

INSPECTION REPORT

THE CARRINGTON INFANT SCHOOL

Flackwell Heath, High Wycombe

LEA area: Buckinghamshire

Unique reference number: 110283

Headteacher: Mrs Marian Mole

Reporting inspector: Mrs Janet Gill
18706

Dates of inspection: 10th to 12th March 2003

Inspection number: 246977

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 to 7 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	2 Chapel Road Flackwell Heath High Wycombe
Postcode:	HP10 9AA
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Dr M Curtis
Date of previous inspection:	13 th October 1997

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18706	Janet Gill	Registered inspector	English Art and design Music 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? What should the school do to improve further?
1329	Kevern Oliver	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents? How well is the school led and managed?
21816	Beryl Thomas	Team inspector	Science Geography History Religious education Educational inclusion English as an additional language	
13754	Judy Morris	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and technology Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
23412	Alvin Jeffs	Team inspector	Special educational needs	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Carrington Infant School is situated in Flackwell Heath; a village set on the outskirts of High Wycombe. Fifty-five per cent of pupils come from outside the immediate locality where there are fewer adults with higher education and children in high social class households than the area surrounding the school, so the intake is more mixed than would seem apparent. The ethnicity of the vast majority of pupils is White and no pupil requires support in learning to speak English. There are no refugees or traveller pupils. The school is smaller than at the time of the last inspection in 1997 because it is now an infant school, whereas previously it had been a First school. Numbers have been fairly static over the last three years. There are 152 full time pupils attending Reception to Year 2 - 76 boys and 76 girls. There are 20 children attending the part-time Reception class who will attend full-time during the summer term. There are seven classes in total and the Reception and Year 1 classes are full. Attainment on entry is varied but generally around average, however there is little higher attainment – this is a decline. In addition, the number of pupils currently eligible for free school meals has increased and is around ten per cent. The school identifies ten per cent of its pupils as having moderate learning difficulties, which is below average. The six pupils in the Social and Communication Difficulties Department (SCDD) have statements of special educational needs, which reflect the severity of the communication and learning difficulties. The total of pupils with special educational needs is about average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Carrington Infant School is a good school. The headteacher, strongly supported by the deputy, staff, governors and parents, provides good leadership and management. The quality of teaching is good overall and contributes to the effectiveness of the school. All pupils are included well in all aspects of school life; there is good equality. Pupils behave well, have positive attitudes and very good respect for each other's differences. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Attainment in writing is above average and effectively contributes to learning in other subjects.
- Standards are above average in art and design, geography and religious education (RE).
- The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. It is now very good in Year 2 and good in the Foundation Stage (Reception).
- The provision and the quality of teaching in the Social and Communication Difficulties Department (SCDD) are very good, which help these pupils make good progress in learning.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and has a positive impact on pupils' good attitudes, their good behaviour and very good respect for others.
- Links with parents are very good; they make a positive contribution to children's learning.

What could be improved

- Standards of mathematics are not high enough for pupils throughout the school.
- Some teaching in Year 1 is not good enough.
- Aspects of the outside curriculum and provision for children in the Foundation Stage requires enhancement.
- The governing body risk assessment procedures are not rigorous enough.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

There have been good improvements since the school was previously inspected in October 1997. The weaknesses identified then have been addressed. Pupils' attainment is now above average in writing, RE, geography and art and design. Teaching has improved and is now generally good. Assessment, previously unsatisfactory, is now good. The curriculum has been significantly improved as a result of good cross-curricular links and better provision for spiritual and cultural development. There is a strong commitment towards raising standards, particularly in mathematics, the school is well placed to continue to tackle its priorities and to improve further.

STANDARDS

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

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

Standards at the end of Year 2 have remained steady with the exception of 2001 National Curriculum tests, when there was a particularly able group of pupils and results were well above average. In addition, no pupils from the SCDD took the tests. In 2002, attainment in reading was average when compared to schools nationally, writing above average but in mathematics standards were below average. In comparison with similar schools, results were average in reading and writing but well below average in mathematics. There were no significant differences between the performance of boys and girls. Standards are below average in mathematics because proportionally too few pupils reach the higher Level 3 as seen nationally. In addition, not enough time is spent effectively teaching the subject, particularly in Year 1.

Inspection evidence shows that children make good progress throughout the Foundation Stage (Reception) and are well prepared to start in Year 1. Progress flattens in Year 1 and at times is unsatisfactory, as in mathematics. In Year 2, with very good teaching, the rate of pupils' learning accelerates and they make good progress in most areas of the curriculum and reach above average standards in English, art and design, geography and RE. In other subjects standards are broadly average, including ICT. Pupils with special educational needs, in the main school and from the SCDD, achieve well and make good progress because they have effective well-targeted support. .

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy school, are enthusiastic and interested in their lessons. Children in the Foundation Stage have settled well in school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Behaviour is good, pupils know and understand what is expected of them. No rough and unkind play or bullying was seen during the inspection. There have been no exclusions.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are good. All pupils play together and are very accepting of each other's differences. They take on responsibilities happily.

Attendance	Attendance is good but a number of pupils are taken on holiday during term time and some arrive well after the official start of the school day.
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Pupils' positive attitudes, enthusiasm and good behaviour are having a positive impact on their learning.

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 overall quality of teaching is good. The teaching observed in Reception was consistently good and in Year 2 virtually all teaching was very good. In Year 1, the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall but there are some weaknesses. At times lessons lack a clear focus and challenge, as in mathematics. The pace of teaching is slow which means pupils 'switch off' and time is not always used to the best effect, to enable pupils to reach the standards of which they are capable. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good in the main school because they receive good targeted support from well-qualified teaching assistants, which helps them to make good progress. Teaching in the SCDD is very effective and contributes to the good progress these pupils make. Good features were observed in several subjects, including English, science, geography and art and design. Teaching of English, mathematics, science and ICT is very good in Year 2. Lesson planning is effective, with clear learning objectives identified for lessons, but these are not always shared with the pupils. Pupils are taught basic skills satisfactorily overall; better in English than in mathematics. This is because higher attaining pupils are challenged with work that is well matched to their ability; therefore they learn effectively. Teachers generally have a good knowledge and understanding of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. However, in numeracy there is too heavy a reliance on workbooks in Year 1 and only recently have investigative and problem solving activities been incorporated into the curriculum. Day-to-day assessment is good, with some good marking and discussion relating to pupils' progress with their targets. This helps pupils have a good knowledge of what they need to learn next, particularly in literacy. Teachers are effective in their questioning helping pupils understand, consolidate and extend their learning, both in the introduction in lessons and in the review at the end. The management of pupils is good and based on consistent behaviour procedures and good relationships, which help pupils behave well and learn effectively. Expectations are high which means pupils work hard and present their work well.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good for Years 1 and 2. Good emphasis on English, especially writing and its links with other subjects. Time allocated to mathematics is barely satisfactory and has an adverse impact on standards. There are limited opportunities for outdoor activities for children in the Foundation Stage. Extra-curriculum provision is good; it enhances the curriculum well.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. There are good arrangements in the main school to support pupils' learning, particularly in English. Provision for pupils in the SCDD is very good and helps pupils make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils has improved considerably since the last inspection and it is now good. However, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to study non-western cultures in art and design.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory overall. Child Protection procedures are good. The staff know the pupils well and pay close attention to pupils' learning needs. There are good informal systems for monitoring personal development.

	Assessment has improved; it is now good and includes pupils' targets.
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Parents have very positive views of the school and make a good contribution to their children's learning and the work of the school. Information for parents, including that on pupils' progress, is good.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher sets a clear direction for the school. She is strongly supported by the efficient deputy and SENCO, staff and governors. However, a greater drive is needed to raise standards in mathematics. The role of the co-ordinators, although improved, has yet to include monitoring of teaching and learning in all subjects.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governors are effective, fulfil their statutory duties well and have a good understanding of the schools' strengths and weaknesses.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school has effective strategies to evaluate its successes and weaknesses and is aware of its overall performance and the steps it needs to take to continue to improve.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Educational priorities are linked well to financial commitments. Financial monitoring and the day-to-day administration are very good. Specific grants are used effectively to support pupils with special educational needs, both in the main school and the SCDD. The school provides good value for money.

The headteacher and governors use their business expertise and experiences to apply the principles of best value satisfactorily. The accommodation is generally good although there are some problems with leaking flat roofs and rotting window frames. The provision of teachers and support staff ensures that the curriculum is delivered well. Learning resources have improved and are now good.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school. • Teaching is good. • Children make good progress and are helped to become mature. • The school is well led and managed. • The quality of information they receive is good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of extra-curricular activities.

Inspectors agree with many of the positive views and note that apart from some parents' criticisms of the range of extra-curricular activities, they have no real concerns about the school's provision. Inspectors looked carefully into the school's extra-curricular activities and concluded that the number and scope were appropriate for a school of Carrington's type and size.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Standards of attainment have improved slightly since the last inspection with higher standards in more subjects. Previously, standards were above average in just English. This level has been maintained and standards are now also higher in art and design, geography and religious education (RE). However, standards have declined in mathematics. The school is aware that this is a priority for improvement and has introduced strategies to improve aspects of the subject, such as more problem solving and investigative work. However, there is too much reliance on workbooks / work schemes and time is wasted, particularly in Year 1, where teaching is not as strong as in Year 2. Pupils' progress slows; even with the very good teaching in Year 2, it is difficult for the pupils to make up for lost ground. Consequently standards have remained below average for some time.
2. There has been good improvement in assessment and tracking, which helps to accurately predict pupils' progress and attainment. From this data, intervention strategies such as Early Literacy Support (ELS¹) have been implemented successfully for pupils not achieving as well as they should, in English. In addition, planning to match pupils' prior attainment in lessons has been improved; this was a weakness in the last inspection. This has been achieved by teaching pupils in ability groups, across the year group for English and mathematics, several times a week. It is working well, particularly for the higher attainers. Achievement is impressive in writing as seen by the above average results, which also contribute to the higher standards in geography and RE.
3. Standards of attainment of seven-year-olds in the National Curriculum tests in 2002 were average overall in reading but with nearly a third of pupils achieving the higher Level 3, above the national average in writing and below average in mathematics. When compared to similar schools, results were average in reading and writing but well below average in mathematics. Results are lower in writing and mathematics because the standards pupils in the Social and Communications Difficulties Department (SCDD) usually reach, depresses the overall grades. This is not in reality a direct comparison because few similar schools have such provision. Teacher assessment in science indicated that pupils' attainment was below average for pupils gaining Level 2² and above. The 2001 results were well above average in all three subjects when pupils were a particularly able group. In addition, no pupils from the SCDD were included in the tests in that year. Results in 2002 were similar to 2000 so the trend for improvement is broadly average. There are no significant differences in the performances of boys and girls in reading and writing, although girls in previous years have performed better than the boys in mathematics. This was not, however, borne out by inspection evidence. There are very few ethnic minority pupils in the school but they achieve just the same as others in the class. There are no pupils at an early stage of learning English as an additional language in the school.
4. Inspection evidence indicates that, pupils in the present Year 2 are working at above-average levels in English, below average in mathematics and around average for

¹ ELS – Early Literacy Support – a programme delivered by trained teaching assistants, designed for Y1 pupils.

