

INSPECTION REPORT

IVER HEATH INFANT SCHOOL AND NURSERY

Iver Heath

LEA area: Chiltern, Wycombe and South Bucks

Unique reference number: 110343

Headteacher: Mrs J Smith

Reporting inspector: Mrs J McNeil
30711

Dates of inspection: 30th September – 3rd October 2002

Inspection number: 246984

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 and Nursery
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Slough Road Iver Heath Buckinghamshire
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr A Le Marchand
Date of previous inspection:	March 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
30711	Mrs J McNeil	Registered inspector	Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Equal opportunities English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? How high are standards – the school's results and pupils' achievements? How well are pupils taught? How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to the pupils? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9974	Mr D Singh	Lay inspector		How high are standards - attitudes, values and personal development? How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
14816	Mrs C May	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Music Physical education Foundation stage	
32014	Mr M Sandercock	Team inspector	English Geography History Religious education Special educational needs	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Iver Heath Infant School and Nursery provides education for pupils aged three to seven. Of similar size to the average infant school, there are currently 187 pupils on roll, 99 boys and 88 girls. Numbers increase by the term because of the three termly intakes into the nursery. The pupils come from a range of backgrounds, generally favourable, with more than a third attending by parental preference. This reflects the continued popularity of the school, despite a decreasing population trend in the immediate area. There is a relatively low turnover of pupils each year. The vast majority are white with six per cent coming from other ethnic backgrounds. Of the four pupils having English as an additional language, all speak fluent English and require no additional help. Just two pupils have free school meals, which is well below the national average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs, currently 11 per cent, is well below average, with most having moderate learning difficulties. Six pupils have statements of need; this is similar to most schools. There is a range of abilities on entering the school, with overall attainment on entry being broadly average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school with many very good features. The clear focus on the teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy has a positive impact on how very well the pupils achieve in English and mathematics. The success of the school is largely due to the good teaching and the very positive attitudes to learning of the pupils. It is also the result of the very good leadership of the headteacher. The recent 'Investors in People' award justly recognises the very good quality of teamwork that exists between teachers and support staff. This gives a consistency of approach that has a positive impact on how well the pupils achieve and ensures that the pupils get a fair deal in the school.

What the school does well

- The headteacher provides very good leadership and is very well supported by the deputy headteacher. All staff and governors work effectively as a team.
- The teaching is good. It is very good in Years 1 and 2 for the teaching of the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics.
- Standards in English and mathematics are well above average by the time pupils leave the school and pupils make very good progress in these subjects.
- Provision for social and moral development is very good and, as a result, pupils behave very well, show very good attitudes to their work and work very well together.
- The school takes very good care of the pupils. The pupils' personal development is very good.
- The school has very good links with parents.

What could be improved

- Further improvement to the curriculum for nursery, rising fives and reception classes.
- Further refinement of the use of assessment procedures.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made very good progress since it was last inspected in 1998. Then, standards in English and mathematics were found to be generally average; they are now well above expectations by the end of Year 2. Whereas pupils were making at least satisfactory progress, the vast majority now make very good progress, including those with special educational needs. The school has been particularly successfully in addressing the underachievement of the more able pupils. The five weaknesses identified in the last inspection have been successfully addressed. For instance, standards in information and communication technology (ICT), unsatisfactory before, are now well above average. Similarly, the teaching is now much better, with far more teaching being good or very good, particularly evident in Years 1 and 2. There has been equally good improvement in implementing curriculum policies and schemes of work for Years 1 and 2 and in developing the role of the subject leader. Whilst assessment procedures have improved, there remain areas to be addressed, for instance the tracking of

pupils' progress. The school has moved forwards in other areas too. For example, the links with parents, care of pupils, provision for moral and social development, all seen to be good at the last inspection, are now very good. Previously the school provided satisfactory value for money; this is now good.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
reading	B	B	B	C
writing	C	B	A	A
mathematics	C	C	B	C

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

In 2001, the school's results were recognised as rising faster than most other schools and the school received the 'School Achievement Award' for improving standards. Whilst national comparative information for 2002 was unavailable when this report was compiled, analyses of the test results from last year's Year 2 pupils suggests that standards will be even better, well above national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. Almost all pupils attain the expected level, Level 2. Since the pupils enter Year 1 with broadly average abilities this represents very good achievement during the two years and very good improvement since the last inspection. It is a reflection of the very good teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy, with all pupils achieving equally well irrespective of gender, capability or length of time they spent in the Foundation Stage (nursery, rising fives and reception classes). When compared with schools in a similar position (using free school meals as the indicator) early indications are that the 2002 results will be well above average in reading and above average in writing and mathematics. This continues the upward trend for reading and mathematics. The slight dip in writing this year is due to fewer pupils, just ten per cent, attaining the higher level, Level 3. However, there were 30 per cent of pupils attaining the upper end of level 2. Standards have risen in other subjects, too. By the time pupils leave the school they are now attaining well above average standards in science, ICT, physical education and music, which represents very good achievement. They make good progress in geography and religious education and standards are above average by the end of Year 2. Standards in the other subjects have not shown similar improvement and remain average. Pupils in the Foundation Stage make sound progress overall and are on course to attain the early learning goals in all areas of learning by the end of the reception year and exceed them in speaking and listening skills and personal, social and emotional development. The school is aware that curriculum provision and assessment for these children need greater clarification.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. The pupils enjoy school, saying <i>'it's fantastic'</i> , and <i>'we learn loads of things'</i> . They work very hard.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good, both in lessons and during playtimes. No poor behaviour was seen during the inspection.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils play and work together very well. There are very good relationships between pupils and teachers. They say <i>'teachers make it</i>

