

INSPECTION REPORT

KEEP HATCH INFANT SCHOOL

LEA area: Wokingham Unitary

Unique reference number: 109840

Headteacher: Mrs Angela Young

Reporting inspector: Barbara Crane
21227

Dates of inspection: 17th – 19th September 2002

Inspection number: 246941

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:	4 – 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Ashridge Road Wokingham Berkshire
Postcode:	RG40 1PG
Telephone number:	0118 9786714
Fax number:	0118 9794786
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Paul Mitchell
Date of previous inspection:	2 nd March 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Subject responsibilities		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Barbara Crane 21227	Registered inspector	English, art, geography, history, areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage.	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
Ron Elam 9092	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
John Evans 20404	Team inspector	Mathematics, information and communication technology, music, physical education, special educational needs	Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development.
John Linstead 20948	Team inspector	Science, design and technology, religious education, educational inclusion.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

The inspection contractor was:

SCHOOLhaus Ltd
Suite 17
BPS Business Centre
Brake Lane
Boughton
Nottinghamshire
NG22 9HQ

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33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

Page

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

7

Information about the school
How good the school is
What the school does well
What could be improved
How the school has improved since its last inspection
Standards
Pupils' attitudes and values
Teaching and learning
Other aspects of the school
How well the school is led and managed
Parents' and carers' views of the school

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

11

The school's results and pupils' achievements
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

13

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

15

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

16

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

18

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

18

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

21

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

22

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

26

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This school is smaller than most schools. There are 96 pupils, with an equal number of boys and girls. The number of pupils rises over the year as children join at the start of the term in which they are five. They attend part time for a while. A second Reception class is formed in the summer term when the final group of children joins. The children come from a wide range of backgrounds and their attainment on entry to school is above average. Sixteen per cent of the pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is close to the national average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is broadly average at 15 per cent but the school has a higher number of pupils whose needs are met through extra provision. At present there are three pupils with statements of special educational need. The pupils' special educational needs are generally concerned with learning difficulties. Most pupils are from white, English speaking backgrounds with a very small number of pupils having English as an additional language, but they are not at an early stage of acquiring English. There are a very small number of pupils who come from Traveller families. The school faces difficulties in recruiting teachers and this leads to the headteacher taking over the teaching of a class at times.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This school provides a good education for its pupils and they achieve well. Standards in English and mathematics are well above average. The school very successfully promotes pupils' personal development and confidence. The teaching is good and pupils enjoy their work. The leadership and management of the school are good and have ensured good improvement in standards since the last inspection. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in English and mathematics are well above average.
- The pupils' work in art and design is outstanding and is better than expected for their age in design and technology, physical education, geography and music.
- Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress because of high quality teaching and support that meets their individual needs.
- The pupils' attitudes to school, their behaviour and relationships are excellent and they enjoy learning.
- The school promotes the pupils' personal development very effectively through careful planning.
- The headteacher leads the staff well and they work very well as a team to bring about improvement.
- The school's partnership with parents is very good.

What could be improved

- The recording of pupils' progress and attainment in reading and science is not sufficiently clear to allow teachers to always enable the more able pupils to achieve their very best.
- Standards in ICT (information and communication technology) are not high enough and pupils do not use computers sufficiently to support their work in lessons.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

There has been good improvement since the school's last inspection in 1998. Standards in English and mathematics are higher and teaching has improved. The school has successfully resolved most of the issues from the last inspection. The partnership with parents has been greatly strengthened and is now very good. The management of the school has improved, with better planning for improvement and the headteacher, governors and subject leaders taking a more effective role in checking how well the school is doing. The governing body plays a more active role in financial planning. The school is now providing well for pupils' spiritual and cultural development. There have been barriers to improvement in ICT, as teachers' training has only recently been completed and there is still work to do to raise standards in pupils' attainment. The school is now teaching the full curriculum for religious education.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
Reading	A	D	B	B
Writing	A	B	B	A
Mathematics	B	B	C	C

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The pupils' results in 2001 in reading and writing were better than those seen in most schools and in similar schools. The results in mathematics were not as strong, and were average in comparison to all schools and similar schools. There is no national comparative data yet available for 2002 but pupils' results were as good in reading and writing in terms of pupils reaching the level expected for their age, but fewer pupils reached the higher level. Results in mathematics were very much better than the previous year, with nearly half of the pupils reaching beyond the level expected. This was because the school identified what needed to improve in mathematics and set about raising the attainment of more able pupils through adaptations to teaching. On the basis of the work seen in Year 2, standards are well above average in mathematics, reading and writing. Pupils of all abilities are making very good progress in mathematics and writing. Most of the more able pupils are doing very well in reading but some are making slower progress because the teachers cannot quickly match work to their needs since information about their previous attainment is not always clearly recorded. Standards in science are average, with some improvement in the proportion of pupils assessed as gaining the higher level in 2002. However, more able pupils should be doing better and their progress has been restricted through a lack of clarity of information to guide teachers in planning work at an appropriate level. The pupils' work in art and design is outstanding for their age. Work in music, geography, physical education and design and technology is better than expected for pupils' ages. Attainment in ICT is lower than that expected for pupils by the age of seven because the improvement in teachers' expertise has not yet impacted on standards and pupils do not have enough opportunities to use computers in their everyday work. In all other subjects the oldest pupils' work reaches the expectations for their age. When children leave the Reception year, their attainment is much better than expected for their age in all of the areas of learning. In all year groups, pupils with special educational needs make very good progress because of well-planned support. The very small number of pupils who are learning English as an additional language and who come from Traveller families make good progress because their needs are taken into account.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Excellent. The pupils are keen to do well and enjoy their work. They concentrate well in lessons and take pleasure in their success.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Excellent. Pupils' behaviour is exemplary both in classrooms and at play.
Personal development and relationships	Excellent. The pupils grow in confidence and self-esteem because they know how much the school values them as individuals. Pupils of all backgrounds and abilities get on very well together and help each other.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Pupils arrive punctually, ready to start work.

The pupils take full advantage of what the school offers them. They eagerly take part in activities and use their initiative very well to organise themselves in their work and in their play. Pupils respond very well to the school's high expectations of them to behave sensibly and think about how they can help each other.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The teaching is good and so the pupils are interested in lessons and learn well. The teachers create very good opportunities for pupils to use their ideas and express opinions. This supports pupils' personal development very well. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and this leads to calm classrooms in which hard work and concentration are the norm. The basic skills are very well taught and then practised through lively activities that are carefully planned. Support staff work as part of the team and have a clear understanding of how they are helping pupils' learning. Teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good because it is closely based on pupils' needs. Pupils who are learning English are supported well, as are pupils from Traveller families. The teaching of English is good but teachers cannot always quickly match work in reading to a few of the most able pupils' needs because the information they get about what pupils can already do is not always clearly recorded. Teaching in mathematics is very good, with a fast pace and practical activities that speed pupils' learning. Teaching in science is satisfactory but teachers have not had the information to allow them to plan work for the more able pupils, based on what these pupils already know. Teachers' expertise in ICT has recently improved, but they are still planning too few opportunities for pupils to use computers in lessons.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good for the Foundation Stage and good for Years 1 and 2. There is a good range of interesting activities in all classes that link pupils' learning well in most respects but the pupils do not use computers sufficiently in Years 1 and 2.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. The support for these pupils is closely based on their needs and they are very well integrated in all activities. They make very good progress as a result.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Although no pupils are at an early stage of learning English, their needs are taken into account in lessons.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Very good provision, overall. There is excellent planning to support pupils' social and moral development and good provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	This is good. The staff know the pupils well and are mindful of their well-being. The pupils are given good advice and support.

The provision for the arts is very good and promotes better attainment than expected for pupils' ages. The teachers check how well the pupils are doing in mathematics and writing very effectively and pass on clear information that enables the next teacher to quickly plan work at an appropriately challenging level. This is not always the case in reading and science for the more able pupils. The school's partnership with parents is very strong. Parents receive very good information from the school about the work their children will do each term and good guidance on how to help children at home.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school that is shared by the staff. The able deputy head gives good quality support. All of the staff work very well together and put the pupils first in all that they do.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	They do this well; all of their responsibilities are carried out and governors provide good support for the school, despite frequent changes of membership.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school looks at how well it is doing and knows what it needs to do improve. The right priorities are identified and the school works diligently towards its targets.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The finances are well used to support the school's planning for improvement and the school effectively seeks the best value for its expenditure.

The school's focus on improving its checking on teaching and learning has successfully improved its provision. All staff and governors now contribute to drawing up the school's plans for improvement. The governors check the safety of the building and facilities but do not always record what they find and this makes it difficult to check if problems have been resolved. The school's staffing and its accommodation are good and used well to support pupils' progress. Resources are satisfactory, but there is too little computer software for pupils to use in lessons.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school and make good progress. • The children's behaviour is good. • Children are expected to work hard and do their best. • The teaching is good. • The school is well led and managed. • The school helps children to become more mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A few parents feel that the school does not work closely with them.