² In the National Curriculum test, Level 2 is the average level that seven-year-olds achieve; Level 3 is above the national average.

science. However, results could in reality be lower in the National Curriculum tests, as there are four pupils from the SCDD who will be included in the school figures. Pupils are learning better in science and standards are gradually improving. There is now a stronger focus on investigations to develop problem solving and thinking skills and with very good teaching, this is already proving effective, as is evident in the Year 2 lessons observed.

5. Apart from the six pupils supported by the SCDD, the school supports an additional six pupils who have special educational needs mainly relating to language and literacy difficulties. These difficulties affect their ability to understand new ideas and record them effectively. They receive additional support in the form of structured small group work and all receive work modified to ensure understanding and assisting in their progress. The high quality of classroom support means that the progress of these pupils is always good. They develop well in reading and language and this assists their ability to complete tasks in other subjects. The responsibility for a significant number of other pupils with moderate learning difficulties lies firmly with the class teachers. This means that progress for these pupils relates very much to the attention and insight of individual teachers. They are well advised and supported by the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO). She works well with class teachers and teaching assistants to identify targets, activities and helpful resources.
6. When children enter the Reception their overall attainment is broadly average with few higher attainers. This has changed from the last inspection when attainment on entry was above average. More children come from out of the area and the number of children eligible for free school meals has increased. Children make good progress in all areas of learning in Reception, because there is a positive learning environment with effective teaching. By the time children enter Year 1, many are likely to achieve the early learning goals and reach average standards, with some exceeding the goals. This also includes children with special educational needs, both from the Reception classes and the SCDD. However, there are a few who do not achieve the goals, although they still make good progress, albeit from a lower starting point.
7. The school has managed to maintain the good standards in English and either maintaining or improving standards in science and most of the foundation subjects. In art and design, geography and RE, standards have improved and are now above average. However, standards are now average in information and communication technology (ICT), where previously standards were higher. This is because since the introduction of Curriculum 2000, the nationally expected standards in this subject have been raised considerably and as such, it is difficult to make direct comparison between standards now and then.
8. The progress throughout the school is satisfactory overall. Attainment when children start in the Reception classes is just around average but with little higher attainment. They make good progress and there is higher attainment, with children achieving well in all areas of learning by the end of Reception, ready to start Year 1 work. Satisfactory progress is made in Year 1 overall, because not enough work is covered in some subjects, such as mathematics. Year 2 teachers have to work hard to ensure pupils catch up. In lessons these pupils often make good or very good progress, which is evident in the quality and quantity of work completed since September. The rate of progress in mathematics lowers the overall school grade. There is good achievement in English, satisfactory to good in science, but it is unsatisfactory in mathematics.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Carrington Infant School's pupils really like their school. As far as they are concerned it is a good and happy place to be. They get on well with each other and with all the adults who teach and look after them. They are polite to all adults and welcome visitors with cheery smiles, open doors and offer to help and show the way. They also appreciate what visitors do for them. The local vicar, for example, was a real "hit" with everyone when, in an assembly, he used brushes of all kinds to help pupils understand roles and purposes. There were gasps of sheer delight when he suggested that a carpet brush could be used to clean his teeth!
10. Pupils work hard. They enjoy learning and respond particularly well to challenges. In a Year 2 class about the three and four times tables, for example, there was a real 'buzz' and sense of commitment as pupils worked hard, on their own and in groups, to solve a range of difficult problems. Reception children showed similar attitudes as they concentrated on exploring the use of playdough and sand, finding out whether objects floated or sank and learning how to cut and stick paper. A small group of them showed impressive maturity as they shared ideas about the best way to move an image around a computer screen.
11. The children in Reception have settled particularly well into school and have quickly adapted to school routines. Effective teaching in personal, social and emotional development helps children to have positive attitudes and behave well, which contributes to the good learning and developing independence in the Reception classes. Children sit quietly and listen to their teachers and classmates at the beginning of the day, during introductions to literacy and numeracy sessions and at story times. They generally respond well in PE lessons in the hall and sensibly follow instructions. They choose their activities, concentrate well and enjoy sharing and playing with others.
12. The overall standard of behaviour is good with pupils knowing and understanding what is expected of them. At the beginning of each year, for example, pupils work out their own class rules. The result is that lessons are rarely interrupted by problems with behaviour. Pupils get on with the day-to-day business of teaching and learning. A good example of this was a Year 1 lesson about differences between people when pupils sat quietly and listened to their teacher reading a story about a girl in a wheelchair. They responded sensibly to her questions and sensitively asked questions, such as *How does she get to school?*
13. Breaks and lunch times are happy occasions. Pupils behave well in the dining room. In the playgrounds they have fun, playing a range of games, chatting to their supervisors and each other and just running, jumping, and chasing around. Pupils from the special unit, who spend their lunchtimes with all the other pupils, are normally and naturally welcomed by everyone. Pupils generally look after each other. In the absence of oppressive behaviour and bullying the schools procedures are working well. No rough or unkind play or bullying was seen during the course of the inspection. The lunchtime supervisors confirmed that these sorts of problems are very rare events in Carrington Infants.
14. The school's strong inclusive approach to education allows pupils with special educational needs to be fully included socially and, where appropriate, educationally. All pupils play together and are very accepting of each other's differences and difficulties. As a result, there is a secure atmosphere for learning for all pupils. The inspection team was impressed with the confidence and happiness displayed by pupils with learning and emotional difficulties, particularly in settings such as the playground and PE lessons.

15. Pupils enjoy responsibility and, when opportunities do arise are capable of taking responsibility for their own learning. A good example of this was a Year 2 art and design lesson, in which they used sponge printing and rubbing to create sea effects for their paintings. Pupils happily help their teachers prepare for and clear up after lessons. Older pupils act as messengers around the school and compete, for example, for the privileges of clearing chairs away at the end of assemblies and collecting recyclable paper at the end of the day.
16. Attendance is good. It is above the national average but is nevertheless marred by the number of pupils who are taken away on term-time holidays. Since September 2002, 18 per cent of pupils have had time off for this reason. The majority of pupils arrive at school on time but some do arrive well after the official start of the school day. There have been no exclusions in recent years.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. There has been a significant improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection when nearly a fifth of all teaching observed was unsatisfactory. The overall quality of teaching is good, whereas it was previously sound. There is now a greater proportion of good and better teaching than previously. Four-fifths of all lessons observed were good or better and nearly a third were very good. Virtually all teaching was satisfactory or better but there are a few weaknesses in some lessons in Year 1. These lessons lacked a clear focus and challenge, particularly for the average and higher-attaining pupils.
18. Teaching in the SCDD and Year 2 is very good and the pupils make particularly good gains in their learning. The quality of teaching and learning of music when the specialist works with the children is also of high quality. This is helping teachers, who are present in the lesson, to become more knowledgeable and confident to teach their own music lessons. The overall quality of teaching in most subjects is good, particularly in both Year 2 classes.
19. The quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage is consistently good. There is good teamwork and all staff have high expectations of what children can achieve and how they behave. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the curriculum. Planning is satisfactory and planned across all areas of learning with clear learning objectives for children inside the attractive, stimulating classrooms. However, there are limited planned and assessed learning opportunities for children to work and play outside. Children acquire skills well in all areas of learning, are thoroughly absorbed by their activities, enjoy learning and working with their teachers and other adults and co-operate well. This helps them to make good progress and, by the end of Reception, many children are likely to achieve the early learning goals, with some exceeding them. However, a few will not. Nevertheless, they will still have achieved well in Reception, from a low base.
20. The pupils who have special educational needs are taught well which helps them to learn effectively and make good progress. The quality of teaching for those pupils with moderate learning difficulties is usually good. Most class teachers match these pupils well to appropriate tasks and use language and questions well to ensure understanding. They also respond well to pupils who display problem behaviour. This provides a secure and happy environment, which assists their learning. Teaching assistants demonstrate good skills and sensitivity in meeting the needs of these pupils within class. They have regular contact with the special needs co-ordinator for advice. This ensures good activities and very effective monitoring of pupil progress. Small

groups of pupils receive additional specialised support from a teaching assistant. This is good quality and relates well to individual difficulties.

21. The good implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, together with other recent developments in literacy, has generally given teachers good expertise in English. As a result, the majority of basic skills are taught well in lessons. The promotion of speaking and listening skills is a high priority in the school, although there is still scope to extend these skills through drama and debate within lessons. The implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has not been as effective and the standards have been too low for a number of years. Teaching of basic skills in Year 2 is good and the pupils learn well but these teachers cannot make up for weaknesses in teaching in Year 1. Consequently achievement in mathematics is unsatisfactory. Teachers do not promote mathematics with the same enthusiasm as English.
22. Literacy is taught across the curriculum particularly well in subjects such as geography and RE, which helps pupils to record their work effectively and contributes to the above average standards and good progress made in these subjects, particularly in Year 2. For example, pupils have written many poems relating to events and visits, special people and places. However, in numeracy teachers do not exploit the curriculum links, as they do in literacy – this has an adverse impact on the progress pupils make, although numeracy is used effectively in a Year 2 science lesson. A timer is used for the rate of ice melting and results are recorded in a table. Similarly, in ICT insufficient attention is given to improving pupils' ICT skills through other areas of the curriculum. However, an ICT skills' lesson is taught each week in the computer suite and this is proving successful, particularly in Year 2 where teaching is very good. However, pupils make limited progress in Year 1, particularly when time in the ICT suite is reduced from that on the timetable.
23. An effective range of teaching methods is usually employed, being adapted well to both the requirements of different subjects and the needs of most of the pupils in the class. Teachers generally prepare work that is appropriately matched to pupils' prior ability in literacy and numeracy. Where this works very successfully is in Year 2, where pupils from both classes of a similar ability work together. This means the teacher works with either the average and higher attaining pupils, or, the below average and lower attaining pupils. This enables the teachers to offer good challenge to the higher attaining pupils. For example, Year 2 pupils wrote creatively about the polar regions, following a class 'brainstorm' session where they shared some descriptive words and phrases. Some pupils' work was very imaginative and met the learning objectives of the lesson very well, for example *I heard the whissling wind but I knew I was safe...., as the snow drifted in to my eyes it made me cry.....*
24. The good relationships seen in the school, together with the consistent application of the good behaviour management procedures, ensure that the organisation and control of pupils in lessons are usually good, with pupils behaving well, which helps them to learn effectively. Teachers are generally skilled in maintaining a good pace in the lesson and time is usually used effectively: this ensures that pupils remain focused and work hard. However, at times in Year 1, the pace of teaching is slow and the lesson lacks a clear focus. This means pupils become restless, 'switch off' and do not listen attentively to their classmates or the teacher, so too little is learnt in the lesson. In addition in some Year 1 lessons, time is not used to best effect. Sometimes lessons did not start on time, ended abruptly or were too short and this resulted in too little work covered in the lesson. When this happened, pupils' progress slowed.

25. The quality of planning is good. A good feature of the planning is the clear learning intention about what is to be learnt in each lesson. Where this is shared with pupils, it helps them to be clear what it is they are learning. Teachers often make valuable use of discussions to assess pupils' knowledge, such as in geography when groups of pupils tell the rest of the class what they have found out from their research about the Antarctic. This also promotes speaking and listening effectively, as well as helping pupils consolidate their learning. The scrutiny of work that pupils have completed previously showed some good quality marking with high expectations, but there is some variation. Good marking, such as in English in Year 2, includes helpful comments, encourages improvement and acknowledges when the learning objective of the lesson has been achieved. All pupils work hard to present their work well. They have good opportunities to be involved in assessing their own learning through the 'traffic light' system by putting a green spot to show they have totally understood the learning intention, amber if they have partly understood and red if they need help. Homework is used satisfactorily to support pupils' learning.