	<i>fun', 'they listen to us and we listen to them'.</i>
Attendance	Satisfactory. Attendance rates are average. Pupils arrive on time and lessons start promptly.

This is a very happy community where the pupils' very good attitudes to school are a major contributory factor to their good achievement. The school vision is realised to a large degree in the day to day life of the school, *'that children achieve their very best intellectually and socially in a caring and secure environment'*. Also that there are *'high expectations of everyone in the school – children and adults'*. The positive approach towards encouraging very good behaviour, self respect and respect for others is evident throughout the school and is central to the school's aims and values. There are good opportunities for pupils to take responsibility across the school. For example, the older pupils supervise the taped music in assemblies and all pupils are register monitors at some time. Attendance figures would improve if fewer parents requested holiday leave in term time.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2
Quality of teaching	Sound	Very good

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

When the quality, range and quantity of the pupils' work over the past year are considered alongside the lessons observed, the quality of teaching is judged good overall. During the week of the inspection, the teaching was consistently good and in almost half the lessons it was very good. The best teaching was in Years 1 and 2, where almost six out of ten lessons were seen to be very good. It was particularly impressive for English and mathematics. Here, the vast majority of the pupils are very effective in their learning, irrespective of the class in which they are placed, their gender, race or capability. The learning support assistants make a very good contribution to the learning of the pupils with special educational needs. There is a strong commitment to teaching the basic skills of reading, writing and mathematics. The setting arrangements for English, mathematics and science in Year 2 are a key factor in the well above average standards seen. A key feature of the best teaching is the very good relationships between the teachers and pupils. Similarly, the teachers have good knowledge of the subjects they are teaching and ensure that the pupils know what they are expected to learn and achieve by the end of each lesson. Time is used very effectively, with lessons starting and finishing promptly. As a result, the pupils work at a very good pace, maintaining much interest and enthusiasm for their work. Where the teaching is less successful, this relates to the inappropriateness of some of the worksheets being used and the ongoing assessments of pupils being insufficiently used to track and challenge pupils to achieve even better. The teaching in the Foundation Stage is sound overall, although over half was better than this during the week of the inspection. Whilst the teachers display similar teaching skills to those teaching the older classes, for example, in using time effectively and managing pupils, the younger pupils make sound progress overall. Progress is not better than this because there are shortcomings in the quality of the curriculum provided and the procedures for assessment.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good overall. Time is particularly well used. Overall there is good breadth and balance to the curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision is very well co-ordinated across the school. Pupils are very well supported in lessons and make good progress in the Foundation Stage and very good progress in Years 1 and 2.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall. The school makes very good provision for moral and social development and good provision for spiritual and cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good systems ensure the pupils' health, safety and welfare. The assessment of pupils' progress is satisfactory.

The rich curriculum challenges all pupils in Years 1 and 2, where provision is good. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is satisfactory, but fails to take sufficient account of the small steps, 'stepping stones', that pupils need to take in order to ensure appropriate progression of knowledge, skills and understanding. The school rightly awaits national guidance to implement new assessment procedures in the Foundation Stage. All teachers keep ongoing records of pupils' progress, but there is no whole-school system for tracking and reviewing progress on a more regular basis other than in Year 2. Extra-curricular provision is very good, including a range of clubs and visits within the locality and beyond. The school works very well with parents.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher is very effective in providing a clear focus on academic success for all within a very caring and supportive environment. Her deputy very effectively supports her. There is also good support from other senior staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governors are well informed and fully involved. They provide a good level of support for the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. There is a shared understanding of the strengths in performance and how to address areas needing improvement. The headteacher evaluates teaching and learning effectively.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Forward planning of expenditure is good. Very effective use is made of the spacious accommodation, time and staff. The school seeks to find good value for money.

Led by the headteacher there is an effective partnership between staff in the school and a very strong, shared sense of purpose. The effectiveness of this is evident in the well above average standards being attained by pupils at the age of seven and public recognition by the prestigious 'Investors in People' award. Management responsibilities are effectively delegated to subject leaders. Support staff are particularly well deployed, making a very good contribution to pupils' learning. The school has accumulated a large surplus budget. However, the governors have exercised appropriate financial caution to ensure that the current generous staffing levels are maintained for as long as possible. Learning resources are generally adequate. The range and storage of books in the library are in need of

improvement.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

One hundred questionnaires (43 per cent) were returned and 18 parents attended the meeting with representatives of the inspection team.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• They value the good teaching.• Their children like school.• The school is well led and managed.• Their children make good progress.• Their children behave well.• Staff have high expectations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• They would like to be more informed about their children's progress.• The range of activities outside lessons.