Inspection evidence supports the parents' positive comments. The concern of a few parents that the school does not work closely with them is not supported. The school makes a very good effort to keep parents well informed and involve them in its work.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The pupils' results in 2001 in the national tests in reading and writing were better than those seen in most schools and in similar schools. The results in mathematics were average in comparison to all schools and similar schools. In 2002, pupils' results were as good in reading and writing in terms of pupils reaching the level expected for their age, but fewer pupils reached the higher level than in the previous year. Results in mathematics were very much better, with nearly half of the pupils reaching beyond the level expected. There are, as yet, no comparators available for the 2002 results. Most of the pupils in Year 2 last year did at least as well as expected from their starting point. Lower attaining pupils did particularly well, but a few more able pupils did not make the progress expected. The school identified this through its improved tracking of pupils' progress, which was implemented last year and has started to put in place more frequent checks on pupils' progress.
2. The average and lower attaining pupils are doing well in most areas. More able pupils are often doing well but a few could be doing better in reading and more could be reaching the higher level in science if the school's recording systems gave a clearer picture of what pupils had already learned. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress and learn very well. This results from the very good quality of teaching they receive in lessons and withdrawal sessions. Planning for these pupils is closely targeted at their needs, and there are very good measures to ensure that the learning pupils achieve out of class is carried through in lessons. The very small number of pupils from Traveller families and who are learning English are well supported and do as well as other pupils.
3. Many of the current Year 2 pupils are working well above the level expected for their age in reading, writing and speaking and listening. The school's efforts to improve standards in writing over the past year have been very effective. About half of the current Year 2 pupils are on track to reach the level higher than that expected by the end of the year in reading and speaking and listening, and about a third are likely to reach the higher level in writing. The pupils use their literacy skills well in other subjects such as history and geography, where they read for information or write imaginative accounts. They speak confidently in thoughtful sentences and use a wide range of vocabulary. Pupils listen very carefully to the teachers and so quickly follow instructions and understand what they have to do. They also listen to each other and readily offer opinions and ideas, often modifying these in the light of what others say. For example, in a literacy session a group of pupils offered alternative ways of starting a story. Pupils have a very good level of understanding of what they read, and use lively expression. When pupils write, they do so quickly and neatly, using a joined script. They think about how they will form sentences, are eager to set down their ideas and use their knowledge of the sounds of letters very well when they spell. The work that teachers plan is consistently at the right, challenging level; this ensures that the lower and average attaining pupils make very good progress in all areas of English. The more able pupils make very good progress in writing and speaking and listening. However, while most of these pupils are making at least good progress in reading, there were times when their progress at this early time of the year was slower as teachers did not always pitch the work in reading at the right level for them. This is because the quality of information that teachers receive about pupils' earlier progress and attainment is not sufficiently clearly recorded so that new teachers can quickly identify their needs and plan work accordingly.
4. Standards in mathematics are well above average by the end of Year 2 and pupils' achievement is very good. Standards are now significantly higher than at any time in the last four years. This improvement in standards and achievement results from the very good quality of teaching of pupils in groups that are based on their ability. This enables teachers to match

lessons more closely to pupils' needs and challenge them at the right level. This results in a much higher proportion of pupils achieving above average levels, while average and less able pupils also achieve very well. The Year 2 pupils work confidently with numbers and are quick and accurate in their recall of addition and subtraction facts. In mental calculation they quickly work with two-digit numbers or number sequences. By the end of Year 2 pupils carry out some written calculations with three-digit numbers and begin to use decimals when working with money. Most pupils have a good understanding of how the position of a number changes its value, and a developing sense of the size of numbers. This enables them to quickly check their answers are accurate.

5. Standards in science in Year 2 are in line with the national average but too few pupils are reaching the higher levels and more able pupils should be doing better. Most pupils' achievements are satisfactory but the scrutiny of previous work shows that the needs of more able pupils are not always planned for to take them beyond the levels expected of the rest of the class. The school has recognised that its provision for more able pupils, and recording the levels reached by the more able pupils, have weaknesses. While appropriate action has been taken to ensure that better recording is in place and more challenge is included in the work this year, it is too early to see the impact of this improvement. Pupils with special educational needs make rapid progress with most reaching the levels of attainment expected for their age. Much of the work carried out by pupils is through investigations and experiments that lead pupils to understand scientific ways of working and understand how to test their ideas fairly. Pupils use the correct terminology and show their results using appropriate charts and tables. They often write accounts to explain why they think things happened but do not make regular written predictions before testing an idea to help them further in accounting for what actually happened.
6. The pupils should be doing better in ICT. Until recently, there has been too little work planned at an appropriate level to support pupils' sound progress and so they do not reach the expectations for their age. The curriculum is now fully planned but it is too early to have made an impact on pupils' attainment. In addition, pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to develop their computer skills by using them in other subjects, such as mathematics and English. Recent work contains some satisfactory skills, for example, creating graphs in science or using a paint program in art, but pupils do not use computers often enough. Subject managers recognise this and have good plans to improve resources and the way cross-curricular work is planned.
7. In other subjects, the pupils are at least reaching the expectations for their age by the end of Year 2. There is some good achievement in physical education and history, with a number of pupils reaching beyond expectations for their age. In religious education, pupils' work reaches the expectations of the local syllabus and they extend their understanding of different religions and explore concepts such as what it means to be 'special'.
8. Pupils' work in art and design is outstanding. They make very rapid progress in art and design because of the very good teaching of skills and techniques and the opportunities teachers provide for them to try out and extend their ideas in a wide range of media. Their observational skills are excellent, being carefully trained through skilful teaching. Pupils use information and inspiration from sources that they have gathered and use this very thoughtfully in future work.
9. Attainment in design and technology is better than expected for the pupils' age at seven because of the good teaching that enables them to hone their skills in designing, planning and critically analysing their work. Pupils do well in geography and their work is better than expected for their age because of good teaching that build on their own experience, and enables them to find out more about how the characteristics of places affect people's lives. Attainment in physical education is better than expected for the pupils' age at seven because of careful teaching that promotes pupils' control and skill in moving.

10. Pupils' attainment in music is above average and they achieve well. Pupils in Year 2 sing tunefully and start and end pieces together. They control their voices well, with good expression and phrasing. They understand how to make high or low notes on chime bars and use gestures to show whether notes are rising or falling. Pupils show sensitivity in listening to music and saying how it makes them feel.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Pupils' attitudes to learning, and their behaviour and personal development, are excellent. This is a very significant improvement over the findings of the previous inspection when these features were judged to be good. Now they are an outstanding strength of the school. This reflects teachers' skilled management, the excellent relationships that they achieve and the way all adults working in the school value pupils both as individuals and for the contributions they make.
12. Pupils enjoy learning and thrive on the interesting, varied activities that teachers provide. They listen attentively, work very hard and concentrate well. Pupils are enthusiastic and eager to learn. They are trustworthy and sensible, for example, when handling musical instruments or moving physical education apparatus. They are very responsible, for example, in organising their work and belongings and show suitable initiative. Pupils of all abilities are confident and secure because their relationships with adults are warm, encouraging and positive. Pupils work very well alongside each other and co-operate very well, for example, in music or group work in mathematics. They listen to and respect the feelings of others and are polite and friendly.
13. Pupils' behaviour is excellent. No instances of inappropriate behaviour were seen during the inspection, in or out of class. This is an improvement over the last inspection when there were occasional instances of misbehaviour. Pupils are very happy in their work, play freely and amicably together, join confidently in lessons and enjoy coming to school.
14. The quality of relationships at all levels underpins the school's success in promoting excellent personal development. It flows from the example that teachers and classroom assistants set. In lessons and about the school, adults manage pupils with warmth, sensitivity and respect. When working together, teachers and classroom assistants set good examples of co-operation and shared responsibility. They use praise to encourage pupils, building their self-esteem, emphasising the positive aspects of their achievement and ensuring that all pupils are fully included in all activities. As a result of the supportive climate in classrooms, pupils learn to relate to others in a similarly positive way.
15. As at the time of the previous inspection, attendance is satisfactory. In the school year 2000/2001 it was well below the national average but the action subsequently taken by the school resulted last year in an improvement. Absences are mainly due to the usual childhood illnesses. Unauthorised absence is below the national average reflecting the efforts made by the school to ensure parents provide reasons for absence. Pupils are keen to come to school and any lateness is rare.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. The teaching is good and has improved since the last inspection. The basic skills in literacy and numeracy are taught very well in all classes and practised through interesting and well-planned activities that motivate the pupils to learn. The teachers plan good opportunities for pupils to use their skills in literacy and numeracy in lessons. Teachers have a good knowledge of their subjects and offer advice to each other readily. This has had a very positive impact on standards in mathematics, writing, art and design, design and technology, geography and music. The pupils develop confidence because of the warm support they receive from all adults. The classrooms are busy and pupils work hard because they want to do well to please the teachers. High expectations of behaviour are evident in all classes. Teachers praise pupils'

efforts and are sensitive to their developing emotional and social needs. They ensure that pupils have choices over resources and plan very good opportunities for them to use their initiative and organise their work. Teachers take the needs of pupils who are learning English as an additional language into account in group work and class discussions. They check the pupils' understanding thoroughly and provide sensitive support.

