of pupils who speak English as an additional language. The bilingual assistant in nursery works very successfully with older children if they are admitted with little or no English. Outside agencies are available to support pupils who are admitted with other languages, for instance children from asylum seeking families. The language support teacher and assistant work with small groups of pupils, supporting them most effectively during normal lessons. Individual and small groups are withdrawn for more concentrated language development, which enables them to make very good progress in the acquisition of English language skills. Very good resources are available; many of them made specifically for the individual needs of pupils who speak English as an additional language. Through the good intervention and the very supportive and caring ethos of the school, pupils make very good progress in acquiring English.

35. When the best teaching and learning come together, the results are outstanding. This was seen a number of times during the inspection but a Year 2 lesson on symmetry underlines the type of experience that pupils meet during their time in school. Here the teacher very effectively developed the theme of line symmetry by asking challenging questions and setting taxing work for groups. The pupils were very well motivated because the expectations of the teacher and pace of the lesson held their attention fully. The pupils were keen to answer questions and worked hard to identify the line(s) of symmetry in increasingly more complex polygons. By the end of the lesson, the pupils had built their knowledge of symmetry very well and were close to level 3 in attainment. There was some good natured argument about the number of lines of symmetry in a circle in the lesson and the pupils' mathematical vocabulary and investigation skills had been extended very well.

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

36. The school teaches all the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education for an appropriate amount of time. Pupils' intellectual, moral and physical developments are promoted effectively. Provision for pupils' moral education is excellent. Very good provision is made for pupils' spiritual, social and cultural education. Provision in all of these aspects has improved since the previous inspection. Very good provision is made to ensure that all pupils have opportunities to succeed and equal access to everything the school provides. There is very good provision for out-of-school activities.

37. The National Literacy Strategy and National Numeracy Strategy have been successfully introduced. The school has very good strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy skills. Greater attention needs to be given to providing harder work for gifted and talented pupils.

38. There is very good provision for personal, social and health education throughout the school. Health matters, including drugs education, are taught effectively through science lessons and discussed in personal and social lessons. Visits by the school nurse and health visitor complement these lessons. Pupils benefit from visits by the Life Bus, when, as well as discussing the misuse of drugs and medicines, pupils are encouraged to talk about feelings. This work is supported in assemblies during Health Week when pupils learn about the problems faced by pupils who suffer from asthma. Assemblies are used well to support pupils' personal and social education. Themes in assembly, such as *Friendship*, last for a week. Teachers taking assemblies make great efforts to praise pupils and give a positive message. In a celebration assembly, pupils from every class demonstrated what they had done during the week. The theme of friendship and helping each other was reinforced when children in the Reception class showed how they helped each other balance on a beam in

physical education lessons. The school works hard and very successfully to build pupils' self-esteem. To help with this, there are many posters around the school showing messages such as, 'Don't think twice, just be nice.'

39. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. They are taught to respect the feelings and beliefs of others through religious education and as part of the programme of work for their personal and social development, particularly when pupils sit in circles to share their thoughts. Year 1 pupils, for example, think about what they say and do to others to show that they are their friends. Assemblies play an important part in pupils' spiritual development. There are many opportunities to think about the ideas expressed in assemblies. Pupils concentrate on lighted candles to help with their thoughts. Teachers create a quiet, reflective atmosphere by closing the hall curtains and playing soothing music. Pupils are encouraged to concentrate on the message behind a song, *Love is stronger than fear*, when a class mime the words.

40. Provision for the moral development of pupils is excellent. Although the school has class rules and rules for behaviour around the school that are found in most schools, it is the attitudes promoted by adults in the way they treat children and each other that sets such a good example for pupils to follow. The caring attitude seems almost to be part of the fabric of the building. Adults in the school promote a clear sense of right and wrong. Sanctions are applied consistently when pupils misbehave. They are encouraged to think how their actions affect others. The school places great emphasis on boosting pupils' confidence and self-esteem. Teachers use praise, stars and other reward stickers to good effect: the good work done by pupils is celebrated in assemblies attended by parents.

41. Provision for pupils' social development is very good. They are given many opportunities to work together in small groups, for example, in Year 1 when pupils worked together to use a programmable device. Pupils willingly take on tasks around school, for example, giving out milk and apples at morning break. This period of time is used well by teachers to encourage pupils to talk quietly together. Teachers make good use of craft activities to encourage conversation and co-operation among pupils. For example, when small groups of pupils work in the Shooting Stars group, the teacher uses the time spent embroidering canvas squares to encourage pupils to talk to each other and share materials. Pupils also have the opportunity to work together and express an opinion that they know will be listened to in circle time. The residential camp provides very good opportunities for pupils to learn to live and work together. Very good links are made between social and spiritual development in sharing assemblies when parents join in the celebration of the successes pupils have achieved.

42. There is very good provision for developing pupils' cultural awareness. They learn about past and present British culture through history and geography topics. Knowledge of the local area is strong because there are rich resources nearby that provide inspiration for studies of William Booth, the founder of the Salvation Army, and Robin Hood. Understanding of other beliefs, traditions and values is well promoted. Festivals from different faiths are celebrated with parties for Christmas and Eid, for example. Other festivals, such as the Chinese New Year and Diwali are shown in displays. Teachers introduce pupils to music from other countries, such as the Gaelic tunes played as pupils enter the hall for assembly. Although they are still in the early stages of development, the school is developing good links with schools in Holland and Spain through the Socrates Project, sponsored by the European Union. Exchange visits between teachers have already taken place and it is intended that pupils will soon begin to communicate with each other by e-mail.

43. The Foundation Stage curriculum is planned very well to cover the six areas of learning in both classes. Good use is made of the school's own grounds to support learning.

Frequent visits to the immediate locality extend children's knowledge and understanding of the world around them. They visit the local park and shops and the museum at Green's Mill. Visits further afield, such as to an open farm, support topic work. Parents and other visitors to school help children learn about different cultures through costume, music, dance and drama. Priority is given to developing children's language skills and their self-esteem, confidence and ability to co-operate in a social group. Provision is particularly good in the nursery.

44. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is a strength of the school. These pupils are given the same opportunities as others, both inside and outside the classroom. They are very well supported within the classroom and when withdrawn in small groups by the special educational needs co-ordinator. The work they are given is linked well to targets identified in their Individual Education Plans as well as to work being done by other pupils in the class.

45. The provision for out-of-school activities is very good. There are physical education and art clubs and a computer club will start in the near future. Pupils in Year 2 are given the opportunity to take part in a three day residential visit to a local college of agriculture, where they learn to live together in tents. This further promotes their social education.

46. Pupils' education is enhanced by visits to local places of interest such as Nottingham Castle, the Brewhouse Yard Museum, Green's Mill, local farms and William Booth's birthplace. Pupils take part in role-play to find out how Victorian schools differed from their own. Visitors to the school have included a parent who demonstrated Chinese cooking, an actor who told the life story of William Booth, and ducks and a snake from White Post Farm. Visitors from local churches talk to pupils, who themselves visit the churches and a Sikh temple.

47. The community makes an excellent contribution to pupils' learning. Pupils take part in concerts at the Royal Concert Hall at Christmas and after the National Curriculum tests. They plant daffodils in the local churchyard. The school has connections with local businesses, members of whose staffs come to school to listen to readers. Parents have successfully approached other businesses for grants to improve playground facilities. They work alongside pupils during Health and Book weeks and give freely of their time to organise Eid and Christmas parties. Pupils organise and run stalls at school fairs. They learn about local history when they visit Nottingham Castle and the nearby birthplace of William Booth.