Parents clearly hold the school in high regard, making very favourable comments about almost every aspect of the school. The inspectors fully agree with all the things that most please parents. They found that the information provided concerning their children's progress was appropriate. There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities for a school of this size. A small minority of parents expressed concern about the use of supply teachers, the quality of information sent home for the completion of mathematics homework and the short notice given for the change of dates for some events. Inspectors found no evidence to support these concerns. Homework sheets are of good quality, supply staff use existing planning and just one date has been changed in recent times. Parents can be reassured that the school does its best to communicate effectively to parents at all times.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Most pupils who attend the school start in the nursery class either in the autumn, spring or summer terms. There is a range of attainment on entry to school but, taken overall, the children are attaining broadly average standards, the same judgement as made at the last inspection. By the time they complete the Foundation Stage (encompassing the nursery, rising five's, and reception classes) most children have reached the standard that is expected for their age in communication, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development. They are above average in personal, social and emotional development and speaking and listening skills. This represents sound achievement overall, the same judgement as made at the last inspection. All children achieve appropriately, although those with special educational needs now make good progress. The reason that standards have not further improved is because the teaching, although sound overall, takes insufficient account of the stages of development identified within the 'stepping stones' identified in planning for children of this age. Therefore learning, whilst satisfactory, is insufficiently extending children's knowledge, skills and understanding to enable them to make greater progress over time.
2. For the Year 2 pupils who took the National Curriculum tests in 2002 no comparative data were available at the time this report was compiled. However, using the national data from 2001, indications are that the school attained standards that are well above national averages in reading, writing and mathematics and much improved since the last inspection. Given that the overall attainment on entry to Year 1 is average, this represents very good achievement during the two years. When compared with similar schools (using free school meals as the indicator) it is probable that standards are well above average for reading and above average for writing and mathematics. From the data available in 2001, standards have been generally rising since the time of the last inspection, most particularly in writing and mathematics, but also to a lesser degree in reading. This upward trend was more rapid than that being seen in most other schools. Last year, in recognition of the improving standards, the school justly received the national accolade of the 'School Achievement Award'. Almost all pupils are now attaining the expected level, Level 2, in all three tested areas. Boys and girls attain equally good results. Since the last inspection, when there was seen to be insufficient account taken of the needs of the more able pupils, the number of pupils attaining the higher level, Level 3, has increased year on year. For example, in 2001, 42 per cent attained Level 3 in reading, compared with 54 per cent this year. In mathematics, in 2000, 29 per cent of pupils attained Level 3; this has risen to 37 per cent this year. This is set to further increase the rising trend for these subjects. The exception is likely to be for writing where a slight decline is forecast, since the percentage of pupils attaining Level 3 has dipped to ten per cent, compared with 27 per cent the previous year. However, although this smaller percentage was disappointing for the school, a further 30 per cent of pupils were at the upper end of Level 2. Attainment and achievement in science are harder to judge, since the pupils are not tested in science. However, the teacher assessments in 2001 and 2002 suggest that standards continue to rise, with almost all the pupils attaining Level 2. Almost half attained Level 3 this year, which is well above expectations, indicating that they make very good progress.
3. Evidence from the inspection confirms that overall standards have much improved since the last inspection. Then, standards were seen to be average in most subjects, with the pupils making sound progress. There were two exceptions to this. The first was in ICT, where standards were seen to be below average with pupils making insufficient progress. The second was in design and technology, where standards were above average and pupils achieving well. Standards are now much higher in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology (ICT), physical education and music. They are higher in religious education and geography. They remain the same in art and history. They are now average in design and technology. Here, at the time of the last inspection, pupils were found to have high levels of skill in using handtools. This is still the case, but when the full range of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding is considered,

their overall attainment is average. Taken collectively, all pupils achieve very well and get a very fair deal, irrespective of gender or capability. The overall very good improvement is largely due to improved teaching, more secure schemes of work and stronger subject leadership, combined with the pupils' very good attitudes to learning.

