

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST MARY'S CATHOLIC
INFANT SCHOOL**

Croydon

LEA area: London Borough of Croydon

Unique reference number: 101799

Headteacher: Mrs M Whale

Reporting inspector: Dr M Bradshaw
6169

Dates of inspection: 10th – 13th March 2003

Inspection number: 246152

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	3 to 7 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Bedford Park Croydon
Postcode:	CR0 2AQ
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr S White
Date of previous inspection:	7 th July 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
6169	Dr M J Bradshaw	Registered inspector	Foundation Stage, science, physical education	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
19426	Mr C Farris	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school work in partnership with parents? How well is the school led and managed?
2756	Mr M Barron	Team inspector	Educational inclusion, including race equality, special educational needs, English, art and design, history, music	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
20832	Dr M Galowalia	Team inspector	English as an additional language, mathematics, design and technology, geography, information and communication technology	How well does the school care for its pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The St Mary's Catholic Infant School has 240 pupils who attend full-time from Reception to Year 2, together with 51 children who attend the Nursery part time, either morning or afternoon. The proportion of girls is 53 per cent. Children usually enter Nursery in the autumn term of the school year in which they are four, transferring to Reception the following autumn. They become full-time shortly afterwards. The changes to the school's roll are about average during the school year although it is common for a few children to transfer to a local primary school during Year 2. This is to aid parents' subsequent school choices, and tends to involve higher attaining children. About one third of pupils are from a white ethnic background. The remainder are from a wide mix of minority ethnic backgrounds, with no group predominating. There are 72 pupils whose mother tongue is not English. Nineteen of these are at an early stage of language acquisition, the main languages being Twi, Malayalam, Tagalog and Portuguese. There are six refugees and two traveller children on roll. The background of pupils is very varied and below average overall; 57 full-time pupils (about a quarter) claim free school meals, which is above average and has increased steadily since the previous inspection. The number of pupils having special educational needs is about average. About a fifth of pupils in Years 1 and 2 have been identified as having significant learning needs. One child in Reception has a statement of special educational needs. Attainment on entry to Nursery is well below average, especially in the area of communication, language and literacy. The school has undergone considerable changes to its staff over the past two years, and the headteacher has only recently returned following absence due to a serious illness.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

St Mary's Catholic Infant School is providing its pupils with a good education. Pupils enjoy their time in the school and have good attitudes in lessons. They behave very well. The personal care of pupils is good and there is a very strong partnership with parents. Pupils make good progress throughout the school. Owing to the low starting point, attainment, by the end of Year 2, is below average in English and mathematics, but about average in science. The curriculum is good and well organised. Teaching is good, although there are some inconsistencies between different classes in each year group. The school is well led and provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The quality of teaching and learning in Nursery and Reception is good and very good in the area of children's personal, social and emotional development.
- Good teaching in Years 1 and 2 results in pupils making good progress.
- The school is well led by the headteacher, deputy headteacher and governors.
- The provision made for pupils' personal development is very good, and this results in positive attitudes, behaviour and relationships. Racial harmony is very good.
- The management and organisation of support for pupils with special educational needs are very good.
- The links with parents are very good and effective in helping children make good progress.
- Standards in art and design are above those expected by Year 2.

What could be improved

- Standards of attainment in English and mathematics by Year 2.
- Inconsistencies that occur in the quality of teaching, especially in meeting fully the needs of more able pupils.
- The outdoor areas for children in Reception and Nursery need to be developed.
- Pupils' levels of attendance.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

St Mary's Catholic Infant School was inspected in July 1997. Its progress since then has been good. The areas of weakness identified have been tackled, and in most cases successfully. Since the previous inspection the school's intake has changed, with more pupils being eligible for free school meals, with special educational needs or English as an additional language. Despite this, attainment by Year 2 has tended to rise at a rate similar to that nationally. The confidence of staff in planning and teaching design and technology, and information and communication technology (ICT) has improved. Clear schemes of work are in place, which ensure that knowledge and skills develop in a systematic way from Nursery to Year 2. Management systems at all levels have improved so that there is greater awareness of the quality of the curriculum and standards of attainment. Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and efficient use is made of members of staff. Provision for children in Nursery and Reception remains very well organised. The quality of teaching remains good, and there is less teaching that is not satisfactory. The school has not yet achieved enough in its attempts to meet the needs of more able pupils.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	2000	2001	2002	2002	
Reading	C	E	D	C	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Writing	C	E	D	C	
Mathematics	D	D	D	C	

Children enter the Nursery with well below average attainment levels, particularly with respect to their communication skills. They achieve well, but most children will not reach the expected standard in English and mathematics by the time they start in Year 1. In other areas of learning they are likely to meet the standards expected. Overall, standards at the end of Year 2 have improved in line with the national trend in recent years. In the 2002 National Curriculum tests at age seven, standards were below the national average in writing, reading and mathematics, but compared with similar schools, results in writing, reading and mathematics were average. Current Year 2 pupils' attainment will remain below average in reading, writing and mathematics. It is about average in science. Standards in art and design are above average, and they are about average in other subjects. During their time in school pupils achieve well.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to school are good. They try hard and are keen to do well.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in the school is very good. Pupils work and play together very well. No evidence of any aggressive behaviour was seen.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is very good. Relationships at all levels are based on respect. Pupils respond well to the opportunities for taking responsibility.
Attendance	Attendance is below the national average.

Pupils' enthusiasm and enjoyment help the development of very good behaviour and relationships, including that between adults and children. Racial harmony in the school is very good. Attendance is not high enough and, despite the late start to the school day, some pupils are still late for school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching was previously described as good, and this remains the case. Teaching is now rarely less than satisfactory. Almost three quarters of the lessons seen were good or better, including about a quarter that were very good or excellent. Teaching is good in Nursery, Reception, Year 1 and Year 2, with examples of very good teaching. In Years 1 and 2, teaching is satisfactory in English and good in mathematics. There are inconsistencies in the quality of teaching between classes in each of the three age groups from Reception to Year 2. Not enough thought is consistently given to how to challenge more able pupils. Teachers manage pupils well, and effective use is made of time and resources, including support staff. In science, art and design, and geography teaching is good, and it is at least satisfactory in other subjects. Numeracy, literacy and ICT skills are not always used sufficiently in other subjects. Pupils' learning is good. They work hard, and consistently show interest and concentration.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a good curriculum. It has good breadth, balance and relevance to the needs of the wide range of pupils in the school.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The area is very well managed and organised.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Provision is good, and managed effectively. Good support is given in class by the co-ordinator.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for pupils' personal development is very good. The strong Catholic ethos underpins the school's provision for personal development. Provision for spiritual development is very good, and that for moral and social development good. Provision for pupils' cultural development is particularly strong with the wide ethnic diversity of the community strongly celebrated.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides a high level of pastoral care and support for its pupils. Procedures to ensure pupils' safety are securely in place. Good assessment procedures are in place, and satisfactory use is made of the information gained.

The school provides a very caring environment in which pupils are secure and happy. Support outside the classroom for pupils with special educational needs is very good and this helps pupils achieve well. Parents are very satisfied with the school, and links with parents are very good.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher and senior management team have a vision that ensures a clear educational direction.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body provides effective support for the school. Almost all statutory duties are in place and governors provide effective guidance to the school. They are proactive in the school's forward development. Governors have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school's performance is evaluated well and effective action has been taken to meet its targets. It is developing well its system for checking the quality of teaching.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes good use of its resources. The school's use of finance and other resources ensures that pupils gain maximum benefit.

The school is well staffed with a good number of teachers and support staff. Accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory, except for Nursery accommodation, and the outdoor area for Reception. The school is aware of the need to obtain good value for money on a day-to-day basis, and compares its performance with that of similar schools satisfactorily.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school and behave well. • Children's rate of progress. • Teaching is good, and children are expected to work hard. • The information about their children's progress. • The way the school works with parents. • The school is approachable. • The school is well led and managed. • Children are helped to become mature and responsible. • The amount of homework. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities outside of lessons.

Inspectors agree with parents' positive views. They agree that pupils like school, behave well and that they are helped to become mature. Teaching is good and most pupils are expected to achieve their best. Pupils' rate of progress is generally good, although some more able pupils could achieve more. The amount and quality of homework are similar to that in other infant schools. Links with parents are very good. The school is approachable and welcoming. Leadership and management of the school are good. The range of activities outside of lessons is better than for many infant pupils.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Over the period 1998 to 2002, in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, pupils' results have risen at a rate similar to that seen nationally, although there was a dip in 2001 in reading and writing. In 2002, results in reading, writing and mathematics were below the national average, however when compared with the results of similar schools they were about average. The proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard of Level 2 was average in reading and writing, and above average in mathematics. Fewer pupils than the average number achieved the higher levels. Teacher assessments in science indicated that, over the last two years, pupils' results have been about average. Inspection evidence indicates that standards in reading, writing and mathematics are below average, while those in science are about average. Over the past three years, compared with the national picture, boys have tended to do better than girls. There are no major differences currently.
2. The previous report indicated that standards were close to the standard expected in most subjects by Year 2. They tended to be above average in English, mathematics and physical education. They were average in other subjects, except for design and technology where they were below. There has been good improvement in design and technology, with attainment now meeting expectations, and in art and design where attainment is above that expected. Standards overall are not as high as previously reported and this is due, at least in part, to the changing characteristics of the school's intake.
3. Attainment on entry to Nursery is well below average. This is especially true in communication, language and literacy and this inhibits children's understanding of other areas of learning. During Nursery and Reception, children achieve well in all areas of learning. The majority of children are on course to meet the Early Learning Goals in personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical and creative development. They will not meet expectations in, communication, language and literacy or mathematical development. Children are developing confidence in speaking skills and they make a good start in developing reading and writing skills. Many children count objects and order numbers to ten. They use vocabulary associated with measurement of length correctly. Children achieve particularly well in the area of science, including what is needed to help plants grow. Knowledge that the world has changed is promoted in their religious studies about the life of Jesus. Children control pencils, paintbrushes and the computer mouse carefully and, in the hall, handle balls with satisfactory control. They do not always use the space available well. They sing well and enjoy using role-play activities in the 'St Mary's Garden Centre' or 'St Mary's Garage'.
4. Pupils in Year 2 attain below average standards in English and mathematics. In science and information and communication technology (ICT), pupils' attainment is about average. Pupils read with satisfactory accuracy and an understanding of what they have read. Writing skills are below average and pupils use a limited vocabulary and few extended sentences in their writing. Most pupils' speaking skills demonstrate a lack of confidence and reflect a limited vocabulary, although most listen well. Pupils' mathematical knowledge is below average. Understanding of number progresses satisfactorily, but there is little high attainment. In science, pupils' attainment is average by the end of Year 2. They have knowledge across most areas of science, and use skills such as observation and simple recording well. In ICT, attainment is average.