48. Appropriate transfer arrangements are made with the junior schools that William Booth Infant School feeds and the school aims to achieve a smooth transition between the different stages of education.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

49. The school makes very good provision for the welfare, support and guidance of all pupils, in a caring and supportive environment. Parents expressed the view that the school provides consistently good support for their children and is a caring place in which their children are happy and safe. Inspection evidence confirms these opinions. The school is an orderly, caring and sharing community, which abides by a few rules. These enhance the pupils' development of self-discipline, personal and social skills. This results in good standards of behaviour that encourage pupils to want to learn. The teachers and support staff work very effectively as a team. They act as very good role models and have a very good knowledge of individuals, which they use well to provide policies and procedures that are appropriate to meet the academic and social needs of pupils.

50. Pupils' progress and personal development are monitored very well. There are good procedures to identify individual needs and to match work to pupils' level of understanding. The school maintains very good records of pupils' achievements in all aspects of the curriculum and individual education plans are in place and used for pupils with special educational needs. The support provided for pupils with special educational needs is very good and the school works closely with other agencies and support services where necessary. Pupils are integrated well into classes and, where appropriate, given out of class support in the 'Shooting Stars' groups, which are very effectively supported by teaching and support staff. Their progress is monitored well and achievable targets set for improvement.

51. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are very good. Parents are generally conscientious in notifying the school of absences and staff follow them up where no notification has been received. Punctuality is monitored carefully. The school works very closely with the education welfare service where necessary. There are very good procedures in place for child protection and promoting the well being, health and safety of all pupils, with high staff awareness of the issues. The school has close links with other agencies and deals very effectively with any concerns they may have. The caretaker ensures the school is very well maintained with a very high standard of cleanliness. Appropriate health and safety checks are carried out regularly. The school actively promotes healthy and safe living through its comprehensive programme.

52. The school has very good measures to promote and maintain discipline and behaviour with a reward system that pupils understand and value. There are clear guidelines for staff. Highly effective procedures are in place for dealing with bullying or racial harassment. Any incidents that arise are taken seriously and promptly and effectively dealt with. Pupils with behavioural difficulties are managed very well and effectively included.

53. Pupils with special educational needs benefit greatly from the additional support they receive from the special educational needs co-ordinator and classroom assistants. Baseline and other tests are used to measure pupils' attainment and to help teachers provide work focused on individual pupils' needs. The school tries to establish good links with parents. Teachers are prepared to spend time with individual parents to talk about incidents that happen out of school but which affect the way pupils learn. This approach that the school adopts of paying great attention to pupils' personal development is typical of the caring attitude that the school has for all its pupils. It is best seen in arrangements whereby small groups of pupils, who find it difficult to work in normal lessons, are taken by the special educational needs co-ordinator and an assistant and are taught social as well as academic skills.

54. The Foundation Stage staff make very good links with parents prior to children joining the nursery and there are good induction arrangements, which help settle the youngest children into school. Very good levels of care are given to the youngest children in school and all staff quickly get to know each individual child well. Overall, there are very good procedures to monitor the behaviour, personal development and attendance of children in the Foundation Stage.

55. The school has established very good systems for assessing and monitoring individual pupils' progress. Most of these have been implemented recently and have not yet had time to be fully effective. Assessment procedures in the Foundation Stage are particularly good.

56. When children are admitted to the nursery, staff assess them and compile a profile. This is used to set targets for development. The targets are shared with parents. A staff team meeting is held each Monday to review the attainment of a small group of children and set the

focus of observations for the coming week on specific aspects of their development. At the end of the week these are reviewed and annotated on their individual record sheet against the descriptions of achievement in the Foundation Stage curriculum. During the week, staff record any informal observations of significance for any child, these are collated weekly into their ongoing profile. This, together with dated examples of children's work, is kept in individual Record of Achievement files. The files will be passed to the next teacher. This process was newly established in September and is very good.

57. Reception teachers are adopting a similar assessment procedure. Task sheets include assessment pointers "can the child..." so any adult observing the activity can contribute to ongoing assessment. This is good practice. However, not all activities are so well monitored. A good example of the use of individual behaviour targets was seen in one class where all the children discussed whether they had been achieved during playtime.

58. Children are assessed against a commercial baseline procedure at the end of the Foundation Stage. The information gained is not entirely helpful. The school is looking forward to implementing the national scheme in the near future.

59. A very comprehensive range of assessments is carried out regularly during Years 1 and 2 covering all aspects of pupils' English, mathematics and personal development. It is used to set targets for all pupils including those with special education needs and pupils for whom English is an additional language. All targets are shared with parents and pupils.

60. Assessment information is used to predict attainment at the end of the key stage, but as the procedures have only been implemented since September, it is too early to evaluate their effectiveness. They should prove valuable when they have been in place longer. The local authority provides a detailed analysis of national assessment results that is very helpful in reviewing the whole curriculum.

61. The school has successfully maintained the effective provision for the support, guidance and welfare of the pupils and it is a strength of the school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

62. The school's relationship with parents is very good and results from the commitment of staff to work in partnership with parents. From the response to the questionnaire and at the meeting prior to the inspection, it is apparent that parents are very supportive of the school. In particular they are very supportive of the events organised by the Friends of William Booth. Significant funds are raised each year, which are used to enhance the school environment, its resources and the educational experiences which pupils receive. Most parents comment very favourably on the openness of the school. They are made to feel welcome and staff are very approachable. Parents have opportunities for both formal and informal discussions with staff. The school has effectively implemented 'home-school agreements'. A very good range of opportunities is provided for parents to find out about the work of the school. These comprise of family assemblies, open evenings and parents' evenings. After parents' evenings, notes are sent home which thank them for attending and these identify targets they can help with. In addition, a good variety of parents' courses are provided including a keep fit class.

63. There are very good links with parents of nursery and reception children. Parents are invited to nursery before their children attend. They are encouraged to stay with their children in the early days. Start time is flexible and parents help their children register themselves and settle to a prepared activity at the beginning of each session.

64. Good, practical information and guidance is displayed in the entrance cloakroom, suggesting how parents might help their children at home. There are opportunities at the beginning and end of each session to exchange information or concerns. A formal opportunity is available each term to discuss children's attainment, progress and any concerns. Individual targets for development are shared with parents, and ways in which they can support their children suggested.

65. Booklets are given to parents explaining how they can help their children learn to read, develop mathematical concepts and language, how to get on well at school, and which also give examples of phonic songs. There is an effective home-school agreement that is developing further the partnership with parents of children in the Foundation Stage.

66. The quality of information for parents is very good. Parents are kept very well informed through regular letters and newsletters about school life. The school prospectus and governors' annual report to parents provide up-to-date information on the school. Annual written reports to parents are generally good and provide information on pupils' progress and knowledge. Some include pertinent comments about improvement.

67. Individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are drawn up to provide appropriate targets, which are shared with parents who attend meetings and reviews. The school works very closely with parents of children with additional needs linked to behaviour.

68. Parents are appreciative of the opportunities they have to see how subjects are now taught. A good number of parents come into school regularly to help in classes. They are always welcomed and have a room of their own, the family room. Parents are encouraged and assisted in helping children at home with reading, spellings and other activities through useful information booklets produced by the school. Many parents help in school and parents' attendance at celebration assemblies and other events is very good. There is a very active and successful parents' association and parents are made to feel part of the school community and are encouraged to participate strongly. A few parents do not feel confident to support their children's learning in this way and the school works hard to involve them.

69. The school has successfully built on the good relationships established with parents and continues to actively promote partnership in learning.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

70. The previous inspection identified a number of strengths in the leadership and management of the school. The headteacher was judged to have created an effective staff team that was providing constant and consistent support for the pupils. The key aim of raising standards was at the heart of the school and the sense of shared commitment was a strength. There were two key issues that related to management. Firstly, the systems to monitor and evaluate school performance had shortcomings. Secondly, the school development plan was not tied firmly enough to the budget so that competing priorities were insufficiently costed. Nonetheless, leadership and management was good overall.