4. Standards in English and mathematics are well above average by the time the pupils leave the school. The reason that the pupils achieve very well in these subjects is because of the very good teaching and the whole-school commitment to the teaching of the basic skills of reading, writing and numeracy. It is also due to the setting arrangements for literacy and numeracy in Year 2. These sets are generally arranged according to prior attainment, which means that the pupils' individual needs are met more fully. Additionally, the national strategies for literacy and numeracy have been particularly well implemented. The time devoted to English is very generous, with additional sessions to the literacy hour being timetabled. For example, the daily slot devoted to teaching speaking and listening skills has paid dividends, impacting favourably on all areas of the curriculum.
5. There has been equally very good improvement in science, ICT, music and physical education since the time of the last inspection. The pupils now achieve very well and, by the time they leave, the vast majority are attaining standards that are well above expectations. The teaching is very good, which has a positive impact on the very good quality of pupils' learning. Of particular note, the school focus on improving standards in ICT has been particularly successful, since attainment was judged unsatisfactory at the last inspection. Here, there has been an intensive training programme for staff, which is a key reason why standards have improved. Staff and pupils particularly gain from the expertise of the subject leader. Added to the very good teaching, the curriculum and resources are much improved and the ICT suite enables all pupils sufficient time in which to practise and learn new skills.
6. The pupils attain above average standards in religious education and geography and they achieve well during the two years. In both subjects this is because the teaching is good and pupils achieve well in lessons and over time. It is also the result of more secure schemes of work and good leadership. Standards in art and design, design and technology and history are average by the end of Year 2 with pupils making appropriate progress. Here, whilst not below average, standards have not shown a similar level of improvement to that seen in most other subjects. In art and design and design and technology this is primarily because the pupils are not always expected to finish products to a consistently high standard. In history there is too great an emphasis on worksheet completion, with limited opportunities for pupils to use research skills to seek information for themselves.
7. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well in relation to their prior attainment. As a result of specific support programmes and strategies, almost all pupils attain the expected level, Level 2, by the time they leave the school in reading, writing and mathematics, albeit at the lower end of Level 2. This represents very good progress, improved since the last inspection where it was good. The school identifies pupils with special needs promptly and sets appropriate learning targets for them. They make very good progress towards these because they receive high levels of support from teachers, learning support staff and outside agencies. The pupils show very positive attitudes to their work and have high levels of self-esteem, which helps them achieve so well.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. Pupils' attitudes to school and learning are very good, complemented by the very good behaviour, trusting and constructive relationships between pupils and with staff. As a result, pupils value their teachers and serve the school in a very responsible manner. This evidently contributes to the school's purposeful ethos and to the good standards achieved. Pupils' attitudes to learning have significantly improved since the last report and they continue to display the very good behaviour and constructive relationships evident in 1998.
9. Pupils' attitudes to learning are often demonstrated by their commitment, good levels of

concentration, interest and enjoyment. They are enthusiastic and conscientious learners. For instance, in a Year 2 science lesson, pupils were observed listening attentively and eager to answer questions. Their inquisitive nature encouraged them to pose interesting questions and contribute constructively to a lively and challenging debate. They shared information and ideas in groups and responded very effectively to independent learning, creating a stimulating environment. Pupils speak proudly of their school and appreciate the efforts of their teachers. They have a positive attitude to visitors and this is often demonstrated in their helpful and courteous behaviour. Many pupils actively participate in extra-curricular activity during lunch and after school. These opportunities ensure that pupils think positively about themselves and others, enhancing their confidence and self-esteem.

10. Pupils' very good behaviour is evident in most lessons, the playground and around the school. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils consistently listen to teachers. All staff give time to encouraging good listening skills, to very good effect. For example, each class target during the week of the inspection was 'to be a good listener'. Year 2 pupils said that each time they achieve the target they earn a cube, with '*fill the jar with cubes and when its full you get extra playtime*'. Such strategies work well. All pupils observe the school rules. They move around the school in an orderly, organised manner. They are polite, courteous and friendly to teachers and particularly to visitors. Older pupils care for younger pupils and encourage them to play in a friendly and purposeful manner. Pupils throughout the school share equipment, toys and conversation and this supports their personal and social development. There are no signs of bullying, or other types of anti-social behaviour. Pupils respect their personal property and the school environment. This environment is further enhanced by the fair and balanced approach of teachers, who actively encourage and achieve the highest standards of behaviour from their pupils. As a result, pupils continue to learn in a warm and friendly environment, which is appreciated by parents and those associated with the school. There have been no exclusions in the history of the school.
11. Relationships amongst pupils and with teachers are based on mutual respect and understanding. Pupils, teachers and support staff work collaboratively, sharing concerns and working constructively to resolve disagreements. The school community understands and appreciates diversity and the small numbers of pupils from the minority ethnic community are well integrated into the life of the school. Pupils enjoy working in pairs and small groups and show a strong willingness to exchange information and ideas. They respond very constructively to visitors' questions and always reply positively and confidently. Older and younger pupils are taught to value each other. This actively encourages independence, confidence, self-esteem and maturity. Pupils immensely enjoy the responsibilities they are given to serve as class and school monitors. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils take their responsibilities as register monitors and fund-raisers very seriously, valuing the opportunity to serve the school and community. These opportunities create a harmonious and stimulating learning environment, which clearly supports pupils' learning and personal development.
12. Attendance is satisfactory overall. Authorised and unauthorised absences are similar to those seen nationally. Attendance rates are no better than this because a small, but significant, minority of parents take their children on holiday during term time. The school continues to address existing concerns and improve attendance. The head teacher, staff and most parents are working as a team to ensure that pupils attend regularly and on time. Registers are taken at prescribed times, absences rigorously pursued and full attendance is rewarded.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

