

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **DAYLESFORD INFANT SCHOOL**

Solihull

LEA area: Solihull

Unique reference number: 104043

Headteacher: Mrs Linda Jones

Reporting inspector: Mrs Chris Field  
9479

Dates of inspection: 10<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> February 2003

Inspection number: 246344

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3-7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Lyndon Road Solihull
Postcode:	B92 7QW
Telephone number:	0121 743 2290
Fax number:	0121 742 0408
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Dave Crutchington
Date of previous inspection:	26 <sup>th</sup> January 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
9479	Mrs C A Field	Registered inspector	Educational Inclusion	Information about the school The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further? How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
19361	Mr K Ross	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
31801	Mrs Y Bacchetta	Team inspector	Science Geography History Physical education	
22704	Mr G Williams	Team inspector	Provision for pupils with special educational needs Provision for pupils with English as an additional language English Music Religious education	
11704	Mr P Williman		Mathematics Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology	
32531	Mrs S Pearce		Provision for children in the Foundation Stage	

The inspection contractor was:

Evenlode Associates Limited  
6 Abbey Close  
Alcester  
Warks.  
B49 5QW

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The school is situated on the outskirts of Solihull close to the boundary with Birmingham. Pupils come from neighbouring houses that are mainly owner-occupied. A handful of pupils travel from some distance away to receive their education at the school. There are 238 pupils on roll with 60 children attending part-time in the nursery. The school has a waiting list for the nursery. Most pupils are from white British backgrounds, but nearly a fifth are from different backgrounds including Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Indian. The school is supporting 3 pupils who are at an early stage of learning to speak English. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is low; one pupil has a statement. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is well below average. School data shows that children's attainment on entry to school is broadly average overall, but covers a wide spread of ability.

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

Daylesford Infant School is highly effective. Standards are above average and compare well with those found in similar schools. Teaching is consistently good with some very good features that enable pupils to achieve successfully. The headteacher provides well-focussed and determined leadership that ensures crystal clear educational direction. She has built a high performing team of staff who provide a happy and purposeful environment in which pupils develop into confident and capable learners. The value for money provided is good.

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

- Standards are above average in English, mathematics, science, religious education, geography, history and music and are well above average in information and communication technology.
- Consistently good teaching across the school is enabling all pupils irrespective of their gender, ethnicity or ability to learn successfully.
- Pupils' attitudes and values are both very good and, together with good behaviour, underpin positively their creditable achievements.
- The curriculum is rich and exciting, with very good provision for personal, moral, social, cultural and health education assisting pupils in becoming responsible future citizens.
- The school is very inclusive in its practices and makes very good provision for pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language.
- The procedures for health and safety matters are implemented meticulously and so pupils feel well looked after at school.
- The leadership and management of the school are both very good and there is excellent reflection of the school's aims and values in its work.

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

- The school's tracking and target setting systems could be even sharper.
- More opportunities could be provided for pupils to use their good writing skills across the curriculum.

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

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

The school was last inspected in 1998 and three key issues were identified that centred on improving teaching, making monitoring and evaluation more effective and improving the provision for information and communication technology (ICT). Good progress has been made with improving all of the key issues raised at the time of the previous inspection. The school was accredited with the government's achievement award in 2002 in recognition of its improving academic standards. There is very good shared capacity for future success.

## STANDARDS

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

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

***NB Similar schools are those with between 8-20% of pupils eligible for free school meals***

The above table shows that the school's results in the 2002 SATs were well above the national average in reading and writing, and above average in mathematics. The school's results in tests compare very favourably with those of similar schools. The girls' performance in SATs in 2002 was above average but over three years shows a decline when compared to that of the boys. Standards are rising and this is a positive feature and testament to the school successfully breaking down the barriers that some pupils have to learning. The school has met its agreed targets every year so far, even when they are challenging.

Inspectors looked carefully at how well different groups of pupils were doing in every year from nursery to Year 2, and found the majority to be making at least good progress irrespective of their ability, gender or ethnicity. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress overall against their individual targets. The very small proportion of pupils who are learning to speak English as an additional language, are making good progress because of the good support they receive. The standards in ICT have much improved from the just satisfactory level reported in 1998. Standards are above average in English, mathematics, science, religious education, geography, history and music and are well above average in ICT. Standards are average in art and design, PE and design and technology.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Almost all of the time, the pupils show very positive attitudes to their studies and this is a key factor in helping them to achieve well.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' show good standards of behaviour at all times. They collaborate well in lessons and show very good levels of independence. The peer buddy system is a positive feature.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils take on roles of responsibility very willingly. They have high self-esteem and are confident to make the most of the good learning opportunities provided. Relationships are very good at all levels.
Attendance	Pupils are eager to attend school and most are punctual. The school is concerned about the increase in the number of holidays taken in term-time and is monitoring this carefully.

## 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.*

Teaching is very much better than it was when the school was last inspected in 1998. The range of teaching methods has been improved from being unsatisfactory to now very good and this is a positive feature in assisting different pupils to achieve well. Classrooms are happy and stimulating places of learning in which pupils show very good levels of interest, concentration and independence. Teachers have good expectations and there is very good focus on developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. This starts in the nursery and is built on systematically to Year 2. However, there are missed opportunities, for example in history and geography for pupils to use their independent writing skills to the full. There are strengths in the teaching of pupils with special educational needs who make good progress against their specific targets. The regular reviews ensure that they know how well they are doing. The school has yet to transfer the process of sharing targets with other groups of pupils so their own knowledge of their learning is not as good. Teachers mark work conscientiously and write supportive comments; they do not always show clearly the next steps for improvement, including better presentation. The school is well placed to extend its monitoring systems to iron out the inconsistencies so that very good teaching becomes the norm.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is rich and exciting and is fully accessed by all pupils. The school has very good strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy skills. Occasionally, some pupils are withdrawn for extra literacy work that is valuable, but they miss out on other lessons and this has yet to be monitored.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good provision helps these pupils make good progress and achieve well.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Pupils who learn to speak English as an additional language are given effective support and make the same good progress as their class-mates.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good provision overall is made for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is assisting them to become confident, caring and tolerant young people who are well prepared for the next phase of their education.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The procedures in place for child protection, monitoring academic progress and for ensuring pupils' welfare are very good. However, there is a need to up-date the procedures for regularly assessing risks and keeping records in school. The school's target setting systems are effective in literacy, but could be even sharper in other subjects.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	There are very well forged links with parents who hold the school in very high regard.



## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher is a highly effective leader and manager. There is crystal clear educational direction that is enabling the school to build on successes and improve the standards. Senior managers are developing their roles well and the staff are a well bonded and high performing team who collectively ensure that all pupils receive a good education.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are committed, knowledgeable and very proud of the school. They fulfil all legal responsibilities and are ensuring good application of best value principles to all aspects of the school's work.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good attention is paid to evaluating the school's performance and to establishing effective strategies that will assist good improvement. The next step is for further refinement in tracking how well pupils are learning across all subjects.
The strategic use of resources	Good accommodation, a generous level of staffing and very good resources is used very effectively to enable pupils to achieve well. The school provides good value for money.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Children like school.</li><li>• Behaviour in the school is good.</li><li>• Teaching is good, there are high expectations and pupils make good progress.</li><li>• The school works closely with parents, keeps them well informed and is approachable.</li><li>• The school is well led and managed.</li><li>• The school is helping children to become mature and responsible.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Nothing of significance.</li></ul>

The inspection team agree with the positive views expressed by parents.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. The school's results in national tests (SATs) have shown a rising trend since the time of the previous inspection. Pupils' achievements are showing good improvement since then. The school's good rate of improvement in standards was recognised by the government's achievement award in 2002.
2. The school's results in the 2002 SATs were well above the national average in reading and writing, and above average in mathematics. The school's results in SATs compare very favourably with those of similar schools. The girls' performance in SATs was above average, but over three years shows a decline when compared to that of the boys. Inspectors looked very carefully at how well different pupils in school are doing. There is no significant difference in the rate at which boys and girls are learning, whatever their background or ability. Neither is there any difference in the good enthusiasm for work; all pupils are keen and eager to learn. There is an even spread of both girls and boys across different ability groups and in fact this year, there are slightly more girls in the higher attaining sets in Year 2.
3. All pupils at Daylesford Infant School irrespective of their gender, ethnicity or ability, are receiving a very good education and one that is enabling them to make good progress and reach above average standards in English, mathematics, science, religious education, geography, history and music and are well above average standards in information and communication technology (ICT). Pupils are attaining at the level expected for their age in art and design, design and technology and physical education. The school has earmarked these subjects for improvement in the near future in its well conceived action plan.
4. When children first start school in the nursery their attainment varies widely, but overall is broadly average. All children, including those from minority ethnic backgrounds and those with special educational needs, make good progress in the nursery and reception classes, known as the Foundation Stage. The majority are on track to achieve the early learning goals in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, creative, physical and personal and social aspects and knowledge and understanding of the world by the time they start in Year 1. A significant proportion of children in reception are already working within the National Curriculum level 1 in literacy and numeracy.
5. The school has highly effective strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy that enable pupils to make very good progress in reading and in speaking and listening and good progress in writing and number work. The school has yet to fully extend the potential for pupils to write creatively and at length across the curriculum. For example, there are missed opportunities for pupil to show their full capabilities in writing in geography, history and to some extent science when recording their work. There is inconsistency in the way different teachers expect work to be presented and some work is scruffy even though the content is good. These are aspects that closer monitoring will flag up. Pupils with particularly well-honed literacy and numeracy skills are placed in a Year 1/2 mixed age class to enable them to be further challenged. In recorded work it is clear that some of these pupils are working securely within National Curriculum level 3 which is above average for those in Year 2 and well above for those in Year 1. In the two single age classes in Year 2 there are fewer pupils attaining at this higher level, but a handful are reaching this standard. In Year 1 classes, no pupils are attaining beyond a level 2. The split class arrangement is working best for pupils in Year 1 as the very highest attainers are receiving very good levels of challenge by being mixed with older pupils. In the lessons that inspectors observed there was no significant difference between the three classes in Year 2 in the quality of learning experiences provided. Inspectors could see that the split class ensures fewer numbers of pupils gives a few higher attaining individuals more attention.