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

26. Overall, the quality and range of the curriculum provided by the school is good and promotes the aims of the school well. It includes all subjects of the National Curriculum, together with religious education. The curriculum meets all statutory requirements and offers pupils a good range of opportunities. Personal and social education receives good attention while health, sex education and the use and misuse of medicines are taught as part of science. Pupils are provided with accurate information to promote a positive attitude to a healthy lifestyle.
27. The Foundation Stage curriculum is satisfactory overall. It is planned effectively using the six areas of learning and clearly identifies both the learning intention and activities. However, although planning is good for activities inside, there are limited planned activities identified for children to work and play outside. The school has identified this as an area of development but at present the provision is a weakness.
28. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented well and has helped to raise standards. However, the effectiveness of the strategy for teaching numeracy skills is unsatisfactory. The previous inspection identified problem solving in mathematics as an area for development, but strategies to address this weakness have only been recently implemented. The time allocation for the subject barely meets the recommended minimum. Analysis of the timetables reveal that, between classes, there is an imbalance of time spent on the subject. Sometimes, too, lessons do not begin on time. Consequently, these lessons then end abruptly leaving pupils with insufficient time to undertake independent work so they can consolidate their skills, or time for the inclusion of a review session as recommended in the Numeracy Strategy. Some aspects of the curriculum such as representing and interpreting data need further development.
29. All subjects have policies and planning is largely based on the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) national guidelines. These have mostly been adapted to meet the needs of the school. The overemphasis on commercial schemes and lack of investigative work mentioned in the last inspection has been mostly rectified and this is an improvement. However, there is still a heavy reliance on workbooks in mathematics. Links between literacy and other subjects such as history are good. However, the use of numeracy and ICT across other curriculum areas is more limited.

30. The curriculum is enhanced by visits to the local church and mosque as part of religious education. Visits to the local shops, recreation ground and High Wycombe on a market day broaden pupils' experiences and act as a good resource to enrich learning in geography, history and science. The school is fortunate in having strong links with the local football team who provide training during and after school to develop pupils' skills.
31. The school identifies ten per cent of its pupils as having learning difficulties. The specific needs of 12 pupils are met by good additional programmes of work and individual education plans (IEPs) which helps them to make good progress. These are provided by the co-ordinator for special educational needs. Well-trained teaching assistants implement these plans in close co-operation with class teachers. The six pupils in the SCDD have statements of special educational needs, which reflect the severity of the communication and learning difficulties. The overall figure for special educational needs is low in total and reflects the school's acceptance of the new Code of Practice. This places a significant responsibility on class teachers to recognise, plan for and support these pupils.
32. Pupils with special educational needs receive the same curriculum as all other pupils in a way that they can understand. During the inspection, skilled support was seen in a number of subjects. This meant that where mild learning difficulties existed every effort was made to adapt the work. This ensured that these pupils had the same degree of success and satisfaction as their peers. The consistency of the school's approach to behaviour assists in meeting the targets for pupils who experience behaviour difficulties.
33. There is a good range of visitors to the school, such as drama and drum workshops and a puppet theatre that enrich other areas of the curriculum, including music. The strong inclusive policy of the school is reflected in the involvement of all pupils in all of the activities that enrich the curriculum, including visits, performance and meeting visitors. Visits by parents from other cultures to talk to pupils makes pupils more aware of cultural diversity in society.
34. Links with partner institutions are satisfactory. Pupils also take part in an 'Energize' music, drama and dance programme, in collaboration with local schools, as well as the annual Folk Dance Festival. There are established links with the local playgroups and the neighbouring junior school. Links with the business community are sound. These include the local supermarket store where pupils' artwork is displayed and a telephone company which have assisted with the provision of PE equipment and training for teachers.
35. The school's provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils has improved considerably since the last inspection and it is now good.
36. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. The school has developed a climate, through its clear set of values, principles and beliefs, within which all pupils can grow and flourish, respect others and are respected. The school provides a well-planned daily act of collective worship, which fully meets statutory requirements. Pupils are encouraged to reflect upon '*differences*' in many contexts. Time is given for pupils to reflect on special friends and for questioning and identifying how they might have responded to their differences. The outside environment truly reflects the joy of nature. The opportunities given to the pupils to create the nature trail, build nesting areas, plant shrubs, trees, sensory gardens and flowers fuel the imaginations of children to ask questions and be curious and helps them to respect the environment. The visit of the Red Tail falconry team and the lady who brought in bees all help pupils

to learn to appreciate beauty in the world. In RE lessons, pupils develop a good understanding of the differing beliefs of Christianity and Islam. Pupils use actions well, sing expressively and display emotion together as they join in with *'Jesus loves us all.'*

37. There is a good framework for the promotion of moral development. All the staff set a good example for the pupils to emulate by promoting the schools' values and standards and treating the pupils with care and respect. Pupils' self esteem and confidence is enhanced in lessons and elsewhere with praise and encouragement. The school fosters the values of honesty, fairness and good behaviour. It has a positive ethos of encouraging pupils to think about the world in which they live and care for others and the environment. Teachers use English, science, history and geography lessons well to encourage pupils to debate moral issues and to express their views, for instance, the dangers related to fire, *'don't play with matches.'* and to *'the dangers of playing with electricity'*.
38. From entry to Reception, pupils are taught to distinguish right from wrong and to understand what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Consequently, the pupils' conduct in and out of school is good. Reflection time promotes consideration for others, taking turns listening to and thinking of others around them. The school encourages a calm atmosphere so pupils feel secure and special, especially the pupils in the unit. The school has developed good listening skills. This was evident across the school
39. The school provides good opportunities to support pupils' social development. Relationships are good in the school particularly with the pupils in the unit, where teachers foster a sense of community and self-esteem. There are some opportunities for pupils to take responsibility. In discussion with pupils they all said that they enjoyed coming to school. The school supports a number of charities locally and nationally. Work displayed is bright and purposeful and highlights pupils' self esteem and very positive behaviour.
40. Provision for pupils' cultural development is strong. The school provides a good range of planned learning experiences for pupils to explore their own cultural assumptions and values through art and design, music, geography, and history. Religious education has contributed very effectively to a good understanding of Islam. Particularly good is the study of the local area and the influences that have shaped the pupils' cultural heritage. The *'Go Global'* week provided opportunities for the pupils to participate in literature, drama, music and art and design events and recognised celebrations around the world. Pupils recount enthusiastically their experiences of African dancing and music, which help to promote a greater understanding of the multi-cultural society in which they live. The school should now ensure that non-western cultures are included within the good range of western artists studied.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

41. Carrington Infant's governors and staff are fully committed to ensuring that their pupils spend their days in a healthy, safe and secure environment. There is, therefore, for example, a fully trained first aider on-site throughout the school day and almost all of the rest of the staff have basic first aid training. There are regular fire and evacuation drills and safety inspections of the whole site. In addition the caretaker carries out daily checks to make sure that everything is all right.
42. Satisfactory risk assessment and management procedures are already in place but the school is working hard to improve and update them. There were some minor health

and safety issues that were brought to the governors' attention. The recently appointed safety co-ordinator is working towards a formal safety qualification, which will ensure that the school has first class expertise on-site throughout the school day. She is already having a positive impact on all aspects of safety management.

43. Arrangements for child protection are good. All staff are aware of the procedures that they must follow if they are concerned about health and well being of any of their pupils. Proper arrangements to control and protect pupils' access to the Internet are in place. There are rigorous systems for monitoring and encouraging attendance. The governors and staff work together to prevent, as far as they are able, parents from taking children away on holiday during term time.
44. All of Carrington's pupils are well known to the adults who work with them. Teachers and support staff pay close attention to pupils' learning needs and there are good informal systems for monitoring and encouraging pupils' personal development. All the teachers work hard to ensure that pupils, whatever their ability, make progress. Those who continually challenge and encourage their pupils are more successful at helping pupils to learn. In the telling of a Reception class story called '*The Selfish Crocodile*', for example, the teacher made absolutely sure that everyone listened and contributed to a discussion about why other animals would not help the crocodile.
45. Teachers act as good role models for their pupils. They successfully operate the school's very good low key approach to behaviour and discipline. In some classes there are posters, developed by pupils, which spell out the set of simple rules that everyone must follow. Good behaviour, contributions to all aspects of school life and successes in class work are rewarded through stickers and achievement awards. On the very rare occasions when serious behaviour problems do arise, the school collaborates with parents to develop a strategy for dealing with the problems. An example of this approach is the very successful use of behaviour diaries, complete with helpful feedback from the teacher and 'smiley faces'.
46. The caring ethos of the school provides security for the pupils who experience moderate learning difficulties. The procedures adopted by the school mean that these pupils do not have individual education plans and their assessment and monitoring is the responsibility of individual class teachers. This is entirely appropriate. The school has good relations with external support staff, such as speech therapist and educational psychologist. Many teaching assistants have received additional training in speech and language support.
47. The planning for all pupils requiring individual educational plans throughout the school is good. Plans are clear and practical. They are reviewed regularly and the targets set are realistic and well reviewed. This assists everyone in monitoring the progress that takes place and assists in moving pupils, including those with statements, on at whichever stage they are.
48. Since the last inspection there has been an improvement in the procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress and overall these are now good. Assessment procedures for children in the Foundation Stage are good. Children's attainment and progress in the six areas of learning are recorded effectively building up a good picture of the child's development. Entry assessments are used to group children for their English and mathematics activities to ensure work is matched well to their prior attainment.

49. Individual assessment books are started in Reception and these continue through the school. All pupils are set targets for literacy and numeracy and these are shared with pupils and parents alike. In English, assessment is good and effective use is being made of pupils' individual targets. From an analysis of National Curriculum test results, the school identified that pupils' skills in interpreting what they read needed to be improved. Strategies for developing comprehension skills have been put into place. As yet, it is too early to assess the overall impact of these strategies. In mathematics, assessment is ongoing but with formal assessments undertaken half-termly based on the units of work previously undertaken by pupils. Each pupil has an individual pupil analysis sheet, which highlights the amount of progress the pupils make and identifies those who require extra support. For example, in English, Year 1 pupils are identified for the ELS programme, which is implemented effectively by trained teaching assistants. Individual pupil attainment is assessed and levelled at the end of each year and records passed onto the next teacher or the next school.
50. Regular assessments take place in some foundation subjects such as ICT, but in other subjects, such as physical education and design and technology, assessment is limited and requires further development. The results of the National Curriculum, Year 2 tests for reading, writing and mathematics are analysed to identify weaknesses in provision. Currently all records of progress are undertaken manually. The school is liaising with the adjoining junior school to formulate a method of using an ICT assessment program in order to be able to identify the progress of individual pupils over time.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

51. Parents are very enthusiastic about Carrington Infant School. They are certain that the teachers and all the other staff take very good care of their children and that they are dedicated to helping them learn and grow up. They have confidence in the ways that the governors and the headteacher lead and manage the school. Everyone supports the home school agreement and is fully aware of the arrangements for dealing with absence from school.
52. The majority of new children come from the independent pre-school group, which is on the same site as Carrington. There are very close links between the two institutions, including very good arrangements for the transfer, at the beginning of the school year, of children and parents from pre-school to Carrington's Reception classes. The arrangements include a range of formal and informal visits, briefing sessions and a special 'Welcome Pack'. Effective links are quickly established between parents and carers and the teachers, through daily contact at the beginning and end of sessions. Parents are well informed about their child's progress.
53. Official documents such as the governors' annual report to parents and the prospectus are good. There are regular newsletters, which keep parents in touch with what's going on in the school and notices and notice boards, which contain information about all aspects of school life.
54. There is a formal meeting every term when parents are able to discuss their children's progress and targets with class teachers. The summer meeting, which takes place after the end-of-year reports have been sent out, also provides an opportunity for both parents and children to meet their next year's teacher. The end-of-year reports are very good. They are comprehensive, cover all aspects of the curriculum and are in formats, which match pupils' ages, needs and achievements. All pupils add self-evaluating comments and there is a contribution from parents.