13. The overall quality of teaching is good and almost half is very good. The pupils are taught particularly well in Years 1 and 2 where the teaching is judged to be very good overall. Here, it is particularly impressive for the teaching of English and mathematics. More than anything else, this explains the overall very good achievement made by these pupils. This represents very good improvement since the last inspection, when the teaching was judged satisfactory overall, with more than one in ten lessons being seen to be unsatisfactory. Indeed, where there were weaknesses in teaching these have been convincingly addressed and are now strengths of the

- teaching. For instance, the teachers have higher expectations of the more able pupils and present more challenging activities to them in most subjects. As a result, a generally increasing proportion of pupils is now attaining the higher level in the end of key stage tests. The teaching is similarly very good in science, ICT, music and physical education. It is good in religious education and geography and satisfactory in design and technology. In art and design and history there was insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement.
14. The teaching and pupils' learning in the Foundation Stage are judged sound overall despite over half the teaching observed being seen to be good. The exception is in the teaching of speaking and listening skills and personal, social and emotional development, where teaching is consistently good and pupils achieve well. Inspectors were equally confident that all the teachers had many good features to their teaching in the other areas of learning; for example there were very positive relationships, the children stayed focused and happily pursued the activities on offer. However, whilst the children achieve appropriately overall, the activities are not necessarily sufficiently challenging. Primarily, this is because the planning lacks depth. Whilst the six recommended areas of learning for young children are used, there has been little thought given to using the progressive 'stepping stones' as the basis for planning the next steps in children's learning or for assessing the progress of individual or groups of children. However, the school is aware of issues relating to planning and assessment and is scheduled to address this next term, once national assessment guidance and materials are sent to schools.
 15. The school has placed great emphasis on the teaching of speaking and listening skills with much success. All teachers provide many opportunities for the pupils to speak at length, either being planned within subjects and activities or taught within a distinct session. Here, the teaching is consistently good and pupils make good progress. For example, the use of 'paired partners' in Years 1 and 2 provides good opportunities for pupils to think and respond freely as they work either within the class situation or as part of a small group. This makes a very good contribution to the pupils' moral and social development. The pupils listen attentively at all times, being respectful and tolerant of the views of others.
 16. Almost all teaching builds successfully on the very good attitudes to learning that the children bring to school. There are common features to most good lessons, which were evident in all classes. The key characteristics of lessons where the teaching is most successful and the pupils achieve well include:
 - The very good relationships between teachers and pupils and between the pupils themselves which creates the climate for learning to take place;
 - The pupils' behaviour being very well managed. There is no time lost through waiting for pupils to settle or through correcting unacceptable behaviour. As such, curriculum time is used to maximum advantage for teaching and learning;
 - Teachers knowing their subjects well and using the correct technical, subject-based language to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of each subject. For instance, older pupils understand the meaning of subtraction and minus as being 'take away' or 'counting back';
 - The learning support staff being particularly well briefed by the teachers and making a very valuable contribution to the quality of the pupils' learning at all stages of the lesson. Their contribution to furthering the progress of pupils with special educational needs is particularly good. The very strong team spirit between teachers and support staff was evident in every class in the school;
 - Expectations of what will be achieved being high, with pupils rising to the challenge. They work hard in class sessions and during group working time;
 - The good opportunities for pupils for using their own initiative within a lesson, often through working with a partner;
 - Planning being secure. This was particularly evident in Years 1 and 2 where lesson objectives are shared with the pupils at the beginning of the lesson. Similarly, at the end of the lesson, the teachers refer back to the expected outcomes to ensure that the learning has been secured. This helps the pupils to appreciate the relevance of their learning.
 17. Much of the best teaching occurs in English and mathematics lessons in Years 1 and 2. Here, the most significant factor is the consistently very good teaching of the basic skills of speaking

and listening, reading, writing and mathematics. Teachers are able to convey to the pupils in such a way that they learn very effectively in all classes. The teachers have a good understanding of the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy. These are well established and make a significant impact on how very well the pupils achieve in each class. All lessons move at a fast pace with a wide variety of teaching techniques. The teachers' questioning skills are skilful and challenge pupils to think about their work. In return, the pupils are totally engaged; they maintain interest and tackle their work with enthusiasm and concentration. The Year 2 setting arrangements for literacy and numeracy are now embedded and have a positive impact on the well above average standards being attained by the time the pupils leave the school. In part, this is because the pupils are taught in smaller groups. It is also because the teachers are planning for a narrower attainment range, enabling them to match the work more accurately to the capability of the pupils.

18. There are weaker areas in the teaching:

- Teachers are not making sufficient use of assessment data to track, review and challenge the pupils' progress or to pinpoint the pupils' future learning needs. Whilst this is happening to a degree once the pupils move into Year 2, it is not impacting sufficiently on learning because it is not starting soon enough;
- The teachers' marking of pupils' work does not fully conform to the very good school policy, by taking sufficient account of the lesson objective to let the pupils know how to improve their work in the future;
- Teachers use too many worksheets that are repetitive or insufficiently challenging. For example, the pupils complete worksheets that practise letter or number formation when their previous work indicates that this is not always necessary.