6. The standards being reached in ICT are well above average and this is very much a success story as standards were just sound when the school was previously inspected, with some attainment barely meeting national expectations. The dedicated computer suite is timetabled intensively and inspectors saw very good learning taking place across the age range. The teachers are confident in their use of ICT so that there is good use made of it to support pupils learning across the curriculum. Some very useful opportunities are provided in ICT for pupils to assess how well they are achieving and for targets to be set to help them make improvement. This practice could usefully be promoted more widely in other subjects.
7. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the highly effective provision made for them. Support staff together with teachers, ensure that these pupils have time to work on their individual targets that are well-focused and enable them to take the small steps forward to secure their confidence as learners. When taken out of the class to work on tailor-made programmes the activities are particularly effective and help these pupils to make good gains in literacy and numeracy in particular. The school places strong emphasis on building pupils' phonological awareness that results in successes in reading and spellings. The withdrawal and *catch-up* strategies are clearly effective but inspectors noted a down side. When pupils are withdrawn they miss out on the lesson taking place in the class. During the inspection pupils who were withdrawn missed parts of music, science and school council for example and no-one is monitoring the impact of this. This requires attention to ensure that pupils are not being unduly disadvantaged.
8. The very small proportion of pupils who are learning to speak English as an additional language, are well provided for, and they make good progress. In some cases these pupils also have special educational needs, the school deals with this very effectively and inspectors observed some high quality work taking place to support a young child that resulted in very good learning taking place.
9. A key feature in supporting pupils' good achievements and the school's rising standards is the use of targets. These are set at the school level so that managers can monitor and adjust them upwards as required. At the class level for teachers to keep under review; in numeracy and literacy targets are shared with parents too. The targets are challenging and this is positive. The next step is for targets to be shared with pupils so that they know how to improve their work across the subjects they study.
10. The school has at least good capacity to take on board all of the areas identified for improvement and is well placed to sustain a good rate of improvement.

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

11. The strengths reported by the previous inspection have all been sustained and behaviour is now very much better than it was and is good overall. The pupils' very good attitudes, values and personal development are a strong feature of the school. Pupils feel how they are expected to work hard by teachers who know their capabilities. They are well motivated and respond positively to the help provided by teachers and support staff to enable them to improve their standards of work.
12. During lessons, in and round the school and at break-times, pupils' interest and involvement in whatever they are doing is very good. Nearly all pupils pay good attention to their teacher and fellow pupils when they are contributing to discussions. They have an enthusiasm to get on with whatever task they have been asked to do, showing a natural curiosity for the world around them as well as demonstrating caring and thoughtful attitudes.
13. Pupils with special educational needs take a full and active part in the stimulating activities on offer. They behave well around the school and relate well to their peers and to adults. Many attend after school activities and join in enthusiastically. Pupils with English as an additional language mix well with their peers and are keen to participate fully in activities that the school

promotes. They are well motivated, keen to learn and this contributes significantly to the good progress they make.

14. There are very good relationships based on mutual trust and respect between teachers and pupils and between the pupils themselves. These positive relationships underpin the life and work of the school and this ethos is clearly stated in the school's aim to provide each child with appropriate opportunities to learn to live and work together thereby developing respect for themselves, others and their surroundings.
15. Pupils' behaviour is good overall and there is an absence of oppressive behaviour. There have been no exclusions in recent years. Any incidents or problems of a sexist or racist nature that might occur are recorded in the school incident book. There have been no returns made recently. Within lessons, where teaching is stimulating, discipline and behaviour is very good. However, after some classes have had a very busy morning, on a few occasions pupils' behaviour in the afternoon is not as good and only tight management keeps control. Behaviour around the school, in the playground and at lunchtime is very good. The school is an orderly and happy community providing a calm and secure place in which pupils learn well.
16. Pupils' personal development is very good. They are learning a good range of social skills which are helping them to develop into mature individuals. The pupils respond well to the rich opportunities provided for them within an ethos of a family atmosphere and a strong focus on each individual pupil's needs. They have caring attitudes and are encouraged successfully to develop values of friendship, kindness and responsibility. For example, playground 'buddies' help those who have no one to play with. They have also been trained to handle playground disputes. Pupils with assigned duties carry them out effectively, and enjoy being helpful. There are class and a school council where pupils can bring and share ideas in discussion. Pupils thus have a practical opportunity for involvement in the decision-making processes of the school. Pupils take on roles of responsibility very willingly. They have high self-esteem and are confident to make the most of the good learning opportunities provided.
17. Overall attendance is broadly in line with the national average. Unauthorised absence is below the national average. A small but increasing minority of parents take children out of school for family holidays and this has an adverse effect on attendance levels and sometimes the progress their children make. The school is rightly concerned about this and is monitoring the situation closely. Nearly all pupils are punctual and registration is completed quickly and effectively before the morning and afternoon lessons. This enables learning to get off to a purposeful and efficient start.

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

18. Consistently good teaching across the school is enabling all pupils irrespective of their gender, ethnicity or ability to learn successfully. This marks significant improvement since the previous inspection in 1998 when weaknesses were flagged up in the teaching of ICT and where a tenth of lessons were unsatisfactory.
19. The quality of teaching today, is good overall. Around nine tenths of lessons were of good or better quality with some very good teaching seen in pupils' work and in lessons in English, mathematics and ICT. Only one lesson was unsatisfactory because the teacher did not ensure that all pupils were working sufficiently well to achieve the objectives she had set. In contrast, two excellent lessons were observed, one a mathematics lesson and another, music. Here the highly effective teaching enabled both boys and girls to make rapid gains in their knowledge and understanding and in consequence attained well above average standards of work. Because teaching is good across the school so is learning. Classrooms are happy and productive places in which pupils show very good levels of interest, concentration and independence and become capable and confident learners who reach good standards.

20. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good and enables the majority of children to achieve the early learning goals in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, creative, physical and personal and social aspects and knowledge and understanding of the world by the time they start in Year 1. A significant proportion of children in reception are already working within the National Curriculum level 1 in literacy and numeracy. Teachers and support staff operate as an effective team. Good attention is paid to personal and social development so that the children quickly build the skills they need to work together successfully. The children are encouraged to *have a go* at the interesting activities provided and this approach helps them to build high levels of confidence and good self-esteem.
21. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good. Relationships in all classes are very good. There is a strong sense of teachers wanting to be with their pupils and vice-versa and this underpins the good learning environment created. Teachers treat the pupils as responsible young people and provide many opportunities for them to take initiative and manage appropriate aspects of their studies. For example, in a very successful personal, social and health education lesson in Year 2, the pupils led a class council meeting with very little input from the teacher. The chair showed good authority in inviting representations about a wide range of issues, whilst the vice-chair gave support and the secretary took the minutes. The chair took great care to involve all of his classmates as they decided on the best solution for ensuring that the school rules are always upheld.
22. There are strengths in the teaching of pupils with special educational needs who make good progress against their specific targets. The regular reviews ensure that they know how well they are doing. The teaching of pupils who are learning to speak English is well focussed on enabling them to practise literacy and oral skills. For example, in a lesson in Year 1 about the local environment, pupils were asked quite complex questions to check that they knew how to identify key features in the locality and could give direction to a visitor to get from one place to another. The teacher deliberately asked a pupil with limited English a series of questions that required fairly simple responses so that she could voice her opinions but not feel different from others in so doing.
23. The range of teaching methods has been improved from being unsatisfactory to now very good and this is positive feature in assisting different pupils to achieve well. Other positive aspects of teaching that are to be found in all years include:
- Good subject knowledge.
  - Good expectations, particularly in developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills.
  - Detailed planning.
  - Effective class management.
  - Well deployed support staff who assist pupils with learning difficulties very sensitively.
24. However, there are aspects of teaching though satisfactory would stand improvement as practice is inconsistent. For example, teachers mark work conscientiously and write supportive comments; they do not always show clearly the next steps for improvement, including better presentation. Additionally, there are missed opportunities, for example in history and geography for pupils to use their independent writing skills to the full. The school has yet to transfer the highly effective process of sharing targets seen in special educational needs work, with other groups of pupils to ensure that their knowledge of their learning helps them make improvement.
25. The school is well placed to extend its monitoring systems to iron out such inconsistencies so that very good teaching becomes the norm.

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

26. There are secure, whole-school long and medium-term planning systems in place which ensure fair and equal coverage of the National Curriculum, requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education, National Literacy and National Numeracy Strategies and the Foundation Stage curriculum. The curriculum meets fully all requirements. There is a well-planned systematic approach to personal, social and health education. ICT skills are planned for and taught discretely and the contribution of technology and computer work to improve learning across the curriculum is well advanced. This marks significant improvement since the previous inspection.
27. The quality and range of the curriculum is good. The strategies for literacy and numeracy are highly effective. Staff plan together in year groups and this ensures that pupils in parallel classes cover the same material. Teachers include curriculum objectives in their lesson planning but these are not supporting precisely different levels of attainment. One of the strengths of curriculum planning is the very good arrangement for the support staff to be involved in the process, and they are deployed well to enhance pupils' learning.
28. The curriculum is rich and exciting. Teachers choose interesting activities for pupils and this helps them to learn successfully. For example, in a Year 2 English lesson, the teacher had prepared a tied sack full of items that were referred to in the story the class were studying. As the story unfolded the teacher brought out the items one by one, this assisted the pupils in good recall of the storyline and plot because of the strong mental imagery that had resulted from her innovative approach. The curriculum is enhanced by good provision from extracurricular clubs, for example music, art, computer, French and football. The school has firm plans to establish a mathematics club at lunchtime in the near future. These activities are very well supported by pupils and parents; for example 75 per cent of Year 2 children have joined the music club. The school also provides before and after-school care which is well attended. The transfer arrangements between the local family of schools are good and have been developed very thoughtfully to ensure that the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs are well met. There are strong links with the community that widen pupils' horizons. For example, the music group perform to a local Adult centre at Christmas. Wider community links involve the school in sponsoring a child in India called "Pappu" who regularly sends letters to pupils and receives replies.
29. The school has taken steps to ensure that its provision for all pupils with special educational needs (SEN) complies fully with the revised Code of Practice. The school places great emphasis on early intervention and makes a graduated response to meeting pupils' needs from nursery onwards. Pupils make good progress because the work planned for them builds directly on the targets in their individual education plans. Members of the support staff and teachers are particularly skilful at devising and executing work plans for these pupils. Record keeping and feedback arrangements between staff are very good. Curriculum provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good because it enables them to make good progress. Staff use the targets in pupils' individual education plans to provide and deliver the right level of work for these pupils, which ensures that they are well motivated, work hard and achieve well. There is one aspect of the provision that could stand improvement. When pupils are withdrawn from lessons for individual or group-work, no one is monitoring what the impact is in terms of what they miss out on back in the classroom.
30. Pupils who learn to speak English as an additional language are given effective assistance to enable them to make the same good progress as their classmates. Pupils from different minority ethnic backgrounds are given a very warm welcome by the school and settle well into the routines because of the support provided. For example, a girl from Zimbabwe joined Year 1 a few days before the inspection began and had already made a confident start in her new class. The school has a very positive ethos with regard to celebrating the uniqueness of individuals and in this way promotes highly effective educational inclusion.