17. The teachers and support staff work very well together. Classroom assistants give valuable support to groups of pupils because they have a very clear understanding of what they have to do in lessons. Teachers and support staff evaluate the progress made by individuals and groups to decide what needs working on next. The teaching support for the very small number of pupils from Traveller families is well focused on their needs and effective.
18. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good. The special educational needs co-ordinator sets a high standard in her own teaching, which is versatile and responsive to pupils' differing needs. In lessons, good planning, excellent relationships and careful monitoring by teachers and classroom assistants ensure that pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all activities and experience pleasure and achievement in learning. The very good links with parents and the planned involvement of pupils in discussing their own work improve the effectiveness of learning. This builds pupils' confidence and security and helps to improve pupils' personal development by promoting independence and responsibility.
19. Teaching for Reception children achieves a good balance of activities that allow them to explore their own ideas and also to engage in tasks that are set by the teacher. The organisation of lessons is good, with effective use of the classroom assistant to support groups of children. The children's individual abilities are taken into account in planning the work and so they make good progress. Good routines are quickly established so that children feel secure and know what is expected of them.
20. Teaching in English is good. The pupils enjoy reading and writing and contributing their ideas because the teachers inspire them with a love of language and a desire to improve. Pupils reflect the teachers' very good examples of handwriting and reading aloud with expression. In guided reading sessions, the teachers explore ideas with the pupils when they ask probing questions that prompt them to think about the author's use of language and how characters develop. The careful assessment of pupils' writing means that teachers closely pinpoint areas for improvement and pupils are reminded of what they need to work on next. Teachers are not always quickly able to group pupils and plan challenging work in reading for the most able, as a result of the way in which pupils' earlier learning and attainment are recorded.
21. Teaching in mathematics is very good. Teachers use imaginative approaches to motivate pupils and push them on in their understanding of numbers. The work set is consistently challenging and well matched to pupils' abilities. As a result, pupils of all abilities make very good progress. The climate for learning effectively combines a good humoured approach with purposefulness that reflects teachers' high expectations. Pupils are interested in lessons because teachers are lively and keep up a good pace in oral work, give clear explanations, and use well-chosen visual resources to increase the impact of learning.
22. Teaching in science is satisfactory. There are strengths in the ways in which teachers organise practical activities to promote pupils' understanding of scientific ways of working and pupils' vocabulary is extended well. However, the previous lack of clarity with which the more able pupils' attainment has been recorded has led to work that does not always challenge these pupils. This has been resolved, but it is too early to see its impact in the progress made by pupils.
23. Teaching in all subjects except for ICT is at least good. Teaching in ICT is satisfactory and expertise has been raised through recent training, but teachers are not yet planning sufficient

opportunities for pupils to use computers in lessons. Teachers have a high level of confidence in teaching art and design and this leads to outstanding work.

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

24. The school provides a good range of curricular and other learning opportunities for its pupils. Statutory requirements are fully met, including the teaching of religious education and health and sex education. This represents good improvement since the last inspection. The school has successfully resolved the key issue of needing to broaden its interpretation of the syllabus for religious education used in the local authority's schools, which was judged then to be too narrow. In addition, the teaching of National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy are better implemented.
25. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is very good because it takes full account of the wide range of children's abilities when they start school and teachers plan varied and interesting activities that link very well together to build on new skills learned. The children use computers frequently and quickly learn the basic skills. The curriculum in Year 1 and Year 2 is good because of the range, depth and richness of the learning experiences pupils engage in. Teachers make good use of opportunities to link subjects to aid pupils' understanding and add relevance to their learning, for example, in pointing out mathematical shapes, patterns and number in physical education lessons or using drama to help pupils understand the meanings of Bible stories. The provision for the arts is good and pupils are encouraged to be creative and express themselves. The activities planned in art and design, music, physical education and design and technology lessons enable teachers to help pupils reach levels of attainment higher than those expected for their age. The weakness in the curriculum in Years 1 and 2 is in ICT. The planning for ICT has improved since the last inspection so that there is now an appropriate range of activities in place. However, it is too early in the implementation of these plans for a significant improvement in pupils' skills and understanding. There are too few planned opportunities for pupils to use ICT in their work in other subjects, for example in science, mathematics and English.
26. The planning of lessons ensures that all pupils have equal access to the whole curriculum. The support for the few pupils from Traveller families is effectively organised. The needs of pupils who are learning English as an additional language are properly taken into account. A considerable strength of the school is that pupils with special educational needs play a full part in lessons and in school life generally. The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs is carefully planned and documented. Pupils' individual education plans are clearly written and practical, specifying concise targets and providing a framework for very good progress. Individual teaching is carefully planned to ensure that the learning pupils follow outside the classroom links with the work they do in lessons. This ensures that the curriculum for pupils with special educational needs is relevant and effective. There is some careful tracking of the progress of all pupils and includes, for example, the attainments of boys and girls, pupils for whom English is an additional language, as well as pupils with special educational needs. Where necessary, activities are planned for pupils on an individual basis. For example, the school sought expert advice for one pupil with a singular special need that resulted in a programme of work and the pupil making very good progress. However, there is not always planning of appropriate work for higher attaining pupils to reach the levels of which they are capable in reading and science.
27. The curriculum is appropriately extended through the visits pupils make to places of interest associated with their studies, and links with the local community are good. For example, pupils have visited the local church, Welling Country Park and the local town centre. The local vicar is a regular visitor and has, for example, carried out a mock Christening with the help of pupils to help them understand the meaning of this ceremony. Other visitors to the school have also added considerably to pupils' experiences, especially in music, dance and drama. Theatre groups, expert dancers and musicians have all worked directly with pupils from all years. The

school is justifiably proud of its choir, which comprises the whole of Year 2, and which has performed at the Royal Festival Hall following successfully taking part in local festivals.

28. Overall the school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good, which represents a significant improvement since the last inspection. The provision for spiritual development was found to be lacking in some areas at the last inspection but is now good. This has been developed very well, especially through improvements in the planning of acts of worship, the religious education curriculum and work in art and music. The planning of collective acts of worship now ensures themes of a spiritual nature are explored and pupils given time to reflect. In one assembly, for example, the theme was the school's 'Golden Rules' and how everyone is special in a different way. Time for reflection was built in enabling pupils to link their experiences and feelings to what had been discussed. The school makes good use of 'circle time' in each class for pupils to discuss ideas and to share these with their classmates. It is also an opportunity for pupils to share anxieties and concerns, under the guidance of a teacher. The work in art and design lessons is used very well to help pupils explore their feelings. For example, pupils painted sunsets and added their thoughts about how this made them feel. In another lesson pupils expressed considerable wonderment as their teacher rolled paint across some tiles and the colour unfolded.
29. The school has strengthened its provision for the moral development of pupils since the last inspection so that this is now excellent. The school's 'Golden Rules' are known and respected by all pupils who understand the reasons why it is important to have and obey such rules. Again assemblies and circle times are used to discuss moral issues with these also built into the religious education curriculum. The moral codes of other cultures are also explored in these lessons. Teachers provide a very good example through their relationships with each other and the way they treat pupils and value their work. There is an implicit understanding in the school that everyone will treat others with respect and courtesy.
30. The school's provision for social development is also excellent and has improved very well since the last inspection. Pupils get on with each other remarkably well. At break times, for example, pupils play happily together and create games that often extend to include large groups of pupils of different ages. The school is a caring institution that has created a strong sense of community and co-operation among staff and pupils. All pupils are treated equally and teachers take care to involve all pupils in discussions, demonstrations and the life of the class generally. In lessons pupils co-operate very well in their groups or discuss things earnestly in pairs. Equipment and resources are shared and used fairly.
31. The school's provision for cultural development has progressed well since the last inspection and is now good. Pupils have good opportunities to explore and become aware of their cultural heritage through the curriculum provided. These include the provision of a wide range of literature, the learning of songs from a variety of cultures and traditions and studying the lives of different people in their historical, geographical and religious studies. Pupils have access to musical instruments from other cultures and have looked at the work of famous artists. Visitors to the school have included representatives of the Hindu religion to talk about their beliefs and show different costumes. In addition, pupils have watched and performed dances from different African traditions under the guidance of a visiting expert.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

32. As at the time of the last inspection all the staff show good concern for the needs of the pupils and provide good examples to encourage their development. Parents are pleased with the level of support in the school, seeing it as a caring community where staff are approachable if there are any problems. The procedures for providing educational and personal support and guidance are very good, and for monitoring pupils' academic performance and personal development are good.