55. A small number of parents work in the school as teaching assistants and lunchtime supervisors. Many other parents eagerly come into school as volunteer helpers. A very good example of this is the rota of parents who regularly listen to children read at the beginning of every day. There is also no shortage of volunteers to help with trips and one-off events. The parents' association is very active and well supported. It organises fund-raising and social events throughout the school year. At the moment, for example, it is concentrating on fund raising for an enclosed walkway between two of the school's buildings.
56. The welcoming nature of the school is a positive factor in the teaching and support of pupils with the full range of special educational needs. For pupils with mild learning difficulties this close contact with parents is very beneficial. The special educational needs co-ordinator has close contacts with parents and devotes a significant amount of time to supporting them. It was clear during the inspection that the school provides good support and advice for parents seeking to assist children who experience difficulties.
57. Carrington's staff and governors believe that close, working partnerships between parents and them is an essential part of their pupils' education. Therefore parents are always welcomed into school with the headteacher operating an open door system. Teachers are nearly always available for quick, informal chats at the beginning and end of the school day. Support staff, including the school secretary, contribute to the warm welcome that is given to everyone who comes into school. A simple appointment system ensures that more formal meetings with either the headteacher or class teachers take place with the minimum of fuss and organisation.
58. The governors and staff value their parents' ideas and opinions. They take them into account in their plans for improving the school. A recent example of this in practice is the decision not to introduce a walking bus as part of the school's highly successful travel plan because the majority of parents insisted on seeing their children right into school.
59. In spite of the above, a number of parents who attended the pre-inspection meeting and completed the pre-inspection questionnaire felt that the school did not provide sufficient information and was not particularly approachable. The headteacher and governors were most concerned when the inspection team discussed this situation with them and they are already seeking ways to sort it out.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

60. The Carrington Infant School is well led and managed. Improvement since the last inspection in October 1997 has been good overall. Overall, the key issues identified at the time of the previous inspection have been tackled well. Teaching and assessment have both improved and are now good. In addition the curriculum, assessment and provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development have improved. The headteacher has a clear vision and educational direction for the work of the school. She is aware of what the school needs to do next to improve still further; this is shared effectively with the deputy, governors, staff and parents. However, the headteacher and the staff have been less successful in raising standards in mathematics, which have remained below average for a number of years.
61. Delegation to staff of management responsibilities is good. The senior management team, comprising the headteacher, deputy headteacher and the SENCO/head of the

SCDD offers good support to the leadership and management of the school, including carrying out performance management for other members of staff. The deputy provides valuable pastoral support to the staff, as well as providing a good model for teaching, as she is an exemplary classroom practitioner. There is good teamwork between the headteacher and the deputy: they work well together, sharing management roles and leading the school effectively.

62. The role of the co-ordinators has developed well since the last inspection. Leadership and management of the Foundation Stage, English, science, geography, PE and RE are good. Co-ordinators have more control over their subjects, they are expected to identify strengths in the subject and areas for development, they monitor teachers' planning to ensure coverage of subjects, audit resources and control their own budgets. The headteacher ensures they are carrying out their roles effectively through their annual monitoring sheets in their files. However, as yet, many co-ordinators have had limited opportunities to monitor teaching and learning in the classroom. For example, the mathematics co-ordinator has had limited time to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in the subject, consequently it is difficult for her to identify the weaknesses in the subject. Monitoring of teaching and learning has taken place by the headteacher and the local authority education advisors, linked to improving the quality of teaching and performance management; in this they have been successful as is evident in the improved quality of teaching.
63. Carrington's governors are very conscious of their responsibilities and fulfil their statutory duties well. They are aware of health and safety issues that required attention that were brought to their attention during the inspection. They have a clear vision of the school's aims and values and fully support the 'our pupils come first' philosophy. All the necessary policies and procedures are in place. They are clear, focussed on the school's needs and right up to date. The School Improvement Plan is a good working document. At every governors' meeting the school's actual progress and performance are compared with the targets and priorities which are set out in it. Subcommittees such as the Premises, Teaching and Learning and Parents, Pupils and Community committees meet regularly and governors make formal and informal visits to the school. As a result the governors have satisfactory knowledge and understanding of pupils' standards and are developing their appreciation of the strengths and weaknesses of teaching and learning. They have a good overall grasp of how well the school is doing and what needs to be done.
64. The quality of financial planning is good. The governors, many of whom have been in place for only a short period of time, do not make formal use of the so-called 'best value framework' but through the application of their own business expertise and experiences they do make sure the school achieves satisfactory value for money. The expenditure per pupil is high when compared with national averages but costs are very much in line with schools in the surrounding area.
65. The headteacher and governors have prudently dealt with a difficult financial situation over the last couple of years as income from the local education authority has decreased. They have coped with this shortfall by making best use of income generating opportunities, such as, the renting out of parts of the premises and the school hall to a nursery, a pre-school group and local clubs. They have made appropriate use of any special grants, which the school has received. The day-to-day administration and monitoring of the school's spending is very efficient. The headteacher and secretary ensure that the governors are kept very well informed about the school's financial situation.

66. Special educational needs provision receives very good support from senior management and the governing body. The special needs governor is informed and committed, working regularly with groups of pupils. She works closely with the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO). The SENCO is a member of the senior management team and this is totally appropriate, as it provides good links between the staff and managers of the school. However, not enough time is allowed for the SENCO to carry out the full range of her management duties. Unlike the teaching assistants in the SCDD, the specialist teaching assistant who provides special educational needs support in the school does not have clear line management. There has been a programme of training relating to the new Code of Practice and more of this would assist in the development of class teachers' skills in planning and matching tasks.
67. There are sufficient teachers and support staff to ensure that the curriculum is delivered well. The school makes satisfactory use of new technology such as computers, videos and electronic cameras not only in the teaching of pupils but also in the way that it is organised, administered and promoted. There is, for example, a website and a video of the last Christmas concert was produced. However, the use of ICT in assessment is limited.
68. The school is built on a large, sloping, leafy green site. The buildings, which date from the 1960s, are in generally good condition although there are some problems with leaking flat roofs and rotting window frames. The accommodation is good. There are two playgrounds and a well-equipped outdoor activity area for early years' children. A large grassed area is used when the weather permits and in a corner of the grounds there is a specially laid out nature area. The school hall and dining room are large, light and attractive. Some of the classrooms for Year 1 and 2 are rather small for the number of pupils in them but skilful use of the large open area, the art and design room and ICT suite make up for any shortcomings. The accommodation for the Social and Communication Difficulties Department is compact but very well equipped. It includes a separate play area and a special playhouse.
69. The lack of suitable resources for teaching RE and mathematics, which the previous inspection team highlighted, has been put right. Teaching and learning resources are now good across the whole of the curriculum.
70. The school's high income per pupil includes significant funding for pupils in SCDD, which can only be used for the six pupils attending the department. Very good provision ensures the pupils make good progress, so the budget is well spent. Weaknesses from the last inspection have been tackled well. The quality of teaching is now good overall, standards have risen in several subjects, and the curriculum is interesting and ensures all pupils have good opportunities, assessment is good, the partnership with parents is very positive and pupils are enthusiastic and have positive attitudes towards school. The capacity to improve still further is good and is shared by staff, governors and parents. The school gave satisfactory value for money at the time of the previous inspection: value for money is now good.

THE SOCIAL AND COMMUNICATION DIFFICULTIES DEPARTMENT

71. The school supports six pupils who have social and communication difficulties. It is an exemplar of what this sort of provision should be. It has a very good emphasis on the fullest possible social inclusion. In addition, it provides the highest quality of teaching and support in small group settings. The latter is often a requirement of a child's statement and all such requirements are very well met.

72. The head of the SCDD, who is also the SENCO, provides very high quality teaching. This is characterised by pace and the good involvement of every individual pupil. Work is always pitched at an appropriate level and the detailed planning and recording ensure that statement and IEP targets are incorporated well into lesson plans. The head of department is assisted in this by very good support staff who work extremely well with groups in the large class setting. They provide imaginative and informed support for the full range of curricular activities. Sessions of individual support and specific language skill development are a priority and carried out very well. A very good numeracy lesson typified the success of this teaching. Each of the six pupils received appropriate one-to-one support. One used a computer to count in multiples of two, five and ten. Another sequenced numbers up to 15, following this with subtraction activities that challenged him well. A third pupil used dominoes to add to ten, while a fourth matched number symbols to their names. The whole lesson was well resourced and every adult clear about the learning objectives. Throughout this very good lesson, staff worked to highly detailed plans. To ensure the maximum progress they continually alerted each other to the development that individual pupils made.
73. Good teaching is also provided by the visiting speech and language therapist. Imaginative use of resources assists pupils in, for example, learning to take instructions from a tape recorder as well as the human voice. In another good 'emotions group' session, pupils made good progress in social skills. Here two department pupils worked with two other pupils in a board game that required turntaking and matching emotions to pictures. The importance of this aspect of the curriculum is considerable and contributes well to pupils' maturity.
74. The curriculum is well planned and in the main the same as every other child at the school. Most work is carried out within the department. This ensures a very rich curriculum, particularly in terms of speaking and listening, interaction with adults and co-operative social skills. Personal and social development progresses very well, as do the basic skills for which most pupils have been identified. Within the department activities such as 'brain gym' and the 'rainbow road' programme ensure that physical co-ordination and thinking skills are addressed in detail. This further strengthens the progress these pupils make. These activities are a strong feature of the department. The 'rainbow road' co-ordination programme has been very successful and is now being extended to other parts of the school.
75. The inclusion of department pupils within some mainstream lessons, particularly PE and dance, is a great strength. Thus, in a good Year 1, dance lesson, one department pupil joined a full class with his teaching assistant. Both class teacher and assistant ensured that language, directions and attention was appropriate to allow the pupil the right combination of support and independence. The fact that the pupil had made very good progress in a short space of time was, in part, due to this sort of imaginative inclusion work.
76. The assessment, recording and lesson planning is the most detailed that the inspection team has seen. Every lesson is made relevant to each pupil. Lessons provide information which the teacher and assistants use to add to the records. These then inform what is done next. The overall care provided is of the very highest quality. This is given within clear boundaries that ensure that inappropriate behaviour is noticed and good behaviour rewarded. This is always done in a positive way that ensures that the pupils do not feel criticised. Thus, a pupil who is rude to another is asked to apologise, which he does. He is then congratulated on having made the apology. In this way, pupils with significant communication difficulties learn the rules of give and take.