31. The school pays very good attention to supporting the personal, social and health education of its pupils. This is of great relevance to some pupils who begin school with immature behaviour but grow in confidence and self-assurance because of the school's good approach. A well-conceived programme that includes aspects of keeping safe and healthy is covered and, through *circle times* and assemblies, for example, pupils consider a range of issues that provides them with a very good set of values and principles by which to live. There is the required attention to drugs and sex education which is sensitively geared to the ages of the pupils. There are class councils and a school council which result in pupils' views being fully taken account of in the school's life and development.
32. Very good provision overall is made for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school promotes aspects of citizenship very effectively. The school is currently working towards achieving an *Eco-award* to celebrate the high level of pupils' involvement in caring for the environment. The school heightens pupils' awareness about the world around them very effectively. In the school foyer there are numerous awards that are testament to the school's high regard for environmental matters including *walk to school week* and *waste watch*. The school has consistent expectations about how pupils will behave and relate to each other. Rules are very prominently displayed in every classroom, and teachers universally make their expectations clear. The quality of relationships at all levels, are mutually respectful and tolerant. Assemblies make a satisfactory contribution to spiritual development and there is some good emphasis on poetry in literacy and through art, music and dance during a multi-cultural week when customs and traditions from Asia, Africa and Europe were looked at. Religious education places a useful emphasis on a range of major world faiths that enable pupils to consider the beliefs of Christians, Jews, Muslims, Sikhs and Hindus. In Year 2, pupils have reflected on *heaven* and thought about what it means to different faiths. They have written some thought-provoking accounts that include the fact that Muslims see it as a garden in the same way that Christians do. In Year 2, pupils have looked at similarities and differences between Mary Seacole and Florence Nightingale and have considered the concept of *empathy* and how each woman made changes for the better within the nursing profession. All of this is assisting pupils to become confident, caring and tolerant young people who are well prepared for the next phase of their education.

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

33. The school is a caring community in which pupils' learning and their personal and social development are given equally effective consideration. This, together with a family atmosphere and strong focus on each individual pupil, provides a very good foundation for developing the very good attitudes to school that pupils show. The standards of pastoral support and guidance identified in the previous report have further improved and are now very good. Monitoring and the support for pupils' academic progress have also improved significantly. The procedures for health and safety matters are implemented meticulously and so pupils feel well looked after at school
34. There are effective procedures to report health and safety concerns and record any remedial action taken. Regular safety checks of equipment are completed and fire drills are held each term and correctly recorded. Regular reviews are undertaken of the condition of the premises and any issues arising are dealt with promptly and effectively. However, risk assessment procedures need updating. The current documentation does not show a full and accurate awareness of potential risks to pupils' safety, nor does it identify the appropriate steps taken to prevent or control such situations. This requires attention.
35. The school has very good procedures for child protection matters and all staff are fully aware of their responsibilities and duties if they feel a child is at risk. First aid procedures are implemented very well and there are sufficient staff trained in first aid. There are appropriate procedures in place for recording accidents and notifying parents of any injury that may require further monitoring.

36. The school's arrangements for identifying pupils with special educational needs have due regard for the procedures recommended in the code of practice and the provision outlined for pupils with statements of special educational needs. The school gives very good care for pupils known to need particular attention and works effectively with outside agencies, including the speech and language specialist. An appropriate and graduated response begins in the nursery and, via timely assessment and regular reviews, pupils are given the support they need in each year to achieve as well as other pupils.
37. The key issue regarding assessment at the previous inspection has been addressed very effectively and the sharp rise in standards in the core subjects between 1999 and 2002 are partly as a result of more effective assessment arrangements. Data analysis to identify how to improve the curriculum and raise standards is a key tool of senior managers. There is a strong link between assessment procedures and action planning and this ensures appropriate progress for individuals and groups in all subjects. Good professional development of staff in assessment and moderation of assessment data has led to highly effective monitoring of the standards of achievement and progress of all pupils from the time they enter until they leave the school. Monitoring typically includes lesson observations, work scrutiny and discussion with pupils in core subjects. Half-termly assessments of pupils' progress in all subjects are based upon the work undertaken and the data used very well to modify the curriculum either to increase the level of challenge for the highest attainers or to provide a wider range of activities for lower attainers. The monitoring of pupils by ethnicity is thorough and indicates no significant underachievement. Tracking, though clearly effective, requires refinement in some aspects, for instance in evaluating exactly what those pupils who are withdrawn from lessons for additional literacy support miss out on back in the classroom.
38. Pupils' individual targets to be attained by Year 2 are correctly based on their attainment at the end of the Foundation Stage. Termly targets arising from a review of targets each term are set in literacy, numeracy and PSHE. These are usefully shared with parents at teacher/parent consultation meetings, but are not yet shared with pupils to involve them enough in assessing their own learning.
39. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are very good. Administrative arrangements are very efficient and unexplained absences are investigated. The computerised system the school uses provides attendance and tracking information quickly and effectively. The school is currently monitoring the rise in the number of holidays being taken in term-time as this is causing concern.
40. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and eliminating oppressive behaviour are very good. There is a clear and effective strategy for the management of behaviour and pupils are encouraged to look at their own behaviour and make choices. The school's values embrace inclusion. For example, by the way it manages the very small number of pupils who have behavioural problems. Lunchtime routines are well established and midday supervisors, who have received effective training to undertake this role, work well to ensure that lunchtime is a pleasant social occasion.
41. The school successfully promotes a healthy and safe environment by placing a high priority on its personal, social and health education programme for pupils. For example, the school is part of a healthy school initiative. Pupils are encouraged to eat fruit at break times and have water and milk for drinks. A principle aim of the school is to create a stimulating, caring and secure environment that challenges and encourages each pupil to learn new skills. The school meets this aim very successfully.

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

42. Parents' views of the school are very positive, as at the time of the previous inspection. They see the particular strengths as the approachability of the staff, the management of the school and the progress their children make. Any concerns are dealt with promptly and effectively. Parents raise



no areas of concern. They are pleased that their children like school. Parents hold the school in very high regard. Inspection evidence supports the positive views of parents.

43. Good steps are taken by the school to evaluate its effectiveness in working with parents. Questionnaires have been sent out to find parents' views on such matters as the use of information communication technology in school and parents' e-mail facilities. Parents are also asked for their comments on various issues via newsletters. The school reports a good response.
44. There are very good arrangements to involve parents and carers of pupils with special educational needs in their annual reviews. The special educational needs co-ordinator, in consultation with the class teacher, draws up their individual education plans in accordance with the new Code of Practice and parents and carers are immediately advised and invited for discussion.
45. The school works closely with the parents of pupils who speak English as an additional language. The good relationships and attitudes promoted by the school encourages parents to be fully involved in early discussions to identify the most effective strategies to help overcome pupils' difficulties at an early stage of language acquisition. Some parents from minority ethnic backgrounds are deliberately choosing Daylesford even though they live outside the borough because of its very positive ethos that ensures very effective educational inclusion.
46. Appropriate home/school agreements are in place. These show clearly the school's aims and values. The agreement was jointly written by staff, governors and parents working together. All parents have signed and returned the agreement, indicating a commitment to support their children's education. The school has very good links with parents.
47. Parents are provided with very good information about the school through the school brochure, regular newsletters and general correspondence. These give a clear overview of the school and cover all activities and requirements of the school year. There is also an open morning and an afternoon when parents have an opportunity to observe children in the classroom.
48. A particular merit of home/school communications is that teachers send parents advance information on the taught curriculum that shows ways they can support their children's learning at home. Also there are well-attended termly consultation meetings with parents when pupil targets are shared and evaluated. An outstanding feature is the innovative and eye-catching governors' report that contains valuable information about the work of the school and of the governing body. Annual reports to parents on their children's progress are very good, with a very helpful section highlighting attitudes to learning and general areas of improvement.
49. Parents' contributions to support the work of the school are good. There are a good number of parents who loyally assist in a variety of roles and contribute positively to pupils' learning. The school also enjoys the very strong support of its Friends of Daylesford Association. Besides raising substantial funds which supplement the school's budget, the Association organises a variety of events that bring people together socially. This facility further strengthens the link between home and school.

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

50. The school has sustained the many strengths in leadership and management flagged up by the previous inspection. Better emphasis has been placed on monitoring and evaluation systems since then and to-day the school is at the point of bringing in a comprehensive model of feedback that looks critically at all aspects of provision. Excellent communication is at the heart of the school's effectiveness. All stakeholders know exactly what is expected of them and they rise to the demands and challenges with good heart. The recent award of the much-valued Investors' in People gave school managers great pride. At Daylesford, not only teachers but also every single person in school is a part of the process, including mid-day supervisors, site manager, cleaners and administration staff. The unity of purpose to strive towards still greater effectiveness is

tangible. Children are at the centre of the school and it is because of them that everyone does their very best. Staff are a well bonded and high performing team who collectively ensure that all pupils receive a very good quality education. There is very good shared capacity for future success in supporting the school's ambition to become a centre of excellence.

51. Daylesford Infant School is highly effective because of the overall very good quality of leadership alongside very good management. There is crystal clear educational direction that is enabling the school to build on successes and improve the standards. There is excellent reflection of the school's aims and values in its work. The headteacher's style is consultative and empowering. She knows the strengths and shortcomings of the school fully and has worked very well with the governors and staff to form a partnership that is focused on sustaining what works successfully and making continued improvement to those aspects of the school's work that require enhancement. The headteacher gives very good leadership to the school and does this in a way that allows individuals to use their management talents well.
52. The headteacher is supported effectively by two acting deputy headteachers who work successfully to fulfil their responsibilities. Senior managers, subject leaders and other staff are equal partners in the quest for improvement and all place the interests of the pupils first. There is a will to take the next step towards improvement and the staff are not afraid to submit their own work to scrutiny in order to identify what works well and what requires enhancement. All teachers have a responsibility for at least one subject or aspect of the school's work and they work hard to make the necessary advancement. The role of senior managers and subject leaders has been developed well over the past two years and, although there are still one or two things for refinement in their roles, individually and collectively they are committed to improvement. All subject leaders are involved in monitoring pupils' work by looking at samples of books or through examining subject planning for example. The next step is for subject leaders to have the opportunity to more frequently monitor the standards being attained in lessons.
53. Leadership and management of the provision for special educational needs are very good. Documentation is kept up-to-date and is of high quality. The monitoring of the provision made for pupils with special educational needs, including statements is thorough and rigorous. The designated governor for special educational needs is enthusiastic and supportive. The reporting on special educational needs in the governors' annual report to parents is sharp and provides clear and useful information. The procedures for involving parents are effective.
54. The leadership and management of the provision for pupils who are learning to speak English are highly effective and robust. The school directs its attention immediately to support pupils at an early stage of learning English as soon as their needs are assessed. The school usefully enters into discussion with parents to share views about the most effective way to help their children learn English. This is a positive feature that makes a good contribution to ensuring these pupils make the same good rate of progress as other pupils.
55. Governors are key players in taking the school forward. They are committed, knowledgeable and very proud of the school. They fulfil all legal responsibilities. Governors have very good understanding of what works well and what requires development, and play a strong role in shaping the educational direction of the school. Governors make very good use of the available performance data to identify to what degree the school meets its aim of providing the best education for all pupils. They make the necessary checks and evaluations to ensure that the school achieves as well as schools with a similar intake of pupils, whether in Solihull or nationally. They have secure understanding of the principles of best value and apply these conscientiously to all aspects of their work. Governors, like the staff, hold high expectations of all pupils and they have developed very good systems to check that pupils rise to the many challenges set for them. The school is truly inclusive in educational, social and personal terms due to this concern for every pupil as an individual.
56. There are very comprehensive systems of self-evaluation. The headteacher has monitored the work of staff in the classroom in order to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning. This is a well-managed process and has resulted in several improvements to the curriculum and the quality