33. The school has good procedures for child protection and for ensuring the welfare of the pupils. The designated person for child protection is well trained and the school follows local procedures. The staff have received guidance on how to deal with any situations that may arise and know who to report to in the school if necessary. Health and safety matters are discussed at staff meetings to maintain a good awareness throughout the school. The teachers make the pupils aware of health and safety issues during lessons such as science, physical education and design and technology. The headteacher and governors carry out risk assessments but their findings are not recorded and this makes it difficult to ensure that points are always followed up.
34. The teachers check pupils' personal development very well. Useful comments are made in the annual reports to parents because all the staff know the pupils well. They promote pupils' positive attitudes through assemblies and classroom discussion, for example, to discuss feelings and to promote sharing. The times when pupils sit together to share feelings help them learn to listen to others and develop tolerance of others' points of view. Pupils' personal qualities are enhanced by the various tasks they have around the school such as taking the registers to and from the classroom.
35. The school promotes discipline and good behaviour well and is very effective in preventing any oppressive behaviour. The approach adopted by the staff recognises the needs of the pupils and reflects the philosophy of the school. The school's rules were originally devised by pupils and are discussed at the start of the year and on other occasions as necessary. There are rewards for good effort and behaviour. The lessons seen during the inspection showed that the staff consistently adopt a positive approach.
36. The school monitors and promotes good attendance well and makes a positive contribution to the attainment and progress of all pupils. The school uses computerised records to monitor the attendance of individual pupils but does not yet produce class or school totals during the year to provide early warning of trends. The excellent relationships between the pupils and the staff mean that the pupils enjoy being at the school. The school knows the families well and, if necessary, will telephone home on the first day of an unexplained absence. Holidays in term time are actively discouraged with reminders in the prospectus and governors' annual report.
37. The assessment of pupils with special educational needs is accurate and detailed. It characterises pupils' individual needs concisely so that well-targeted, practical teaching plans can be designed. Pupils' progress is continuously monitored during lessons and individual teaching sessions, and systematically reviewed. This ensures that assessments reflect pupils' developing needs and remain relevant and informative.
38. The ways in which the teachers check how well the other pupils are doing have some strengths and weaknesses. The teachers of the Reception children make careful checks on how well the children are doing when they start at the school and then progressing in literacy and numeracy. Teachers use this information well to plan work that matches the needs of different ability groups. This information, however, is not always presented to the Year 1 teachers in a way that is easily interpreted so that they can quickly provide work at a suitably challenging level for all of the more able pupils in reading and science. The same picture is seen when pupils transfer from Year 1 to Year 2. This slows some pupils' progress as the new teachers spend time at the start of the school year finding out the best way to group pupils and plan work to meet their needs. The situation is much better in mathematics and writing. The checking of pupils' progress in writing has greatly improved because of the samples of writing that are analysed each term and teachers are accurate in their assessment of the level at which pupils are working. In reading, the pupils' progress is checked against progress through the reading scheme but does not give a sufficiently clear picture of the National Curriculum level reached by the pupils. This means that when teachers assess the level reached by the more able pupils at the end of Year 2, their assessments are sometimes inaccurate. This was reflected in teachers' assessments for the oldest pupils last year, when the pupils' performance in the tests was better than that judged by teachers. The

school has recognised through its monitoring that there are weaknesses in checking on more able pupils' progress in science and has put in place a more effective system but it is too early to show an impact in terms of its use.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

39. There has been excellent improvement in this aspect of the school's work since the last inspection. In their responses to the questionnaire and at the meeting with the inspectors parents showed that they are very pleased with what the school provides. The inspection team supports all of their positive comments, that show a considerable improvement since the time of the last inspection. The inspection evidence did not support the concerns of a few parents, regarding the school not working closely with them. Parents feel that the school is well led and the teaching is good. Their children like coming to school and behave well, and they make good progress because of the level of support they receive. They feel the school expects their children to work hard and helps them to become mature and responsible. Parents feel comfortable approaching the school with any questions or problems.
40. The school has established very good links with the parents and these contacts are effective. The headteacher sends very good newsletters home two or three times a term, outlining the various activities that the pupils are involved in as well providing general administrative information. Each term, class teachers send extensive details of what they will be teaching their pupils, suggesting how parents can help at home. Every afternoon provides a very good opportunity for parents to see the teachers who ensure they are readily available when children are collected. It is very apparent that parents feel very welcome to come into the school. The school holds a variety of more formal meetings. In addition to the one-to-one meetings with teachers each term, the school invites parents to meetings in each year group to discuss the work for the year. The annual report on pupils' progress provides a good summary for each subject of what the pupils know and can do, together with targets to help the pupils to improve. However, the reports do not provide a clear indication of how well pupils are doing compared to most children of the same age. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are very well involved in the setting and review of their children's individual education plans.
41. Parents' involvement with the school makes a good contribution to its work and to the attainment of the pupils. Pupils are happy in school and work hard and are keen to learn, and these attitudes reflect the extent to which parents encourage their children to respect the school and education process. There are meetings and booklets that explain the school's approach to homework and how parents can help at home. In particular, reading books go home regularly. The parents' association is very supportive in arranging fund-raising and social events and uniform sales. Parents come to help in the classroom on a regular basis, for example, hearing readers, organising the library and helping with sewing. The school intends increasing parental involvement with questionnaires and extending the opportunities for parents to raise general matters about school life during consultation evenings.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

42. The leadership and management of the school are good. The school's aims are very well reflected in its everyday work. There was a great deal to do following its last inspection and the headteacher's clear vision for the school has underpinned good improvement. In addition, over the past two years, due to the school's difficulties in recruiting teachers, the headteacher has had to teach a class for extended periods of time; for example, last term she taught for three days each week. The deputy head sets a very good example in her teaching and plays a full role in taking the school forward. There has been overall good improvement due to the sensitive and effective leadership by the senior managers and the very good teamwork by the staff. The school has worked very effectively to improve its partnership with parents and there has been excellent improvement here. Good improvement has been made in providing for pupils' spiritual and cultural development and in enabling subject managers to play a more

effective role in checking provision in their subjects. There has been good improvement in financial planning to underpin the school's planning for development. The school is making better use of data to set targets for improvement in standards.

43. The action taken to resolve the issue from the previous report regarding improvement in ICT has faced some barriers and has been slower than expected. This has been due, in part, to the school only recently receiving the training provided nationally to upgrade teachers' expertise. The arrangements for checking teachers' performance and setting targets for improvement are now fully in place and used effectively to bring about improvements in teaching. New teachers are given good support. The good work done in improving the curriculum planning for children in the Foundation Stage has enabled the new teacher to quickly pick up the threads and ensure continuing good progress by the children. The staff are well supported by a staff handbook, which was lacking at the last inspection. The classroom assistants are very well deployed to provide effective support. Their training needs have been carefully identified and worked upon successfully and this enhances pupils' progress.
44. The staff work very effectively as a team and the school works well towards the targets it sets for improvement. Teaching and learning are checked well, and areas for improvement identified and worked upon effectively. The focus last year on improving provision for pupils with special educational needs is reflected in the very good progress these pupils make. The school has a clear understanding of what it needs to work on next to raise standards through its analysis of pupils' performance in tests. For example, the need to ensure better progress by more able pupils in science and reading has been identified. The school checks the progress made by boys and girls and tracks the pupils' progress from starting school to when they leave. This analysis has identified a few of the more able pupils whose attainment was lower than expected. The school has rightly identified the need to create more efficient ways of recording and passing on information about pupils' attainment that enables teachers to quickly understand the levels at which the more able pupils are working, so that teachers can better meet their needs.
45. The subject managers know what needs to be done in their areas to bring about improvement because they check what is working well and what could be better. All subjects have clear action plans that set out what needs to be done next. The management of special educational needs is very effective. The special educational needs co-ordinator is very enthusiastic, knowledgeable and well organised. Documentation reflects the requirements of the special educational needs code of practice and is detailed, accurate and up to date. Procedures, for example the identification and review of pupils' needs and the planning of provision, are flexible and secure. The governor for special educational needs is well informed and reports back to the governing body.
46. The governors give good support to the school's work. They face considerable challenges because of the very frequent changes of governors but they fulfil all of their responsibilities. They check the school's performance against other schools and ask questions about the school's provision and priorities. The governors are kept well informed by the headteacher and several have visited the school to find out more about its daily work. Financial planning is good and grants are well used to support the school's priorities for development. The governors ensure that they seek good value for money, for example in expenditure on classroom assistants. The level of carry forward in the school's budget was higher than usual last year because of late refunds of amounts but reduces to its usual level of about five per cent of total income in this year's budget. The school makes appropriate use of new technology to support its administrative systems.
47. The staffing and accommodation are good. The outdoor area for children in the Foundation Stage has been suitably developed after being identified as a weakness in the last report. Resources are at least adequate but there is too little computer software to support pupils' learning.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- **Ensure that all of the more able pupils achieve the best that they can in science and reading by:**
improving the way in which their progress and attainment are recorded so that new teachers can quickly pitch work at a challenging level.
(Paragraphs 2, 3, 5, 20, 22, 26, 38, 55, 59, 68)
- **Improve standards in ICT by:**
ensuring that better opportunities are planned for pupils to use computers as part of their everyday learning;
improving the range of computer software.
(Paragraphs 6, 23, 25, 47, 57, 64, 69, 86, 88)