71. Since 1998, the headteacher has had a number of bouts of illness. The deputy headteacher served in the capacity of acting headteacher during some of this time and since September 2001 has been the regular head of the school. As acting headteacher he has had a strong platform to build from, with many of the strengths identified in the previous inspection report having been sustained well. The acting headteacher has introduced a number of significant changes to the school, including the internal layout of the accommodation, substantial improvements to the external environment to create an outdoor play and learning

resource and the streamlining of existing management procedures. He is clearly a head with vision and he leads the school most effectively. He is popular with pupils, parents, staff and governors and is widely and justifiably respected for his acute sense of purpose, determination and high expectations.

72. Over the past few months the acting headteacher has strengthened the staff team very well. There is excellent commitment to improvement at all levels of management and this is a significant strength of the school. The fact that pupils start school with well below average attainment levels and that there are many characteristics that work against the achievement of average standards in the short time pupils are in school are not allowed to serve as barriers to best achievement. There is very good determination that pupils will make optimum progress and achieve very respectable standards. This prime aim of the school is very well borne out by the senior management team who has formed an invaluable partnership with the acting headteacher. They have taken on the additional tasks brought about by the absence of the headteacher most successfully and have excellent working relationships with other members of the staff team.

73. Subject leaders work hard in the interests of the pupils. Individually and collectively they have good grasp of the strengths and weaknesses of their subjects, though this could be stronger. At present, subject leaders do not have a central role in the monitoring and evaluation of school performance and this leads to a few gaps in the thoroughness of their knowledge of their subjects. The acting headteacher accepts that this is a key priority of the school and that moves to improve the system of monitoring and evaluation after the 1998 inspection are not complete. Subject leaders demonstrate very clearly that they have the capacity and capability to take on an enhanced monitoring role and the prospects for improvement are very good.

74. The school's provision for pupils with special educational needs is managed very well by the co-ordinator. There are clear strategies to identify pupils with special educational needs at an early stage. Targets relate well to identified needs and are set out in pupils' Individual Education Plans, which are reviewed regularly. The co-ordinator makes very good use of services supplied by the local authority, such as the paediatrician and educational psychologist. The school is well prepared to meet changes in provision for pupils with special educational needs, having adopted the new Code of Practice early.

75. Similarly, the management of provision for pupils who speak English as an additional language is very good. Procedures to identify and support such pupils work very effectively and staff are deployed very well to help the pupils build confidence and accuracy when speaking, reading and writing English. The bilingual staff are managed very well and deployed very effectively. Because they are very capable, they have immediate and lasting impact on the progress that these pupils make.

76. There is also very good management of the provision for children in the Foundation Stage. The leader of the nursery and reception phase is very committed, highly skilled and a very good motivator of the staff. Since her arrival at the start of this school year she has been responsible for considerable improvement in provision in the nursery. The acting headteacher and the leader of the Foundation Stage recognise that the focus should now shift to welding the strengths in reception into a similar quality of provision. As a start, increased monitoring across the phase will enable the leader to identify the strengths for enhancement and weaknesses for improvement. There is much very good practice to share and the potential for future improvement is very positive.

77. The governors are full members of the school community. They are well informed and are influential in taking the school forward. Their confidence as a critical friend is growing well

and they are not afraid to ask the questions that matter in their bid to ensure that the school compares favourably with others and is competitive in purchase and provision. Governors make appropriate checks to ensure that the school meets its statutory requirements. The governors join in celebrations of school achievement and they monitor improvement effectively.

78. There is improving knowledge of school performance amongst governors and staff. The acting headteacher has very good command of the data that identifies school strengths and weaknesses and he is successfully drawing other people into the process of self-evaluation and review. The target setting and tracking process is relatively new but it is bedding in well and is developing as a powerful tool to raise standards. Managers recognise that refinements are due to some aspects of assessment and the use of the data produced by assessment in order to provide the ongoing checks that pupils are meeting their targets.

79. Financial management is a significant strength of the school. The budget is tied firmly to the school improvement plan, which is thoroughly costed. This is good improvement on the situation at the previous inspection. The cheerful, hard working and very successful office staff very capably handles the day-to-day management of finance. Additional funding for specific purposes such as the education of pupils who speak English as an additional language or for those with special needs is spent very wisely to ensure best progress is made and that good value is added to their attainments.

80. The school is generally well endowed with accommodation, though it is cramped in a few places. Both nursery and reception have their own integrated, open-plan area. The Foundation Stage classrooms are bright and cheerful, enhanced by attractive displays of children's work and colourful, informative pictures. There is a very good range of materials and equipment for the six areas of learning. There are computers in each class. Rooms are arranged well with provision for quiet listening and more active and messy play. Each class has access to good outdoor facilities. Large play equipment is situated over soft landing surfaces. There are good resources for physical activities such as climbing, sliding, pushing, peddling, building, aiming, throwing and kicking.

81. The accommodation for Years 1 and 2 is equally attractive and is presented well. The site staff, led by the very committed site manager, are immensely proud of their work and they ensure that the school is spick and span. There are very good levels of staffing throughout the school and everyone is part of the school team. The catering and lunchtime supervisory staff are equally proud of what they do and the pupils relate very positively to them. All non-teaching staff make a valuable contribution to the personal development and welfare of the pupils. The provision of learning resources is good overall and the equipment and materials are used very effectively in learning.

82. It is evident that, because of the school's very many strengths and few weaknesses, it gives good value for money. There is concerted effort to add even more value in terms of standards but pupils make good progress and what they achieve is entirely appropriate. The prospects for future growth in the school are very good.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

83. William Booth Infant School is a place where pupils are put first. They enjoy a very good education and make good progress from a well below average starting point. The acting headteacher, staff and governors are committed to further improvement and are working hard and successfully to make things even better for the pupils. With this in mind, they should:

Continue to raise standards, especially in English, mathematics and science, by:

- Enhancing the degree of challenge provided for higher attaining pupils;
- Making sure that group work in reception classes always consolidates and extends skills and knowledge;
- Giving subject leaders more opportunities to check and evaluate the quality of provision and standards across the school;
- Honing the target setting and tracking process.

(See paragraphs: 11-13, 26, 29, 73, 76, 78, 96, 117, 120, 123, 133, 137, 152, 161 and 165.)

Lesser issues for the governors to include in their action plan:

- Maintain the work with parents to enhance the level of attendance.

(See paragraphs: 7, 19 and 130.)

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	24

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	14	23	11	0	0	0
Percentage	4	28	46	22	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	57	164
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	N/a	91

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	36	57

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	93

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	21

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.8

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.6

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	19	22	41

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	11	17
	Girls	16	17	19
	Total	27	28	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	66 (79)	68 (74)	88 (81)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	16	18
	Girls	17	19	22
	Total	29	35	40
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	71 (57)	85 (71)	98 (69)
	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	7
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	24
Indian	3
Pakistani	42
Bangladeshi	4
Chinese	1
White	78
Any other minority ethnic group	1

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.5
Average class size	25.3

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	137

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	28.5
Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	80
Number of pupils per FTE adult	12.7

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

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	7	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.

Financial information

Financial year	2000-2001
	£
Total income	470332
Total expenditure	466262
Expenditure per pupil	2507
Balance brought forward from previous year	13622
Balance carried forward to next year	17692

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	221
Number of questionnaires returned	50

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school	76	22	0	0	2
My child is making good progress in school	70	28	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good	52	44	4	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home	48	28	12	2	10
The teaching is good	84	14	0	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on	70	26	2	0	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem	74	24	2	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best	70	26	0	0	4
The school works closely with parents	72	18	4	0	6
The school is well led and managed	70	30	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible	70	26	2	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons	56	28	8	2	6

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

84. Children enter nursery when they are three. Because of local admissions policy, some pupils have no reception year experience. The youngest children each year go straight from nursery to Year 1. This is a dilemma that the school is trying to resolve in order to give all children the full range of Foundation Stage experiences. Children attend nursery for five sessions either morning or afternoon. They attend reception full time. To compensate for lack of reception experience, the school accommodates summer born children for morning and afternoon sessions for a term before they move straight into Year 1.