of teaching and learning. In addition, she analyses the data on pupils' performance carefully. This enables a speedy response where pupils' progress is less than expected and helps all pupils to achieve to their full capabilities. The systems in place to track progress and give due support to pupils ensure that pupils' final level of performance is the cumulative work of all staff from the nursery through to Year 2 and is not over-dependent on boosts given just before SATs. The school's strategies for performance management are excellent. Clear, sensible and very appropriate targets are set for staff that relate very well to the school's mission and educational priorities. The culture of self-analysis, evaluation and improvement in school is strong and staff are not afraid to identify and tackle weakness. They also celebrate success.

57. The school's budget is put to good use in the interests of the pupils. The school improvement plan is well focused on the core priorities of the school and the desired improvements to standards, the curriculum and the quality of education are all costed efficiently. Extra funding to help pupils achieve at their level of capability is also used well. Thus, pupils with special educational needs or those who speak English as an additional language are taught well and the progress that they make is no different from other pupils. Good accommodations, a generous level of staffing and very good resources are used very effectively to enable pupils to achieve well. The school provides good value for money.

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

58. In order to raise standards further and in its bid to become a centre of excellence, the headteacher, governors and staff should:

- (1) **Extend the systems in place to track how well pupils are learning by**
- Widening the use of targets so that pupils know how well they are achieving;
  - Insisting that marking not only celebrates effort, but consistently targets pupils' next steps for improvement;
  - Building on the role of subject leaders to more frequently monitor teaching and its impact on learning via direct observations in an endeavour to identify and promote the very best practice;
  - Focussing monitoring on specific aspects of teaching to check that expectations are consistently high in respect of presentation of work and the use of correct grammar and punctuation for example;
  - Tracking exactly what those pupils who are withdrawn from lessons for additional support miss out on, and what the build-up is.

Paragraph Nos. 5. 9. 24. 37. 52. 87. 92. 98. 101. 106. 117. 123. 124. 129. 137.

- (2) Widen the opportunities for pupils to use their good writing skills across the curriculum

Paragraph Nos. 5. 24. 81. 85.

Although not identified as a separate issue, in preparing their action plan the Governing Body should also pay attention to the following:

- Up-dating the procedures for regularly assessing risks and keeping records in school.

Paragraph No. 34

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	68
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	22

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	24	32	9	1	0	0
Percentage	3	36	47	13	1	0	0

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

### *Information about the school's pupils*

#### **Pupils on the school's roll**

	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	30	209
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	16

*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	1	9

#### **English as an additional language**

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	38

#### **Pupil mobility in the last school year**

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	11
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	11

### *Attendance*

#### **Authorised absence**

	%
School data	5.4
National comparative data	5.6

#### **Unauthorised absence**

	%
School data	0.1
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 (Year2)**

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	36	32	68

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	34	35	36
	Girls	30	31	31
	Total	64	66	67
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (98)	97 (98)	99 (98)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	34	35	35
	Girls	30	29	28
	Total	64	64	63
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (98)	94 (97)	93 (98)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

**Ethnic background of pupils**

**Exclusions in the last school year**

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	102	0	0
White – Irish	1	0	0
White – any other White background	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	7	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	6	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	4	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	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)	9.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.7
Average class size	26

**Education support staff: YR – Y2**

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	135

**Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	30
Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	63.75
Number of pupils per FTE adult	15

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

**Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1.6
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2.0

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

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

**Financial information**

Financial year	2001/2002
	£
Total income	574,102
Total expenditure	572,233
Expenditure per pupil	2,477
Balance brought forward from previous year	35,809
Balance carried forward to next year	37,678

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

**Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	266
Number of questionnaires returned	119

**Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	72	25	2	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	67	31	0	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	66	28	1	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	47	41	5	2	4
The teaching is good.	75	23	1	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	60	35	5	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	74	24	2	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	74	25	0	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	70	27	3	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	72	27	0	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	68	31	0	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	52	32	5	0	11

NB Rows may not total 100% due to rounding

## **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**

59. Since the previous inspection the nursery and reception classes have become a phase in children's education known as the *Foundation Stage*. Previously, the nursery was a stand-alone building but three new classrooms now join it to the main school. Both the nursery and reception now have their own outdoor play areas. These are both attractive and secure areas that are used to enhance the curriculum. The acting deputy headteacher manages the Foundation Stage and has successfully created a cohesive team, who are committed to the children in their care. Progress has improved, children enter the nursery with different levels of attainment that are broadly average for their age and leave reception slightly above. Teachers monitor and evaluate children's learning carefully and feed their findings forward into planning lessons that meet individual needs successfully. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well from their different starting points because of consistently good teaching.
60. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage comprises the nursery and three reception classes. The nursery teacher is currently on maternity leave, but a highly experienced supply teacher is covering her teaching position. The nursery provision is for 60 part time places: 30 per morning and afternoon. Children are admitted to the nursery in the September of the year in which they turn four. Nursery children transfer to one of the reception classes, other children join them from many different settings including playgroup, child minder or no previous experience. The staff work hard to ensure that there is a smooth transition from year to year. Baseline assessments are carried out in the nursery, along with the local education authority's assessment during the first two weeks in reception. These are used to identify individual children's needs and provide a curriculum that is relevant and imaginative.
61. The management of the Foundation Stage is good. The acting deputy headteacher manages it as well as having a range of other responsibilities. She has built a supportive and committed team of teachers and NNEBs. The newly qualified teacher, supply nursery teacher and NNEBs are all fully up to speed on current practices, planning and teaching. All team members have a good understanding for the assessment of children's progress against the 'stepping stones' leading to the Early Learning Goals identified in the Foundation Stage curriculum. In the nursery, the highly skilled NNEBs have responsibility for a family group of ten children, they fulfil a demanding teaching role, plan with the nursery teacher, assess children and report back to parents. The Foundation Stage manager regularly monitors planning and children's progress. She has opportunities for classroom observations and shares findings with the team, but now needs to look more specifically at monitoring teaching and especially learning across the phase, focusing in on relative shortcomings and seeking to promote the very best features that result in very good learning.
62. Numeracy, literacy and personal and social targets are used effectively to raise children's levels of attainment. These are currently shared with parents at consultation meetings and are highlighted in individual records. They are regularly reviewed and new targets are set. However targets now need to be shared with the children so that they know how to improve their work. In nursery this could be introduced initially through individual personal and social targets, such as *I must hang my coat up, to say please and thank you, to share a book with a friend*. Focused monitoring of teaching and its impact on learning through observation should now be used to identify the very best practices that are evident in the Foundation Stage. These practices should then be shared with other team members in order to further enhance the good teaching that already exists. There is good capacity within the early years to make the necessary improvement to make more consistent the very good features apparent.



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

63. Provision for children's personal, social and emotional development is very good overall and as a result they make good gains in their learning.
64. On a daily basis, children enter the nursery confidently. There is a calm, relaxed and purposeful atmosphere. Children leave their parents and go into one of three family groups, each one led by either a teacher or NNEB. They sit quietly and enjoy talking to each other or looking at a book. Registration is both quiet and controlled where the children answer their names confidently and clearly. Time is taken to discuss what day it is and to describe the weather. Some children are absent due to 'Eid', but others know that this is a special celebration for their friends. Higher attaining children are able to recognise the numbers in the date, and the initial letter of the day. This is written on a white board. Children in the nursery are invited to choose from a variety of suitable activities and the level of support from staff and parent helpers helps them to concentrate and complete them before moving on to the next task. This helps promote independence and responsibility for their own learning. During activities children relate very well to each other. For example they take turns to go on the slide, help one another on the computer and share glue sticks. Adults form very good relationships with the children. Children with learning difficulties are catered for well in the Foundation Stage, their needs are identified early and addressed accordingly. They are well integrated and make very good progress. There are no significant differences between boys and girls as all children will attain the Early Learning Goals for this area of development.
65. In reception classes, registration is again a quiet and calm time that sets the tone for the next lesson. In one class the teacher welcomes each child in a foreign language, for example, 'Bore Da' 'Guten Tag' and 'Bonjour'. Each child is encouraged to greet the rest of the class with 'Have a lovely day everyone' 'I hope your day is a good one'. Exercises are done as warm ups for thinking – children follow the teachers lead during these fun co-ordination activities. Children are aware of well-established routines in the classroom. Children are becoming increasingly independent during group activities. They are aware that there are times when they must work without the teachers help during certain tasks and they do this very well. Circle time rules are displayed and children particularly enjoy this time of sharing. They listen to each other very carefully and speak confidently. In one very good lesson a teacher brought in her son's teddy bear and told how it once got lost. This gave the children an opportunity to empathise and develop their awareness of their own feelings and the feelings of others. During a reception assembly time children were read a story about how a small boy helped others in his class. The children were encouraged to think about how they can all be 'teachers' by helping others to do something that they find difficult.

## **Communication, language and literacy**

66. Children start school with broadly average skills in this area of development. Consistently good teaching enables them to make steady progress in their learning and achieve well by the time they enter Year 1.
67. Great emphasis is put upon communication, language and literacy in the nursery and the quality of teaching and learning of this is good overall. The nursery is a language rich environment, for example there are good quality displays which are carefully labelled, the day of the week is written at the commencement of each session on a white board and children attempt to write their own name. There are many quality books available for children to look at. All children take a library book home each week to share with their parents. This loan system is operated by parent helpers. Children are developing sustained listening skills during story times. Most children are attentive, look carefully at pictures and answer simple questions about the sequence of a story. All children are encouraged to listen to simple instructions and are praised for doing so. During activity times, teaching staff work with individuals or small groups of children in order to develop their vocabulary and speaking skills.