77. Social and Communication Difficulties Department links with parents are very good. The co-ordinator sets aside time to discuss children with their parents. She is also happy to support parents where difficulties arise. This lays the basis for very good home-school teamwork.
78. The SCDD is well managed and well resourced. The accommodation and resources are both of a high quality and this shows respect for the pupils and staff who use them. The budget is well administered and supplemented from the school's own funds. The head of department is also the SENCO and more time is required if her duties and the support of class teachers is to be fully effective. There is also a need to ensure that communication between class teachers and SEN support assistants is regular and accurate to ensure that staff are fully included as well as pupils.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

79. In order to improve standards, the headteacher, senior management team, governors and staff should:

- (1) Raise standards in mathematics by:

- ensuring more time is spent effectively teaching mathematics;
- reviewing the scheme of work to ensure it meets the needs of the pupils in the school;
- ensuring that work is planned at the right level so that pupils are sufficiently challenged in their lessons, particularly the higher attainers;
- reviewing the excessive use of workbooks; and
- ensuring teaching and learning in the subject is effectively monitored.

Paragraphs: 1, 4, 8, 21, 22, 28, 29, 60, 62, 104, 107 – 110, 120 and 125.

- (2) Improve the quality of teaching in Year 1 to the level of the very best in Year 2 by:

- insisting that teachers are taking steps to ensure the pace in lessons quickens and pupils complete more work in lessons;
- ensuring that the teachers keep to the allocated amount of time for lessons, such as in ICT, music and art and design;

Paragraphs: 17, 21, 22, 24 and 119.

- (3) Improve the Foundation Stage Curriculum by:

- using the curriculum guidance for Reception aged children as a basis for planning and assessing their work and play outdoors; and
- developing the existing outside area into a stimulating learning environment for Reception children.

Paragraphs: 19, 27 and 88.

- (4) Ensure the governing body updates and improves aspects of the school's risk assessments.

Paragraphs: 42 and 63

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

45

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

41

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	13	23	8	1	0	0
Percentage	0	29	51	18	2	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching

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)	154
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	15

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	13

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	10
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	11

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	4.9
National comparative data	5.4

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)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	24	25	49

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	21	20	21
	Girls	25	25	25
	Total	46	45	46
Percentage of pupils At NC level 2 or above	School	94 (93)	92 (96)	94 (98)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	20	18
	Girls	25	25	24
	Total	45	45	42
Percentage of pupils At NC level 2 or above	School	92 (96)	92 (98)	86 (96)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British - Indian
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
122	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
3	0	0
0	0	0
4	0	0
2	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0

Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	1	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17.78
Average class size	21.2

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	6.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	115

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
	£
Total income	432,645
Total expenditure	453,013
Expenditure per pupil	2762
Balance brought forward from previous year	32,910
Balance carried forward to next year	12,542

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
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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	174
Number of questionnaires returned	66

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	62	33	5	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	59	32	3	0	6
Behaviour in the school is good.	44	47	5	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	42	48	8	0	2
The teaching is good.	59	36	2	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	35	53	9	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	58	35	6	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	50	44	0	0	6
The school works closely with parents.	41	47	9	3	0
The school is well led and managed.	61	32	5	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	58	38	0	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	15	45	24	6	9

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

80. The school admits all children into the Reception classes in September. Children attend full-time in the term in which they are five. Older children in two classes attend full-time, while the children with their fifth birthday in the summer term are attending part-time. The majority of children have the benefit of pre-school education. Most children transfer from the playgroup, which is on the school site and a few from local nursery schools. There are good relationships with the playgroup and there are good systems to pass on information. This helps the school staff to be knowledgeable about the children and helps the settling in process. When children enter the Reception their overall attainment is broadly average with few higher attainers. This has changed from the last inspection when attainment on entry was above average. More children came from out of the area and the number of children eligible for free school meals has increased. Teaching is consistently good and this helps children make good progress. There is effective teamwork between the teachers and a positive learning environment, where good learning takes place, including for the children with special educational needs in Reception and from the SCDD. Children make good progress in all areas of learning and, by the time they enter into Year 1, many are likely to achieve the early learning goals and reach average standards, with some exceeding the goals. However, there are a few who do not.

Personal, social and emotional development

81. Children's personal, social and emotional development is given a high priority in the Reception classes which means most children are likely to make good progress to reach the early learning goals, with a considerable number exceeding them by the time they enter Year 1. Children with special educational needs are supported well which helps them make good progress in this area of learning. Teaching is good and organisation and deployment of staff are effective and strongly promote personal, social and emotional development. There are good relationships between the children and staff who have high expectations for children's behaviour and their work. On the few occasions when children's attention drifts, as in the class with younger pupils, the teacher quickly draws them back to the activity with sensitivity. Planning ensures that children have a good balance of adult directed activities and tasks they choose themselves, which helps them to make decisions and gain in independence. The management of children is firm but gentle and effective; the staff know the children well and address their needs effectively. Children show a real sense of enjoyment and involvement and respond positively to instructions, as in physical development in the hall. They concentrate and persevere with activities. For example, when they paint pictures of the sea and waves, they carefully mix colours, adding more flour if necessary. Children take turns well, as on the computer, and work co-operatively and happily when discovering the properties of sand.

Communication, language and literacy

82. On entry to school, children's communication, language and literacy skills are generally around average, with little higher attainment. The quality of teaching is good. The teachers and support staff are effective in developing children's listening, communication and thinking skills by effective questioning and building upon children's responses through a wide range of activities. This helps them to make good progress and, by the end of Reception, attainment is average. There is a good emphasis on

promoting speaking and listening skills which means children learn to listen well and speak with confidence. Good opportunities exist for children to communicate their thinking through investigating and exploring. For example, when the classroom assistant asked the children *what do you need to do to fill up the jug to the top?* Children explained *that the jug was nearly full and they would need to pour in more water to make it full up.*

83. The organisation of the National Literacy Strategy is appropriate for Reception children. All share in the introduction, followed by working in small groups with the teacher, when their individual needs are addressed effectively. Meanwhile, other children choose from a good range of activities or work with another adult. Teachers teach basic skills well and promote writing and reading skills well and this means children have positive attitudes towards learning and 'having a go' and make good progress. Higher attaining children read simple texts and work out simple words from the sounds, showing they have appropriate strategies for decoding the text. Children of average ability are likely to attain the early learning goals in reading and writing but a few lower-attaining children will not, nevertheless still make good progress from a low base. Children enjoy stories and following the story of *'The Owl and the Pussycat'* several older children retold the story in correct sequence and, with good detail, including the *pea green boat*. Good opportunities exist for children to write with their teacher. However there are limited opportunities for children to write on their own in the role-play areas, writing corners and other areas. Many children write their own name and higher attaining children write simple sentences about which character they like best, using their knowledge of sounds effectively – *I lik pig becuz hee haz a ring on hiz noz*. Younger children listen avidly to *'The Selfish Crocodile'*, making good observations about the size of the crocodile and that it had learnt to be kind.

Mathematical development

84. The quality of teaching of mathematics and the provision for the development and awareness of mathematical language are good. There are lots of opportunities for learning to count and carry out simple addition, order numerals, recognise shapes and colour and create patterns through a good range of creative and mathematical activities. Children reinforce their knowledge of shapes through collage work and learn about symmetry, when creating symmetrical monsters. There are good links with knowledge and understanding of the world, when children make a class block graph of the different ways they travel, when they come to school. Children make good progress and, by the end of Reception, most are likely to achieve the early learning goals, with a few exceeding them, particularly in number, but some will still be working at levels below those expected for children of a similar age.
85. Good arrangements for teaching children in small groups are beneficial and mean that higher attainers are challenged well and make good gains in their learning. More able and average ability children name two-dimensional shapes, work out more than / less than, understand the duration of time, order and recognise numbers to 10, with higher attainers counting to 20 and beyond. Higher attaining, younger children learn how to carry out simple addition to 12, by throwing a dice. They put the appropriate number of animals in a paper boat, then throw the dice again, count the animals carefully and correctly add them together. Older children learn how to complete tasks set against a one-minute timer helping them to appreciate the duration of time. Children thread a variety of wooden objects in a minute, improving the rate the second time, this also helps children to improve their dexterity as well as understand about time. Other children throw, count and move around a board against one minute with one child observing that the *higher the number means you finish quickest*.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

86. Provision and teaching for children to develop aspects of knowledge and understanding of the world around them are satisfactory. Children's learning is appropriately promoted with an interesting range of activities, so by the end of Reception, most children make satisfactory progress and are likely to achieve the early learning goals, but some will not. There is a satisfactory focus on exploration and investigation and children have suitable opportunities to find out about objects that float and those that sink. Two children learn about the properties of sand when they discussed why wet sand would not go through a sieve but dry sand would. They said *it would get stuck and not go through, it is too sticky*. There are satisfactory reinforcement activities for children to learn to use the computers. Some children are proficient at using the computers and willingly help those who have difficulty. Children use a mouse to click on and drag various windows and doors to complete a picture of a house and use a graphics program to make a range of patterns, draw houses and trees. They are developing a growing control and use of different applications.
87. The use of visits and visitors help children to understand the jobs people do, when learning about transport. Children enjoyed the visit of an ambulance and fire engine and were able to sit in the driver's seat and learn how the hoses worked. They are showing a good awareness of where they live and identify England on a globe and draw simple plans of their route to school, with features and appropriate labels. Children are gaining an awareness of their own cultures and beliefs and those of others. They begin to express their feelings about being scared and what they are frightened of. Children are included in the school community for such events as Harvest and Christmas and learn about their significance. In addition good attention is given to other cultures and beliefs. Children learn about the Year of the Sheep, Chinese writing and make dragons when they find out about the Chinese New Year and create Mehndi patterns following *'The story of the Mehndi tree'*.

Physical development

88. The quality of teaching in physical development is good, particularly physical education in the hall and most of the children are likely to achieve the early learning goals by the end of Reception. There is a range of vehicles and climbing apparatus in the Early Years playground but opportunities to use them are too limited. The outside area is being used to promote physical development, but as yet, opportunities are limited. This is a priority that has been identified by the school. Younger children are developing good skills when riding the bicycles and using the rope walk. They are patient while waiting their turn, chatting and laughing whilst encouraging each other. Good routines are being established, as children are encouraged to tidy up at the end of the session – they quickly put the equipment away and line up to go back to the classroom.
89. The children are being taught PE well in the hall, including safety aspects, such as carrying the equipment, which they do correctly. They enter the hall sensibly and quickly find a space for the 'warm up' session. Children make good progress in their movements and co-ordination when carrying out floor work and using the apparatus. Children walk, run and jump around the hall with a good awareness of space and the safety of themselves and others. They respond well to the commands that are given by the teacher on a variety of instruments. When on the apparatus, they make good progress in travelling and balancing on the apparatus, although a few boys do not always listen as well as they ought.

90. Indoors, children have good opportunities to handle scissors, glue, pencils and brushes with increasing competence and their handwriting, cutting and sticking skills develop well. For example, as when they cut out pictures of clocks with care or mark out patterns with a variety of tools on their pictures of waves.