85. Children enter nursery at various stages of development, but many are well below that expected for their age particularly in language skills and their experience of the world beyond their home. Some children speak little or no English and a few have suffered serious trauma in their life. A few children exhibit very challenging behaviour, others are very shy and withdrawn.

86. The teacher with responsibility for the Foundation Stage was appointed in September 2001. Since then she has made significant changes to the nursery. This has led to very good provision for the youngest children. Alterations to the buildings have been made recently so that the reception classrooms now form a single self-contained unit more appropriate for Foundation Stage practices. The very good planning introduced and now established in nursery will extend into reception as teachers become more familiar with their new environment.

Personal, social and emotional development

87. Children have many opportunities to make choices and decisions for themselves. Several children played with pop-up puppets and looked at string puppets before choosing to make their own. The teacher drew their attention to detail, showed how they work and encouraged children to work out for themselves how to make their own rather than doing it for them. Children were thrilled with their results and wanted to show them to the inspector. The few very challenging children learn that unacceptable behaviour will not be tolerated. They have time out on a 'thinking chair' or may spend time with an adult in another room. This is very effective.

88. Nursery provides a happy, safe and secure haven for children, some of whom have difficult home circumstances or have experienced trauma in their lives. Quiet music is playing much of the time to create a calm effect. Children have many opportunities to be thrilled, excited and to wonder, such as seeing the ducklings brought into school and searching for slugs and snails in the school garden. They learn to appreciate living things and treat them and each other with respect.

89. Reception builds on the good start in nursery. Children gain in confidence and self-esteem. Teachers use the school's behaviour management strategies very well, so that even the most challenging children learn to follow the rules and not to disrupt other children's learning. In a very good lesson, children greatly enjoyed co-operative activities with a parachute, jointly controlling its movement so chosen children could exchange places when it floated up. By the end of reception most children are self-confident, co-operative, able to make choices and they behave responsibly. They make very good progress because the overall quality of teaching is very good.

Communication, language and literacy

90. Most children enter nursery with very limited language and communication skills. A few children speak no English. Most have limited experience of books or stories and rhymes. Teachers place great emphasis on talking and listening. All adults engage informally with children in their chosen activities, talking about what they are doing, seeing, hearing, touching and finding out. In this way children extend their vocabulary and are encouraged to link words into phrases, sentences and detailed description.

91. Each day children have a quiet story time, looking at big picture books and following the text. There is a good balance between fiction, non-fiction and poetry so children learn that print carries meaning and books can be a source of information as well as pleasure. Children listen well during story time and enjoy recalling events and suggesting what might happen next. An attractive book corner is a quiet area where children can enjoy books on their own. A number of these are school produced picture books with photographs taken by older children. These are very good. Children are introduced to words and letters and self-registration helps them recognise their name card. More able children begin to identify the sounds for their own name. The most able children recognise letter sounds at the beginning of words and sometimes within words. One or two children begin to acquire a small sight vocabulary of common words. All children regularly take books home.

92. An 'office' area is provided with a variety of papers and mark makers, complete with office tools such as hole punches and staplers. There are envelopes and real (1p) stamps for letters to be posted in the post-box. There are sheets of school headed paper for children to write letters. A group of children were encouraged to write to the farm to say which animals they would like to see. An assistant was encouraging good talk and helping children to write their letters. More able children copy some words, other make marks with some recognisable letter shapes. A few more able write their name independently. Most children are still well below expectations despite the very good progress they make.

93. The highly competent bilingual assistant supports children who speak English as an additional language very well. They have some story time in their mother tongue. The very happy, caring and rich environment means these children settle easily. They quickly pick up English through friendly interaction with other children. They all make very good progress in learning English.

94. The senior teaching assistant works with all those children who have very limited language skills. She works with them for short periods using pictures to learn nouns and verbs. Children recognise themselves and their friends in the pictures. The assistant uses a good variety of resources and activities to maintain their attention and concentration. They begin to isolate individual sounds, for instance 'f' for 'fork', 'fish' and 'floor'. They are taught the teeth/lip position to pronounce it correctly. This is very good provision.

95. In reception children are gradually introduced to aspects of the more formal National Literacy Strategy. They build on what they have learned in nursery. Most children know that print carries meaning. They begin to acquire a small sight vocabulary and recognise most sounds and letters of the alphabet. The most able children begin to use phonic clues to sound out simple three letter words. All children handle books carefully, almost all know that print carries meaning and is read from left to right and top to bottom. Most children can 'read' the pictures to tell a story, some children use picture clues to help them read simple, repetitive captions. A small number of children read simple unfamiliar texts fluently using phonic and picture clues to help them.

96. Following whole class sessions, teachers work with a small target group on tasks carefully matched to their attainment level. These are well planned but not all other activities taking place at this time are planned carefully enough to develop children's literacy skills.

97. Children are taught how to construct a sentence correctly so that it makes sense, using a capital letter and full stop. Only the most able children can find words from a word bank using the initial sound to help them. Few children form letters correctly. Two girls were seen using an easy information book to find words for the captions to their life-cycle of a frog. One girl sounded out the word while the other wrote it down. The phonic recognition was accurate, but the letter formation was not and had some reversals. These are two of the most able children.

98. Children for whom English is an additional language are supported very well in meeting their specific targets by the teaching assistant who works with them.

99. Although progress is good, pupils are still well below expectations and only a few reach the expected level by the end of the Foundation Stage.

Mathematical development

100. Very few children begin nursery able to count, compare measures or recognise shapes. Every opportunity is taken to count objects, compare sizes and lengths, match shapes and sing counting rhymes. The outdoor wheeled toys each have a number label and are parked in the correctly numbered 'parking lot' at the end of each session. Children 'write' their name on a white board against the appropriate number to 'book' a turn with a particular toy.

101. A group session is held each day when children practise counting, recognising numerals, matching sets, comparing sizes or learning shape names. Teachers and assistants observe children carefully and target individual questions to assess and extend their knowledge and understanding. More able children count with confidence to ten and sometimes beyond. They count out at least five objects correctly, the most able can say what one more will be or how many more are needed. Other children are just beginning to distinguish one and two. Children make very good progress although most have below average levels of mathematical skill and knowledge by the time they enter Year 1.

102. Most reception children count by rote to ten and beyond. At least half of them are less confident individually especially beyond ten. Most count out five objects accurately. More able children identify a missing number from a number line to 20. The most able child knows that 30 follows 29. About half the children recognise numbers to ten. The teacher introduces counting on by jumps. All but a very few really understand the concept. The most able children readily add on two quickly and also say the difference between two numbers.

103. Children learn to order by size and length. They recognise coins to 50p and use coins to buy and give simple change when shopping. Children learn the names of basic two- and three-dimensional shapes.

104. Direct teaching is good in whole class sessions and small target groups. There is a good range of mathematical resources and self-correcting activities but these are not used efficiently when children choose their activities. Children make good progress in counting and number recognition, but this could be improved with better planning for free choice activity time. Most children attain below the expected level by the end of the Foundation Stage.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

105. Many children begin nursery with very limited experiences of the world beyond their own home. They have little knowledge of the wider world. Many opportunities are provided to extend their horizons through walks, visits, stories, pictures, play equipment and resources brought into school. Many informal opportunities are utilised and activities planned to extend children's knowledge and understanding of the world.

106. Ducklings, a snake, tadpoles and spiders have been introduced to the children and a visit to an open farm is planned. Children collect slugs and snails from the school garden and spend much time observing them using magnifying lenses. A particularly good resource is a microscope attached to the computer. Children distinguish between things that are alive and not alive by comparing pictures such as a real dog and a toy one. Children develop observation skills, learn new vocabulary and extend speaking skills when describing what they see as well as learning more about the world around them in a direct practical way. When they go for walks in the locality they describe their route and what they have seen. A very early introduction to maps is provided when children draw their own roadways for toy cars instead of using the commercial mat.