68. Diagnostic tests completed during the first two weeks of the reception year show indicate that children are broadly average in ability. By the end of reception they are above average. This is because of the consistently good and sometimes very good teaching within these classes. Teachers plan together to provide exciting activities linked to a specific theme. The book of the week 'Dogger' by Shirley Hughes enthuses all children across the reception classes and is the focus for all language based activities. Higher attaining children are able to sit attentively, answer carefully differentiated questions about the sequence of the story, recognise key words and compose simple sentences. They understand the need for capital letters and full stops at the beginning and end of a sentence. Teachers make very good use of the review session at the end of a lesson. A very good example of this is when the teacher role-plays a character in the story and invites the children to question her. Stories, poems and rhymes are carefully chosen to link with the current theme about dogs. All classrooms are stimulating environments, with quality displays, books and listening corners. The children are able to access story tapes. They know how to use the tape recorder and headsets, settle quickly and listen attentively. Experiences are well targeted and evidence in children's books show that they make good progress over time, so that a high proportion of children will be working well within National Curriculum level 1 by the end of the year.

### **Mathematical Development**

69. All Children make good progress in this area because of the good and sometimes very good teaching across the whole Foundation Stage.
70. Well-planned practical activities and discussion assisted children in identifying the 'lightest' and 'heaviest' duck in a set of three, in the nursery. All children were given an opportunity to describe and compare them. Higher attaining children were able to use the words 'heavy, heavier, light and lighter' accurately. Children showed excitement when using the simple scales to identify the lightest and heaviest ducks and were surprised by the results. The nursery is a numeracy-rich environment and all teaching staff use every opportunity to reinforce counting skills and number recognition, for example, the writing of the date, numbers on the bottoms of ducks in the duck pond and number spots on the floor where the children sit in their family groups.
71. In reception classes teachers use warm up activities to ensure the children are focused and thinking about numbers. In one class the teacher played a number recognition game of numbers 1-29. This was pacy and involved all children, setting the scene and expectations for the rest of the lesson. The sharing of the lesson objective helps children to know what they are expected to achieve and this is often done well. The next stage would be to give children more individual targets that would enable them to take responsibility for their own learning. A leading mathematics teacher skillfully uses questions to involve all children, knows individuals well and differentiates her questions accordingly. She promotes mathematical thinking by asking children to think about the 'numberlines in their head' to identify missing numbers in a given series. This is good practice and should be shared across the school. Children have a good understanding of mathematical language and use words like 'lowest' 'least' and 'digit'. The majority of children have achieved the Early Learning Goals for mathematical development and are working within National Curriculum Level 1.

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

72. Children enter the nursery with knowledge and understanding of the world broadly in line with that expected for their age. Due to good teaching they make good progress in their learning and the majority achieve the Early Learning Goals at the end of the Foundation Stage, with a number of them attaining beyond this.
73. Staff in the nursery provide many opportunities for all children to learn about their environment. There are also opportunities when children enjoy co-operating with each other to build with a wide range of construction toys. Children are able to design a farmyard scene on the computer and talk about the animals that live on a farm. They are developing good ICT skills – including

clicking and dragging with a mouse in order to build a picture. Family group times and milk and fruit times are used to talk about happenings of personal significance. Children show interest in the lives of their friends and teachers. They are also given opportunities to share special events like Eid and Diwali.

74. In reception, children show curiosity when they look at how toys move. They explore and investigate a carefully chosen selection of toys. They use words like 'push', 'pull' and 'blow'. NNEB's give support to children with special needs and carefully explain what is happening and simplify vocabulary, enabling them to take part in the whole class activity. The children were fascinated when the teacher explained that when blowing a 'pin-wheel' the air pushes the sails round. The teacher stresses the importance of reporting back findings from investigations. This was done by tape recording, photographic evidence, drawings and verbal presentation. The children enjoyed these activities and found them quite challenging at the end of the school day. Some are easily distracted and lost sight of the learning objective especially as it is quite difficult to make decision about the movement of some toys. In a very good lesson in the ICT suite, average and above average pupils were able to write a sentence about their glove puppet saying for example, 'My dog is happy'. They could use the shift key and space bar, as well as access the keyboard to write the sentence and project it onto the whiteboard. At least half of the children are working at National Curriculum Level 2C, with the others within Level 1.

### **Physical Development**

75. Children make good progress in physical development because of the well-planned activities, and overall good teaching.
76. Children in the nursery are given ample confidence in this area of learning. There is a well resourced indoor physical development area which is equipped with a range of large apparatus, including climbing frame, tunnels and balances, all on safety flooring. The children are co-ordinated in their movements and can describe what they are doing. They also make use of the outdoor area, with a full range of bikes, scooters and other equipment, whenever possible. Good opportunities are available to practise manipulation using pencils, paintbrushes, scissors and simple tools. All children make appropriate progress and most reach expected levels by the end of nursery.
77. This is continued in the reception class, where children have an understanding of the need to warm up their bodies before exercising and are aware of changes to their bodies when they are active. In one very good dance lesson, pupils made good use of the super hall floor shape markings that help them to be away from others – these help to promote good spatial awareness. During this lesson the stimulus was a stringed puppet which the teacher skilfully used to develop the children's thinking about a variety of movement. The NNEB played an important role – setting a good example, as well as encouraging and supporting those with physical difficulties so that they have full access to the lesson. Children confidently experiment with a variety of movement and are able to devise a combination of movements to express and respond to ideas. An opportunity was given for children to appraise their own and others work. They do this sensitively and constructively. All children are able to dress and undress themselves independently. The children are successful in reaching the Early Learning Goals in this area of learning.

### **Creative Development**

78. Due to good teaching, all children make good progress in the area of creative development.
79. Children learn very effectively in creative areas as a result of good teaching ensuring good progress. In the nursery, children work in groups with the nursery on activities related to the theme of 'The Ugly Duckling'. They have opportunities to experience a wide variety of skills based activities, for example all children produced a duck pond in a shoe box and were able to discuss what they were doing as they cut, stuck and modelled. There were able to retell the story of the ugly duckling as they worked with a parent helper. Children used the ugly duckling corner

– a large creative play area to sensibly re-enact the story. They relate very well to each other and are building positive relationships with their peers. The teacher and NNEB's know their children well and take every opportunity to develop their vocabulary. This enables children to feel secure and willing to participate, try new activities and develop their language and vocabulary through play. An NNEB led a good music session when all children sang songs and rhymes about the weather. They accompanied the songs with un-tuned percussion instruments paying attention to 'loud' and 'soft' sounds and recorded their song. They were fascinated when it was replayed.

80. Very good opportunities are planned for all children to explore a range of media and materials. Most tasks are determined by adults so children can learn to use equipment correctly and discover what materials can be used for. Based around the theme of 'Dogger' the children create dog collars, a school fair and sad and happy faces in clay. At the end of the lesson they are given the opportunity to talk about why they have chosen to make a sad or happy face and to appraise their work and say what they have learned. However, during this time, at the end of the school day, some children are tired, become distracted and lack attention to detail. However, most children are on track to achieve the Early Learning Goals with a few others already working at National Curriculum Level 1.

## ENGLISH

81. Standards have improved since the time of the previous inspection and today are above average overall. Standards are well above average in speaking and listening and reading and above average in writing. The school has made good strides forward in enabling pupils' time and opportunity in English lessons to write independently, creatively and at length. However, there are missed opportunities in some subjects, for example geography and history, for pupils to record what they learn that would enable them to extend further their growing writing skills. The school has set very challenging targets to support pupils' attainment in the May 2003 SATs and this reflects its sure ambition to sustain good improvement.
82. The school is very successful in helping average and lower attaining boys and girls to achieve to their full capability levels. This applies equally to pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language. They are totally included in all aspects of the English curriculum, and for whom there is very good provision. Higher attainers are not overlooked and they are provided with sufficiently challenging work to enable them to maximise their potential. Pupils of all abilities make good progress at Daylesford.
83. Most pupils achieve above average standards in speaking and listening. Teachers adopt a very positive approach in encouraging pupils to speak clearly and fluently. A number of pupils chatted with inspectors during the period of the inspection and displayed well-developed vocabulary. They are well adjusted to their audience and in lessons make a good contribution particularly in response to very effective and often probing questioning. Pupils in both Year 1 and 2 use the "hot seating" process, where pupils sit in a seat and are asked questions by their peers. For example, in Year 1 they were character moulding to gain a deeper understanding of the characters in the book they were reading. Similarly, in Year 2, when pupils were introduced to their different roles in a play, pupils were put in the "hot seat" to explain their character. Apart from promoting pupils' speaking and listening skills, it also promotes confidence and high self-esteem and promotes rapid growth in their personal and social development.
84. By the age of seven, pupils have made particularly good progress in their reading to reach well above average standards. They are given a good foundation in the early years in the skills needed for initial literacy such as letter and word recognition, and a variety of phrase skills, all of which are taught systematically. The very best readers use expression as they read fluently from quite challenging texts. They are articulate in explaining both storyline and plot. Good attention is paid to building up pupils' phonic skills. Those who struggle with reading and spellings are given extra time with support staff to practise building words. Inspectors observed this work to be very effective, although the pupils involved unfortunately miss out on other lessons when they are withdrawn from class and this requires monitoring. The school makes strenuous efforts to

encourage parents to read with their children and this is further proving to be beneficial. Pupils read in school, and take books home. The library is well stocked and the books are of good quality.