In addition to the issues above, the governing body should consider the following point when drawing up its action plan:

- Ensuring that governors record the areas for improvement that are identified when they assess the safety of the school, so that they can better track their work in resolving problems.
(Paragraph 33)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	23
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	14

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	5	13	4	0	0	0
Percentage	4	22	57	17	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	96
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	16
Special educational needs	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	15
English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2
Pupil mobility in the last school Year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	9

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.8
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
2001	22	18	40

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	20	19
	Girls	17	17	17
	Total	35	37	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (84)	93 (98)	90 (86)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	17	17
	Girls	17	17	17
	Total	34	34	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (84)	85 (84)	85 (79)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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	83	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	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	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	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	1	0	0

No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0
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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)	5.7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17
Average class size	21

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	146

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
	£
Total income	350635
Total expenditure	336798
Expenditure per pupil	2854
Balance brought forward from previous year	13030
Balance carried forward to next year	26867

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	96
Number of questionnaires returned	40

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	78	20	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	85	15	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	80	18	2	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	48	40	5	0	8
The teaching is good.	85	10	2	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	28	60	2	5	5
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	70	20	8	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	78	18	2	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	38	45	8	5	5
The school is well led and managed.	80	12	2	0	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	72	18	2	0	8
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	50	40	8	2	0

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

48. Children are admitted to the Reception class in the term in which they are five and initially attend part time. Children will have three or two terms in the Reception classes if their birthdays fall in the autumn or spring terms, while those with summer birthdays will have just one term in Reception when a second class is formed. At the time of the inspection there were 14 children in the Reception class, two of whom were five years old. The school's assessments of children when they start at the school show that, while there is a wide range of attainment, for the majority it is above average. Good account is taken of children's different capabilities and this leads to their good progress. The teacher and classroom assistant work very closely together, with a clear idea of what skills are being developed through the activities that are planned. There is a good balance of direct teaching of skills and plenty of opportunities for children to decide what they will do. Activities are carefully planned so that when children choose for themselves, they are using the knowledge and skills they have just learned.

Personal, social and emotional development

49. Children make good progress in this area. They develop very good attitudes to work and do so cheerfully, showing pride in their achievements. Almost all of them are likely to reach well above the goals set for their age by the time they start in Year 1. The children's personal, social and emotional development is well supported by good planning that ensures that they develop independence. Children settle quickly into the routines of the school day, secure in knowledge that their efforts will be rewarded and help is at hand when needed. The teaching is good. The warm atmosphere ensures that children readily approach adults, confidently try out their ideas and learn to work together. Children persevere with activities, such as building models with construction kits, and in one session a group extended their work on a building to include a lift in a skyscraper after one of the group thought of this idea.

Communication, language and literacy

50. Most of the children are likely to achieve well beyond the expectations for their age by the end of the Reception year. The children's progress in this area is quick because of the good teaching. The basic skills in reading and writing are very well taught and there are good opportunities to practise what has been learned. Children are encouraged to listen very carefully to each other and adults. This means that they settle quickly to their work because they understand what they have to do. When writing postcards, for example, children used ideas that classmates had discussed in the opening session. They had a clear idea of what they were going to write and several attempted to form sentences with words based on the sounds of letters they knew. Nearly all of the children hold pencils correctly and they are very keen to put down their ideas. The children have a good vocabulary and most speak clearly, in complete sentences. The adults prompt fuller replies or contributions from the few who offer phrases and this successfully extends their use of language. For example, in one session, the confidence of more reticent speakers increased quickly through sensitive prompting by the teacher. The teacher's lively expression when reading to the class ensures that children's interest is captured. The children remember how a story unfolds and eagerly suggest what might happen next on the basis of what they know so far. They quickly learn to recognise familiar words and enjoy looking at books together.

Mathematical development

51. Good teaching promotes the children's good achievement and so most are likely to reach well beyond the goals set for their ages by the time they start Year 1. Most children, at this early

stage of the Reception year, count up to and back from ten. Most know what is one more or one less than a given number under ten. About half of the children count up to 20 and some go beyond this. Children recognise shapes such as a circle, triangle and square. They sort objects and organise them into sets. Children match the symbols for numbers up to ten to the correct number of objects. Teaching places a good emphasis on mathematical terms such as 'less than' or 'more than'. This use of language is reinforced well in other work. For example, adults ask children whether the lines that they create are shorter or longer than others in art work. When children work in the sand or water trays, they guess how many containers will be needed to fill larger ones. The teaching takes good account of children's different needs and sensitive support ensures that the more able children have challenging work and that those who need extra help receive it at the right time to make good progress.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

52. The teaching is good because it builds carefully on what the children already know and understand. As a result, they make good progress and show real enjoyment in exploring and testing out their ideas. Most children are on track to achieve beyond the expectations for their age by the end of the year. In one good session, the children worked together to recreate scenes from holidays. One group worked together in the water, using models of sea creatures, boats and divers to enact scenes where rescue from danger formed a major part. Another group created a beach scene and used sand to create the beach and then set up a café that sold ice cream "because it is a very hot day today". Timely intervention by the teacher and classroom assistant helped children to extend their learning by setting further problems for them to solve. The teacher's suggestion that, "You could try to build a table and chairs for your picnic with the big blocks" led to intense concentration as children tried to fit the blocks together. The teacher plans good opportunities for children to use computers regularly and so, for example, they learn the basic skills of controlling the mouse and clicking on and dragging images when they dress a 'teddy' on screen.

Physical development

53. Children make good progress as a result of the good teaching and are likely to exceed the expectations for their age by the end of the Reception year. There are good opportunities planned for children to develop dexterity and control. For example, children accurately punched holes in card and threaded string so that their work could be displayed. They use tools such as scissors, pencils and brushes carefully and use these accurately. When children play in the outdoor areas, they use their imagination very well to create games in which they climb or crawl through apparatus. In physical education sessions that are planned in the hall, children use the space well and make interesting shapes with their bodies in dance that display different moods.

Creative development

54. Teaching and learning are good and most children are likely to achieve well beyond the expectations for their age by the end of the year. Interesting activities are planned in music, painting and making things so that the children are quickly involved and can try out their ideas. In one lesson, for example, the task to explore how to make different lines with chalk led to children discovering that the thickness and sharpness of the line could be varied by using the edge or point of the chalk. One child tried smudging the line she had just drawn and explained that she wanted "to make it look like a cloud". Other children experimented with jagged lines or softly waving lines in paint. All the children became absorbed in the work and the teacher and classroom assistant gave high quality support in questioning children and developing their ideas. The children show some good detail in their drawings. When drawing pictures for postcards, for example, most who drew people included fine details in facial features. There are good resources for imaginative play in both the classroom and the outdoor areas. Children

act out different parts and work well together to sustain their play acting, making full use of 'props' in the 'shop' or to create camping scenes in the outdoor area.