19. Very good teaching of ICT supports learning in other subjects as well as developing the pupils' ICT skills. In part, this is because the teachers are competent in teaching ICT. It is also because the timetabling of the ICT suite ensures that all pupils receive sufficient time to practise skills that are being taught by their teachers. Added to this there is very skilful leadership of ICT. As a result the pupils achieve very well in all aspects of this subject.

20. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good and at times very good. Work is carefully planned to match targets set in pupils' individual education plans. Appropriate arrangements are made for the pupils to receive additional support from the teachers and in particular from the learning support assistants. Support staff are involved in the planning of pupils' targets and support pupils unobtrusively during whole-class teaching sessions. Additionally, they provide appropriate help and encouragement to support pupils in completing tasks as independently as possible. In Years 1 and 2 they provide challenge and record assessments of the pupils' progress. This is very good practice, enhancing the learning for these pupils particularly very well.

21. Homework is used well to supplement the pupils' learning. All pupils take home reading books. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 practise spellings each week and complete mathematics homework every fortnight. Teachers provide sufficient opportunities for homework for the age of the pupils.

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

22. The overall curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils are good overall. At the time of the last inspection, although judged satisfactory overall, there were weaknesses. These have been successfully addressed. For example schemes of work have been developed for all subjects, which clearly identify a progression of skills to be learned and all policies are in place. The curriculum for the children in the Foundation Stage remains satisfactory, as it was at the last inspection. It has not further improved because the recommended 'stepping stones' are not being sufficiently used by teachers for planning for progression and continuity. At the same time the quality of the planning for outdoor play is insufficiently focused. The curriculum for Year 1 and 2 is

broad, well balanced and relevant to meet the needs of all pupils and fully meets statutory requirements. The curriculum for religious education conforms to the locally agreed syllabus. There is a daily act of collective worship. Sex education and drugs awareness form part of a programme of personal, social and health development, for which there is a good scheme of work. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good, further improved since the last inspection.

23. In Years 1 and 2, the strategies for numeracy and literacy are used particularly well to develop pupils' skills and raise standards. The time available for teaching the curriculum is used to maximum advantage. There is no time slippage, with lessons starting and finishing promptly. Similarly, sufficient time has been apportioned to other subjects to ensure appropriate coverage of the curriculum over the year. A particularly generous amount of time is allocated to English. This includes the daily literacy hour and additional planned sessions to include handwriting practice and spelling checks. In addition, there has been a school focus on developing speaking and listening skills, evident in all lessons as well as the specific short daily session. There are sufficient opportunities for pupils to write at length, not only in English, but also in other subjects, thus extending their creativity. These are key reasons why attainment in reading and writing is now well above national averages by the time pupils leave the school. Some subjects are 'blocked', such as history and geography, but careful time allocation ensures that the pupils receive appropriate curriculum coverage over time.
24. The school has made very good strides in developing a scheme of work to improve the pupils' skills in ICT, which were highlighted as needing improvement in the last inspection. The very good subject leader monitors the subject closely to ensure that standards are rising. She has introduced a school award system, designed to reward achievement for pupils of all ages in all aspects of ICT. This is an excellent initiative, which has helped to raise standards. All foundation subjects are taught, using a two-year cycle of topics. English, mathematics and science are taught in three groups in Year 2, set by prior attainment. This is now embedded in the school and is a contributory factor in the rising standards being seen in these subjects. The governing body is well informed about curriculum matters and gives good support.
25. Extra-curricular provision is very good and improved since the last inspection when it was judged satisfactory overall. There is a range of extra-curricular activities either at lunchtime or after school, including choir, percussion, recorders, country dancing, football, short tennis and computer clubs. A small number of parents indicated that there was an insufficient number of clubs and that opportunities for pupils in Year 1 were limited. Inspectors found that, for a school of this size, provision is very good. The clubs are very popular, being attended by boys and girls, with Year 1 pupils being included in country dancing and computer club and rising fives and Year 1 pupils being invited to football club. The school makes good use of links with the community to extend pupils' learning. Regular visits, to places of local interest and further afield, form an important part of the curriculum for each class. For example, the pupils in Year 1 have recently visited the church to support the curriculum for religious education, geography and art. There are good links between the school and its partner institutions. Links with the playgroups attended by the majority of the children help to ensure continuity in children's learning. There are equally good links with the nearby junior school to which most pupils transfer. Pupils attend an induction day at the junior school and are invited to school performances, which help ensure a smooth transfer to the next stage of education for these pupils.
26. The curricular provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The school ensures that all pupils have equal access to the full range of the curriculum and have a policy to take advantage of every opportunity to integrate special needs pupils. Pupils have detailed individual education plans with focused targets, which are reviewed regularly by teachers, learning support assistants and the special needs co-ordinator to assess progress towards these targets and identify new ones. Targets within pupils' individual plans would be further improved if they were broken down still further into short-term, weekly steps so that pupils' progress can be closely tracked to inform the next steps in planning the curriculum. The high priority given to training learning support assistants has paid dividends and helps ensure that pupils are provided with tasks that closely match their needs.