107. Children are introduced to the concept of time, past, present and future, through watching plants grow, thinking about how they have changed over time and looking at objects from the past. They are taught how to control a computer mouse and use a children's tape recorder to record and play back sounds and music. The cultural mix within their own group is exploited through dressing up, music, dance, stories, festivals and visits to school by parents. Progress is very good, but attainment remains below that expected by the time pupils enter Year 1.

108. In reception, children's knowledge is further extended. Through the very good ongoing observation of tadpoles children learn about the life-cycle of a frog and compare this with changes in other living things, such as growing plants. Children learn the parts of the body and make simple skeleton pictures using art straws. They learn about keeping healthy. They investigate different materials, describe their textures and observe how some of them behave, for example, which will float and which will sink. Pupils continue to make good progress. By the end of reception about half reach the expected goal, a very few exceed it. Overall they are still below the expected level.

Creative development

109. Provision for children's creative development is very good. Children's progress is very good. Before starting nursery, few children have experienced creative activities. There are many opportunities to experiment with paint, crayons, sand, paper, modelling materials, glue and junk modelling. Different tools and materials are set out daily and children are left free to explore them, for instance they rolled different balls in trays of paint and then rolled them on paper; they pressed lollipop sticks in paint and made patterns on paper as well as using conventional brushes. They used a selection of junk materials to construct objects of their choosing. Adults intervene if children are unsure and suggest different possibilities, but never do it for them.

110. Music is often playing in the background both indoors and out. This creates a calm atmosphere, but outside, children are encouraged to move and dance. Adults suggest using scarves or ribbons so children try out Bangra and Chinese style dancing. Musical instruments are always available for children to experiment in making different sounds. A very good use of different styles of music is introduced to children and they are asked to choose an expressive face card to describe how they feel when listening to it. There is good provision

for role-play. Dressing up clothes and home corner utensils include items from different cultures that represent the diverse cultural background of children in nursery.

111. In reception children continue to experiment with different media and gain confidence in expressing themselves in paint, crayon and modelling materials. Their depictions of people and other subjects become more mature and recognisable, but are still below the expected level for their age. Children use the computer to 'paint' pictures and patterns with increasing control. One child created a recognisable tadpole on the computer; another did so with paint after looking carefully at the ones in the classroom. Children know the names of different percussion instruments and how to produce sounds from them. They begin to record patterns of sound using their own symbols. One child proudly showed me the music book she had made and proceeded to play her music on a tambourine following her own symbols which she carefully explained. This opportunity is very good practice. Children continue to role-play through dressing up, playing in the home corner and using small toys. These opportunities help their creative development but also their language and social development. Children continue to make very good progress.

Physical development

112. There is very good provision for children's physical development in both classes. The nursery has its own extensive outdoor learning area with large climbing, sliding and balancing equipment. All equipment is on a soft landing surface. There is a range of wheeled toys including tricycles and bicycles with wide tyres without stabilisers. Most children quickly gain confidence on the apparatus and enjoy climbing, walking across the balance plank and sliding sometimes head first. Most children peddle tricycles and steer them well. One timid child gained confidence rapidly on the bicycle; at first walking it along, then gliding down a slope and finally managing a couple of peddle turns before losing his balance. All this happened in about ten minutes. He was praised and obviously felt very proud of his achievement. The language assistant invited children to move in different ways along the painted snake, jumping, hopping and skipping. She joined in with them encouraging them to experiment and also extend their speaking skills.

113. During more formal sessions in the hall, children learn to warm up their muscles carefully and learn why this is necessary. Attention is drawn to their increasing heart and breathing rate and awareness of feeling hot after exercising. They move with reasonable control in different ways and at different speeds, generally avoiding collisions. Most children are aware of their bodies in relation to others and can find a space to sit in. They learn to cool down and relax after the lesson. Children make very good progress.

114. Children are less skilled in using small implements and tools such as pencils, crayons and scissors. Again plenty of opportunities are provided to develop good hand-eye co-ordination through creative activities, threading and weaving. They make good progress, but are still below expectations in pencil control.

115. Reception children also have access to large outdoor play equipment fitted over soft landing surfaces. They enjoy scrambling over it. In the hall they learn to move with increasing control at different speeds and in different ways. When using the large hall apparatus they use their imagination well to move along and over and through it in different ways. The more confident children are adventurous. Children create a wide range of shapes on the floor and on the apparatus when a 'freeze' signal is given. All children reach the expected level and many exceed it.

116. Again, children's fine motor skills are less well developed. Pencil control is still not firmly established and writing often poorly formed. Children control scissors with varying

degrees of success. Similarly children have varying control when modelling with malleable materials. Children have many informal opportunities to develop skills. Specific lessons are well planned. Overall children continue to make good progress and most reach the expected level.

ENGLISH

117. Standards are well below average by the time pupils are seven. However, most pupils make good progress, while those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make very good progress. There have been significant improvements in the percentage of pupils achieving level 2 in the national tests since the previous inspection. However, not enough pupils reach higher levels. Although both boys and girls achieved well below average standards in national tests in 2001, girls did significantly better than boys in both reading and writing.

118. Standards in speaking and listening are below average by the time pupils reach the age of seven. However, as many pupils enter school with a limited knowledge of language and there is a high proportion of pupils with English as an additional language, this represents good progress. Younger pupils in Year 1 do not listen carefully enough to instructions in physical education lessons when they play with small equipment and so do not practise the skills they should. Similarly, pupils' excitement takes over in a science lesson about sound when, instead of exploring different percussion instruments as requested by the teacher, pupils played the instruments with increasing volume. In a science lesson in Year 2, pupils did not understand what to do. To counteract this, the teacher altered the way in which the question was asked so that pupils understood more easily. Speaking skills are also below average. Some pupils do not know all the sounds formed by the letters of the alphabet, singly or in groups. To remedy this, teachers provide good role models when they speak clearly while introducing pupils to blends of letters such as 'or' and 'oa'. They make learning new sounds interesting for pupils when they teach a 'clap rap' such as

*Clap, clap, turn around,
Show me a letter, I'll tell you the sound,
Show me a letter, I'll tell you the name,
Show me a letter, I'll write it down.*

119. Teachers make good efforts to develop pupils' speaking skills when they encourage them to join in conversations. In a lesson with lower achieving pupils, the teacher and classroom assistant used the less formal setting of time spent embroidering a piece of canvas to encourage pupils to talk about their work. The success of teachers' efforts to improve speaking and listening skills was seen in lessons when pupils rapidly gave clear ideas on a variety of subjects. However, teachers sometimes miss opportunities to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills. For example, when using big books in the introduction to lessons, teachers do not always give pupils the chance to read the text themselves.

120. By the age of seven, standards in reading are well below average. Fewer pupils reach average standards and not enough reach the higher levels. The majority of pupils say they enjoy reading but only higher achieving pupils name authors such as Dick King Smith and Jill Murphy. These pupils remember stories, such as *Peace at last*, written by Jill Murphy and one pupil is able to give a good description of the main points of a more difficult book, *Watership Down*. However, other pupils could not name any authors. With few exceptions, pupils do not read with expression to make their reading interesting. They do not make enough use of punctuation and clues from the way the text is written, such as words in capital letters, to help with their reading. However, some pupils respond well to the humour in their books. A high achieving pupil saw the funny side of her book, *Little Red Riding Wolf*, and

an average achieving pupil said, "I love this bit" when he found a passage he liked and read it with more enthusiasm.