Pupils enter text, using word processing competently, although their keyboard skills are quite slow.

5. Throughout the school, pupils achieve mainly average standards in other subjects. In art and design, by Year 2, pupils' attainment is above that expected. They develop a good range of skills and apply these well using a range of media. The quality of work in design and technology is average in Year 2. Pupils often use well-labelled drawings to plan and record their designs. In music, standards are average, and singing skills develop well. In geography and history, pupils attain average standards by Year 2 and in both subjects, pupils' knowledge and skills develop satisfactorily. In geography, pupils know about various locations overseas and, in history, pupils' understanding of a range of famous people from the past develops well. In physical education, pupils attain the standards expected.
6. Pupils' achievement is good, although there are some variations between classes in the same year group. Progress in Nursery and Reception is good, and particularly strong in the area of personal development. Expectations of pupils are not consistently high enough, and this means that some more able pupils do not achieve as well as they could. The overall achievement of pupils with special educational needs is good, especially when measured against targets set in individual or group education plans. In Nursery and Reception they make good progress in all the areas of learning, and this continues in most subjects in Years 1 and 2. Where pupils are withdrawn from classes and taught in a small focused support group, achievement is very good but it is only satisfactory if pupils with special educational needs are given limited additional support within whole-class settings, especially when tasks within these lessons are not matched to the different needs and abilities of pupils. Pupils who speak English as an additional language achieve well in lessons supported by the co-ordinator, and make at least satisfactory progress at other times. Their progress is aided by the use of visual cues.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. As at the time of the last inspection, pupils' good attitudes, very good behaviour and very good relationships contribute to the effectiveness of the learning environment.
8. Children in Nursery have settled into school well, built good relationships with adults and learnt the daily routines. Whilst friendly with each other, they still tend to play alone. It is only when they get into the Reception class that they start to play co-operatively, for example in the role-play 'St Mary's Garden Centre', but even then it is quite limited. Their attitude to school life is good and behaviour is very good. They have already developed good independence and move confidently around the classroom to find things they need. They work and play on their own while the teacher deals with another group. They know that their classroom has to be tidied up and join in enthusiastically with their classmates to do this.
9. Throughout Years 1 and 2, pupils have good attitudes to learning. They enjoy their school life and try hard to do well and make progress. They generally listen attentively, both to the teacher and to their peers, and they are keen to answer questions and be involved. Pupils settle down quickly to work and most show good levels of concentration even when not directly supervised. They are particularly well motivated by exciting challenges, as in a Year 1 art and design, and design and technology lesson when pupils learnt about 'flap' pictures and the different techniques needed to work with pastels. When required, they work together co-operatively, as in a Year 1 mathematics lesson when pupils worked in pairs to identify 'doubles' and 'near doubles'.

10. The behaviour of the pupils, both in and out of the classroom is very good overall, which is a similar picture to that at the time of the previous inspection. Indeed, no instances were seen where teachers found it necessary even to consider using sanctions to manage behaviour. The pupils are a delight to be with; they are alert, cheerful and interested in everything that is going on. They treat their own and school belongings sensibly and their classmates with respect. Lunchtimes are pleasant civilised occasions with pupils of all ages eating together and enjoying the social chit-chat. Playground behaviour is very good. Pupils take good care not to interfere with the activities of others during their play. They happily wait their turn to take part in organised activities, for example skipping with a rope held by staff. There was a total absence of any untoward behaviour during the time of the inspection, and from conversations with parents and staff such behaviour is rare. No pupil has been excluded in the past year.
11. Relationships at all levels are also very good. Pupils get on well with adults in the school, who provide a high level of support to them. Pupils of all ages support each other well and are patient and understanding of those with special educational needs or who find the work difficult. They pray thoughtfully for a staff member who has been bereaved. Pupils really care for the feelings of others. They are quick to support a friend who is upset and they are generous in their praise for the successes of others. There was a real buzz of approval around the assembly when a child with special educational needs became 'star of the week' in her class. The school is proud of its linguistic and cultural diversity. They celebrate it by taking registers in different languages. This builds pupils' confidence and contributes to harmonious relationships. Pupils from all ethnic groups work and play happily together and there is a family atmosphere within the school with no hint of any racism.
12. Pupils respond well to the school's provision for their personal development. Each class has its 'helping hands' children who undertake a range of classroom duties, such as taking registers to the office and handing out milk and fruit. Older pupils act as monitors with duties such as putting out chairs in the hall and allocating milk and fruit to each class. Older pupils support younger ones at events organised by team colour, such as sports day. Pupils undertake these tasks willingly and their confidence and self-esteem are improved as a result.
13. Attendance during the last reporting year was 93.7 per cent, which is below the national average and is unsatisfactory. Attendance is marginally below that at the time of the previous inspection when the figures were satisfactory. Unauthorised absence is better than the national average and is satisfactory. Punctuality at the start of the day is generally satisfactory. A few pupils arrive late, but this does not disrupt the prompt start of lessons.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

14. The quality of teaching in the school is good and rarely less than satisfactory. About three quarters of lessons featured good or better teaching, and a quarter that was very good or excellent. This is an improvement over the previous inspection when teaching was also described as good. There are differences in the quality of teaching between some classes in the same year group. Pupils' work in particular demonstrates that in one of the Reception and one of the Year 1 classes teaching has not been as strong as in the other two. One of the Year 2 classes features particularly good teaching.
15. The teaching for Nursery and Reception children is good, and no unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Teachers plan well together, although the school recognises the need to strengthen the links between Nursery and Reception further. Teachers demonstrate good knowledge about how young children learn. The management of children is usually very good and this makes a significant contribution to their learning.

However, in one of the Reception classes, there is not always a high enough expectation about children's attention and behaviour. Children's learning is also aided by the very effective use of resources, including adults, and also by the range of teaching methods used, including opportunities for children to select from a range of activities offered. As a result, children make good progress in acquiring skills and knowledge. They work with pace and concentration.

16. The quality of teaching in the remainder of the school is good. In one Year 1 class, however, pupils' recorded work demonstrates that this has not been consistently the case. Teaching is good in mathematics, science, art and design, and geography. In other subjects, it is at least satisfactory, and this is evident in pupils' recorded work even where no teaching was seen. Planning is generally good, but an evident weakness is that, particularly in English, it does not give sufficient attention to how to meet the needs of more able pupils. Good thought, however, is given to ensuring that pupils' lack of language skills, both those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, does not inhibit learning. Visual cues or recording methods are used effectively. Pupils' learning in virtually all lessons observed was satisfactory or better. Overall, the good teaching results in pupils making good progress in their acquisition of knowledge and skills. Teachers' subject knowledge is mostly good, and used well when talking with pupils about the work being covered. In most lessons, pupils are challenged effectively in their work, so that they work at a high pace. Literacy is satisfactorily taught, but the needs of higher attaining pupils are not met consistently. Satisfactory use is made of literacy in other subjects, but limited use is made of pupils' numeracy and ICT skills. The management of pupils is usually good and results in behaviour that has a positive effect on learning and attitudes in class. Assessment during lessons and marking are satisfactory overall, although in English it is inconsistent and not used well to aid detailed planning. Homework is used satisfactorily.
17. Pupils who have special educational needs work very well when given targeted teaching and adequate support in small focused groups for English and mathematics. Well-trained support assistants work closely with both the special educational needs co-ordinator and class teachers to plan sessions and supervise these small groups effectively. As a result, the achievement of most pupils working within them is very good. The standard of teaching in the one observed support group, taken by learning support assistants, was good. Work set for pupils included an element of appropriate challenge, which pupils responded to well. The two learning support assistants had a secure understanding of the needs of the pupils and as a result most pupils had achieved an increased understanding of letter sounds by the end of the session. Pupils with special educational needs only make limited progress in literacy lessons when teaching and planning does not fully cater for the different abilities of pupils. As a result, their learning is less secure and this is reflected in overall achievement. Teachers ensure that pupils' weak literacy skills do not limit learning in other subjects.
18. Teachers have good awareness of the role of language in learning for pupils whose first language is not English. They know, for instance, that pupils need to understand terms such as, more than, greater than, less than, smaller number, bigger number, one-digit number, and two-digit number to do number work. Teachers check pupils' understanding of these and reinforce them for the benefit of those who are developing their language competency. Teachers are used to teaching collaboratively and taking the lead for particular areas. A writing workshop demonstrated very good planning and preparation. Whilst the class teacher introduced a story box to help pupils write a story describing East African plains, the support teacher scribed the developing sentences. This served as a very good model for pupils about how to think and compose interesting descriptive sentences and the correct use of punctuation. Models of animals and the setting of the scene were very effective in developing pupils' language, for example 'the elephant has grey wrinkly skin' and 'it uses its trunk to drink water'. The use of ICT for

downloading pictures and listening to animal sounds from an earlier lesson made learning very exciting. Group working supported by the language support teacher, who provided skeleton sentences, helped pupils to make very good progress in constructing a story, for example, using 'I can see', 'I can hear', 'in the distance', 'rain fresh' and 'green acacia leaves'. Effective assessment and support ensured very good progress. Similar group working supported by the mainstream teacher, special educational needs co-ordinator and one learning support assistant, created a very effective classroom in which all the pupils were included. As a result, they made very good progress. The lesson culminated in at least one pupil from each group reporting to the whole class. The pupils and the teachers enjoyed the teaching and learning experience in equal measure.