Creative development

91. Teaching is good and, as a result, all children make good progress and most are likely to attain the early learning goals by the end of Reception. Children responded and behaved very well in their music lesson. The teacher, from the local education authority, skilfully included all children in the activities through a mixture of demonstration and practice. Effective teaching is helping children learn well and they begin to build a good repertoire of songs many with actions that are enthusiastically carried out. They have lots of fun but instantly respond to instructions when needed. Children in Reception enjoy singing; this is because teachers use singing in a variety of ways to reinforce different aspects of the curriculum. For example, younger children start the morning activities singing *'What is the weather today?'*
92. Children learn about colour, pattern and texture in pictures and painting. They successfully learn how to mix paints and know that blue and yellow make green, also by mixing in more white they will make a lighter colour. Teachers use art and design effectively to support learning, such as reinforcing patterns and shapes in mathematics. Children are encouraged to work in both two- and three-dimensions. For example, they make thumb pots with clay and the youngest children paint good representations of the ambulance and its crew. Children have good opportunities to use a range of media and enjoy creating pictures in chalk on the paving outside.

ENGLISH

93. At the time of the previous inspection, pupils' attainment in English was above average. The level of attainment has been maintained overall, although it is not as high in reading as in writing. The National Literacy Strategy has been fully implemented, along with intervention programmes, such as ELS, for those pupils who need extra support. There has been better assessment of pupils' attainment and progress. The information gathered has been used to set realistic and achievable school and individual targets. There has been good improvement in the standards in writing since the last inspection when there were weaknesses in provision; pupils were previously doing too much work from workbooks and writing was too prescriptive.
94. Standards are now above that found nationally. To achieve this a number of successful strategies have been adopted:-
- Pupils are taught in ability groups within their year group, and this is pushing up attainment for everyone.
 - There is effective monitoring of teaching, planning and detailed tracking of pupils' progress.
 - There has been a strong focus on extending writing skills, not only in literacy but also across the curriculum.
 - Appropriate support is provided and teaching is more directly focused to the specific needs of individuals. This has resulted in better progress, particularly in Year 2.
95. Overall standards in English in the work seen are above average for pupils at the end of Year 2 in speaking and listening and writing, but around average for reading. Pupils achieve well and progress is good from the time children start school in Reception,

although progress steadies in Year 1 and accelerates in Year 2. It is likely that the overall grade in the 2003 National Curriculum tests could be lower as four pupils from the SCDD will be included.

96. Teachers provide pupils with good opportunities for speaking and listening. For example, in a Year 2, science lesson, they asked enquiring questions *why, what happened next* which meant pupils could sequence the events from blocks of ice to water correctly. Pupils ask and answer questions, generally listen and respond to others and present their own ideas and opinions clearly. For example, in Year 1, pupils told the class about what happened at the weekend, clearly and confidently. However, the pace slowed and some pupils became restless and did not listen attentively. There are limited opportunities for role-play and drama to enhance speaking and listening skills, which could be extended further within lessons.
97. By the end of Year 2, standards in reading are average. Satisfactory progress is made overall. Raising standards in reading is a priority. The school has identified that pupils' skills in interpreting what they read needs to be improved and has put into place strategies for developing comprehension skills. Able readers are targeted with teaching support each week and additional time is devoted to group and individual reading, with the help of volunteer parent helpers. However, on some occasions these reading sessions finish late which has an impact on the next lesson.
98. Pupils in Year 1 are generally taught well the relationship between letters and sounds, especially when the pace is brisk, which maintains pupils' attention and ensures that they are responsive. When the pace slows, too few take part. For example, when the majority wait for one child to write on the large white board, rather than all writing their answers on individual white boards. By Year 2, higher attaining pupils read with expression and understand how to use punctuation effectively. Reading is promoted well in lessons and teachers act as effective role models when they read, such as the 'big book' on materials in Year 1 or '*Ice Palace*' in a Year 2 lesson. They read with good expression and pupils are totally absorbed and disappointed when the extracts in '*Ice Palace*' end. Pupils know the difference between fiction and non-fiction books from Year 1, locate books in the library in Year 2 and use them well for research. They understand the use of the index, contents and glossary and enjoy finding out about books. For example, in Year 1 when they are introduced to the term 'blurb', they are amused but remember the term.
99. By the end of Year 2, guided by good and very good teaching, pupils achieve well in writing and attain standards that are above average. In Year 1, pupils complete a reasonable amount of work and make satisfactory progress, reaching average standards. Teachers offer their pupils a good range of work within literacy and in other subjects. They encourage them to write in a variety of forms, such as lists, labels, instructions, letters and stories. Handwriting is taught well and teachers have high expectations of presentation. In Year 1, pupils print and are generally forming their letters correctly. By Year 2, pupils are learning to join their writing, with a few beginning to use a neat joined script consistently. Growing understanding of the use of punctuation is shown in the use of capital letters and full stops to punctuate correctly structured sentences. By Year 2, pupils have a good understanding and recognise the importance of writing for different audiences. Simple and complex sentences are used, with higher-attaining pupils using extended sentences effectively to engage the reader. In Year 2, teachers successfully encourage pupils to structure their stories correctly and to use imaginative words and phrases, as in the work based on '*Baby Polar Bear*' and the '*Ice Palace*'. Lower-attaining pupils work hard to use opposites in sentences, remembering the correct term 'antonym' in the review at the end of the lesson. Very

good teaching of basic skills is helping all pupils with their writing and a few of the higher-attaining pupils are already working at the higher Level 3 and are writing with maturity.

100. The quality of teaching is good overall, with very good teaching in Year 2 and generally good teaching in Year 1. Lessons are well planned and consistent across both classes in each year group. Work is built on what most pupils can already do and this is supported by the good assessment within the lesson and over a period of time. Pupils are given good opportunities to evaluate their own work. In one lesson, they read through their own and their partners' work, highlighting the 'tangle factor' words and find ways to improve their stories. High expectations mean pupils quickly get on with the activity set and work hard. Good attention is given to the needs of all pupils, which means they achieve well. The support given by the well-qualified teaching assistants is effective and ensures that pupils of lower ability and those who have special educational needs are supported well during lessons. The school's good procedures for behaviour management, which are consistently applied by all staff, mean that the management of pupils is effective. This aspect is considerably enhanced by the good relationships teachers have with their pupils. There are a few occasions when pupils need reminding to listen and attend, but that is usually linked to a slow pace in the lesson and their lack of involvement.
101. The subject makes a good contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils, through working together, creating writing with the 'tangle factor' and reading about people and animals in other countries. Subjects, such as geography, science and history, contribute to pupils' skills well in English. For example, when Year 1 pupils discuss what *Barnaby Bear* will need to pack in his suitcase when he goes on holiday, or when pupils in Year 2 record their findings in science, write up their research in geography and record facts when writing in history. ICT is used satisfactorily overall to support and extend literacy, such as word processing, but overall, limited use is made in literacy lessons.
102. The co-ordinator provides effective leadership and management and, with very good teaching in Year 2, has ensured standards are good. The co-ordinator has a clear view of what needs to be done next, such as raising the standards in reading to that in writing. She monitors teaching and learning and offers good support to her colleagues. There is a good range of reading materials to support learning and a well-stocked library, which helps pupils develop their research skills. Homework supports learning in lessons and most pupils read regularly at home.

MATHEMATICS

103. Standards in the Year 2 National Curriculum tests in 2002 were below average compared to all schools nationally and well below average when compared to similar schools. Attainment in the subject remains below average because too few pupils achieve the higher Level 3 compared to all schools nationally. However, the number of statemented pupils is reflected in the 2002 results. This inspection finds no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls, although in previous years girls performed better than boys. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and make sound progress in relation to their abilities.
104. The findings from the current inspection are that standards in mathematics remain below average. However, the overall grade in the 2003 National Curriculum tests is

likely to be lower as there are four pupils from the SCDD who will be included in the school figures. At the time of the previous inspection attainment was judged to be in line with national expectations. However, following the inspection, later that year in the National Curriculum tests, pupils' results were below average. The school has now put in place strategies to remedy the situation and improve attainment. It has analysed test results and identified problem solving as an area for development although this was also identified at the last inspection as an area for improvement. Recently problem solving has become more of an integral and ongoing part of the curriculum. In some Year 2 lessons, pupils are grouped according to their ability across the year group, in order that pupils are provided with work with appropriate challenge well matched to their abilities. These changes are having a positive effect and, together with the very good teaching seen in Year 2, are helping to raise attainment for all pupils, particularly the higher attainers.

105. Pupils enter Year 2 with attainment that is below average due mostly to insufficient progress made in Year 1. In Year 2, they make good progress and evidence from lesson observations show that at least half of them are working within Level 2, with some working within Level 3, on some, but not all, aspects of the mathematics curriculum. The lower-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs are working within Level 1 or the lower Level 2. Work scrutiny does not accurately reflect the attainment and progress observed during lessons because a proportion of the subject involves oral work.
106. In Year 2, pupils are developing a sound working knowledge of number bonds and over half are able to add and subtract accurately to 20, while a few can extend this to 90. Some average and lower-attaining pupils have some difficulty with numbers to 10 particularly when dealing with money, but most are beginning to understand the significance of place value. Pupils in the upper set can count in multiples of three, four, and five while in the other set, they need visual cues to help them to count in three's. All pupils can identify simple, common two-dimensional shapes such as triangles, circles, squares and rectangles. Many can name three-dimensional shapes such as sphere, cone, cylinder, pyramid and cuboids. Most pupils are at the early stages of using estimating and using standard and non-standard units of weight, capacity and length, and reading the time to the hour, half-hour or quarter hour. There are links with ICT when pupils program a programmable toy to make a series of pre-planned movements. In science pupils use ICT input data to compile simple block graphs relating to pupils' hair colour as part of their *ourselves* topic.
107. In Year 1 teaching is satisfactory overall with some good and unsatisfactory teaching observed. The less than satisfactory lesson, lacked challenge, particularly for the higher-attaining and average pupils. Time is not used to best effect and too much use made of worksheets and workbooks. Sometimes lessons do not start on time and this results in insufficient work being covered in the lesson. Consequently pupils do not achieve as well as they could.
108. During lessons in Year 2, very good teaching was observed. Teachers work hard to make up for the lack of progress in Year 1 due to less effective teaching and learning. Setting for pupils is working well with work well planned and consistently matched to the needs of pupils and their varying abilities. The teachers are enthusiastic, well organised with resources ready for use, and support staff aware of what they are required to do. Lessons are lively, focussed and continue with a very good pace as pupils are encouraged to 'beat the clock'. There is good emphasis on oral sessions and pupils are eager to be involved as they practice number multiples of three, four and five. Pupils respond well to very good teaching and other methods, such as open-

ended questioning which enables them to reflect and think for themselves. Consequently learning in lessons is effective and pupils achieve well.

109. The school mostly follows the National Numeracy Strategy using a commercially produced scheme. Some shortcomings of the scheme, such as lack of problem-solving activities, have been identified and overcome by the weekly separate problem solving activities. Overall teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject is secure and the teaching of basic skills satisfactory overall. However, only the minimum time is devoted to the subject and this is a weakness, particularly when standards are below expectations. Sometimes lessons do not begin on time or have to end abruptly; consequently, pupils do not have sufficient time to undertake independent work to consolidate their skills. Analysis of the timetable reveals that there is some disparity of time spent between classes, for example, a Year 1 class is timetabled for one full hour more than the other classes. Some aspects of the curriculum, such as representing and interpreting data, the use of computer programs to support and reinforce learning and the use of numeracy across other curriculum areas, require further development, as their use is limited. Since the last inspection, there has been good improvement in assessment in the subject. This is now ongoing but with formal assessments half-termly based on the units of work previously undertaken by pupils. All pupils are set targets and these are shared with pupils and parents alike. Individual pupil attainment is assessed and levelled at the end of each year and records passed onto the next teacher.
110. Leadership in the subject is satisfactory overall. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and is aware of the need to raise attainment and for further development of the subject. However, insufficient time has been provided for her and senior managers to monitor teaching and learning rigorously and to ensure that best practice, such as that seen in Year 2, is identified and shared. Resources are good and have recently been updated and augmented. As a result, each class is well equipped to deliver the curriculum while the less-used resources are stored elsewhere but are easily accessible.