121. Although the more able readers have a good knowledge of the more common words, other pupils do not recognise them. Many of them know the individual sounds of letters but are not confident in blending letters to help them read the words. Higher achieving pupils split up words that they do not know into syllables to help them read. Most pupils recognise when they have made mistakes but many wait for help and do not make use of the sense of the story to help them read the words. Lower achieving pupils sometimes look at pictures then guess at words without paying attention to the first sound in the word. This led one pupil to say 'trainer' instead of 'shoe'. The very successful introduction of the National Literacy Strategy means that pupils know the difference between fiction and non-fiction books and most understand technical terms such as 'author', 'title' and 'illustrator'. Higher achieving and some average achieving pupils search alphabetically through the contents and index pages for information. The most able reader describes the use of the glossary and the 'blurb' on the back of books.

122. Pupils make good progress in reading. The school is making great efforts to improve standards. Teachers concentrate on teaching pupils how to combine letters sounds to build words. Pupils who need extra help are taught in small groups so that their individual needs are better met through initiatives such as the City Reading Intervention Strategy. All pupils are encouraged to take books to read to parents at home. Notices round the school ask pupils to be 'Wibblers' - William Booth Book Lovers. A reading diary, with notes written by parents and teachers provides a good method of communication between parents and teachers, but some pupils do not receive enough help with their reading at home. Teachers keep detailed records of pupils' progress in reading.

123. Pupils in Year 2 achieve standards that are well below average in writing. Not enough pupils reach higher levels. Pupils write for a range of different purposes and their writing includes poetry, recounting events, recipes and letters of thanks. The school has amended the way it teaches the literacy hour so that pupils are given the chance to concentrate on writing at length each week during writers' workshop sessions. Although this approach has not been in operation long enough to raise standards, it is beginning to have a positive effect. Pupils have the chance to develop their ideas so that in a lesson when they added lines to the poem, *Don't*, by Richard Edwards, higher achieving pupils were able to add up to ten extra lines of poetry each. However, in general, there is not yet enough challenge in the work for higher attaining pupils.

124. Teachers make good use of writing in other subjects to develop pupils' writing skills. Pupils in Year 1 write descriptions of the friends of Robin Hood following visits to Nottingham Castle. They describe a visit to Lees Hill Park and list improvements they would make. In Year 2, pupils combine research from books taken from the library and the Internet to answer their own questions about whales and penguins. They write about the Great Fire of London in history lessons. Higher and average achieving pupils spell most common words correctly and make recognisable attempts at words that are more difficult. For example, a pupil wrote 'plese wumon' instead of 'police woman'. Lower achieving pupils, however, whose grasp of letter sounds and blends is poor, seldom spell words of more than three letters correctly. Throughout the year, pupils learn to plan their work. The writing of higher and average achieving pupils follows a logical sequence from the beginning to the end. The most able pupils show good progress in building sentences, advancing from ideas often joined by 'and' or 'then' at the start of the year, to well-constructed, extended sentences with capital letters and full stops. For example, a high achieving pupil wrote, "While the tiger was walking through the forest a trap fell on him." Average and lower achieving pupils do not yet use full stops and capital letters consistently.

125. The standard of handwriting is unsatisfactory. Although higher achieving seven-year-olds have progressed well to writing clearly shaped letters, average and lower achieving pupils produce letters which are uneven in size and sometimes incorrectly formed. Nevertheless, this represents good progress since September, particularly for lower achieving pupils, some of whose letters were difficult to read then, or could not be recognised. Not enough pupils join their letters.

126. The quality of teaching in English is good. Pupils have a positive response to the good teaching and, consequently, progress is good. Teachers have very good knowledge and understanding of the subject. When talking about the characteristics of information books, teachers point out how titles, bold type and the use of labels on diagrams help the reader to gather information. They use imaginative ways to teach spelling strategies. In a good lesson, the teacher showed only the initial letters of the school address to teach pupils how to spell the words and asked pupils to find other words within the words of the address. This prompted one higher achieving pupil to say she could see 'mail' spelt backwards in 'William'. Teachers work hard to teach pupils letter sounds and how to put them together to form words. They do not always get the response their hard work merits. In a lesson in which nearly half of the class had English as an additional language and a similar proportion of pupils had special educational needs, pupils found it difficult to understand the 'or' sound. Teachers plan most lessons well. They organise work that matches the needs of individual pupils. Teachers use support staff well to enable pupils to make good progress, especially those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language.

127. The management of pupils by teachers is excellent. Teachers apply the school's code of conduct fairly and consistently so that disruptions are kept to a minimum. Arrangements have been made for pupils who find it difficult to concentrate in large groups to be taught the literacy hour in small groups so that they receive individual attention and the class is not disrupted. However, teachers are sometimes too quick to enforce school rules, such as always expecting pupils to put up their hand before answering. For example, a pupil was reprimanded when, through enthusiasm and excitement, she said she could see a pattern in a poem that no one else had seen, but did not put up her hand. Teachers try to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of words. In one lesson, pupils were challenged to make as many words as possible in ten minutes from 'Antarctica'. In work on display in a Year 2 class, pupils were given words such as 'whimper', 'exclaim' and 'murmur' as alternatives to 'said'. Teachers use questions well to find out how much pupils understand. The regular use of praise and the award of stars and stickers encourage pupils in their efforts. The marking of pupils' work is good. Pupils are told what they have done well and how they can improve their work.

128. The management of the subject is very good. The headteacher and co-ordinator watch lessons to ensure that the literacy strategy is taught correctly. The school provides a very good curriculum for its pupils. Thought has been given to the structure of the curriculum, which has been amended to provide time for pupils to practise their writing skills through writers' workshops. Procedures for assessing pupils' progress and attainment are very good and are carried out regularly. Lessons are planned in three-week blocks, after which assessments are made. The co-ordinator collects samples of pupils' work to check progress but, at present, they are not shared with other teachers to show what pupils in other classes are achieving. Very good use is made of bilingual support staff to help pupils with English as an additional language and pupils with special educational needs. The co-ordinator tries to make sure that all teachers and some support staff attend training in some aspect of the literacy hour every year. To try to ensure that standards in English are raised, local authority literacy consultants have worked closely with the school for the last three years. This

demonstrates the excellent, shared commitment and determination of the staff to raise standards.

MATHEMATICS

129. In 1998 the inspection team recorded that standards in the mathematics national tests were below average and that progress was satisfactory. However, teaching of the subject was good. Since that time a number of significant changes have been introduced, not least the school's strategy for numeracy which is very effective; these measures have ensured that good improvement has been made to mathematics.

130. Current standards are also below average. However, this disguises the fact that pupils' achievements are good given their starting point. As discussed on page 11, there are a number of key factors that influence the pattern of progress and ultimate standards in mathematics. The starting level is low and there are significant numbers of pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language. In addition, the rates of pupil mobility and attendance impact on standards and progress. However, staff do not let these factors stand in the way of good achievement and their high expectations contribute much to the good progress made and the appropriate standards that result by the age of seven.

131. Pupils build basic skills and knowledge in mathematics at a good rate. Lessons are well focused on the building blocks of mathematics and targets are set for improvement that drive progress well. Checks are made to ensure that pupils are on target and formal assessments are made to build a detailed profile of how well individual pupils are faring. Marking of pupils' work is good because it highlights the progress made and indicates clearly the next step for pupils to take.

132. Pupils at all levels of the academic spectrum are very well provided for. The higher attainers are challenged thoroughly by their work. This was shown in a Year 2 lesson observed that focused on the symmetry of two-dimensional shapes. A team consisting of the class teacher and the coordinator for special educational needs taught this lesson very well. Higher attaining pupils were spurred to investigate the symmetry of more complex shapes. One pupil, for example, observed that if a rectangle is cut along a diagonal and flipped over the two halves would be a symmetrical match. This was done through mental images rather than practical means and demonstrated clearly the level of mathematical thinking taking place amongst the higher attainers.

133. Good as the provision is for the higher attainers, a priority for development concerns the very top attaining pupils. It is evident that there are some very capable young mathematicians in school and the time is ripe for the school to identify these pupils clearly and to set specific targets for them. The subject leader is alert to this need and is actively pursuing appropriate and consistent provision throughout the school.