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

19. The school provides a good curriculum that fully meets statutory requirements. It has good breadth, balance and relevance to the needs of the wide range of pupils in the school. In the Nursery and Reception, the curriculum goes beyond that in the national guidance, as swimming is included for Reception children. The expectations within the national Foundation Stage guidance are met. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Provision within the curriculum for pupils for whom English is an additional language is good throughout the school. The school has addressed the issues concerning the monitoring and balance of the curriculum raised by the previous inspection and, as a result, the quality and range of learning opportunities offered to pupils are now good.
20. The strategy for teaching literacy skills are satisfactory, whilst the strategies for teaching numeracy skills are good, although inconsistencies occur in both subjects in meeting the needs of more able pupils. This is reflected in pupils' attainment in English and mathematics in Year 2. Teachers work co-operatively to plan the curriculum on a whole-school and year-group basis and, at present, the match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum is good. This assists most pupils to make good progress in most classes within the school.
21. The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Provision is very good when pupils are taught in small support groups, but it is less so if pupils are not supported well in the classroom. The school's systems for identifying and assessing pupils with special educational needs are good. However, the number of Reception children that have currently been identified as having special educational needs is less than might be expected, given the numbers in Years 1 and 2. Individual and group education plans usually feature specific and attainable targets for pupils to achieve. Progress is reviewed on a regular basis. Planning in support groups is good and usually closely linked to pupils' needs. The curricular planning for the target for pupils for whom English is an additional language is good. The teachers use their awareness of pupils' learning and language needs for planning effectively. Direct support also makes the curriculum accessible to the target pupils.
22. The curriculum is enriched through visitors to the school and through regular off-site visits for pupils as part of the school's topic based approach to teaching, which aims to take advantage of the diversity of pupils' backgrounds and make learning relevant to all pupils' needs. Although the provision of extra-curricular activities for pupils is satisfactory overall, there is also an awareness that this area is still in need of further development. The local environment is used effectively to support learning and links to businesses are used to enhance the relevance of education to pupils' daily lives. An example of this occurred when pupils visited a local pizza parlour and designed, made and evaluated (ate) pizzas as part of their studies in design and technology.

23. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good. Sex education is taught within the context of the curriculum at stages suited to the growing understanding of pupils about their bodies and how to care for them. The school actively promotes equality of access and opportunity to the curriculum for all and is fully inclusive. This is directly reflected in the school's ethos and in the way in which the school has created a happy, secure environment for all pupils. During the inspection pupils were very well behaved, very polite and eager to be of assistance. They respected others and would happily help other pupils if the need arose.
24. Good links exist with the community, and links with the local Catholic church are especially close. The need to develop further the home and school liaison is included in current school developmental planning. Relationships with partner institutions are satisfactory overall. Links with the local junior school are good and improving. Both schools jointly discuss curricular matters, conduct joint staff meetings and have combined staff socials. Relationships with the local high school are developing and links to feeder institutions are satisfactory.
25. The school makes very good provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development and good provision for their moral and social development. All the strengths found at the last inspection in the provision for pupils' personal development have been maintained. The strong ethos within the school is firmly founded on Christian beliefs and underpins the life of the school. Whole-school assemblies and class prayers support pupils' spiritual development well. The inclusion in assemblies of music from other cultures, the display around the focal point of the Cross and the respectful atmosphere all enhance the spiritual quality of assemblies. The school develops the idea within the children by promoting the 'I can do' mentality and by encouraging them to take risks to extend their learning. Opportunities for reflection arise in lessons, for example, through stories and work in art and design and music. Pupils are supported sensitively to consider the realities in life, such as the birth of a sibling or death of a relative. Children in the Nursery were excited and enthralled as the nursery nurse turned the incubating hens' eggs and they eagerly counted off the days before the eggs were due to hatch.
26. All adults working in school are good role models for pupils' moral development, which is based on Christian principles. There are regular and effective discussions for pupils to think about difficult situations and how they might be put right. Class rules are agreed with the pupils and are framed in a positive form of promises; emphasising the 'dos'; rather than the 'don'ts'. Assemblies, masses and liturgies help pupils to learn respect. As a result, pupils have a good understanding of the difference between right and wrong. Pupils are guided to think about situations outside school and how they affect other people. Visitors to the school, such as the priest, fire and rail service employees and the RSPCA, also provide good opportunities for pupils to consider moral issues.
27. The provision for pupils' social development is good. The headteacher and staff know the pupils well and encourage them to care for and help one another in and out of the classroom. A good system of rewards, including stickers and 'star of the week' assemblies, encourages them to try hard in every aspect of their school life. Good relationships within the school help to form positive attitudes towards good behaviour and self-discipline. Pupils learn to respect those of different backgrounds and abilities and the school environment is strongly inclusive. Older pupils help the younger ones during events such as sports day. Pupils are given responsibility for a range of duties around the school and in the classrooms, which they carry out willingly and reliably. Pupils learn about people less fortunate than themselves and help to support them through collections for charities such as CAFOD and Street Children of Nairobi.

28. The provision for the development of pupils' cultural education is multi-faceted and a strength of the school. The great diversity of the pupils' cultural backgrounds is seen as a positive attribute and is actively celebrated. Pupils of all races live and work within a cohesive and vibrant school community and learn from the huge range of multicultural experiences that is on offer. Pupils learn French after school and experience celebrations of Chinese New Year and Jewish and Hindu religious festivals. Geography and history lessons give pupils an understanding of life in other countries and at other times and these are consolidated by attractive displays of pictures, books and other artefacts. Local culture is also celebrated and pupils learn what life was like in the past through history lessons and the memories board. Appreciation of art and music is developed through the curriculum and through a good range of pictures by famous artists, such as van Gogh, and through ethnic and classical music played at assemblies and in class. The school has taken part in the Croydon Dance and School's Music Festivals and pupils have been involved in local and national art projects.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

29. Overall, the school cares for the pupils very well and there are good procedures in place to ensure their safety and wellbeing. This is a similar picture to that reported at the time of the previous inspection. Very good care begins from the time children start in the Nursery and continues throughout their time in school. The pastoral support provided is very good. The school is a warm and friendly place in which pupils are happy and secure and enjoy their school life. They learn without fear within a caring environment. All adults provide a high level of affectionate support and the very good relationships that exist make it easy for pupils to talk to them about any worries they may have. Personal development of the pupils is very well promoted through the curriculum, assemblies, individual attention and through the high expectations that teachers have of them. Additionally, pupils' self confidence is enhanced by a good range of responsibilities for their age, both in and out of the classroom. Pupils receive appropriate support to prepare them for their move to the junior school. There is some formal monitoring of personal development and teachers comment on this in pupils' end-of-year reports. Teachers know the pupils well and any concerns are shared between staff and acted upon.
30. Child protection procedures are good. The headteacher is responsible for this and works closely with the special educational needs co-ordinator to ensure that proper support is given. Both have had relevant training. Teachers and support staff are briefed as necessary on individual cases and, where appropriate, the school involves social services and other outside agencies. Class teachers are very aware of pupils' needs and any concerns are flagged up so that early support can be given.
31. The school promotes and monitors attendance satisfactorily, involving the education welfare service where necessary. All unexplained non-attendance is followed up and it is made clear to parents that reasons are required for all absences. Holidays in term time are closely monitored and permission has to be sought before they are authorised. Registers are properly maintained and monitored.
32. The school's management of behaviour is good overall, with most of it very good, and this ensures that school life is calm and orderly. There is a basic policy for behaviour, supported by class rules and a good range of rewards. However, it is the good example and the high expectations of all staff that really promotes the high standards of behaviour that exist. These lead to an environment that is generally conducive to effective learning. Most teachers manage behaviour very well in lessons but, in two classes, teachers are not sufficiently assertive and pupils sometimes have to be told several times before they react to an instruction. Midday supervisory assistants manage

playtime behaviour sympathetically but firmly and this has a positive effect on playground behaviour and safety.

33. There is a good policy for health and safety, and the management of this on a day-to-day basis is also good. Governors carry out regular safety inspections and risk assessment is undertaken biennially by a consultant. Fire drills take place each term and the fire alarm is tested weekly. Testing of portable electrical appliances is up-to-date. First aid procedures are good and several adults have first aid qualifications. Accidents are properly logged and parents are notified in writing in the event of a bump to the head or more serious accident.
34. There is one safety concern resulting from an incident witnessed during the inspection. The chain-link wire fence along the boundary between the Reception playground and the junior school is insecure at the bottom, enabling pupils to reach for any items that roll underneath. The projecting wire strands are sharp and could cause injury to the child.
35. The school has good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment. Assessments, when pupils start at school and during their time in Nursery and Reception, are thorough and detailed. The information is recorded carefully and used well to organise activities and plan work. Assessment procedures are well established for English, mathematics and science and match closely with the outcome of the National Curriculum tests in mathematics and English. Some aspects of assessment of pupils' literacy need further work to identify pupils' needs more clearly and the curriculum planned more carefully to meet the full range of pupil's attainment. Additional tests are also given, for example, Middle Infant Screening Tests (MIST) and NFER test for mathematics in Year 1. Assessment information is used soundly for setting targets for reading, writing and mathematics. These are reviewed every term. Where monitoring of progress raises concerns, the teachers provide effective additional support to pupils directly or by deploying learning support assistants. Procedures for other subjects have been developed according to the national guidance on schemes of work. Full development of assessment procedures for art and design, and in design and technology has been halted due to staff changes. The school is expecting to complete these by the end of the summer term. The use of assessment information for curricular planning has improved and is now satisfactory. As a result, planning of the curriculum is now more systematic. This is also helping to build cross-curricular links such as between ICT, geography, history, science, design and technology, physical education and writing. The school has started to establish a database and its use for tracking and monitoring progress. Progress in this regard is good.
36. All adults pay careful attention to ensuring that pupils with special educational needs get as much access as possible to the full range of activities the school has to offer. Procedures for the assessment of pupils in Years 1 and 2 with special educational needs are very good and information is usually used effectively to produce good individual and group education plans. The special educational needs co-ordinator and support staff use a variety of formal and informal assessments to ensure that progress is checked and recorded and that pupils' progress is monitored on a regular basis in order to set further achievable targets.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

37. The school has a good relationship with the parents and seeks to involve them at all levels in the education of their children. This has a beneficial impact on their children's education. All the strengths reported at the time of the previous inspection have been maintained. Parents who made their views known at the pre-inspection meeting or responded to the questionnaire are all strongly supportive of virtually everything the school does for their children. Parents see the school as well led, easy to approach,

with good teaching and promoting a positive work ethic. They see their children liking school, making good progress and being well supported as they grow up. The inspection findings entirely support these positive views. The only negative view expressed was about the provision of out-of-school activities. The inspection does not support this view since, for the ages of the pupils there is a good range of activities compared to that found in most infant schools.