85. By the end of Year 2, pupils have made good progress in the acquisition of writing skills. Standards are above average and achievement good. The school is focusing on this area and good improvement has been made compared to the previous inspection. Pupils experience a range of opportunities for writing imaginatively in literacy lessons, for example when considering feelings, one pupil in Year 1 wrote, “cuddling my cat makes me feel brave...”. However, managers now need to focus on using writing more regularly in subjects such as science, history and geography in order to raise the standards further by promoting greater opportunities to write for a variety of purposes. The school’s strategy for promoting independence in writing is proving effective in building upon the good foundation in nursery and reception classes. It would be further enhanced by widening opportunities for pupils to use their good writing skills across the curriculum. Children are usefully taught skills of letter formation and other techniques required for producing written sentences and short texts. In a Year 1 lesson that inspectors observed, for example, pupils were blending pairs of letters to form words, such as, *sw-im*, *sp-ot* and *st-ep*. The school pays high regard to handwriting from a very early age and expects everyone to make the correct joins and to write neatly and legibly. Occasionally, however work is not presented as well it could be, dates are missed off pages and work slopes rather than keeping to lines. These are minor areas for improvement.
86. Teaching is good overall with examples of very good teaching where work is matched precisely to pupils’ different needs. Teachers help pupils to achieve well in all aspects of English by using a variety of strategies and a range of interesting experiences. In Year 2, for example, good opportunities are provided for pupils to enjoy planned play session, not only to sharpen their speaking skills but to help pupils understand that different people play different roles which determines the manner in which they speak, display emotion and use action. A good example of this was observed in a mixed Year 1/2 class lesson when pupils performed the play of the “Three Little Pigs”. Lessons are delivered briskly and questioning is often probing and quick-fire. Relationships between pupils and staff are very good and this underpins the very positive learning atmosphere in classes. Pupils’ moral and social development is successfully encouraged through a range of media; especially poetry. Support staff are deployed well and contribute sympathetically to pupils’ understanding of right and wrong as they consider moral dilemmas in stories. Specialist staff brought in from outside the school for example the speech therapy service blend effectively into the whole school community and speak highly of the school’s efforts of concern to provide absolute entitlement for all pupils, irrespective of need. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who are at an early stage of learning to speak English as an additional language, work hard and persevere with their reading and writing drafts.
87. The leadership and management are both good. The subject leader works hard and has been instrumental in raising standards. The progress pupils make is assessed carefully and the school uses this data, together with other data from tracking and analysis of pupils’ work, to guide future planning. The school is committed to looking critically at how well different pupils learn in English and is very focused on making those changes necessary to bring advancement. Planning overall is undertaken by teachers together to ensure that pupils in parallel classes and the mixed year group are provided with an identical curriculum that ensures equality of opportunity. Resources are very good and used well, monitoring of planning and standards are also good, but the monitoring of teaching and its impact on learning is a developing feature. There has been a good overall improvement since the last inspection and the school has the capacity and intention to improve still further.

## **MATHEMATICS**

88. Standards in mathematics are above average. There has been a trend of good improvement overall since the last inspection when standards were judged to be sound. Inconsistency of

teaching, through changes of teachers, caused attainment in SATs to plateau in 2002. However, the school has taken effective action to stabilise and improve the quality of teaching, especially the range of methods being used and to target those aspects causing pupils difficulty for improvement. The evidence of the inspection shows that almost all pupils by the age of 7 achieve well to reach good standards. A high proportion is expected to attain well above the level expected nationally in the May 2003 SATs.

89. Pupils in Year 1 count confidently to one hundred. They are consolidating additions and subtraction with numbers up to 20 and are beginning apply this knowledge effectively to larger numbers and higher calculations. They count in 2s and 5s well. They understand the value of each figure in a two-digit number. Higher attaining pupils in Year 1 attain well. For example, they are beginning to work at levels expected for eight year olds, typically in Year 3. They understand odd and even numbers and can use doubling and halving. They calculate simple fractions of quantities and are beginning to use standard measures. Just under half of Year 2 pupils are tackling at least some work expected of pupils in Year 3. Lower attaining pupils can explain the value of figures in numbers of three digits, with a little help, while higher attaining pupils enjoy being successfully challenged by numbers well into the thousands. They explain clearly the features of 3D shapes and discern different kinds of pyramid.
90. Pupils' progress is good and is clearly seen within individual lessons and over time. Pupils achieve well regardless of ethnicity, gender or ability as the result of good teaching. Further there is consistency of pupil progress across all the strands of the curriculum. Year 1 pupils who were just beginning to identify the value of each figure in a number at the beginning of the school year are confidently using this knowledge in addition calculations with numbers beyond one hundred by mid-year. Year 2 pupils apply their knowledge of a range of strategies, which they have learned in earlier lessons in the week to solve the calculations in problems. In other lessons they show good progress in approaching challenging work, which requires the use of addition, subtraction and multiplication in identifying missing numbers.
91. Pupils behave well overall. Teachers' skilful management ensures that the few older pupils with challenging behaviour work to their best. Pupils' personal skills develop very well. Pupils generally are very attentive to their teachers' questions and are eager to succeed in their answers when together as a class. Individually, they work independently and when they are in groups, they are both very co-operative and mutually supportive. For example, small groups in Year 2, while wrestling with complex word problems, chatter quietly about each other's ways of solving the problem until they come up with a solution that takes all the information into account. They are eager to show how many problems they can complete. Although pupils have very positive attitudes to the subject as a result of the well focused and often challenging teaching they receive, they are not sufficiently aware of how well they are doing and what, individually, they need to work on to succeed further.
92. The quality of teaching is good. Scrutiny of pupils' progress and observation during the inspection demonstrates that the greater majority of lessons are well taught with some lessons being judged very good or excellent. However, there are insufficient opportunities for teachers to observe this very good practice and thereby enable further improvement to the currently good standards. Teachers are good at explaining new ideas and methods clearly to pupils. They model examples well and use questioning effectively to guide children to better understanding. They develop the strategies explicit in the National Numeracy Strategy very well. However, the high expectations shown in direct teaching are not carried over to pupils' exercise books where presentation is often casual and wasteful of paper. Further, in some classes there is insufficient information in the marking of work to clarify the next steps pupils should take to improve. Targets setting to aid pupils' advancement in numeracy is not well developed as in literacy.
93. Teachers use the National Numeracy Strategy very well to plan and execute their lessons. The range of work is well matched to pupils' level of development, which ensures pupils are secure in taking their next steps. Equally, there is an emphasis in the planning to challenge all pupils with work at a higher level and this promotes progress. Pupils, who have been identified as having a talent for the subject are very well supported by targeted teaching, higher expectation

and extended levels of work. Teachers pay good attention to consolidating mental skills, the standards of which were a concern at the last inspection. Mathematics is well applied across the curriculum to support, for example, science and geography. ICT is increasingly being used very effectively within the subject, to demonstrate data and support learning.

94. Very comprehensive analysis of national and school generated assessment data is the hallmark of the good leadership of the subject. This ensures both a vision for development and effective targeting of key areas for attention to improve teaching and learning. The development of leadership skills, in preparation for future responsibility, in a younger member of staff, by the subject leader, provides not only good training, but a further valuable layer to the depth and breadth of subject management.

## SCIENCE

95. Standards in science are above the national average. Standards have improved well since the 1998 inspection. The school has given due emphasis to promoting pupils' enquiry skills and in developing their knowledge and understanding of physical science. These are positive features.
96. In 2002, the standards attained by Year 2 pupils in the SATs were assessed by teachers to be above average. Although the proportion of pupils attaining above average standards in the knowledge aspect of the subject were higher than those found nationally, pupils' enquiry skills were average. This led the school to plan specific teaching and learning opportunities for pupils to make better sense of their experiences through collaborative group exploration. Good professional development for teachers has enabled a better identification of higher attaining pupils, who are now consistently challenged. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The school is quick to respond to the diverse learning needs of pupils with special educational needs and to those whose home languages are not English, and they receive good support from classroom assistants.
97. Pupils of all abilities regardless of race or gender are suitably challenged and they achieve well. Children start school with an average awareness of the world and benefit from a rich variety of opportunities to explore and discuss, for example how toys move. Because of the good support they receive and good questioning alongside the activities, they develop key vocabulary, for example about *pushes* and *pulls*.
98. By the age of seven the majority of pupils have a very good understanding about how to structure an investigation. They record their observations as they work and look for patterns in their graphs to support their original idea, for example about which fabric would be the best to repair a hole in the knee of trousers. They work well together to collect evidence and share in decision making about how to collect and present their evidence. They confidently evaluate their evidence and the majority of pupils correctly explain how their tests are 'fair'. In their presentation of work they sometimes forget to correctly include titles and label graphs. Their ability to communicate using grammatically correct and punctuated sentences is not reflected enough in their writing. These are aspects for still more improvement.
99. Pupils have a good understanding of physical science. Most pupils correctly explain the meaning of symbols in their diagrammatic recordings of circuits and the different effects of changing the number of bulbs in a circuit. Pupils measure distances in standard measures and recognise that a sound is quieter when further away. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 use an appropriate vocabulary to correctly explain how different materials are chosen for their properties but are uncertain that some changes in materials are permanent. They have an adequate understanding about the right conditions that plants and animals must have to flourish, and they confidently put forward their own ideas about how the lack of any of these will affect growth. From visits to different locations they recognise that different living things are found in different places. In some instances a few pupils' limited awareness shows itself, for example, a lower attaining pupil found difficulty in understanding the term 'bulb' to mean a plant.

100. Pupils talk enthusiastically about the lesson topics because they are made relevant to their everyday life. They know that their ideas are valued and are quick to respond in using correct terms in class discussions at the beginning and end of lessons, and during paired or group investigations. They confidently offer clear explanations, for example, about why they have chosen either a bar chart or a pie chart to present their work. Because pupils of all abilities know they will be supported well they settle quickly to tasks and make a good effort to succeed.
101. Teaching is good overall. This is the case in lessons and in the scrutiny of pupils' work. Lesson plans identify inquiry skills as well as understanding but in Year 1 this is not always challenging enough to build on pupils previously acquired skills. Effective opportunities are planned for the development of pupils' personal and specific basic skills identified in individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs. Teaching in Year 2 has high expectations and uses methods of collaborative learning, which the high attainers known as 'zoomers and average attainers known as managers' and who form the great majority cope with very well. Expectations for the strugglers are sometimes too high and the rate of working does not allow them sufficient time to fully grasp, for example, what happens in different electrical circuits. Teachers' expectations for pupils to correctly label recorded data and write reports according to their abilities could be raised. There is sound use made of ICT to support science recording, but many pupils have higher order ICT skills that could be used to better effect. Pupils evaluate their work with excitement, but have no criteria against which to consider their achievement to support the knowledge of their own learning. Teachers' marking is correctly related to the purpose of the work, but comments to explain the next steps for improvement are inconsistent.
102. Leadership and management of the subject are both good. Very good whole school analysis takes place of pupils' progress against clear achievement criteria for three levels of ability. The school very effectively tracks individual pupils' progress and responds quickly to modify teaching and learning to offer more challenge. This is raising standards. This year, for the first time, the planning for formative assessment of enquiry skills in conjunction with pupils' knowledge and understanding is having the desired impact in raising standards in Year 2. The school is aware that planned opportunities in the curriculum for pupils to measure in Year 1 are missed and that more effective use could be made of the school grounds to involve pupils in gardening activities. During a science week last year several opportunities were made for parents to find out more about science alongside their children in science workshops. This is a positive feature.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

103. Standards today are broadly average, which is a similar judgement to that of the previous inspection. However, significant developments have been undertaken since that time to give greater breadth to the curriculum, both through revising the scheme of work and by ensuring that the provision offers pupils good opportunities to explore a wide range of experiences. The full impact of these developments has not, as yet, been fully realised because teachers have had insufficient training to fully capitalise on the improved curriculum. Good support does ensure that pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs progress at a similar rate to their classmates.
104. Overall, pupils' skill with colour is good, but their observational drawing is not as well developed. They display an appropriate appreciation of pattern and apply it well in creating designs for fabrics and illustrating them in a fashion context. They use clay in simple forms to create colourfully designed tiles and expressive faces. Pupils in all classes use their sketchbooks appropriately to experiment with colour, line and texture. However, these resources are not used sufficiently constructively and purposefully. Pupils however, do acquire positive attitudes to making choices and combining media to gain effects in their work. For example, pupils in Year 2, when illustrating favourite story characters, used a delicate colour wash, which they over-mark with pen to delineate expression and detail and crayon to create texture. In a design lesson, pupils applied the smudging technique, which they had learnt in art, to give a soft backdrop to their technology artefacts. Pupils demonstrate more sensitive work in lessons in which teachers intervene appropriately to point out opportunities to develop ideas and techniques. Pupils apply



their colour sense well, for example when creating abstract designs in the style of Mondrian or the free patterns of Jackson Pollack.