27. The provision for homework is appropriate for the age of the pupils and makes a good contribution to the pupils' learning. A small number of parents expressed dissatisfaction over the clarity of instructions for mathematics homework. The inspectors found that the worksheets were generally of very good quality, offering a positive way for parents to support their children's learning at home. The worksheets include space for parents to comment on the quality of the homework and the level of help they needed to provide. However, inspectors agree that each worksheet from the published scheme should be carefully assessed before sending it home.
28. Overall promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development makes a very significant contribution to their attitudes, behaviour, relationships and personal development. This represents good improvement in provision since the last inspection. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. The school has a strong and positive ethos, which places high value on the worth of the individual and the need to care for one another. The atmosphere in classrooms is characterised by a sense of calm purpose, built on mutual respect, shared values and tolerance. Attitudes of staff to pupils encourage mutual respect. Assembly themes complement spiritual development. They are well planned, promote opportunities for all and reinforce values of freedom, justice, and truth and provide opportunities to develop awareness of other faiths. Special achievement assemblies recognise pupils' efforts and help to develop self-esteem. These are particularly enjoyed by the pupils, with one pupil stating *'the headteacher's lovely because in assembly she gives out the headteacher cup'*, with another pupil adding *'but only if we do really well'*. Pupils develop personal beliefs, including religious beliefs. Collective worship and religious education lessons, as well as the personal, social and health education programme make an invaluable contribution to pupils' spiritual development.
29. The provision for pupils' moral development is very good. Throughout the school, the pupils respond well to the teachers' very high expectations of behaviour. There is a clear emphasis on mutual respect, which results in consideration and care for others. Pupils are polite and extremely friendly and can clearly distinguish right from wrong. Circle and story time are used constructively, to talk about positive attitudes and values and help children to realise that they need to take responsibility for their actions. They are encouraged to tell the truth and are praised when they do. Teachers and assistants make very good role models, promoting the school values of co-operation, honesty and fairness.
30. Pupils' social development is also very well supported. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to work collaboratively in all subjects, either in groups or pairs. Very positive relationships are successfully promoted when pupils mix outside of lessons and through extra-curricular activity, where they learn to respond to each other in different settings. They are encouraged to show consideration and sensitivity toward one another and are taught the value of friendships during break and lunchtimes. Pupils behave courteously towards visitors and show respect for teachers and other adults employed in the school. They respond very seriously to the responsibilities they are given in the school, such as the daily tasks within classrooms and assemblies.
31. The provision for pupils' cultural development is good. Religious education, art and music make a significant contribution to pupils' knowledge of other cultures through teaching about beliefs of different religions and cultures. The main festivals of Christianity are celebrated and pupils learn about those of other cultures such as Diwali. Pupils benefit from listening to a wide range of music during assemblies and through active participation in the school choir. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to develop a good understanding of their local heritage through visits to the local football and tennis club and regular visits to places of educational interest.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

32. The provision for pupils' care, support and guidance, and welfare is very effective. The good procedures and policies are consistent with some very good practice and ensure that pupils learn in a safe and secure environment. The school continues to provide very good support and guidance evident at the time of the last inspection.