ENGLISH

55. There has been good improvement in standards since the last inspection, when standards were average. This is because the school has identified what it needed to do to improve pupils' attainment and made adaptations to teaching. An example is in the teaching of handwriting and spelling. The school has introduced daily short sessions in handwriting and spelling in which the teaching is very good and so pupils reach high standards in these areas. The teachers' assessment of pupils' writing has improved greatly and they are very clear about what pupils need to work on next. The lower and average attaining pupils are making very good progress in all areas of English because the work that teachers plan is consistently at the right, challenging level. The more able pupils are making very good progress in writing and speaking and listening. While most of the higher attaining pupils are making good progress in reading, there are times when the quality of information that teachers receive about pupils' earlier progress and attainment is not sufficiently clearly recorded so that new teachers can always pitch the work at the right level at the start of the school year. This means that some of the most able pupils are not achieving the best that they can at this early stage of the year.
56. On the basis of the current work in Year 2, the pupils are working well above the level expected for their age in reading, writing and speaking and listening. The pupils use a wide vocabulary and speak confidently. They listen very carefully to the teachers and each other, and readily offer opinions and ideas. About half of the current Year 2 pupils are on track to gain the level higher than that expected by the end of the year in reading and speaking and listening and about a third are likely to reach the higher level in writing. The pupils use their literacy skills well in other subjects such as geography and history, when they read for information or write accounts.
57. Pupils read accurately and with a very good level of understanding that enables them to talk about the characters in a story and how the plot might develop, based on what they already know. They use the sounds of letters, and the context of sentences, very effectively to work out new words. They use very good expression when they read, taking account of the punctuation. Pupils remember what they have been taught previously; for example, in a Year 2 lesson, pupils quickly picked out the words in a passage that showed that time was passing. They eagerly suggested alternatives that could be used to give better variety and more interest. When pupils write, they quickly set down their ideas and use their knowledge of the sounds of letters very well when they spell. The pupils' handwriting is neat, joined and well formed. More able pupils, in one Year 2 lesson, quickly wrote an opening to a story that set the scene and introduced characters. Their spelling and punctuation was accurate and they wrote interesting sentences. Pupils occasionally use computers to present their writing but do so too infrequently.
58. The teaching is good. The basic skills in reading and writing are very well taught and teachers plan interesting activities that keep the pupils' involved and motivated. The relationships are warm and supportive and so pupils are very keen to please the teachers and work hard. Pupils are given plenty of opportunities to express their ideas and so they feel confident in class discussions. Teachers praise pupils' efforts but also take care to pick up on areas in which they can improve. For example, in a Year 1 lesson, the teacher noticed that a few pupils were not blending letters correctly to make a word and ensured that they learned the correct pronunciation. In the same lesson, the teacher planned an activity that involved the children in finding words in the classroom that started with a particular group of letters and pupils were delighted when they created lists of words that extended their vocabulary. Teachers' handwriting sets a very good example for pupils to follow, as does their lively reading of stories. In a Year 2 lesson, for example, the pupils were spellbound by the teachers' dramatic reading of a story and this was reflected in pupils' performance when a group read together

later in the lesson with the teacher. Teachers check pupils' progress in handwriting and spelling very carefully; they take time to coach them individually so that pupils make rapid progress. The support for pupils with special educational needs is well planned and pupils achieve very well because the support staff know exactly what areas they are working on with pupils. Pupils who are learning English as an additional language make equally good progress because the adults check their understanding thoroughly and ensure that they are fully involved in discussions.

59. In a few lessons, there were occasions when the level of challenge for the higher attaining pupils was too low in the group reading sessions in both Year 1 and Year 2 and this led to slower progress by pupils. Teachers were quickly picking up on this and planning to re-organise groups, but the information about the level at which pupils are working is not recorded in a way that easily enables them to accurately group pupils when they take over a new class. Teachers are not sure how the school's reading scheme links to National Curriculum levels in reading and this led last year to teachers' assessments of the more able pupils being too low. This has been identified as an area for improvement, through the previous subject leader's monitoring. There is good management of the subject. The newly appointed subject leader has benefited from her predecessor's good work on analysing pupils' results and teachers' assessments and so is in a good position to address this area of weakness. There are too few opportunities for pupils to use ICT to support their learning in lessons and the subject leader has also highlighted this as an area for improvement.

MATHEMATICS

60. Standards in mathematics are well above average by the end of Year 2 and pupils' achievement is very good. This is a marked improvement over the findings of the previous inspection when standards were judged to be average. Standards are now significantly higher than at any time in the last four years.
61. The improvement in standards and achievement results from two key features. First, the quality of teaching is consistently very good and sometimes excellent. This is much better than at the time of the previous inspection, when teaching was a mixture of good and average. Second, the school introduced arrangements last year for Year 2 pupils to be taught in groups that are based on their ability. This enables teachers to match lessons more closely to pupils' needs and challenge more pupils at the right level. This has resulted in a much higher proportion of pupils now achieving above average scores while average and less able pupils also achieve very well.
62. By the end of Year 2 pupils work confidently with numbers. They are quick and accurate in mental calculation, for example, in recalling addition and subtraction facts and handling two-digit numbers or number sequences. They accurately carry out some written calculations with three-digit numbers and begin to use decimals when working with money. Most pupils have a good understanding of number concepts such as place value, and a developing sense of the size of numbers. This enables them to evaluate their answers and check for accuracy. Pupils handle information at an appropriate level. For example, they showed in a graph the types of sweet found in a packet and drew some apt conclusions.
63. By the end of Year 2, pupils' knowledge and understanding of shape and space and their ability to use and apply mathematics are satisfactory but less secure than their work in number. This is because there is much more emphasis on number than on the other aspects of mathematics. Teachers have recognised this and have taken action to achieve a much better balance. This is clear from their planning. It was exemplified during several lessons in which teachers developed pupils' mathematical language and improved their problem solving by encouraging them to justify their answers and explain them.

64. The quality of teaching is very good. Teachers are imaginative in varying their approaches. This enables pupils to access ideas, such as the changing value of numbers depending upon position, and to consolidate their knowledge and understanding. The tasks the teachers set are consistently challenging and well matched to pupils' abilities. As a result, pupils of all abilities make good progress. The quality of relationships is excellent and the ethos for learning successfully combines good humour with purposefulness. Teachers and classroom assistants use praise and encouragement to good effect and are careful to value pupils' achievements. This promotes very good attitudes to learning. Pupils listen attentively and respond eagerly. They sustain interest in lessons because teachers are lively and inventive in oral work, give clear explanations, use well-chosen visual resources to increase the impact of learning and set interesting, relevant tasks. Pupils work amicably together, take turns, respect each other's contributions and support each other well. This is underpinned by the strong example of effective co-operation that teachers and classroom assistants provide. The teachers plan too few opportunities for pupils to use computers to support their learning.
65. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very effective. As a result, these pupils make very good progress in mathematics and achieve very well. A key feature of this successful provision is the contribution made by classroom assistants. Teachers and assistants work very closely together, responding sensitively to pupils' individual needs and building pupils' self-esteem so that they grow in confidence and independence. The teacher's warm, energetic leadership set the tone in an excellent lesson given to the Year 2 lower set. Pupils of all abilities glowed with enthusiasm and achievement, drawing on the powerful sense of joint purpose that teacher and classroom assistants shared.
66. Teachers make effective use of assessment within and following lessons. This helps to ensure that tasks are well matched so that pupils continue to progress well. It is particularly crucial at this stage of the school year when groups organised according to pupils' abilities have only recently been formed.
67. Subject co-ordination in mathematics is very good. The subject manager sets a high standard in her teaching and this provides a good example for other staff. She is very well informed and enthusiastic, and has a secure grasp of strengths and weaknesses in the subject and clear, practical plans for improvement. The effectiveness of her teaching, along with that of her colleagues, and the quality of her management are reflected in the high standards that pupils achieve.

SCIENCE

68. The previous inspection judged standards above average but results fell sharply in the following year. There has been a steady improvement since then but this has been too slow to ensure a return to the previous good standard. In current work, attainment by the end of Year 2 is typical of seven year olds but too few pupils achieve higher standards. Most pupils' achievements are satisfactory but the more able pupils should be doing better. This is because the needs of more able pupils are not always planned for so that they do not make the progress of which they are capable. Insufficient work has been planned to take them beyond the levels expected of the rest of the class. For example, pupils in Year 2 made some simple circuits that lit up bulbs. When two bulbs were connected on the circuit one failed to light up. Several pupils offered explanations of this but were not given the opportunity to further test out their ideas even when they suggested ways to light the second bulb. The school recognised that its provision for more able pupils, and particularly its procedures for passing on information about the levels reached by the more able pupils, had weaknesses. The manager of the subject devised good guidelines for teachers that are being implemented this year. It is, however, too early to see the impact of this improvement. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, with most reaching the levels of attainment expected of all pupils.

69. The majority of work carried out by pupils is through investigations and experiments. This leads pupils to understand scientific methods so that they are beginning to understand how to test an idea and what constitutes a fair test. They record their investigations in their own words, often using the correct terminology. Pupils in Year 2 describe their 'pushes' and 'pulls', and the 'energy' from batteries for example. They show the results of their work using charts and tables, for example depicting different animals' eating habits or how plants fared under different growing conditions. The recording of work is accurate and pupils often try to account for what happens. For example, pupils in Year 2 tried to push a chair. They wrote that, "It wouldn't move because the wall is stronger than us and the chair". Another pupil in Year 1 wrote that a seed would not grow because, "The roots won't be able to go through the stone". However, pupils do not make regular written predictions before testing an idea to help them further in accounting for what actually happened. There is some use of ICT to present graphs and tables of findings but, generally, the pupils' use of computers is not planned as frequently as it should be.
70. Using the evidence of discussions with teachers, scrutiny of plans, pupils' work and other evidence, it is evident that teaching is satisfactory. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection and in this teaching was very good because the teacher gained and sustained the interest of the pupils through the provision of good resources and practical tasks. Learning assistants provided very good support so that pupils of all abilities were able to contribute to the class findings. The discussion of pupils' results was very well handled and pupils gave good descriptions of the textures of the materials they were categorising. Teachers make effective use of investigations as the main way in which pupils approach their work. Pupils are encouraged to use their own words to describe what they did and account for what happened. This method of teaching means pupils acquire a good depth of understanding.
71. The co-ordinator for science has only very recently been appointed; however, the plans drawn up for development by the previous manager are good and recognise what needs to be done to improve. High priorities in current action plans are better meeting the needs of more able pupils and improving opportunities to use ICT.