134. Middle attaining pupils are also well served by the school. In a Year 1 lesson involving the tallying of totals to 14, they were well supported by the class teacher who was able to devote much time to their needs whilst the coordinator of special educational needs worked with lower attainers and the higher attainers worked independently. The middle attainers initially required guidance and assistance from the class teacher, but as they grew in confidence they were able to work alone and achieve well.

135. From the above examples it is evident that the coordinator of special educational needs has a significant role in many mathematics lessons. Much of the focus is on lower attaining pupils and this is instrumental in ensuring that they make the same good progress as the other groups. In other lessons, the support of lower attaining pupils is equally polished.

Thus, in a Year 2 lesson on giving directions, the lower attainers worked with the support assistant to *walk* the directions on a large hundred square. These pupils showed a fair measure of independence in the work and learning took place at a brisk pace. They experienced a few problems with left and right but their progress was good and they were pleased with their results.

136. Mathematics is taught very well. The above examples highlight some of the strengths – team teaching, role of support staff, brisk pace, very good methods, high expectations. Teachers also have very good subject knowledge, they teach basic skills very effectively and they manage their classes with conspicuous success. These examples also indicate the very good learning conditions that are established. Pupils concentrate well; they enjoy their activities, try hard and are productive workers. The scrutiny of pupils' previous work confirmed this picture of a very good working atmosphere in lessons.

137. The curriculum for mathematics is relevant, meaningful and interesting; it covers the various aspects well. There are some good links to other subjects, including ICT that help the development of mathematics skills and knowledge. This is the result of the subject leader's very good work to steer the subject. The subject leader is astute, informed and hard working and has made good improvements to the subject. Her role in the direct monitoring and evaluation of standards and the quality of teaching and learning is not as broad as for some colleagues but she is committed to taking a greater role and clearly has the potential to be a key member of staff in this process. On the evidence of recent history, future improvements to mathematics are assured.

SCIENCE

138. Attainment in science by the end of Year 2 is below average. In 2001 almost all pupils attained the expected Level 2, but few attained Level 3. However, standards were above average overall in the teacher assessments. The present Year 2 class has more pupils with special education needs; they are unlikely to do as well.

139. Progress through the school is good given the very low knowledge and understanding of the world and very limited language skills of pupils when they are admitted. Suitable provision is made for more able pupils by demanding higher standards, more independence or giving them more complex tasks. There is good support for pupils with English as an additional language. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum and make similar progress.

140. Teaching is good. Teachers plan lessons carefully to cover all aspects of the National Curriculum for science. Learning always begins with what pupils already know. Teaching and investigation build on this and extend it to new learning. Some pupils do not listen carefully to instructions. Sometimes this is due to inappropriate behaviour and sometimes because they are very passive. Teachers are alert to this and draw pupils back by targeting them with questions or using the school's behaviour management policy effectively. Learning assistants and volunteers make a valuable contribution by supervising groups of pupils in whole class sessions and helping with group tasks. They and the class teacher support the less able pupils well so they learn appropriately at their own level.

141. In Year 2 pupils learn about the similarities and differences in living things. They know about the differences between plants and animals and between different animals. They explore the differences between themselves by measuring head circumferences and foot lengths. Most pupils record these measurements and other body measurements on a prepared chart. The head and foot measurements are transferred to coloured strips that form a simple scatter graph. Good provision is made for more able pupils who record their

measurements on the computer and create different graphs from the statistics. An opportunity was missed to discuss the most appropriate form of graph for the task - block, pie or continuous line, examples of which were produced by individual pupils.

142. Year 1 pupils investigate how they see objects and discover that light is needed. They observe the difference between seeing an object in daylight and shining a torch on the same object in a dark box. To introduce how sounds are heard, pupils investigate different musical instruments and observe the vibrations on guitar strings. More able pupils deduce that pitch changes with the thickness of the strings and that it can be varied by covering holes on a recorder.

143. Pupils' attitude to science is generally good. They enjoy the practical investigations. More able pupils understand that tests must be fair and how to achieve fairness in simple terms. Many pupils have limited language skills and do not easily use appropriate scientific vocabulary. Good emphasis is placed on teaching the correct terms and encouraging pupils to use full sentences to answer questions. More able pupils enjoy learning and using new terms correctly. Pupils' observations are generally simplistic and their ability to record them limited. Teachers prepare tables, charts and worksheets to help them. More able pupils learn to record independently. They create their own block graphs correctly.

144. Management of science is satisfactory. The co-ordinator is new to the school and has had little opportunity to make a significant impact. Whilst minor adjustments have been made to the scheme of work a more comprehensive review of the subject is due next year under the school's development plan.

145. Assessment is informal in Year 1 where evaluation is against the lesson learning objective. In Year 2, a class tracker is used to record individual attainment. It is intended to extend this to Year 1 in the future so overall progress can be more easily measured.

146. There is a good range of resources. The school makes good use of the local area, including visits to Green's Mill. Other visits and the annual camp include planned support for science learning. There are good links with other subjects, for instance, big books with a science focus that are chosen for literacy lessons. Computers are used to record measurements and other observations and to access information from reference CD-ROMs and the Internet. A microscope linked to the computer is a very good resource and is used well.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

147. The 1998 inspection found several key weaknesses in information technology. Standards were below average, progress unsatisfactory and teaching had several shortcomings. The low level of resourcing hampered the consistent development of skills and knowledge and so a key issue was set that required further staff training and an increase in time spent on the subject in lessons.

148. The weaknesses reported in 1998 have been eliminated very successfully. The school has more, and better quality computers. The range of supporting software is now much broader and, critically, the subject knowledge and confidence of staff has been improved most successfully. The school provides all the necessary experiences for pupils to develop skills and knowledge in ICT at a very good rate from the low starting level when they join the nursery.

149. By the age of seven, overall standards are average. There is evidence that in some aspects of the work, attainment is good. For example, Year 2 pupils explored Internet

websites during the inspection to locate information about whales. They navigated the sites efficiently, zoomed-in to particular detail and explored the video clips with gusto. Year 1 pupils develop some good skills in programming *Roamer*, the robotic vehicle. They are able to describe to each other the route being followed and higher attaining pupils make fairly accurate predictions of the distances and directions that would be followed after a particular sequence of instructions had been programmed.

150. Learning is frequently fun and usually enjoyable. It is of good quality and is neatly summarised by the Year 1 pupil who stated confidently that (ICT) "is our favourite work". All pupils are drawn into the sense of investigation and problem solving that pervades the work. The bilingual staff make a valuable contribution by explaining the tasks to their pupils in their mother tongue. These pupils quickly respond to such instruction and complete their work whilst explaining their findings to the teacher in simple English. Pupils work hard, they concentrate well and have a good understanding of their successes and things that they need to improve.

151. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers' subject knowledge is well developed and staff teach with confidence. Good use is made of ICT resources to build pupils' basic skills in the subject. Teaching is brisk, well organised and motivating. Teachers have high expectations and lessons are generally well planned. The identification in planning of more taxing work for the very highest attainers is the next step for staff to take. A key feature of lessons is the development of pupils' independence and initiative. The teacher successfully fostered this in the Year 2 lesson about *Roamer*. Groups of pupils were able to work independently of the adults in the room for considerable periods. This was largely because the teacher was well organised, had made her expectations of response very clear and checked frequently from across the room that pupils were on task.

152. The curriculum for ICT has been extended considerably, so pupils have experience of word processing, data handling, communication, image manipulation and the control of processes. Assessment of skills is an aspect that the subject leader is working to improve. She has good ideas for the development of procedures to check that pupils are building skills and knowledge properly. The quality of management of the subject is very good. The subject leader knows the strengths and weaknesses of the subject and has produced a well thought out plan of improvement. She has not had enough opportunity to monitor standards and the quality of provision directly in other classes and clearly relishes the extension of her role in this way. The potential for maintained improvement in ICT is very evident and the school should have the confidence that standards have a good chance to be above average in the future.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

153. Standards are average in relation to the locally agreed syllabus by the time pupils are seven years old. This is similar to the situation at the previous inspection. Because all the pupils are new to the school since the previous inspection and come from a wide range of cultural backgrounds, this represents good improvement.