38. Good links are made between the school and home before children start in the Nursery. Parents and children can visit the school before they start, and the school arranges visits to the child's home. These establish a strong link prior to the start of school life. Parents are encouraged to support their own, and other, children in the Nursery, and many do so. These very good links are built on well as pupils prepare to transfer to Reception.
39. The school provides parents with a very good level of information about their children's progress and about general matters. The heart of this is the weekly newsletter, which includes a curricular letter for each year group. This tells parents what the children are about to learn and also gives tips and advice on how they can best support their children's learning. The prospectus and governors' annual report to parents both contain a wealth of information but omit a few minor items statutorily required; the headteacher has been made aware of these. Pupils' annual reports are good. They give full information on pupils' attainment and progress for all subjects and include details of pupils' personal development together with targets for improvement. Each term there is a parents' consultation evening and, in addition, parents of pupils with special educational needs are invited to be involved in the review of their children's progress. The quality of written information produced by the school to inform parents about the identification, assessment and progress of pupils with special educational needs is very good. Even so, parents are sometimes insufficiently involved in the initial and further stages of planning the provision for these pupils. The school is well aware that individual education plans presently contain only limited evidence of parental, or pupil, involvement at either the initial or review stages.
40. Parents make a good contribution to the learning of their children and to the life of the school. A number of parents help in the classroom and on outside visits and provide valuable support. The school is trying to increase this area of parental involvement. Many parents provide help to pupils at home with their reading, mathematics games and other homework. The school's homework policy provides a structure for homework that is satisfactory. Each term there are 'workshops' to inform parents of aspects of the schools provision, such as literacy. The school organises a very positive initiative at the governors' annual meeting when parents discuss the progress of the school improvement plan and make suggestions for incorporation into the next year's plan. This enables parents to play a part in school development; for example it has led to the setting up of a register of parents with language capabilities, who are prepared to help families with little or no English. A parent group raises funds for the school that are used to purchase resources to benefit the pupils' learning, for example computer printers and outdoor play equipment. The group also helps collect clothing and furniture for refugee families in the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

41. The leadership and management of the school are good overall. The headteacher, with the support of the deputy headteacher, provides a clear educational direction for the management and improvement of the school. During the headteacher's absence throughout the past year, because of illness, the deputy headteacher carried the responsibility for the school for an extended time. This has been a period of change with 12 out of 15 teachers and most of the governing body newly appointed since the last

inspection. In spite of this, the school has continued to update its systems and procedures for monitoring the quality of the education provided and to achieve improvements. This is reflected in the progress made to rectify the main weaknesses identified at the previous inspection. There has been good progress on almost all of the key issues arising from that inspection. Only one issue, that of supporting the needs of higher attaining pupils, has not moved forward sufficiently and needs to do so. This will continue to be one of the key issues following this inspection.

42. There is a well-defined management structure, including a senior management team, year and subject co-ordinators. Staff work effectively as a team and, with stability in staffing, should develop well to take the school forward. Senior managers have properly defined roles and responsibilities with the senior management team undertaking the monitoring of teaching, with assistance from the local education authority link inspector. Year leaders co-ordinate the planning and teaching within their year groups.
43. Following the period of staff changes, the subject co-ordinators roles have only recently been confirmed. Most co-ordinators have had appropriate training for their role and further is planned for the remainder. All lead their subjects at least satisfactorily, with many leading their subjects well. Leadership is good for the Foundation Stage, mathematics, ICT, art and design, physical education and English as an additional language. It is very good for special educational needs. Subject leaders have not yet all had the opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching in their subject but they check teachers' plans for lessons and also the standards of pupils' work.
44. The management of the foundation Stage is good. The co-ordinator has helped to establish an effective team, which works together well to give pupils a good start to their school life. The key areas for development are recognised. The outside area for Reception is recognised as being a particular weakness. The co-ordinator monitors the quality of teaching and leads Reception team planning well. The inconsistency in the quality of teaching between the Reception classes has been recognised. It is also acknowledged that the accommodation for Nursery pupils is not ideal, although generally used well. Once all members of the Foundation Stage team are established in their new roles, further improvements to curricular planning are to be introduced.
45. The management and organisation of support for pupils with special educational needs are very good. The leadership and management are very good and reflected in the inclusive nature of the school and also the good support the school provides for these pupils. Appropriate systems have been set up to identify, assess, monitor and cater for the needs of pupils with special educational needs. The co-ordinator works very well with the school's learning support assistants to ensure that systems are in place to deliver English and mathematics to pupils needing support, especially outside the classroom. Accommodation for support work is good, if somewhat cramped, and the school possesses a very good range of resources to support pupils who have a wide variety of special educational needs.
46. Leadership and management of the provision for pupils whose first language is not English are good, as are the arrangements for assessing their progress. These are based on the national guidance for the beginning and early stages. However, further work is needed to develop a common understanding of language development between the language support teacher and the class teachers. Setting up a database is a good development to monitor the achievement of pupils who are learning English as an additional language. The school has good links with parents. As a result, they make a good contribution to their children's learning, for example, using multilingual tapes. The grant for the support of pupils whose first language is not English is used effectively.

47. Governors are very committed to the school and supportive of it. Most have been appointed since the last inspection but they clearly understand the issues facing the school and fulfil a good role in shaping its future direction. They fulfil their statutory duties effectively and are increasingly developing their role of critical friend. Governors have a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and a clear determination to ensure that the school will continue to move forward. Whilst still relying on the headteacher for some day-to-day information, governors have allotted curricular duties and undertake classroom observations with the outcomes then shared with other governors. They undertake analysis of the school's results from published statistical information and use this to help determine priorities.
48. The school operates an improvement plan that is in detail for the current year and in brief outline for a further three years. The plan has priorities that are appropriate for the school, although the identified need of supporting the learning of higher attaining pupils is not in the current plan. The financial implications of the plan are costed and included in the budget. The plan is regularly reviewed by the headteacher and, as mentioned elsewhere, is openly reviewed and discussed with parents at the annual general meeting. This is a very positive initiative since it gives parents a chance to influence the future direction of the school.
49. As at the time of the previous inspection, educational developments are effectively supported through careful financial planning. The school carried a surplus of around 6.5 per cent into the current year and had been forecasting a similar carry forward into next year. However, the headteacher's extended absence has led to additional staffing costs and the anticipated carry forward will now be around 2.5 per cent. The finance committee of the governing body maintains an overview of the finances, which are managed on a day-to-day basis by the headteacher, with support from a local education authority financial adviser. This is a good arrangement. Management of office procedures by an administrative and finance officer is efficient. However, a number of minor system shortcomings were identified in a financial audit last November that has led to a tightening up of the school's financial procedures. This has now been completed. The school buys its supplies and services competitively and there is a proper hierarchy for order, receipt and payment of goods. The school makes satisfactory use of best value principles.
50. The school's administrative use of new technology is satisfactory overall. The office runs the 'SIMS' suite of programs covering finance and attendance. The school uses its own spreadsheet system for the management of assessment, although it has plans to change to the 'SIMS Assessment Manager' system.
51. The match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum is good and is an improvement on the situation reported at the time of the previous inspection. Teachers are appropriately qualified and many have significant experience within the profession. However, the school has several who are recently qualified or who have just returned to teaching and, overall, the range of experience is lower than found in many schools. To offset this, teachers plan together within year groups. Support staff plan and work very effectively with the teachers and are well-deployed supporting learning and checking the progress made by the pupils during the lessons. Staff training has a high profile in the school and individual training needs are identified through the school improvement plan and performance management interviews.
52. The accommodation is satisfactory for teaching the National Curriculum. Most classrooms are of adequate size and all have appropriate facilities such as access to a sink and water. There is a good library, which doubles as a computer room. There are not many areas for withdrawing small groups within the school building but the former caretaker's house is currently being used for that purpose. The school hall is a good

size, although the available area is reduced by displays at one end. Internally and externally, the building appears to be in reasonable condition. The playgrounds are barely satisfactory. They adjoin the roadside and suffer from traffic fumes and dirt. The asphalt surfaces of both are uneven and drainage is poor, with evidence of puddles forming. Although marked out for playground games, the markings are worn out and very faint. The areas used by the Reception classes for outdoor play activities are poorly developed.

53. Resources for learning are satisfactory overall with good provision for the Foundation Stage, English, art and design, music and special educational needs. The only shortages seen were of dual language books for the Foundation Stage and more benches for use in physical education lessons. Resources are well used by teachers to enhance the impact of lessons.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

54. Standards of attainment in English and mathematics by Year 2 are not yet high enough. Although good overall, inconsistencies occur in the quality of teaching, particularly in relation to meeting fully the needs of more able pupils. The outdoor areas for pupils in Reception and Nursery are not stimulating enough, that for Reception being particularly bleak. Pupils' levels of attendance are below average.
55. In order to improve standards further, especially in English and mathematics, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- a) Ensure consistency in the quality of teaching so that the needs of all pupils are met by:
- the use of more detailed planning, in particular to identify how the needs of the full range of pupils are fully met;
 - raising the expectations of more able pupils by increasing the challenge;
 - using day-to-day marking and assessment more effectively to help pupils understand their strengths and weaknesses, and how they can improve their work; and
 - improving the use of ICT to support learning across the whole curriculum.