SCIENCE

111. Standards in science are average for the seven-year-olds, as they were at the last inspection and slightly above the most recent assessments last summer. That said, these should be treated with caution because there are four pupils from the SCDD who will be included in the school figures. It is likely that the overall grade will be lower than at the time of the inspection.
112. Even though the trend has been fairly steady since 1999 and progress has been around average, there have been significant changes in science. There is now a strong focus on investigations, not only in lessons, but also a planned investigation for the whole school each year to develop problem solving and thinking skills. This has been effective and parents agree. Boys and girls, including those with special educational needs, are more adept at planning their investigations, setting up a fair test, and recording their findings accurately. They plan how they are going to tackle their investigation identifying what might change and how they are going to measure, as part of their initial planning. These skills are taught well, and this means that learning is effective for every pupil. Year 2 pupils certainly know now that ice will melt at different rates in different temperatures.
113. Year 1 pupils were studying the five senses and their location. This lesson was supporting speaking and listening well as pupils moved round using their magnifying

glasses to look more carefully at the objects on the tables or discussing what they thought the items in the bag were. The teacher was keen to include all pupils and, by her sensitive explanation and positive encouragement, a pupil with special educational needs was able to identify the senses in his drawings, which clearly showed he knew the correct places.

114. Overall teaching was good, with very good teaching in Year 2, and good and sound teaching in Year 1. This is a much better picture than reported before. The teachers in school now are far more secure and capable of teaching the science curriculum.
115. Books show pupils experience all parts of the science curriculum. There is evidence in the books showing detailed in-depth work, in Year 2, of pupils understanding simple series circuits, involving batteries and wires. Some pupils' work reflected that of higher attainment. There were good explanations of how to make a bulb light up. There is good coverage of the animal kingdom and the nature trail, which the pupils created, helps considerably to develop knowledge and understanding of life processes and living things.
116. There have been three changes of co-ordinator since the last inspection. This co-ordinator has a good grasp of the subject, which is led and managed well. Standards, teaching and learning are monitored and checked at regular intervals. Pupils' progress and attainment are charted effectively and the targets for science set. Teacher assessments are accurate as these match results. All these show good improvement. The co-ordinator knows where there are gaps and what she is going to do about them, for instance, as yet there is not enough use made of the computer in science. The subject is well placed to develop further.

ART AND DESIGN

117. The standards in art and design have improved since the last inspection. In Year 2, attainment in art and design is above average. Greater attention is paid to the acquisition of skills in art and design, which are taught well during lessons. At present the scheme is based on national guidance and topic work. This needs to be finalised by the co-ordinator, to ensure skills are taught in a progressive manner and also supports teachers in their planning. The Year 2 teachers are skilful in ensuring the pupils build on the skills learnt in Year 1. The use of sketchbooks for pupils in Year 2 provides a satisfactory record of their experimentation of techniques and use of media; this could be usefully extended to Year 1 and include work that is dated and annotated. The use of sketchbooks would then give a record of progress pupils make, as formal assessment has not yet been implemented by the co-ordinator; this was a weakness identified in the last inspection.
118. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress throughout the school, as they express their ideas through a range of different experiences in art and design. A good range of work has been produced in both two- and three-dimensions. Pupils' skills in drawing and painting have improved and are good. For example, Year 2 pupils have produced effective pictures in the style of L. S. Lowry. Good attention to detail and movement was achieved through pupils practising drawing match-stick men in their sketchbooks, before they tackled their final version and produced pictures which were full of action.
119. Teaching is good in Year 2 and satisfactory in Year 1. There were weaknesses in the time allocation and focus for a lesson in Year 1. In most lessons the teacher takes a group, usually for ICT in the suite, while skilled classroom assistants teach art and

design. This works well and is effective deployment of classroom assistants, as it ensures pupils get greater attention whilst working in smaller groups. However, when a Year 1 class is split into three and one group works unsupervised in the library colouring and using templates, with no particular focus, this is unsatisfactory and a waste of pupils' time. In addition, the time pupils spent on art and design was too short, clearly illustrated by the pupils' disappointment when they had to change activities. Teachers work together in year groups planning the lessons effectively to ensure all pupils access the lesson, as well as ensuring consistency in experiences. Teachers and classroom assistants are enthusiastic about art and design, have good relationships with the pupils, effective management strategies and are consistent in their approach. This means, pupils are well behaved, work hard and have positive attitudes towards their work, striving to improve their attempts.

120. Cross-curricular links are good, particularly in English (speaking and listening, when pupils discuss their work), history and geography. For example, Year 2 link art and design effectively with their work on the *Great Fire of London*. In Year 2, pupils successfully explored ways to create backgrounds to camouflage an animal from either hot or cold regions. Pupils mixed paints to achieve the appropriate colour and then effectively introduced a second colour by printing or combining paint. They thought very carefully about the animal that would be incorporated into their picture and were pleased with the good results produced. Links with mathematics are more limited. In Year 1, pupils create good representations of *'The Snail'* by Henri Matisse when they use squares to form the snail. Links with ICT are developing satisfactorily. For example, Year 1 pupils use a graphics program to draw pictures but overall this is an underdeveloped area. There are good opportunities for pupils in the SCDD to use ICT to support their art and design work as when they take their pencil for a walk, create a pattern and fill in the segments with colour.
121. The management of the subject is satisfactory overall. The co-ordinator has some time each term to monitor art and design and she monitors teachers' plans. As yet, she has had limited opportunities to monitor teaching and learning in the classroom. A satisfactory curriculum is in place, which is broad and balanced. The teachers, particularly in Year 2, ensure pupils have a good range of experiences of different techniques and media. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual and social development through pride in their work and working together but a satisfactory contribution to cultural development. There are particularly good links with Western artists' work but there is too little attention given to promoting multi-cultural awareness in art and design.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

122. Standards in design and technology are average for most pupils in the school, including those with special educational needs. All pupils make sound progress in the subject. Since the last inspection standards have been maintained. Judgements are based on an evaluation of photographic evidence, discussions with pupils and scrutiny of planning. There was no immediate evidence of items made by pupils as they had taken them all home. No lessons were observed during the inspection due to the arrangement of the timetable. Consequently there is insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement on teaching throughout the school.
123. Discussions with Year 2 pupils reveal that they are involved in a number of projects during their time in school. There are opportunities to design, develop their craft skills and evaluate their work using a range of materials and joining techniques during the process. They experience the use of a variety of construction equipment when they

build a huge fairground, which includes revolving equipment such as a big wheel. Pupils gain an understanding of how levers can enable things to move when they make Christmas and other cards that demonstrate a simple sliding lever action. The concept of movement is developed further when they design and make a vehicle, complete with chassis, axles and wheels. Other products made include paper aeroplanes, candles and three-dimensional animal puppets. All pupils were involved in a project to design and make their own hat to wear at the school's Jubilee Celebrations. Photographs of the occasion show pupils had used their artistic skills too when they imaginatively decorated their hats, which they subsequently proudly displayed. Pupils are also engaged in food technology when they participate in designing and making a sandwich or bake fairy cakes.

124. Pupils have experienced a variety of joining techniques such as the use of glue, sellotape, paperclips etc. as well as the use of simple running stitches to join fabrics and decorate bookmarks and bags. During discussions with pupils it was clear that they enjoyed the projects they undertook, particularly food technology!
125. Leadership in the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator does not monitor teaching and learning but is aware of what is happening in classrooms through informal discussion with colleagues. The policy has recently been updated and the school follows the QCA scheme that ensures skills are built on progressively throughout the school. Assessment is limited and requires further development. Currently, it is based on observation and discussion of the finished product with the pupil, rather than a record of the development of skills associated with the subject. Pupils undertake a design and make assignment once a term and teachers endeavour to link this in with a particular area of learning, such as, making a fresh fruit salad linked to healthy eating or designing a lamp linked to science work. There was no evidence of the enhancement of learning through the use of ICT or mathematical skills and this is an area for development. Resources are satisfactory.

GEOGRAPHY

126. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. The school has adapted the new curriculum guidance, (QCA), improved planning and successfully addressed the issue of pupils recording their work without relying on the use of commercial worksheets. All pupils develop good geographical enquiry and skills through the use of a good, wide range of appropriate resources and secondary sources of information. As a result, standards of attainment in geography are above average at the end of Year 2 for all pupils.
127. Teaching in geography lessons seen was good overall. In discussion with Year 2 pupils, they knew that they lived in Flackwell Heath or High Wycombe in Buckinghamshire and could express their views well about these places, especially the many 'calming' bumps that have been put on the roads to slow down the traffic. After visiting the Octagon and the Chilterns shopping centres, pupils draw graphs with a colour-coded key identifying the shops in each area.
128. Pupils in Year 1, have many opportunities to follow the routes that *Red Riding Hood*, *Rosie* and *Goldilocks* took before drawing their route to school and following a map around the local area. Very good use has been made of globes, maps of the world and plans to identify the wide range of places the pupils have had the opportunity to travel to. These cover all the continents. Pupils who are not so fortunate, enjoy listening to their peers and handling the souvenirs that have been bought. Teachers build on this knowledge very well indeed. Each child in Year 2 has a 'Passport to the World.'

Together they have '*visited*' three cities in different locations for instance, Tokyo on an island, Venice in the sea and Madrid on a hill. Pupils know there are three types of desert. In the Year 2 lessons seen pupils researched, using a very good selection of resources, what life was like in the Arctic and Antarctic. Each group shared their findings with the class developing well their speaking and listening skills. As a result, pupils knew far more about the Polar regions at the end of the lesson. For example, the differences in landscape, animal life, climate, the type of people and whether they could exist there.

129. Pupils really enjoy their geography lessons and make good progress in the subject. They use many non-fiction books and ICT to help in geographical investigations. The *Go Global* week helped to widen the pupils' experience of other cultures as they took part in singing songs, hearing and playing drums and listening to stories from around the world. The school displays in and out of the classrooms and in the library of African books, musical instruments, pictures, books and guidebooks, as well as an African dance workshop, help pupils to focus on this area of the world.
130. The co-ordinator is very secure in her knowledge and understanding of geography. As each piece of work is completed a tick is recorded against the pupils' name and a task is set at the end of each unit; however, the co-ordinator is aware that this does not, as yet, record individual pupil's attainment and progress in geographical enquiry and skills.