ART AND DESIGN

72. Pupils' work in art and design is outstanding and goes well beyond that expected for their age by the time they leave the school. There has been very good improvement since the last inspection. The pupils make very rapid progress in art and design because of carefully planned activities that build upon what they already know and can do. A marked feature of their work is their ability to observe carefully and use information that they have gathered from different sources, for example about colour, pattern or texture, and use this in future work.
73. Year 1 pupils have produced high quality observational studies of flowers in paint and pastel. They then created prints from their drawings and also used a paint program on the computer to create a different image from the same source. In each case, the form, proportion and line were maintained but the different media used very effectively to give their own quality to the work. This ability to take an idea and extend it is a notable feature of all the pupils' work. They approach what they are doing very confidently and thoughtfully because they are taught the basic skills very well and then given the freedom to try out their ideas. As a result, there is a very high level of individuality in their work and they are extremely proud of what they achieve. This was seen clearly in a very good lesson in Year 2, where pupils used patterns that they had found in the classroom to create a mono print. They expressed surprise at the range of patterns they had found and when talking about the ones they had chosen for their design, used terms such as 'texture' and 'curved lines' to explain what they found attractive. The pupils organised themselves very well to create the prints, after an excellent demonstration by the teacher. She built up the pupils' sense of anticipation so that they were amazed at the possibilities of repeating and rotating the design. Pupils' commented spontaneously, "That's beautiful, that's magic", and were eager to offer suggestions. One pupil commented that if

orange, brown and yellow were used together on the roller, this would make a 'bronze colour' and the teacher readily adopted his idea in her demonstration.

74. Although only one lesson was seen, it is evident from the quality and diversity of response by the pupils that the teaching is very good and results in high quality work. Teachers have a very good understanding of the subject and plan interesting work that allows pupils to try out their ideas in a wide range of media, including clay, fabric, paint, chalk, charcoal and watercolour. The pupils' awareness of art from different cultures is very well promoted, as in their excellent work on designs taken from scraps of fabric from India. The subject is also very well used to support pupils' spiritual and social development. Their creativity is celebrated and they work very well together. In the lesson seen, for example, a pupil remembered that the teacher had said he would need someone to help him as he lifted the polystyrene tile from the paper after his first print, and his request was quickly met.
75. A strong factor in the pupils' excellent attainment is the high quality leadership provided by the subject manager. Her enthusiastic and expert leadership is underpinned by careful monitoring of standards, and a very comprehensive portfolio of work enables colleagues to understand the high standards they are aiming for in different years by pupils of different abilities. The school environment is considerably enriched by careful displays of pupils' work and this raises both their self-esteem and awareness of the value the teachers place on their individuality.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

76. Discussions with teachers and pupils and an examination of planning and of pupils' work show that pupils make good progress and go beyond the expectations for their age in Year 2. This means the school has maintained the good standards found in the last inspection. Pupils' skills in measuring, cutting and using a variety of joins are developed well. These enable them to construct and make a variety of models and articles including purses, chairs and pull-along toys. What raises their attainment above the average, however, is pupils' ability in designing, planning and critically analysing their work. For example, Year 1 pupils initially draw pictures of what their finished models might look like before producing more detailed plans of the stages of how they will set about the tasks. Older pupils draw their models from different viewpoints before drawing up their plans. These are well labelled and pupils write clearly what they will need to make their design and how they are going to do it. Their ideas show they are familiar with the actions of pivots, axles and sliders. Pupils evaluate their work well, giving honest assessments of the strengths and weaknesses in their designs and how they might improve them next time. Pupils in Year 2, for example, showed their understanding of the 'good' elements of their toys by using the computer to make adverts encouraging people to buy their products.
77. No lessons were seen during the inspection but it is evident from teachers' planning and the rate of pupils' learning that teaching is good. Teachers provide good opportunities and stimulating tasks in order for pupils to reach the attainments they do. Pupils carry out detailed investigations before they start work, for example in the designs of different playgrounds and of chairs through the ages. They are encouraged to show some independence in their designs as is evident from the variety of work seen. Teachers pay due attention to the need for pupils to reflect on their efforts so that pupils are confident enough to criticise their work in a constructive way.
78. The co-ordinator provides good leadership of the subject and so standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Weaknesses in the reporting to parents identified in the last inspection have been addressed so that pupils' attainments are matched to the National Curriculum.

GEOGRAPHY

79. The pupils' work is better than expected for their age. No lessons were observed, but it is evident from looking at the sample of previous work, teachers' planning and through discussions with pupils, that they are achieving well. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils of all abilities do well in geography because of good teaching that provides them with plenty of opportunities to build on their own experience, find out more about the wider world and think about why the characteristics of places affect people's lives.
80. The Year 1 pupils look at the local environment and use the terms 'natural' and 'man-made' to classify things that they see. They make suggestions about how their area could be improved, focusing on how traffic can be better controlled. The pupils give ideas about the results of a traffic survey, suggesting that the road was not as busy at a particular time "because it was not the rush hour" or "there are no shops here". The pupils extended this work by creating a model of an ideal town environment in which features are incorporated to make it safe for children and traffic and with interesting facilities for recreation such as green spaces. Year 2 pupils also study a contrasting location, with a hot climate, and use pictures and photographs to gather evidence from which they deduce information. One pupil wrote that houses were different in Bermuda because "there are shutters to keep out the sun" and that clothing would be different: "I suggest that you wear a T-shirt and shorts because it is boiling hot here." The pupils are good at interpreting maps and understand how to use a key. They can identify the countries that make up the British Isles. There is some use of ICT to collect and present data in graphs but, overall, too little use is made of ICT to support pupils' learning. There are too few programs available to link to the work that is planned. Good use is made of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills, in reading texts, interpreting data and writing accounts.
81. The teaching is good and builds well upon what pupils already know. The activities planned are varied and interesting. In Year 1, for example, pupils worked with a collection of books, maps, artefacts, currency and pictures from various countries and worked in groups to present what they found out about how people lived in the different places.
82. The subject is very well led by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable manager who keeps a close check on the standard of work being achieved and offers valuable advice to colleagues in their planning. This strong leadership is a major factor in pupils' achievement.

HISTORY

83. Only one lesson was seen, but evidence from this and pupils' previous work, teachers' planning and discussions with pupils indicate that the pupils do well in history and meet the expectations for their age by the end of Year 2, with a good number of pupils likely to exceed expectations. Pupils benefit from a well-planned curriculum that provides them with opportunities to think about why things in the past happened and gather evidence from books, pictures and artefacts. They are keen to learn about the past because the work is interesting and often practical. There is very good planning for pupils to act out parts that enable them to use what they know about the past and to represent how people felt in particular circumstances. In a good lesson, Year 2 pupils used what they had just learned about the privations endured by sailors aboard Christopher Columbus' ship to enact scenes to show their fear when climbing to the crow's nest. They looked at pictures and deduced what sailors were doing and worked together very well to enact the strain felt when winching up the ship's anchor. Pupils develop a good sense of chronology. For example, Year 1 pupils know that some things happened before living memory. Year 2 pupils understand that the Great Fire of London happened hundreds of years ago, but that Victorian toys are much more modern. Pupils visit the centre of Wokingham to identify how buildings have changed over time.
84. Teaching is good. Teachers ensure that the pupils have choices about how work will be presented and that they use their literacy skills well in gathering information and writing in different forms, such as lists of what happened then and now, or descriptions of how they might have felt at the outbreak of the Great Fire of London. There is some use of word

processing in their accounts, but too little use is made of ICT to support their learning and the school has very little software to support learning about different topics.