(Para refs: 1, 4, 6, 14 - 17, 20, 21, 32, 35, 41, 48, 57 - 59, 69, 80, 81, 83, 84, 86, 88, 90 - 92, 96 - 99, 106, 120, 122, 123, 131)

- b) As soon as agreement can be reached, improve the facilities, in particular in the outdoor areas, for pupils in Nursery and Reception by:
- implementing the plans for redevelopment of the Reception outdoor areas;
 - ensuring that the plans provide for a wide range of stimulating markings, areas and activities that aid progress in all areas of learning; and
 - using the opportunity to improve further the provision for Nursery pupils.

(Para refs: 34, 44, 52, 58, 73, 74)

- c) Improve attendance rates by:
- continuing to use the current procedures to encourage attendance and punctuality;
 - regularly reminding parents of the impact of extended absences and lateness on the learning of their own, and other, children; and

- emphasising the school's expectations in relation to attendance and punctuality in regular communication with parents, including in the prospectus, annual written reports to parents and the governors' annual report.

(Para refs: 13, 31)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	52
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	35

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	12	24	14	0	0	1
Percentage	1.9	23.1	46.2	26.9	0	0	1.9

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)	25.5	240
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/a	57

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	5	42

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	72

Pupil mobility in the last school year

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

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.0
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	38	46	84

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	30	33	35
	Girls	43	44	45
	Total	73	77	80
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87 (83)	92 (80)	95 (88)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	32	35	35
	Girls	44	45	45
	Total	76	80	80
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (82)	95 (88)	95 (89)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White - British
White - Irish
White - any other White background
Mixed - White and Black Caribbean
Mixed - White and Black African
Mixed - White and Asian
Mixed - any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British - Indian
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
Asian or Asian British - Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British - any other Asian background
Black or Black British - Caribbean
Black or Black British - African
Black or Black British - any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
38	0	0
10	0	0
10	0	0
5	0	0
4	0	0
12	0	0
16	0	0
12	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
7	0	0
14	0	0
35	0	0
4	0	0
0	0	0
6	0	0
0	0	0

The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.7
Average class size	26.7

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	204

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.5
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	65
Number of pupils per FTE adult	8.5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	8.3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	9.8

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
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	£
Total income	695,980
Total expenditure	716,309
Expenditure per pupil	2,558
Balance brought forward from previous year	65,723
Balance carried forward to next year	45,394

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	291
Number of questionnaires returned	63

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	83	16	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	70	24	5	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	57	37	3	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	57	33	8	2	0
The teaching is good.	62	35	0	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	54	38	6	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	70	27	0	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best	67	29	5	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	57	35	5	0	3
The school is well led and managed.	70	19	3	3	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	65	33	2	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	51	22	16	2	10

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

56. The school's Foundation Stage provision includes a Nursery and three Reception classes. Fifty-one children attend the Nursery part time, either mornings or afternoons. There are places for 90 children in the Reception classes. Children who are four years old during the academic year start Nursery part time in the autumn term. They transfer to Reception full time the following autumn. When children start school their attainment is well below average, with particular weaknesses in language skills and in their personal development. The school has made good progress since the last inspection, maintaining the strengths identified then.
57. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good, with strengths in personal, social and emotional development. Teaching is good, with some very good features, and never less than satisfactory. However, it is not consistent between the Reception classes. The curriculum is well planned so children gain relevant and worthwhile experiences in all the recommended areas of learning, with a particular focus on personal, social and emotional development. Detailed assessments of each child's progress are carried out by all staff and used effectively to guide planning to meet children's needs and to ensure a balance of experiences. A few children have been identified as having special educational needs, including a girl in Reception who has a statement of special educational needs. There are, however, fewer than might be expected currently identified in the Reception classes. Children make a very good start to their education in personal, social and emotional development and a good start in the other areas of learning.
58. The close working partnership between the four Reception teachers is effective. They plan all their work together and this ensures a consistency of experiences regardless of which class the teachers are in. There are differences, however, in the expectations within one class. This leads to attention and listening skills that are not as good as in the other two classes. The school has developed extremely close links with parents and children before they start school. Visits help them to know the school well before they start, and the opportunity for Nursery children to visit Reception helps them to transfer smoothly. The Nursery teacher taught in the main school until last year, and this helps to ensure continuity of provision, although the school recognises that the physical links between the Nursery and Reception need further strengthening. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator manages the provision well, and her role includes monitoring the quality of teaching throughout Nursery and Reception. The need to ensure greater consistency has therefore been recognised. The Reception classrooms are of a suitable size, but the Nursery unit is somewhat more cramped. The outdoor area for Reception is large, but poorly developed and does not provide a stimulating environment for learning. The Nursery outside area is better equipped, but would also benefit from considering how it could make an even greater contribution to each of the areas of learning.

Personal, social and emotional development

59. Children make very good progress in this area of learning. The very good atmosphere created in the Nursery and the stimulating, well-organised environment provided ensure that children quickly learn how to behave in school. This good start is effectively continued in the Reception classes, although not so consistently in one class. Children are encouraged to be polite and courteous to each other, to the various adults who care for them and to visitors, often saying 'please' and 'thank you' appropriately. Teachers and learning support assistants are very effective at developing children's independence. Children record that they have arrived from when they first start in

Nursery, and the practice is continued in Reception. There are opportunities to select their own activities, which they do confidently, and to tick lists to show what they have done. A notable feature from early in the Nursery is the good level of sustained concentration that many children manage. Children are encouraged to share resources and work with other children, but many find this aspect of co-operation difficult, and despite some improvement, this continues even when they are in Reception. Classes are organised so that children generally move from one activity to another calmly and sensibly, although this is not always the case in the hall.

60. Teaching and learning are very good. The adults who work in the Nursery are very effective at helping children settle quickly to the demands of school life. In this, they are well supported by many parent helpers. Adults have a warm rapport with children and ensure that all children, regardless of background, are fully involved in all activities provided. There are very good opportunities for children to learn through play and develop their social skills in a friendly, supportive environment. Children with special educational needs are supported in a very positive fashion and are well integrated into the daily life of the school. Similarly, children from the wide variety of different ethnic backgrounds, including those whose first language is not English, are well integrated into classroom activities. Other Reception children were delighted when the girl who has a statement of special educational need was identified in assembly as 'a star of the week'. Reception children benefit from taking part in regular assemblies with pupils from Years 1 and 2. This helps them develop the idea that they are part of a wider community. Children who attend the Nursery in the mornings have a similar opportunity each week. This is further reinforced for all Nursery children when they come over to the main building for physical education in the hall.
61. Children share and enjoy playing with the resources provided. They are encouraged to take turns, even when this does not come naturally, such as by counting how many jumps to complete on the trampoline before handing over to the next child. During the role-play activities good examples of co-operation are evident, as in the Nursery when working in the car wash department of 'St Mary's Garage'. Boys and girls play well alongside one another in a friendly and supportive manner. Relationships between adults and children, and between children, are generally very good and underpin the progress made. In this area of learning most children, despite a low starting point, are on course to meet the Early Learning Goals by the end of Reception.

Communication, language and literacy

62. Many children come to school with a very low level of attainment in language skills. Despite the good provision in this area of learning, the majority are not on course to reach the Early Learning Goals by the end of the school year. Children are encouraged to listen carefully to a variety of stories and instructions, and to join in rhymes and songs. The calm atmosphere in most lessons effectively supports children's listening skills and they make good progress in this aspect of learning. Teachers and other adults encourage children to speak and many make good progress when speaking in front of the class. However, many have poor speech and limited vocabulary, which limit attainment. Teachers attempt, with some success, to get the children to respond with more than a few words. Learning assistants support children when talking with them to extend their vocabulary. Overall, children make good progress in developing their speaking and listening skills in Nursery and Reception, but will not reach the Early Learning Goals by the start of Year 1.
63. Children make a good start in their reading skills. They enjoy playing with games and puzzles that develop the idea that words have meaning. Every child has its own reading diary and book-bag. They take them home regularly and the useful support given by parents makes a significant contribution to the good progress children make in this key

area of learning. Children soon learn that words are read from left to right, and that the pages turn from right to left. Teachers introduce children to initial sounds (phonics) and this helps them to begin to sound out words. More able children read simple text confidently, but the majority of Reception children recognise only a few words. Despite the good progress, few children will achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of Reception.

64. Children make good progress in developing their early writing skills. A wide range of opportunities is organised to encourage children to write, especially their own name, such as when recording whether their hand is longer or shorter than that of other children. Good opportunities are provided in the Nursery for mark making, such as when appointments are made in 'St Mary's Garage' and for the 'car wash'. Most children in Reception hold their pencil correctly and a few children are beginning to use capital letters and full stops. Most can copy their own name or write it from memory. Despite the good progress, few children are on course to reach the Early Learning Goals by the end of the school year.
65. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers and other adults are good role models in the way they speak. Explanations are, therefore, given clearly and this helps children to take a full part in lessons. Focused teaching of initial sounds, the use of books and early writing skills are given a high priority and this successfully enables children to develop their early English skills.