HISTORY

131. It was not possible to observe any history lessons during the week of the inspection. Judgement of pupils' attainment is based on evidence that was collected from teachers' plans, examining books and displays of pupils' work around the school and discussions with teachers and pupils. On this basis, by the end of Year 2, standards in history are average. Pupils make satisfactory progress in the subject, including those with special educational needs, who are well supported to access texts being used. Standards are similar to those at the time of the previous inspection.
132. The school has reviewed the curriculum, developed new policies to inform teachers' planning, and adapted the recent national guidance (QCA). The school no longer relies on the use of prepared worksheets, a weakness identified in the previous report. The subject makes an effective contribution to the spiritual, social, moral and cultural development of the pupils through pupils developing an understanding of the lives of famous people and finding out about the history of the locality.
133. Pupils in Year 1 have watched videos to help them notice change in how people lived in their homes in the recent past and those they live in today. There is limited written work but pupils could recall watching the *Gunpowder Plot*, performing the event in assembly and knew that this was why we celebrate Bonfire night today. Pupils in Year 2 know a little about why George Stevenson, Grace Darling, Neil Armstrong, Mary Seacole and Alexander Graham Bell are famous. The work on *The Great Fire of London* is good and has been well taught. This has linked well to literacy through analysing the story as well as looking at a range of diaries. The higher attaining pupils developed their enquiry skills well and worked independently on texts whilst the lower attaining pupils work together to produce their account of the happenings. Pupils have written poems on '*Fire*', used the Internet for research, created a vibrant background display in art and design and begun to understand much more about the River Thames and places in London.

134. Although procedures are in place to identify what the pupils have covered, as yet there is no effective system for tracking and recording pupils' progress and attainment. Resources have improved since the previous inspection and are now satisfactory. Leadership and management of history is satisfactory overall. The subject co-ordinator has not as yet undertaken any monitoring of teaching and learning but has looked at samples of work in pupils' books.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

135. By the end of Year 2 pupils' attainment in ICT is average. This is a change from the last inspection when standards were above those expected for the age of the pupils. Some of the attainment differences can be attributed to the fact that since the introduction of Curriculum 2000, the nationally expected standards in the subject have been raised considerably.
136. Lesson observations and work scrutiny evidence suggests that in Year 2, most pupils are developing appropriate keyboard skills and make satisfactory progress. They are able to access and use a suitable word processing program to enter simple text, add a space, delete and replace a word or letter when necessary, and use the arrow keys. Overall teaching is good. It is satisfactory in Year 1 but very good in Year 2. During the inspection, Year 2 pupils worked within groups in the computer suite with a floor turtle (programmable toy). The planned activity built on previous work and ensured continuity in pupils' learning. Very good use of open-ended questioning by the teacher to assess pupils' knowledge and understanding encourages pupils to think for themselves. The teachers provide good examples of the use of control technology that helps inform pupils. Pupils were able to provide further examples of the use of control technology, such as the using of robots to make a sandwich or cars. Their knowledge of the use of ICT programs to work the washing machine or video players indicate pupils' understanding of the subject and its use in the world outside school. The teacher's good use of praise made pupils feel confident in their learning and encouraged them to give their best efforts and resulted in effective learning. By the end of the lesson, pupils could confidently input instructions in the right order for the programmable toy to move on a chequered board in a variety of directions avoiding particular squares. Year 2 pupils can log onto the Internet. They investigate a variety of sites and, with teacher help, extract the appropriate information to support their *Fire of London* history topic. The Internet is used too, to develop pupils' research skills in other curriculum areas, for example, in religious education and geography.
137. With help, pupils in Year 1 are beginning to understand that ICT can be used to present information in different forms such as bar graphs and pictograms. They input data gathered from a science lesson linked to their *Ourselves* topic. With teacher help and explanation, the pupils click on the appropriate icon. As they do so there are gasps of surprise and lots of laughter from the pupils as a variety of coloured graphs appeared on the screens displaying their data in a different format.
138. All pupils enjoy using computers and behaviour is good. They work very well together; taking turns with both the keyboard and the use of the mouse. Most are confident, act sensibly and treat the equipment with care.
139. The subject meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. The school follows the QCA scheme of work ensuring continuity and progression in the subject. Some aspects of the scheme have been adapted to meet the needs of the pupils and to help teachers look more closely at what they intend the pupils to learn. The majority of the teaching seen was undertaken in the computer suite installed since the last inspection.

While this is only a small suite comprising six computers, the targeted expenditure has made a valuable contribution to the school's resources. Each classroom also has a computer. However, during the inspection computers were often not used sufficiently to support cross-curricular learning and this is a weakness.

140. Leadership in the subject is good. All staff have undertaken the New Opportunities Funding (NOF) training as well as successfully passing the National Grid for Learning (NGFL) Phase 2 training. Further training has been undertaken by the co-ordinator and there are plans to ensure that learning assistants become more competent in the use of ICT. The co-ordinator has formulated an action plan, which includes improvement in software provision to enhance the learning in literacy and numeracy.

MUSIC

141. Standards are average for pupils at the end of Year 2, although pupils' achievement in singing is good. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress overall but good progress in singing. However, no specific lessons were observed of Year 2 pupils, only in Year 1, but during assemblies it is apparent that Year 2 pupils sing with precision and enjoyment. The school has maintained the standards reported at the time of the last inspection. National guidance linked to a published scheme of work, guides planning and is helping to ensure that skills are developed systematically and teachers have sufficient support, in order to teach the subject. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Specialist teachers for teaching recorders and singing give effective support to these aspects of the subject.
142. The quality of singing in assemblies indicates that teaching in singing lessons is good. Pupils enjoy singing and sing with enthusiasm, enjoyment and sustained effort to maintain a good level of control as in the song '*If I were a butterfly*'. The tone quality is good and pupils sing with a sense of rhythm and a good awareness of pitch. The quality of singing adds a valuable dimension to pupils' spiritual development.
143. Pupils in Year 1 benefit from very good specialist teaching and make good progress in lessons. They sing in time with the piano and learn to follow commands – loud / quiet / slow and fast when some pupils conduct the rest of the class. On occasions, in lessons taken by the class teacher, the pace is too slow in parts and too few children have an active part to play during the session, lessons are not as long as indicated on the timetable and end abruptly. However, during one effective part of a class lesson all pupils, including two from the SCDD, successfully distinguish between long and short sounds by clapping and moving around the room to music.
144. The teaching of music is particularly good when the music specialist from the local education authority (LEA) teaches the pupils in Reception and Year 1. In Year 1, pupils are motivated by the teachers' lively start to the lesson, when she sings '*Hello Year 1*'; they work hard and with enjoyment, developing their sense of pitch, rhythm and tone during the lesson. Teachers work alongside the specialist teacher during lessons and will continue to teach their own music when the LEA input has finished. This is valuable in-service training and helping to ensure that teachers have sufficient expertise and confidence to continue to teach music to their classes.
145. The music co-ordinator has recently taken over the role. She is already showing good management skills and has established a clear direction for the subject. She is attempting to ensure that music is much more cross-curricular and not just reserved for class lessons. She monitors teachers' plans and is given time to monitor teaching.

Assessment of what pupils know, can do and understand is carried out informally; however, the co-ordinator is aware of the overall performance of pupils through listening to singing in assembly and performances, such as Christmas productions. Systematic assessment has yet to be fully implemented. Pupils are given opportunities to take part in school performances, festivals with local schools and musical workshops, such as the recent African drumming during *Go Global Week*. They were thrilled to experience hearing and playing drums from around the world. These occasions enhance pupils' learning, enrich their experiences and provide well for their social and cultural development. There is a good range of musical instruments and a dedicated music room in which lessons take place.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

146. Standards in physical education are average for all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs who achieve well. There are no significant differences in standards between boys and girls. This judgement is similar to that made by the school's previous inspection.
147. Most pupils enter Year 1 having achieved the early learning goals for physical development and they make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. They are provided with a broad and balanced curriculum, which is designed to promote their physical development and social interaction. Lessons in gymnastics, dance and music and movement were observed during the inspection.
148. The quality of teaching and learning in the lessons observed was satisfactory overall, with some good features. Strong features of the teaching are the teachers' good relationships with their pupils and the choice and use of music from other cultures to enrich learning. For example, in a Year 1 lesson the use of well-chosen African dance tape and encouragement by the teacher made the lesson fun and ensured pupils maximum physical effort. In a Year 2 lesson, the teacher demonstrated to pupils the standard of work she expected from them. Pupils were allowed to select an animal they were pretending to imitate. As they developed their sequence of appropriate actions to demonstrate animal movement, they responded well with maximum creative and physical effort. The teacher made good use of praise to encourage them further and an opportunity was given for them to evaluate the actions of others as each half of the class had to 'guess' the animals represented and explain why. In lessons pupils responded well to instructions as they moved in a variety of ways sharing the available space sensibly. They performed a range of movements involving running, hopping and balancing and have gained an appropriate awareness of space. They plan and perform simple skills sensibly and are able to safely put away gym equipment after use.
149. Pupils enjoy physical education and most try hard to improve. Attitudes are good and they behave well, which is an improvement since the last inspection. The subject enhances pupils' personal and social development. Teachers and support assistants are fully aware of the needs of pupils, particularly those with special educational needs. Pupils from the SCDD are fully included in the activities and they participate to the best of their abilities.
150. The co-ordinator manages the subject effectively. She has formulated her own scheme of work, which has been checked against national curriculum recommendations, to ensure appropriate coverage of all aspects of the subject. Although the subject is not formally assessed, this is to be introduced shortly once local education authority (LEA) assessment procedures are made available. The co-

ordinator is enthusiastic and has a clear action plan for improvement. Some of these improvements have already been introduced, such as, the purchase of an outdoor play games equipment box and a successful sponsored event to raise money to purchase a new climbing frame. Staff have been supported with new ideas and resources but there has been limited observation of teaching and learning. Demonstrations by the co-ordinator and the expertise of a gymnast have been used to provide examples of good practice to staff and pupils. Good use is made of visitors, such as the dance company who demonstrated African Dance recently. Pupils participate in 'Get Fit Kids' programme to good effect.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

151. No lessons were observed but time in assemblies, work scrutiny and discussions with pupils and teachers, have helped to provide evidence for judgements. The school closely follows the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. By the age of seven, attainment is above average and progress is good. This is because pupils experience a rich curriculum based on the study of Christianity and Islam. In addition, pupils are encouraged to reflect on their learning and make links with their own experiences. This shows good improvement since the previous inspection when standards were satisfactory and teachers needed more training to teach and allow pupils time to explore their feelings.
152. Pupils say *grace* before meals to thank God for the food they eat. Younger pupils have heard and remembered many stories about Jesus. The good work in Year 2 based on special people, special friends, special places, special symbols and special beliefs helps to develop spirituality well. Teachers make good use of local resources, particularly places of worship, and the use of the expertise of the vicar and local Muslims in the community. The school visits the Church for services at harvest and Christmas. Year 1 pupils go to the church to experience a 'Baptism' service and pupils in Year 2 visit the Mosque. These visits, plus the artefacts in school, allow pupils firstly, to explore and ask questions, then to discover the significance of the object in context and then allow the pupils to reflect, for instance, *Where is your special place and what makes it special?*
153. Links with literacy are good. Pupils have written many poems relating to events and visits, special people and places. There is a booklet, '*Prayers we have shared,*' written by the pupils for their class assemblies. These reflect thanks for the world, food, rain, friends, school and people who help us.
154. Management was unsatisfactory at the last inspection. This is no longer the case; management of the subject is now good. A relatively new co-ordinator has worked hard to deal with all the issues highlighted in the previous report and to implement the newly written agreed syllabus. She has improved the resources and bought books for teachers to help to improve their knowledge and understanding. She is exploring ways to include the use of more ICT for research. Teachers evaluate each unit of work and make notes on the plans. The level descriptors are used when writing reports but these are *best fit*. As yet there is no formal ongoing assessment of pupils' work to enable checks on how well pupils are making progress.