85. The subject is well led by the manager, who has clear plans for improvement, including better resources and use of ICT. In addition, a useful portfolio of work has been started to demonstrate what pupils of different abilities can achieve.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

86. Standards in ICT are below average by the end of Year 2, as they were at the time of the previous inspection and pupils' achievement remains below that which is expected. However, there have been some significant barriers to improvement. These have prevented teachers from moving as swiftly as they had planned in improving provision and standards. In particular, teachers have only very recently been able to complete the national training in teaching computer skills.
87. Teachers are now much more confident in teaching ICT and their subject knowledge is more secure. Since teachers received their training, progress with the ICT curriculum and the teaching has been good. It has been supported and accelerated by the recent appointment of a knowledgeable subject manager.
88. A very limited amount of teaching was seen during the inspection. Scrutiny of pupils' previous work shows that, until recently, there has been too little work at an appropriate level. The curriculum is now fully planned but does not yet show in enough detail how pupils are to develop their computer skills by using them in other subjects, such as mathematics and English. Pupils' recent work contains some satisfactory applications, for example, in science, where pupils made a histogram to show their favourite fruit, or art, where pupils showed sound skills in using a drawing program. However, such examples are too few and do not cover a wide enough range of skills. One reason for this is that the school does not yet have a sufficient variety of suitable software. Teachers recognise this and have well-informed plans to improve resources and the way cross-curricular work is planned.
89. In conversation, a group of able pupils spoke confidently about the advantages of computers in achieving speed and accuracy. They pointed out the convenience of being able to delete mistakes without spoiling neatness and being able to save your work in a form that did not degrade. This group of pupils had clearly achieved a sound level of facility with the keyboard and mouse and readily used some appropriate terminology such as 'cursor' and 'menu'.
90. In a satisfactory Year 2 lesson, average ability pupils showed significantly less security and familiarity with computers. Pupils watched as the teacher showed how horizontal lists could be made into vertical lists by placing the cursor and keying 'Enter' but few were confident enough in describing the features of the keyboard or how to use them. Excellent relationships, skilled management and the teacher's versatility in demonstrating, explaining and questioning ensured that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, listened carefully and made satisfactory progress. However, some pupils could not actually practise the skills they had learned until the next day. Despite the teacher's good plans for supporting pupils as they worked, this was not ideal because it reduced the immediacy of learning for some pupils.
91. Pupils' behaviour during lessons and in conversation is excellent. Pupils enjoy working with computers and recognise the value of supporting one another when working together. Their very good attitudes to learning reflect the excellent relationships that prevail at all levels.
92. Subject management is satisfactory. The subject manager has only been in post a short time and therefore has had limited opportunity to make an impact. She has a clear idea of standards and well-judged plans to bring about improvement. These include building further on teachers' growing subject knowledge, increasing the range of resources, especially software,

and planning for pupils to use computer skills more extensively in other subjects. These apt priorities should enable the school to sustain the improvement it is now beginning to achieve. The school has suitable planning to enable pupils' safe access to the Internet.

MUSIC

93. Standards in music are above average by the end of Year 2 and pupils achieve well. This is in contrast to the findings of the previous inspection, when standards were average and many opportunities for music making were missed. Music, and singing in particular, is now a strength of the school.
94. Pupils in Year 2 sing confidently in unison. They show a good understanding of pitch, pulse and the shape of simple melodies. They control their voices well, for example, when singing loudly or quietly. Teachers successfully communicate the enjoyment to be gained from singing and this is reflected in the liveliness of pupils' performances. By singing to pupils, teachers clarify for pupils the overall shape and sense of a song and illustrate points of detail. This enables pupils to learn new songs quickly and accurately and perform them well.
95. In lessons, warm and constructive relationships combine with interesting activities to inspire progress. Very good teaching enables all pupils, including those with special educational needs, to share in this progress and enjoy music as listeners and performers.
96. Teachers encourage pupils to listen carefully and to discriminate between, for example, long and short sounds, high and low notes and notes of differing timbres. They help pupils find the right words to describe different sounds. Many pupils are imaginative in explaining how sounds differ in quality and feel and in characterising them. A Year 1 pupil, for example, described a sound made by striking two sticks as "like a squirrel cracking acorns".
97. Lessons are thoughtfully planned, providing opportunities for pupils to listen, perform, reflect and evaluate. For example, in a very good Year 2 lesson, pupils studied high and low notes. They identified the different pitches produced by chime bars of different lengths and practised to produce notes of different quality by striking the bars in different ways. Working in groups of three, they consolidated their sense of pitch by using gestures to show high and low notes and responding to them. Later, the teacher played an excerpt from the 'Carnival of the Animals' that illustrated perfectly the effects of contrasting low and high notes and, incidentally, notes of different timbres. Pupils responded thoughtfully and sensitively to this, picking up quickly on the distinctions being drawn and finding their own phrases to describe them. This activity was also valuable in promoting pupils' capacity to work co-operatively and in building the independence required to sustain an individual part and come in on cue. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. The behaviour of all pupils is excellent. Pupils share and take turns very well. They listen attentively to the teacher and each other and handle instruments with care and respect. Teachers ensure that they listen to a good range of music from different cultures.
98. The good standards achieved result from the high quality of teaching. Management of the subject is very good. The manager is very enthusiastic and knowledgeable. She sets a high standard and a good example for other staff in her own teaching and takes delight in the pupils' accomplishments. The outcomes of this very good provision are seen in the wider successes the school achieves. For example, the school choir, which is entirely non-selective, has reached the finals of the National Festival of Music for Youth held at the Royal Festival Hall for two years in succession.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

99. A limited amount of teaching was seen during the inspection but in the two lessons seen, one in each year group, standards were above average and the quality of teaching was good. Standards have improved since the last inspection and pupils' achievement is good.
100. In both lessons, pupils' behaviour and attitude to learning were very good. This resulted from the teachers' effective management and the sense of enjoyment that the teachers communicated. The lessons were well planned and challenged pupils at the right level, promoting good progress. Teachers gave clear instructions, enabling pupils to work purposefully and accurately. They made sure that pupils understood the importance of safety. This was reflected in the consideration that pupils showed for each other while moving energetically and in their very sensible behaviour when following established routines, for example, when putting apparatus out.
101. In a Year 1 gymnastics lesson, pupils were inventive in finding several different ways of travelling on apparatus, using their feet. They practised thoughtfully to improve the quality and range of their movements, drawing on the examples and advice the teacher provided. In a Year 2 dance lesson, pupils moved freely, timing and shaping their movements well in response to the music while showing good control. In this lesson, the teacher enabled pupils to sharpen and vary their ideas by encouraging them to watch for good features in each other's work and by well-timed praise and guidance. Links to pupils' art and design work, where they had studied Aboriginal designs featuring dots and circles, helped pupils to pattern and divide their movements in imaginative ways. In both lessons, pupils moved vigorously, balancing energy with control and showing good awareness of their own and each other's space. Pupils with special educational needs were fully involved and made good progress.
102. The management of physical education is good. Analysis of the school's planning and discussions with teachers and pupils confirm that the curriculum is carefully planned and pupils follow the full range of activities that they should. The manager has raised colleagues' expertise, particularly in dance, by giving demonstration lessons, and dance features strongly in seasonal events. It also provides a vehicle for pupils to learn about cultures other than their own, for example, through performances of Indian dancing and events such as an African dance workshop.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

103. By the end of Year 2 pupils are reaching standards that are in line with those expected for their age, and meet the requirements of the syllabus taught in the local authority's schools. They have an appropriate understanding of some of the central beliefs and customs in the Hindu, Christian and Jewish faiths. These include learning the rituals and meanings associated with Easter, Harvest and Diwali. Pupils also know of the famous people and events associated with these beliefs such as the life of Moses, the Exodus of the Jews and the story of Rama and Sita. They can retell these stories in their own words showing that they have understood not only the events in them but something of what these stories mean for the followers of the different faiths. Pupils in Year 1, for example, studied the parable of the Good Samaritan and then told this in their own way relating its meaning to their own lives. Pupils also explore ideas associated with religious belief. For example, pupils in Year 1 considered what it means to belong to a family and why everyone is special in some way. In Year 2 pupils explored what was needed for a celebration and gave their reasons for their choices of New Year resolutions.
104. It is evident that teaching is good and interesting activities are planned. Good use has been made of the local church to help pupils understand its layout and functions. For example, pupils learnt about the place of the altar and the use of the font. They learnt what was depicted in the stained glass windows and led to them designing their own. Visits to the school by the local vicar and a follower of the Hindu religion have added to the school's provision. Pupils were able to take part in a mock Christening and hear at first hand some of the ways of Hindus and see the costume associated with Hindu celebrations. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection and in this lesson the teaching was good. This was because of the

sympathetic and skilful handling of the pupils' discussion on what made each of them special. The teacher provided a good range of activities including story telling, paired discussion and writing. These, along with the teacher's careful use of their responses, helped pupils to move from the obvious physical differences between themselves to thinking about their temperaments, beliefs and characters.

105. There has been good improvement since the previous inspection, when the school's interpretation of the locally agreed syllabus was too narrow and lessons were not contributing satisfactorily to pupils' spiritual development. The co-ordinator has worked hard in re-writing the policy and medium-term planning in order to improve things so that these key issues are now fully met. There has been good improvement to raise the standards in the subject to their present levels. Pupils are now provided with a broad range of activities that enable them to make the progress expected and reach the required levels of attainment. The co-ordinator provides good leadership for the subject so that the assessment of achievement has improved well. Some pieces of work are identified as ways of assessing progress in addition to teacher observations. She is continuing to develop this assessment to improve its accuracy and use in planning work still further. The resources for religious education are good and add considerably to pupils' learning. They include good examples of the artefacts used in the Hindu, Jewish and Christian faiths.