Mathematical development

66. Children's understanding of mathematical concepts is weak when they begin in Nursery. A good range of activities and games encourages children to develop successfully their knowledge and understanding of numbers and other areas of mathematics so that they achieve well in this area of learning. However, the majority of Reception children are not on course to meet the Early Learning Goals by the end of the school year.
67. Children are given a wide range of opportunities to count to ten or beyond. Teachers use opportunities to ask children to count during activities such as calling the register and during physical activities. Good use is made of the sand and water trays to develop children's vocabulary and concepts of capacity and volume.
68. Books and games are used successfully to support children's understanding of shape and space. More able children in the Nursery name flat shapes such as circle, triangle and rectangle. They are also introduced to words that describe solid shapes, such as cubes. In Reception, children are encouraged to use mathematical vocabulary, such as shorter and longer, to describe relative lengths.
69. Teaching and learning are good. Lessons are well organised and proceed at a lively pace. Teachers' explanations are clear and enable all children to take a full part. Teachers plan their work in this area of learning very carefully, and this ensures that children experience a wide range of stimulating activities to develop their knowledge and understanding effectively. A weakness is that after good introductions to specific mathematical concepts, activities during the succeeding session do not require every child to undertake an activity to reinforce their knowledge and understanding.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

70. Children have a below average knowledge of the world around them when they start school. The good provision and teaching mean that the majority are on course to meet

the Early Learning Goals by the end of the school year. This is especially evident in the science aspect of this area of learning.

71. Children develop their knowledge of different localities by being introduced to the different countries that children in the school come from. The role-play area in Reception very effectively promotes understanding of plants and growth. Many seeds have been sown and plants grown linked with the 'St Mary's Garden Centre'. Children recognise that plants are living things that grow, and that they need, for instance, water and warmth to grow well. The outside garden in the Nursery also promotes this, as well as an understanding of how we obtain some of our food. Children have planted potatoes and carrots in the garden. The hens' eggs that are being hatched in the Nursery are being used very effectively to extend an understanding of living things and the birth of young. In addition, the importance of caring for them properly is being emphasised. Little evidence was available about the historical aspect of this area. However, through the study of aspects of the life of Jesus, children become aware that life has changed since he was alive. Technological awareness is developed through using 'drag and drop' programs, wordprocessing to enter simple text, such as a child's name, basic numeracy programs and operating tape recorders. By the end of Reception, children handle the computer mouse with care and precision.
72. Teaching and learning are good, because of the range of well-organised activities that engages children's interest and provides a stimulating learning environment. Teachers' questioning skills are used well to extend the questions that children ask about what they are doing.

Physical development

73. Children in the Nursery have access to a suitably resourced outside area that is used exclusively by them. Reception classes have a large, dedicated playground area, but it is currently poorly developed. Its improvement is an important element of the school's plans. In addition, children have regular lessons in the school hall, and Reception children swim in the adjacent junior school's pool.
74. When using their own playground, Nursery children enjoy using the range of wheeled vehicles and develop their physical skills effectively. The other apparatus enables children to experience travelling under, over, around and through the apparatus. It was not possible to see Reception children using their area to promote physical development by climbing and riding during the inspection. In the hall, both Nursery and Reception children control their movements well and interpret the flowing music of 'The Scarf' with thought.
75. They handle a variety of small tools with increasing control. Nursery children saw balsa wood carefully. Reception children successfully roll out 'sausages' with plasticine. They handle construction toys, pencils and paintbrushes carefully and manipulate them with reasonable skill.
76. Teaching and learning are good. Planning is detailed and teachers keep useful assessment records to ensure children have a wide range of experiences covering all aspects of physical development. The activities in the hall are based on a commercial scheme that links with the physical education programme for Years 1 and 2. During activities in the hall, teachers do not make enough mention of the need to use all the space and to be aware of other children. Good progress is made and most children are on course to meet the Early Learning Goals by the start of Year 1.

Creative development

77. The attainment of children as they start school is below average but the good progress they make means that most will reach the Early Learning Goals by the end of Reception.
78. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers provide a wide range of well-organised activities that engage the interest of all children and successfully cover art, design, music and imaginative play. Children have made useful attempts at colour mixing and produced colourful sunflower pictures in the style of Van Gogh. Effective use of an art program enables children to produce colourful patterns in Nursery and flowers in Reception. The role-play areas in both the Nursery and Reception classes capture children's imagination. Many vehicles were booked into the 'garage' for washing. Good emphasis is given to singing. In class, children are taught a wide range of simple songs and rhymes and children enjoy joining the infants' assemblies where they sing a range of songs, learnt by heart, with enjoyment.

ENGLISH

79. Overall standards achieved by Year 2 pupils in English are below those attained by pupils of a similar age nationally, but are comparable to those achieved by Year 2 pupils who attend similar schools. This represents good achievement overall in the subject as standards have broadly improved in line with the national trend in recent years, even though the school's intake of pupils has changed as more are now eligible for free school meals, are considered to have special educational needs or speak English as a second language. This represents good improvement since the previous inspection.
80. In the National Curriculum tests for pupils aged seven in 2002, standards were below average in writing and reading. The school is well aware of the need to continue to improve standards of attainment in all areas of the subject and raising standards in English is a key issue in the school's developmental planning. Pupils with special educational needs, and those who speak English as an additional language, are very well supported in group work outside of lessons and make good progress as a result, even though support within lessons is more limited. However, there is a need to improve the attainment of pupils of higher ability in order for them to achieve their full potential.
81. Standards in writing are still below the national average in Year 2. An analysis of the work of Year 1 and Year 2 pupils shows a gradual build up of knowledge, skills and understanding in composition, spelling, handwriting and presentation but there is little evidence of matching work to pupils' individual needs in lessons. As a result, lower ability pupils sometimes find written work too difficult whilst higher attaining pupils are frequently insufficiently challenged and this limits their overall achievement. During a Year 1 lesson on sequencing in alphabetical order, pupils were all given identical written tasks. More able pupils completed them with little difficulty and were not given extension work. As a result they learned little and several became inattentive and noisy. This disrupted the lesson.
82. Standards in reading are in line with the national average in Year 2 and many pupils read with a certain amount of confidence and display various strategies to assist in decoding words. Many pupils in Year 2 read with accuracy and establish the meaning of unfamiliar words. Higher attaining pupils read a variety of texts with accuracy and fluency. The school has concentrated on improving standards in reading through regular activities such as ERIC (Everyone Reading In Class) and through initiatives such as the '3 o'clock reading club' which encourages parents and carers in to school to join in reading sessions. As a result, reading standards have improved overall.
83. Standards in speaking and listening are below the national average and the school recognises improving standards in speaking and listening as an area for future

improvement. Whilst a majority of pupils in Years 1 and 2 are developing confidence in talking and listening, a large minority are reticent to enter conversations and many are unable to communicate effectively or enter into class discussions during lessons because of poorer language development. They are unable to listen carefully for lengths of time or to make suitable responses. Confidence seems lacking and this affects their learning. This was noticeable during a Year 2 literacy lesson when about half the pupils in the class found joining in group discussions about describing story settings difficult and, as a result, gained little out of their very stilted conversations.

84. Whilst pupils display good attitudes to the subject and behave well in lessons, the quality of teaching of English is variable throughout the school, especially in meeting the needs of the more able pupils. Whilst all lessons observed during the inspection were at least satisfactory, only two were judged to be good and only one very good.
85. In the one very well taught lesson, planning was very effective, objectives clearly stated and shared with the pupils and work was matched to the abilities of the different groups of pupils in the class. The very well structured introduction prepared pupils well to complete their written tasks and the teacher used the end of the session to check and reinforce learning. Pupils with special educational needs, and those whose first language is not English, made very good progress and more able pupils were challenged by their work and achieved well. By the end of the session, lesson objectives had been reached and pupils had increased their knowledge and understanding of how to structure a story. Good use had been made of ICT to support teaching and learning.
86. In those lessons where teaching was less successful, teachers' expectations were sometimes low and lesson planning did not always cater for the different need of pupils with the result that work was not matched to different abilities. This had a detrimental effect on learning and the achievement of different groups of pupils, especially the more able who were not sufficiently motivated or challenged.
87. The co-ordinator, who is relatively new to the post, leads and manages the subject well. She has a clear vision of the need to raise further standards of attainment and has ensured that teachers and learning support assistants have been given recent opportunities to attend in-service training in providing support for pupils in literacy in order to improve their confidence. Teaching is monitored through regular scrutiny of lesson planning. Individual pupils' achievement in English is tracked throughout the school and pupils not making sufficient progress are identified and given extra support. In addition the co-ordinator has recently introduced individual reading assessment sheets in order to check pupils' achievement and further improve progress in reading.
88. Resources are good overall although more are needed to better link ICT to English. Resources are well managed, well used and easily accessed and cover all aspects of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. The school possesses a good range of fiction and non-fiction books, which are relevant for this stage of education and therefore enhance the curriculum. Owing to the school's topic based approach to teaching and learning, links between English and other subjects, including ICT, are good.

MATHEMATICS

89. By the end of year 2, pupils' attainment is average in comparison with similar schools. It is below average in comparison with all schools because not enough pupils attain Level 3. The results have continued to improve during the recent years. The trend in improvement is similar to the national trend. Attainment of boys and girls is similar. Improvement since the previous inspection has been satisfactory.