105. Teaching is of sound quality overall with some good and very good practice. In the better lessons teachers interpret the very good lesson plans effectively to ensure that pupils not only engage in the identified range of experience but also translate the experience to a better quality of learning and higher standards through question, discussion and challenge. Most pupils concentrate hard and behave well in lessons. They chatter constructively about what they are trying to do and give each other sound advice. They are enthusiastic and eager to explain their work to adults and to their peers. Pupils use their materials with care and respect. They follow routines for good house-keeping well. Teachers are sometimes too accepting of pupil's first efforts and this leads to some pupils, and especially those with a talent for visual expression, not always able to realise the best they can achieve. In some lessons there are too few opportunities for pupils to learn from each other by evaluating one another's work.
106. There is a valuable breadth to the curriculum. Curricular and extra-curricular combine well to give a rounded experience to pupils. While the projects that pupils undertake often support themes followed in other subjects such as literacy, good planning ensures there is no compromise to the specific objectives of art and design. The subject leader has shown clear vision in producing a good scheme which clearly identifies the work to be offered to pupils. Her subject knowledge and commitment is a valuable resource. She makes good use of the assessment process to complement her monitoring of pupils' work, but has too few opportunities to observe and influence colleagues' teaching directly. Well-managed resources underpin the work in classrooms. Pupils have appropriate opportunities to experience the work of a range of cultures, while visits and visitors inform pupils well of the working styles of current and traditional artists. Good use is made of local museums such as the Barber Institute to widen pupils' cultural and aesthetic appreciation. However, the qualities of displays do not consistently endorse the commitment of the school to an art-rich culture.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

107. Standards are average in design and technology. This is a similar picture to that reported at the time of the previous inspection. Where teaching is more challenging pupils demonstrate they can attain at higher levels. Provision has improved since the last inspection. Greater emphasis is now given to design and practice is now more consistent throughout the school. Pupils, whatever their, ability gender or ethnicity make similar rates of progress. This is promoted by the good relationships teachers have with their classes and the efforts that teachers make to give all children a fair level of attention and support.
108. Pupils in Year 1, having experimented effectively with working mechanisms, make appropriate choices when creating moving animals in a jungle scene. Some pupils are less successful when they are not encouraged to question their first efforts and make improvements. Pupils in Year 2 successfully develop their knowledge of movement in vehicles, which require the design of efficient axles. They experiment with a range of wheels and clearly enjoy testing how successful their vehicles are compared to those of classmates. Pupils are generally successfully in assembling their products, although their knowledge of finishing processes varies and sometimes detracts from the quality of the final article.
109. Teaching is of sound quality overall with some good and very good practice, which needs to be spread if standards are to rise. Pupils are less successful in circumstances where teachers sometimes accept pupils' first efforts without challenge. For example, there is insufficient joint evaluation as to whether the size or the detail of an object is appropriate. In more successful lessons, teachers make suitable interventions, to encourage pupils to make judgements about their work and consider possible improvements. Pupils work hard to be successful in their creations. They concentrate carefully in drawing and in cutting out accurately. They co-operate and behave well. In a Year 1 class, five teams discussed and agreed where animals would be placed in a collage of moving animals and equally had both conviviality and an efficient division

of labour to complete the colouring of the backdrop and put the design successfully together. Teachers do give pupils good opportunities to choose materials and methods. Tasks are often planned constructively to provide a useable product. For example, Year 1 made their animal collages specifically to entertain and inform the Reception classes. Teachers establish good working practices with safe and purposeful routines to make good use of time. The best lessons are well structured and ensure that there is good progression in the development of pupils' skills.

110. The curriculum is well structured. However, there is a danger that, over time, pupils will work on similar set pieces and not have enough original creative challenge. The subject leader, who has both good subject knowledge and a clear vision for moving the subject forward, usefully recognises this fact. In addition to good resources for designing and making, the school has developed a very good initiative of creating *hands-on* displays to give pupils first hand experience of ready made artefacts and their design.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

111. Standards in the subject are above average. This represents good improvement since the last inspection when they were judged to be average. All pupils work well to their different capabilities since teaching has appropriate expectations for pupils of different abilities, irrespective of race or gender. All pupils make good progress in lessons and they achieve well. By the age of seven pupils have a good knowledge of their own locality and of a locality in Ethiopia. This is because of good teaching which makes effective use of a wide variety of meaningful and motivating activities to provide high quality learning.
112. Year 2 pupils analyse traffic patterns from their survey outside the school and show good decision making skills by suggesting a crossing for disabled people and an improvement in other road safety features. Pupils in Year 1 map the street outside the school and draw sketch maps of a village in Ethiopia. Maps produced by the higher attaining pupils are more detailed and include a key for the different shops and symbols. They write at length to describe a day in the life of children of similar age to themselves in Ethiopia; average and lower attaining pupils record very little. However, in discussion about the village in Ethiopia they demonstrate clear ideas about its location and explain enthusiastically that the village developed near a river because of the need for water by the people and animals. They identify the need to be loved by a family in both countries and logically say that children in the contrasting country play with wooden toys instead of plastic.
113. A good example of effective teaching and learning was seen when a Year 1 classroom based map work lesson complemented the previous map work lesson, which took place in the computer suite. Because pupils of the same ability had used the computer to assemble their own street map, they quickly understood the idea of being able to identify features on maps when describing a route and used the correct terms to do so. The level of challenge was carefully matched to individual needs so that pupils of different abilities all experienced success and gained in confidence during the lesson. Pupils support each other well in paired and group activities in geography and this adds immensely to their personal; and social development. There is a good emphasis in all classes in exploiting the locality around the school for fieldwork. Pupils in Year 1 use the computer to present pictograms of the different types of houses in which they live and suggest a wider variety of shops to meet their needs. No lessons were seen in Year 2 because of the timetable but from a careful examination of pupils' work and through talking to pupils, teaching and learning was judged to be good overall.
114. Leadership and management of the subject are both effective. There has been good use made of data to analyse of pupils' progress and to constantly improve learning opportunities for pupils of all abilities. The subject leader has carefully monitored teaching and learning against clear criteria and used information to improve and maintain an interactive curriculum for pupils of all abilities. The school has forged a link with a village in India and the pupils are proud of the opportunity to send money to help a child attend school and that toys made by children in the Foundation Stage are sent there. This link promotes pupils' social and cultural awareness very

well. The school makes very good provision of resources such as photo-packs and a selection of books for all reading abilities. Stories that support pupils understanding of different places are read during story time at the end of the day to good effect.

## HISTORY

115. Improvement in the subject since the last inspection has been good. Standards for pupils at the age of seven are now above average. Good teaching is enabling good learning and pupils' achieve well. At the last inspection these features were described as satisfactory.
116. Pupils by the age of seven pupils develop a very good awareness of the passing of time and of changes in their own culture. A third of pupils who are higher attaining collect information independently from a wide variety of sources and use dates accurately. They use the correct vocabulary such as *decade* to describe the past. They transpose facts into their own phrases and sentences. They use their imagination and empathise well when discussing the characters of Florence Nightingale and Mary Seacole for example, and reflect upon their contribution to changes in nursing care during the Crimean War. Pupils of all abilities clearly exhibit a sense of wonder when handling old household implements to explain the different ways that local people lived in the past. When talking about the daily life of people who lived during the reign of Queen Victoria, pupils know that objects from the past are *more reliable than books* when considering the past. They understand that facts in books have been arrived at in many ways such as from excavations of *things under the ground*. Pupils in reception enjoyed comparing their own toys with toys of earlier generations and benefited from the various resources provided by the school and from a valuable contribution from a grandparent who visited school to demonstrate how his generation played with these toys. This had a positive impact on their historical knowledge and understanding.
117. Teaching and learning are both good. Pupils are provided with stimulating activities which capture their imagination and interest. Higher attaining pupils are challenged to become independent learners and to evaluate and collect information from skim reading a variety of printed articles that include newspaper reports, books and extracts downloaded by pupils from the Internet. However, some opportunities are missed for these pupils to collate the information gathered into structured extended writing. The great majority of pupils have at least an average understanding from the many practical activities and from role-play in the classroom, such as 'Scutari hospital'. Pupils with special educational needs, are integrated well into small groups and enjoy opportunities to talk about events and characters from the past. Teachers plan activities that are well matched to pupils needs so that they experience success and this raises their self-esteem. Teachers make effective use of sentences on flash cards for whole class reading, which improves the basic skills of reading and structuring sentences for all pupils. Pupils with difficulty in speaking are encouraged by teachers to repeat what they say slowly, and are listened to respectfully by their peers, which helps their progress in speaking. All pupils, including those who are at an early stage of learning to speak English, work well according to their different capabilities. The marking of pupils' work is inconsistent in quality, but the better practice raises questions to extend pupils' thinking or includes comments to reinforce their ideas.
118. Pupils appreciate the quality of the historical experiences provided. They enjoy holding 'things from long ago' and being able to 'try them out'. In lessons, pupils co-operate well in pairs and say that they enjoy helping each other work 'back in time'. Effective use is made of videos and artefacts in topic boxes and visits to museums, which enhance pupils' enjoyment of their learning and consequently pupils' attitudes are very good. They wonder at listening, for example, to an actual recording of Florence Nightingale accessed from the Internet. Good use is made of ICT to support pupils' learning in history.
119. There is good leadership and management of the subject. The subject leader has very effectively used analysis of pupils' progress to constantly improve learning opportunities for pupils of all abilities. The subject leader has carefully monitored teaching and learning against clear criteria

and used the information to improve and maintain an interactive curriculum for pupils of all abilities.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