154. By the age of seven, pupils know that Christians believe in God and Jesus. Muslim pupils talk knowledgeably about the Prophet. They develop an idea of belonging to a faith when they talk about being part of a family or school and being a member of a club or organisation such as the Beavers. Pupils have a sound understanding of the events surrounding the birth of Jesus. They learn about the journey to Bethlehem and that Jesus was born in a stable. Pupils know that the wise men and the shepherds visited Jesus and name all the gifts they brought. They talk about the festivals that are important to Christians and Muslims, such as Christmas, Easter and Eid. Pupils know that different faiths have

religious books and name the Holy Bible, the Qur'an and the Torah. They learn about some of the stories of the Hindu faith. Pupils in Year 1 describe their visit to a local church. Pupils in Year 2 compile questions to ask a visiting clergyman, such as "Is God real?" and "What do you think God looks like?"

155. No teaching was seen in Year 1 but overall, the quality of teaching in religious education is good. Teachers show pupils what it means to belong to a Christian church. To help with this, they make good use of materials in support of Christian Aid Week. They talk about the effects that would be felt by fishing and farming communities in the Philippines if proposed oil and mineral extraction were to take place. Well-organised discussions lead pupils to show knowledge of the toxic nature of the pollution left by these industries. Teachers use an imaginative game to show how fish stocks reduce as pollution increases. They show how contributions from charities such as Christian Aid are used to finance the islanders' struggle against the commercial concerns. In Year 1, teachers link religious education with English when they plan work for pupils to write accounts of their visit to a local church. In Year 2, pupils retell the story of the *Feeding of the Five Thousand*. Displays around the school show that teachers introduce pupils to a wide range of faiths through studying religious festivals such as the Chinese New Year, Christmas, Diwali and Eid, and learning about Guru Nanak. This approach means that religious education makes a very good contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development.

156. The management of the subject is very good. The co-ordinators are enthusiastic and knowledgeable and provide good leadership for their colleagues. Very good use is made of parents to support learning in religious education. For example, parents are very involved in the organisation of the celebration of Eid in the autumn term, as a result of which teachers improve their knowledge of the Muslim faith. The school is sensitive to the needs of different faiths. As Christmas approaches, for example, the timetable for parties is amended so that they do not clash with Ramadan. Very good use is made of visits to local places of worship. Classes visit the nearby church and a Sikh temple. Visitors from the Baptist church and a representative from the Jewish community talk to pupils. Resources for the subject are satisfactory. There is no computer software specifically devoted to religious education but pupils in Year 2 undertake research using the Internet. There has not been any recent in-service training in religious education but the subject is an area of focus in the next school development plan.

OTHER SUBJECTS

157. *A total of eight lessons were seen in subjects other than those discussed above. Past work in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education was also examined closely. Because there was less evidence in total for these subjects, they are reported together here.*

158. The 1998 inspection report indicated that standards in five of the six subjects (art and design, geography, history, music and physical education) were average, the exception being design and technology (DT), where standards were below average. On the whole, progress was good, apart from DT and physical education where it was unsatisfactory. Teaching quality was satisfactory in all six subjects. The school has developed a broad and well-balanced curriculum for these subjects and the standards reported last time have been sustained, and in some cases improved well.

159. The standards achieved are average for seven-year-olds in all six subjects. In some, there is evidence that attainment is above average in some aspects. So, for example, in DT pupils make products of sound quality whilst in the plan, design and evaluate stages of the work, standards are often above average. Although skills of English are not at the level found

in many infant schools, pupils' knowledge, practical skills and understanding are all developed well. In discussion, pupils show that, for example, they have good factual knowledge of geography, though it sometimes takes a while for them to express this knowledge in words. Staff do not allow the weaknesses in English to affect the work done in other subjects. As a case in point, in geography pupils develop English skills well by writing a simple brochure persuading people to visit Barbados and Disneyland near Paris.

160. Pupils make good progress overall across the six subjects. In physical education, particularly swimming, very good progress is made. Thus, by the age of seven a very respectable proportion of pupils can swim the desirable length of 25 metres. In gymnastics, Year 2 pupils move in different ways and speeds on the floor, dodging and changing direction and create interesting shapes, low and high as they travel on the floor and over apparatus. They then discuss how to improve their skills such as force and arm movement when aiming and identify the different techniques needed for controlling bean bags as opposed to balls. In music, pupils improvise percussion accompaniment and then record it using simple notation. Year 2 pupils can name a good range of percussion instruments and know how the sound is produced. They also sustain rhythmic patterns using vocal sounds, body sounds and percussion instruments in groups to create three-part rhythms. They then improve their performance by varying the pitch and volume. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language make very good progress in many lessons.

161. The quality of learning in each subject is at least good. In art and design pupils work with effort and determination to make colourful patterns and pictures, many of which are carefully created. Pupils learn to concentrate for sustained periods, though some pupils find this taxing and can lose interest after a while. In general, staff are very adept at encouraging these pupils to redouble their efforts and to strive for worthwhile results. In many lessons there is a buzz of enjoyment and enthusiasm as pupils work. In history, higher attaining pupils carry out research about early electric lighting systems using books from the library and the Internet. However, in some cases, the type of question asked by the teacher restricts pupils' research. In such cases, teachers concentrate on pre-selected aspects and facts, rather than building on what the pupils have discovered.

162. These subjects are taught effectively. There is evidence of some good teaching in physical education and the teaching of swimming is particularly good, resulting in very good progress and attainment levels. In general, teachers have good subject knowledge, they use good methods that focus well on the development of skills and knowledge and expectations are high. They plan and create motivating lessons where the sense of fun and enjoyment is a key element that leads to good learning.

163. The curriculum for each subject is very carefully and successfully planned to bring very good breadth and balance and a richness not often found. For example, in geography, Year 2 pupils study different environments on visits to Skegness and at their residential camp. The local area is also used extensively and effectively in geography. Pupils use ideas gleaned from their work on improving the local park to help with ideas for the new playground equipment and markings. In history, pupils gain good insights into life in Victorian times when they visit museums such as the Brewhouse Yard Museum in the city and take part in role-play in a Victorian classroom. The programme of activities outside lessons is good in these subjects. For instance, in physical education there is an after school club for Year 2. Here, the activity changes termly and rotates between gymnastics, dance and outdoor games. This club is very well supported by pupils and it makes a good contribution to the development of skills and knowledge.

164. The use of ICT to assist the development of skills and knowledge in the six subjects is improving well. Again in history, older pupils use CD ROM to help them learn about the Great Fire of London and use their new knowledge to compare fire fighting at the time of the Great Fire with fire engines at the end of the nineteenth century and the present time. By using a programmable device in ICT, pupils in Year 1 recognise places on a plan. They know what the symbols on a computer map represent and draw a plan of the seating arrangements in the classroom to aid the development of geography skills and knowledge.

165. The management of these subjects is good. The subject leaders are quite well informed about the strengths and weaknesses of their subject, though there has been a limited programme of monitoring and evaluation of standards, teaching and learning. Assessment procedures are the focus of much development work by the subject leaders and systems are being developed at a sensible pace. In some subjects, such as physical education and art and design it is largely informal with no consistent procedures or records. In others, such as DT, assessment is emerging on a more formal footing. School managers are working well to implement changes in assessment that will enable the more accurate and timely evaluation of skills development in all six subjects.

166. The school has sustained the strengths in art and design, geography, history and music and made considerable advances in the quality of provision and rates of pupils' progress particularly in design and technology and physical education. The prospects for continuing improvement are very positive.