90. The school makes good provision for the learning of pupils with special educational needs and pupils who are learning English as an additional language. As a result, they make good progress and achieve well, as do other pupils who start learning from a low base. However, higher attaining pupils are not stretched to their capability. As a result, they do not make as much progress as they should.
91. Number is a common strength that allows most pupils to attain average standards. Pupils understand the place value of each digit in a number, and use this knowledge well in setting out and carrying out calculations in addition and subtraction, for example, $91+30$ and $54-30$. Higher attaining pupils tackle similar sums in addition and subtraction involving 3 digit numbers, for example $871+847$. Most pupils use mental strategies successfully to solve number problems involving money. They understand odd and even numbers and use vocabulary such as more than, less than and between to identify a number between one and 100. They use a calculator correctly to add single digit numbers. They know common names and some properties of two-dimensional shapes such as a hexagon. Standards in solving word problems are relatively weaker because of a weakness in language competency. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of shape, space and measure are also relatively weaker, for example, about solid shapes.
92. Pupils achieve well because of good teaching and learning. When planning lessons, teachers use their good awareness of pupils' language needs to develop mathematical language, for example, to teach the concepts of odd and even, next to and between. This strategy helps pupils to grasp place values and how to use it to identify a missing number. Good lesson structure and pace supports efficient learning. Questioning is used effectively to stimulate interest, increase the involvement of all pupils and for the effective assessment of strengths and weaknesses in learning. Marking is good. It praises good work and directs pupils to put in more effort where it is judged to be lacking. The outcomes of assessment are also used to enhance opportunities to reinforce and consolidate learning. Management and methods are a common strength of teaching. These contribute to effective learning. Teachers expect all pupils to do well, but, for the most able, these expectations are too low; for example, work in pupils' books show that they pitch lessons at levels that do not consistently stretch the more able pupils. As a result, fewer pupils attain Level 3. This depresses the overall attainment in comparison with the national average. According to the school, mobility of pupils, especially at the higher end of attainment, is also an important contributory factor to the school's overall lower than average attainment; they have recently lost three potential Level 3 pupils to other schools.
93. Pupils' attitudes to learning mathematics are rarely less than good, and are often very good. Pupils match teachers' enthusiasm for the subject and they maintain good levels of concentration. They are keen and confident to participate in discussions. They show good co-operation with other pupils and maintain harmonious relationships in the class.
94. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The provision in the subject has seen several improvements since the previous inspection. All teachers have attended a five-day course in teaching the National Numeracy Strategy. As a result, they follow judiciously the national guidance on lesson structure. The quality of the curriculum has also improved and is now satisfactory. The school's planning is based appropriately on the National Numeracy Strategy and the subject is taught in a more organised manner than previously. There is a good focus on developing mathematical vocabulary and on mental mathematics. A satisfactory range of assessment procedures is used to monitor pupils' progress and to assist planning. The subject leader has monitored teaching and learning. She has also carried out some joint observations with the adviser from the local education authority. She has provided appropriate guidance to all staff. As a result, the quality of teaching and learning and pupils' interest in the subject have improved. The special educational needs co-ordinator is deployed to provide in-class

support in numeracy lessons. This helps the lower attaining pupils to achieve well. This has improved attainment at Level 2, which is now above the national average.

SCIENCE

95. In 2001 and 2002, teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 indicated that over nine out of ten pupils achieved the expected Level 2. In 2002, just under a quarter attained the higher Level 3. These results are about average. Inspection evidence shows attainment this year continues to be about average by Year 2, and there is little significant difference in the work of different groups of pupils, including girls and boys. Pupils' achievement is good overall, and this is reflected especially in the work of pupils that have special educational needs or English as an additional language.
96. The previous inspection suggested that attainment was in line with the national expectations by Year 2, that pupils' progress and teaching were satisfactory, that there was a lack of detail in the school's planning and that the science curriculum was not well balanced. Currently, attainment remains about average, despite the changes in the school's characteristics. Teaching is good and pupils progress well, building effectively on the good start in Nursery and Reception. Curricular planning has improved and there is better balance between the different areas of science. One weakness that remains is that teachers still do not meet the needs of more able pupils consistently. Improvement overall has been satisfactory.
97. In Years 1 and 2, pupils acquire knowledge and skills at a good rate because of largely good teaching and well-planned lessons. Attainment is about average. Year 2 pupils know about the different uses of electricity, but do not consistently compare mains and battery sources. They group different objects according to whether they use electricity or not, and draw simple electrical circuits using battery and bulb. They observe well some of the features of ice and how it can be changed to water. In Year 1, pupils understand how sounds are made and link this with the sense of hearing. They describe satisfactorily the properties of different materials and investigate carefully which would be best for making an umbrella. They understand that there is a range of different forces, including push and pull. Literacy skills sometimes limit the number of examples recorded by pupils, but drawings are often used effectively. Little use is made of pupils' numeracy or ICT skills.
98. The quality of teaching seen in lessons varies from satisfactory to very good, and is good overall. There is not enough detailed guidance to help teachers develop pupils' skills sufficiently. Recorded work in the books of one Year 1 class is of a quality that is significantly less than the other two classes in both depth and amount. Too much of the completed work lacks variation and not enough thought is given to ensuring more able pupils' knowledge and skills are extended enough. This was evident, for instance, when Year 2 pupils were studying ice and its properties. The planned work was securely at the expected standard, but questions used did not help to raise attainment beyond this. In a very good Year 1 lesson, the teacher's planning, enthusiasm and effective use of questions helped pupils to study the different types of forces used when making an interesting range of toys work. The recording system employed was effective. On occasions, teachers do not use enough visual aids to help learning. The use of water being poured from one container to another, for instance, would have aided understanding about liquids not having a definite shape. Teachers do not always extend pupils' speaking and listening skills because questions do not encourage extended replies. Pupils enjoy their science and are very well behaved. Attitudes and behaviour in science are particularly good when pupils are engaged in practical activities. In Year 2, pupils excitedly handled ice balloons and gloves, and discussed what they felt with their peers.

99. The school uses appropriate national guidance to ensure coverage of all relevant topics. However, there is insufficient detail to ensure that pupils' skills are developed in a systematic way or to ensure more able pupils are challenged consistently. This meant, for instance, that opportunities to extend learning about materials in Year 2 were missed. Good links are developed with other subjects, such as when using push and pull forces in physical education. Assessment of pupils' scientific knowledge and skills is well established, but the information is not used as much as it could be to plan subsequent work and to challenge pupils more. Science makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development, because teachers plan opportunities for pupils to handle materials and find out information for themselves. Pupils are also encouraged to share resources and work together. The co-ordinator provides satisfactory leadership, and has identified appropriate areas to improve provision and pupils' attainment further. The range of resources is satisfactory, although there is no specific ICT software to support science.

ART AND DESIGN

100. Art and design has a very high profile in the school and pupils make good progress in developing their skills, knowledge and understanding in the subject in all classes. As a result, the standard of work pupils produce is of a consistently good quality and pupils' attitudes to a subject they really enjoy are very good. Standards attained by Year 2 pupils are above those expected nationally in all aspects and all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, achieve well. Displays of art are of a consistently high standard throughout the school and reflect the importance given to the subject in all year groups.
101. The school has addressed many of the areas of concern noted by the previous inspection, which reported that, even though standards were in line with national expectations in most aspects of the subject, there was no scheme of work for art and design and teachers had no means of assessing pupils' progress.
102. All classes now follow a relevant scheme of work in art and design and the co-ordinator has ensured that all year groups and classes plan the curriculum on a whole-school basis in order to ensure overall structured progression in the build up of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. This can be seen throughout the school and was reflected in the work scrutinised from different age groups and classes.
103. Pupils in Year 1 develop their understanding of mixing colours and their use of lines and tones when drawing. They are encouraged to investigate ideas and are given regular opportunities to explore the possibilities of using a variety of materials and processes. Pupils in Year 2 study the work of famous artists such as Monet and Kandinsky and are given opportunities, for example, to paint flowers in the style of Van Gogh. The school's cross-curricular approach to teaching art and design is evident in the good quality clay work pupils have produced when making quite fearsome African masks or a collaborative papier-mâché relief model of Our Lady.
104. The standard of teaching in lessons observed during the inspection was consistently good or better and this was reflected in the good achievement of pupils. Teachers displayed high-quality subject knowledge and their teaching methods were effective in developing and improving pupils' skills and understanding in art and design. This was particularly evident during a very well taught lesson to pupils in Year 1 when the teacher's solid subject knowledge and outstanding use of a range of motivational strategies led to pupils responding very well to the challenge of using pastel colours to draw pictures of 'Old Bear' showing texture and shading. Although pupils' artistic abilities were wide ranging, the quality of their work reflected the concentration they put

into their drawings. By the end of the session many pupils were visibly delighted with their efforts.

105. Leadership and management of the subject are good and have ensured that all teachers understand the importance the school places on art and design as an outlet for creative ability and also as a means of communication for pupils whose language skills have yet to be fully developed. Procedures for checking pupils' progress are presently informally based and more structured procedures have yet to be fully developed. As a result, there is little use of assessment information to improve pupils' achievement in future lessons.
106. Resources for teaching art and design are good and cover all aspects of the subject. They are easily accessed and well used by all classes. Increasing the use of ICT to aid learning in art and design remains an area for future development.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

107. Standards at the time of last inspection were below average. The present standards are as expected at the age of seven. In this respect, the school has made good progress since the previous inspection. Pupils' work on display indicates that boys and girls, including pupils with special educational needs and pupils who are learning English as an additional language, make comparable progress.
108. By the age of seven, pupils generate ideas and design and make sound quality products; for example, they make sketch drawings of their products such as a car, train, lorry, caravan, moving pictures and puppets. Higher attaining pupils make better quality sketches. They label these and also make a list of materials. They write procedures on how to make their product, for example a wheeled vehicle. They use simple tools and join various parts such as axles and wheels as planned. According to a discussion with eleven Year 2 pupils, they designed and made products such as a house with furniture, fruit salad and sandwiches when they were in Year 1. However, they do not evaluate what they make as well as they should.
109. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. Their skills improve satisfactorily as they move from Year 1 to Year 2. This is evident from their work and the degree of independence that they develop. The quality of their finished products indicates that pupils show good interest in this subject.
110. Little teaching and learning were seen during the inspection, but pupils' work and a discussion with Year 2 pupils indicate that teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers' planning and assessment are satisfactory. These are based on national guidance. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory, having been taken over by a new co-ordinator recently. Some of the changes are beyond the control of the school due to staffing instability.

GEOGRAPHY

111. By the end of Year 2, pupils attain the expected standards. Pupils have above average awareness of places beyond their locality. They identify correctly several countries on a world map; their knowledge and understanding of Kenya is especially strong. Pupils have good enquiry skills, for example, they use information books effectively, compare photographs, and use CD-Rom and the Internet for this purpose. Pupils compare and understand physical and wildlife features that make Kenya different from their own locality. They also compare Kenyan pupils' life at school with their own and they look at and compare features of their houses with those in Kenya. They are knowledgeable about the similarities and differences. Pupils survey their local area and draw sketch

maps well showing some significant features. They are aware of pollution, for example litter. However, their knowledge and description of directions and use of symbols is below expected levels. Progress since the last inspection is satisfactory.