120. Standards in ICT are well above average. There has been significant improvement since the last inspection when standards were judged to be broadly satisfactory but with reported shortcomings in some aspects. Good leadership, which has targeted investment in both effective training and well-matched resources, has underpinned the very good improvement in provision, which is both exemplary and a strength of the school's curriculum. As a result, all pupils, of whatever gender, ethnicity or ability, achieve very well and develop knowledge and confidence to develop their ICT skills and to apply them purposefully in their learning in many subjects.
121. In Year 1, pupils are confident and waste no time in opening programs. The majority of pupils work with the skills expected of pupils a year older. In a well-designed geography lesson, they used mouse skills accurately in selecting and dragging images to create a town plan. Higher attaining pupils changed their designs effectively using the rotational tool to increase the complexity of their work. All pupils achieved their set task and could discuss their work appropriately. All pupils went to print with only a cursory reminder from their teacher. In Year 2, pupils use their ICT skills well in other areas of the curriculum. For example, they create appropriate labels for their storyboard work combining art and literacy skills. They change font, select letter size and are able to apply their skills in, for example, punctuation by making capital letters. In other lessons they use ICT to create diagrams and graphs to illustrate their mathematics and science learning, while use of the Internet enables them to find out more in their studies of Florence Nightingale.
122. Pupils in all age groups especially look forward to their lessons in the computer suite. In their whole class discussions they are confident to take their turn controlling the interactive white board and are particularly fascinated by the touch control facility. They answer questions eagerly and try hard to solve the problems set for them. Pupils settle quickly to their work because they have been given good tuition over time and instructions in lessons are clearly explained. Pupils work well co-operatively and often offer turns to others in the group. However, some pupils do not maintain their concentration well when the teacher has a large number of computer stations to support and there is insufficient intervention to maintain their pace of the work. Pupils enjoy the opportunities for computer work in the classroom and are beginning to make good use of the laptops available. Pupils who control the projection of hymns in assemblies take great pride in their contribution. They manage and care for the equipment in an extremely responsible way.
123. The quality of teaching is very good overall. Teachers are confident as a result of the training they have received and the support given by the subject leader. They know their equipment and programs well and use them effectively. Their good quality planning provides clear structure to learning. They model particular skills for pupils very effectively. These strengths promote pupils' learning and progress well. Teachers' use of ICT supports learning in other subjects to good effect. However in some planning, objectives are insufficiently detailed and what is to be learnt lacks clarity. In these cases learning suffers.
124. The school has been very appropriately selective in adopting and adapting a curriculum based on national guidelines. Very good use has been made of the school's funds and nationally targeted funding to give a high quality of provision, with flexibility to support work individually and in classes. As a result pupils have their own website, opportunities to use digital images and ICT controlled vehicles to support their learning, access to laptops, in addition to the fifteen station computer suite. The subject leader has a clear vision to drive forward improvements in the subject. She maintains a high profile in supporting colleagues. The assessment scheme she has developed supports pupils' learning well. There are, however too few opportunities for the subject leader to observe colleagues practice in lessons directly to further develop their skills. The pupils' self-assessment scheme, which is currently being introduced, sets an example of

good practice, and enables pupils to be aware of the next steps in learning. This could well be extended to other curriculum areas.

## MUSIC

125. By the end of Year 2, pupils attain above average standards in music. Pupils, throughout the infants make good progress and achieve well. This shows an improvement since the previous inspection when attainment and progress were satisfactory. Both boys and girls enjoy their musical experiences and all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who learn English as an additional language, are fully involved in music-making activities.
126. Younger pupils are developing a good knowledge of the elements of music. They know the correct names of a wide range of percussion instruments and the sound they make, including instruments from different cultures such as the rainmaker. They recognise how sounds can be made and changed. They create and repeat simple repeating patterns. Pupils use their voices effectively to make a variety of short and long sounds, and they create different sounds of varying duration using pitched and un-pitched instruments. Pupils listen carefully and commit different sounds to memory and know that they fit in with a steady pulse. In Year 2, pupils are introduced to a picture score. Pupils follow these accurately to produce a written rhythm. Very attentive listening is a crucial part of their music learning, particularly when asked to repeat patterns. Pupils' are aware of this and in a lesson observed in Year 2 this was quite apparent. The pupils sat totally focused, listened carefully and reproduced the teacher's patterns, sometimes individually and sometimes as a class. The quality of music making is enhanced by opportunities to join the after school 'music' club. All Year 2 pupils have the opportunity to attend and two thirds are regular members. In an *after school club* observed, pupils enjoyed working in groups and creating their own score using individual pitched instruments known a *boom-whackers*. This, as an activity, not only promoted musical composition but supported moral and social development well. Throughout all music activities within the school, inclusion is a strong feature. These was no difference in the performance of boys and girls. Throughout the school, pupils from different ethnic backgrounds work together in harmony to establish and promote a high quality school community.
127. Singing in assemblies and lessons indicates that pupils sing with good control of breathing, dynamics, direction, tempo and pitch. As pupils enter and leave assembly they listen to music by the composer of the week. During the week of the inspection they listened to a piano concerto by *Brahms* and time was taken to explain this as part of the music appraisal. Throughout the school, pupils are given suitable opportunities to perform. They perform each half-term to their peers to demonstrate what they have achieved in their musical programme for the half term, as well as for parents and friends for different festivals such as Harvest and Easter. Every term a group of pupils, perform for the residents of a local Adult centre.
128. Teaching is good overall, with examples of very good and excellent teaching. Over the past couple of years much has been achieved in raising the quality of music in the school and standards are rising in consequence. Teachers have gained confidence in teaching music and have benefited from the support of the local education authority staff. Teachers enjoy teaching music and this enjoyment is transmitted well to the pupils. The school has a very wide range of musical instruments that they use across the curriculum, in science for example. Teachers have good management skills and effective classroom routines have been established to ensure time in lessons is well used.
129. Leadership and management are both good overall. The subject leader supports staff effectively in their planning, providing resources for lessons, ensuring that they are confident in using the scheme of work, and fulfilling their in-service needs with very good support from the LEA. The school recently won a competition resulting in £2000 becoming available to promote musical resources, and as a result musical resources are very good. The monitoring of planning and standards is good but the monitoring of teaching and lessons is only just beginning. Effective

assessment takes place to monitor achievement and standards half-termly and is a positive feature in the school's self review processes.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

130. Lessons were observed in games and dance and in these aspects standards are average. No lessons were timetabled for gymnastics. Improvement since the last inspection has been sound overall. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well by learning assistants and by the colour coded space boundaries in the hall which help pupils use the space provided very well during warm up activities. For games, colour coded equipment and modified tactile balls assist team games. Teaching and learning are both satisfactory. The school has earmarked physical education for improvement this year. The subject has no dedicated leader as such, but a newly qualified teacher who has many skills in this area of learning is eager to take it responsibility for the subject in September.
131. Pupils have good team spirit and clear ideas about team play. They co-operate with each other well. Pupils know the importance of warm up activities at the beginning of lessons and a cooling down period at the end. Pupils in one Year 2 class lesson shared good ideas about the importance of exercise for a healthy heart and provided clear reasons for needing to warm-up muscles. Pupils jog and show good control when changing speed and direction. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Where teaching is good, the teacher involves pupils well in considering their achievements and improving accuracy in throwing and catching skills for example. 'Cooling down' time in this effective lesson was used for pupils to reflect upon how they had improved during the lesson and what they might do better next time. Pupils did not improve their accuracy as well in another lesson where insufficient time was made for pupils to talk about the skills they were developing and subsequently they did not evaluate enough to improve their performance. Several pupils lost interest because of the lack of challenge.
132. Good dance lessons in Year 1 were typified by a brisk pace that maintained pupils' interest so they made a good effort to represent different characters in a story they had read. The pupils moved like robots for example, jerking their bodies and changing the speed and strength of movements. Teaching constantly challenged pupils and made effective use of pupil demonstration for other pupils to evaluate how movements could be improved. Pupils show a good deal of enjoyment during dance lessons and demonstrate control and co-ordination in line with national expectations. Insufficient use is generally made of music to encourage pupils to improve their style and forms of movement to demonstrate feelings. A good example of this was seen in a reception class lesson and this added value to pupils' experiences.
133. Leadership and management of the subject are both satisfactory. There are good assessment procedures and pupils are assessed each term against specific objectives. The subject leader recognises the need for moderation and planning 'next steps' and school action is already planned to address this by enlisting support from the LEA advisory service. The school provides a multi-cultural dimension to dance in dance workshops held during Arts week and when celebrating Chinese New Year. Extra-curricular provision is made for football on a regular basis and athletics during sports day.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

134. Standards are above average at the end of Year 2. The requirements of the locally agreed syllabus are met in full. Religious education is taught effectively and sensitively in all classes and this has contributed to the rise in standards since the previous inspection.
135. Pupils, irrespective of their background, gender, ability or ethnicity, make good progress. Good teaching and some very good resources including artefacts and books from a range of major world religions support pupils' learning well. In Year 1, pupils know about the Jewish festival of the *Passover* and understand that *Passover* is a time when Jewish people are reminded about

their history. The teacher adopts a “hands on” approach for the pupils by providing them with the experience of teaching the *Seder plate* and tasting some of the foods, teaching them in a very practical way that the items on the plate were symbols and reminders of their previous history. In Year 2, pupils know that Muslims believe that a *garden* is a symbol of *heaven*. In both classes speaking and listening skills are developed well. They express their ideas in sentences confidently and competently, take their turn to speak and listen attentively when others are speaking. During their religious education lessons they learn about important features of other faiths such as *Nanak’s story* in Sikhism, *the Torah* in Judaism, the *Crescent, Moon and Star* in Islam and *The last Supper* in Christianity. These and other aspects give them a clear understanding of moral values such as rudeness and helps them distinguish between right and wrong. This makes a good contribution to pupils’ spiritual and moral development.

136. The quality of teaching is good overall and teachers encourage and value contributions made by individuals in their discussions. Pupils throughout are attentive and listen with concentration and respect as elements are drawn out of their own knowledge. Pupils make good progress in understanding how we can learn from religion. The teaching is based upon the locally agreed syllabus and the pupils appreciate, learn from and handle sensitively the very good range of resources the school has acquired over the years. Good questioning is used to clarify understanding through empathy and reflection. This was exemplified in the Year 2 class when pupils discussed their understanding of *Heaven*. The teaching throughout gave good direction to the lesson and followed the carefully thought out planning. Teaching builds on pupils’ prior knowledge and understanding and so there is good understanding that we all belong to different religions and beliefs and if we know about the religious beliefs and practices of others it will help us all to live together in harmony.
137. The leadership and management of the subject are both good. The subject leader is experienced, uses the locally agreed syllabus well to ensure continuity and progression and supports the staff well to promote this subject in a sensitive, thoughtful and positive manner. Resources are very good. Assessment is in place and the joint planning is effective. The monitoring of the teaching and learning is not yet sufficiently rigorous to enable the subject leader to gain critical insights into the quality of provision throughout the school.