112. Owing to good teaching and learning, pupils achieve well. This is especially evident in the work of pupils who have special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. They respond to opportunities for learning with very keen interest and their behaviour is very good. In one lesson, they explored photographs and books, used CD-Roms and, with the teacher's help, downloaded pictures of wild animals and listened to their sounds. They collaborated well and made good gains in their knowledge and understanding of people and places in distant localities.
113. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers apply their secure knowledge of the subject for effective planning and explanations. They are enthusiastic about what they are teaching and this rubs off on to pupils who reciprocate with similar enthusiasm. The learning is made more interesting by bringing in features that excite pupils, for example learning about animals of the Savannah. Teachers expect pupils to develop good research skills. This has a positive impact on learning and achievement. They provide similar opportunities for all pupils to learn and achieve well. They use questioning very effectively to assess standards and to help pupils learn more.
114. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory, with a new subject co-ordinator in place. National guidance has been used effectively to create a scheme of work and for developing procedures to assess learning, which are used satisfactorily.

HISTORY

115. Although it was only possible to observe a limited number of history lessons during the period of the inspection, evidence drawn from an analysis of the limited amount of pupils' work in books and on display and also from discussions with pupils indicate that standards of attainment in history for pupils in Year 2 are similar to those expected nationally. The achievement of pupils in this age group is satisfactory overall. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, and those who speak English as an additional language, have full access to the curriculum and make sound progress in building up their knowledge, skills and understanding in history in both Years 1 and 2.
116. Standards are therefore similar to those seen during the last inspection and the school has now addressed the concern over the assessment of pupils' progress in the subject by introducing simple, yet effective, procedures for regularly checking achievement and standards of attainment.
117. Although teaching in the only lesson observed during the inspection was good, this was not reproduced in the quality of work of pupils in Year 1 and Year 2, which was satisfactory overall and reflected the overall standard of teaching of history throughout the school. An analysis of pupils' work showed a gradual increase in historical knowledge and understanding as pupils progressed through the school.
118. Pupils in Year 1 learn how toys have developed through the ages and study homes of long ago. They are given opportunities to develop concepts about the past and the present and build up an understanding of the differences between then and now. The work of average and higher attaining pupils displays an emerging sense of chronology and some knowledge of aspects of the past. Work produced by lower attaining pupils is often limited by lack of writing skills and contains little evidence of any real understanding of the topics covered.

119. Pupils in Year 2 study the Crimean War through the eyes of a nurse and learn about seaside holidays in the past and the importance of Remembrance Day. The work they produce displays evidence that most pupils are beginning to develop knowledge of the past beyond living memory and have some idea of why people living in the past acted as they did. Once again, however, the work of less able pupils is limited by their lack of literacy skills and this affects their overall achievement.
120. The co-ordinator has recently introduced simple, yet effective, assessment procedures in order to record pupils' progress in history and has started to monitor delivery of the subject through checking planning and discussions with teachers. She has ensured that resources for teaching history are satisfactory and that they are easily accessed. The school's present resources include a range of relevant artefacts, which are used well to enhance the curriculum. However, good quality resources to support the teaching of history through ICT are lacking and this is an area for future development. The resources that are available are used satisfactorily. Links between history and other subjects, such as English, geography and art and design, are good and are used well to enhance learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

121. Seven-year-olds attain standards that are close to that expected, and pupils' achievement is satisfactory in view of the low base they start learning this subject. This progress results from an adequate number of desktop and laptop computers, the establishment of a computer suite and teachers having developed secure subject expertise following completion of nationally recommended training. No direct teaching of the subject was observed. However, there were opportunities for observing pupils using computers when learning about aspects of history and geography. These indicate that all pupils, including boys and girls, and those with special educational needs or for whom English is an additional language, are making satisfactory progress and reach the expected standards.
122. A discussion with eleven Year 2 pupils from three classes indicates that the improvement in the provision of ICT since the last inspection is satisfactory. This contributes to satisfactory achievement. The pupils say they use computers to generate, amend and record their work. They share their ideas in the form of text, for example stories, sentences and poems. Many enter, save and retrieve their work. They talk about their experiences of ICT, for example, calculator, remote control devices, play station, game boy, DVD, CDs, printer and scanner. They use sound and pictures, for example when learning about the geography of East African plains. They use software to draw pictures and make cards. The discussion with pupils indicated their strong enthusiasm for the subject.
123. Although no direct teaching of ICT was observed, its use in geography and history lessons indicate that teaching and learning are at least satisfactory. Teachers are confident. They monitor pupils' progress closely and provide effective support to help pupils learn more. Methods and management are effective. As a result, pupils learn well. The use of ICT in other subjects is limited.
124. Leadership and management are good. This has led to significant improvements during the recent years. The curricular planning and assessment are based on national guidance and are satisfactory. Teacher assessments indicate that at least 6 out of every 10 Year 2 pupils reach the expected Level 2, and a few higher than this. The co-ordinator monitors teaching and learning and provides effective guidance to teachers and other staff; for example the co-ordinator supports the use of laptop computers in Year 2 once a week.

MUSIC

125. Music has a high profile in the school and standards of attainment meet, and in some ways exceed, national expectations in both Years 1 and 2. Pupils enjoy their music-making activities and attitudes to the subject are very good. Achievement is satisfactory in all year groups and all pupils, especially those with special educational needs or those for whom English is not their first language, make satisfactory progress and are confident when singing and performing.
126. This represents a slight increase in standards since the previous inspection, which reported that overall standards in music generally met national expectations but that the curriculum was not entirely balanced as the emphasis was too often on listening rather than composing and performing.
127. This concern has now been addressed. All classes follow a whole-school scheme of work and teachers plan together to ensure continuity, breadth and progression in lessons. The curriculum is also enriched through the school's participation in local music festivals and other events. Visits to the school by musical groups, such as 'African Musik Makers', 'Spud and Yam' (Irish and Caribbean music) and 'Croydon Brass Quintet', also extend pupils' musical experiences.
128. Pupils are given regular opportunities to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding in music through a variety of activities, which combine different aspects of the subject. Year 1 pupils learn how to sing and perform songs with confidence; Year 2 pupils listen carefully to pieces of music in order to identify different sound configurations. They use symbols to represent sounds, which they recall from memory. Many older pupils express their views and feelings for different types of music. The standard of singing in many of the assemblies was good and added to the spirituality of the occasion. During a very well taught hymn practice, the quality of singing was very good indeed. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 sang with feeling and expression and were encouraged to greater efforts by the very good input of both teachers and learning support assistants.
129. The co-ordinator leads and manages the subject in a satisfactory manner and has ensured that staff have been given recent opportunities to increase both their knowledge and confidence to teach the subject. As a result, the standard of teaching in nearly all observed lessons ranged from satisfactory to very good. The one exception was when the teacher abandoned a lesson, owing to problems related to planning and delivery.
130. Nearly all observed lessons were well structured and planning included the use of musical terms to aid pupils' learning. When teaching was good or better tasks were well matched to pupils' abilities and pupils were actively involved in all aspects of the sessions, which challenged and sometimes extended pupils' creative abilities. Where teaching methods were less effective, lessons lacked pace and pupils became restless as many found listening a problem and had difficulties understanding the concepts involved.
131. Resources for teaching music are good and cover all areas associated with the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. The school possesses a good selection of easily accessed musical instruments, especially percussion, and a satisfactory range of books on music as well as a number of tapes and CDs. Resources to link music to ICT are limited and the regular use of ICT to support the teaching of music was not evident during the inspection. The school has recognised the need to develop assessment procedures for checking pupils' progress. There are presently no regular extra-curricular activities offered to pupils in music either during or after the school day.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

132. At the end of Year 2, pupils' standards are at the level anticipated for their age. Most pupils achieve satisfactorily, and there is no evident difference in the performance of pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. Standards appear to be slightly lower than those previously reported. The school has been successful in maintaining good curricular provision, despite increasing pressure on the time available. A particularly positive feature is the provision of swimming for all pupils from Reception onwards. Curricular planning has improved, through the introduction of a detailed commercial system. All pupils have an equal opportunity to develop their skills.
133. Year 2 pupils demonstrate a wide range of ball handling skills. Most pupils achieve the expected standard when bouncing, catching or rolling a ball. Boys tend to show better ball control skills than girls. In Year 1, pupils develop satisfactory sequences of movements when travelling over apparatus using different push and pull forces. Pupils are sometimes lively and do not listen well; this can slow learning. However, overall, attitudes and behaviour are good. Many pupils improve their skills satisfactorily following the teacher's comments.
134. Teaching and learning are satisfactory, although there are examples of good teaching. The management of pupils overall is not always fully effective, and this leads to some lack of attention. In good lessons, this weakness is not evident. Pupils learn satisfactorily when teachers concentrate on how to improve, for instance, ball handling skills. In most lessons, teachers used demonstration by pupils well to illustrate good practice, but pupils were rarely encouraged to comment on what they had seen or to incorporate the ideas in their own performance. Teachers ensure that pupils warm up and warm down effectively and pupils understand the need for this. Not all, however, follow the school's guidelines in ensuring that earrings are either taped or not worn during physical education.
135. The curriculum planned for physical education is good, and exceeds statutory requirements because of the introduction of swimming. There are also opportunities for pupils to swim one afternoon a week after school. Good links are made to other subjects, such as science when using push and pull forces to travel over equipment. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development, especially when working co-operatively. Assessment follows the guidance included in the commercial planning documents, but the co-ordinator has identified the need to refine this to meet the school's needs. The new co-ordinator is supported well by the former holder of the post. Together they provide good leadership. Resources are satisfactory, except for the limited amount of simple climbing equipment, such as tables and benches. This lack of resources slowed learning in the Year 1 gymnastics lessons. The hall is a good size, but the corners of the pillars at one end are unprotected. The school has access to the junior school's swimming pool.