33. The child protection arrangements are clear and effectively implemented by a very caring, well-informed and committed designated teacher. She continues to provide clear leadership and co-ordination, which ensure that all staff are informed, suitably trained and understand their role in relation to the issues. All incidents of concern are effectively pursued, recorded and monitored. The arrangements for child protection are complemented by very good, effective procedures that ensure that health, safety and well being of the school community are given priority. Accidents are recorded and systematically investigated. Pupils have clear understanding of the school emergency and evacuation procedures. Staff and the school secretary work effectively to monitor attendance and ensure that appropriate levels of attendance are maintained. Parents are discouraged from taking family holidays during term time, a practice that prevents the school from further improving its existing record on attendance.
34. Teachers enjoy a very constructive, trusting and productive relationship with pupils. They celebrate and reward pupils' achievements, both inside and outside of the classroom. They provide effective supervision, listen attentively to pupils' concerns, and provide good quality information and satisfactory educational advice and guidance. This ensures that pupils feel secure, confident and self assured, which in turn leads to good standards of achievement. There are very effective measures for promoting good behaviour, which is achieved consistently. These are supported by good procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour. For example, older pupils affirm that the 'time 'out' wall works, one pupil convincingly stating, *'You stand by a special wall if you're naughty, it's a time out wall. You stay by the wall for five minutes. If you're too naughty you stand at Mrs Smith's wall, outside her office'*. Strategies such as these ensure that pupils learn in a warm, caring and friendly environment.
35. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress were judged unsatisfactory at the last inspection. There have been several improvements since that time and the procedures are now satisfactory overall, although more work is needed. For example, records of children's progress are maintained in the Foundation Stage. However, the knowledge gained from these assessments is yet to be used to plan the next steps in learning. As a result, whilst children make satisfactory progress in most areas of learning, it is not as high as it might be if planning and assessment were more clearly linked to the different abilities of the children. The school plans an assessment week each half term to assess the attainment of pupils in Years 1 and 2. The information derived from these assessments is kept in each pupil's portfolio, which shows current levels of attainment in English, mathematics, science and ICT. Whilst this is good practice, it fails to record attainment according to National Curriculum levels. All teachers regularly meet to look at examples of pupils' work, to consider, for instance, the standards in writing. This has raised expectations of what each child can realistically achieve. In addition, senior staff analyse national test results to identify any areas of weakness and adapt planning accordingly. As a result, the curriculum in Years 1 and 2 more closely matches each pupil's needs. The previous inspection stated that assessment opportunities were rarely planned or linked to learning objectives. The school has successfully addressed this. In Year 2, the teachers set end-of-year targets for each pupil, for reading, writing and mathematics. They monitor and review progress towards these predicted targets. Whilst this is good practice, these procedures are yet to be extended to include all pupils in the school. Therefore, the school is not sufficiently tracking pupils' progress, missing the opportunity to judge whether progress is good enough or to identify pupils who would benefit from additional support. Plans are in place to fully introduce assessment of other subjects, using assessment criteria provided by the local education authority.
36. Whilst there is a very good marking and feedback policy, there is little in the way of constructive oral or written feedback to guide the pupils on specific ways to improve their work. Inspectors found that worksheets were not always appropriate to the ability of the pupil and frequently restricted the pupils from demonstrating their full capabilities.
37. The headteacher and staff respond sympathetically to the needs of all pupils with special educational needs, both for their academic and personal needs. Teachers and learning support assistants provide very effective support for pupils with special educational needs. Planning in most subjects in Years 1 and 2 is effectively differentiated to meet the needs of pupils on the special needs register as well as those identified by the school as needing some additional

support. There are six pupils in the school with a statement of special needs, for whom work is extremely well planned to take account of the provision outlined in their statements. Procedures for identifying pupils and placing them on the register for special educational needs is very effective and where assessments show more complex needs, advice is sought from relevant outside agencies.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

38. The school has sustained and improved its very productive and purposeful relationship with its parents and continues to provide effective communication between the home and school. Overall, the school does much to promote a constructive partnership with parents and, as a result, the impact of parents' involvement in the school is good and has a positive impact on pupils' learning.
39. Parents speak highly of the school's work. They value the very positive ethos of the school, the teaching, standards, behaviour and the strong and efficient leadership. These very positive features were evident during the inspection. Just a very small minority of parents have concerns, for example, about the information they receive about their children's progress, the range of extra-curricular activity and the instructions relating to mathematics homework. Inspection evidence indicates that progress is reported regularly and in an accessible, clear and productive manner. Activities outside of lessons are very comprehensive and most pupils take an active interest, which supports their personal and social development. The majority of worksheets for mathematics homework provide effective reinforcement of taught skills and provide for a good dialogue between home and school.
40. The school provides very good levels of communication between the school and home. Parents are actively encouraged to attend the termly parents' consultation evenings. They are invited to an information meeting each year, where they are acquainted with the curriculum being taught that year. An information letter is also sent home, so that those parents unable to attend know what topics are being studied. Most parents bring their children to school and take this opportunity to meet and talk to class teachers. This offers them the chance to visit the classroom, and particularly in the nursery, to acknowledge their children's achievements and understand the topics being taught. They also receive an annual report on pupils' progress. Most parents appreciate these reports and information reported on subjects is good. Parents are provided with reliable information about pupils' achievements, attainment and their attitudes to their learning. Realistic targets are set which encourage pupils to make progress. Parents receive clear and purposeful written information in a friendly style through the school prospectus and the annual report from governors. Both documents comply with statutory requirements.
41. Parents are consistently encouraged by the school to support learning in the classroom and at home. A number of parents come to school and support activities in the lessons, which helps to raise standards and contributes constructively to pupils' personal development. The 'Friends of the School' supports numerous social and recreational activities, helping to raise significant funds to purchase educational resources. This further encourages and ensures productive and purposeful links between the school and home. Most parents acknowledge and support the home/school agreement by supporting their children's regular attendance and time keeping and ensure that pupils complete their homework tasks.
42. Parents of pupils with special educational needs have every opportunity to be fully involved in support of their children. Once a pupil is identified as needing support the parents are invited to meet their children's teacher to discuss how they can best support their children in pursuit of the set targets. The headteacher and co-ordinator for special needs provide additional advice. Parents are also invited to the regular review meetings and annual reviews for those pupils with a statement of need, even phoning them if they have been unable to attend. Despite the best efforts of the school, a small number of parents do not take advantage of attending these meetings.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

43. The overall leadership and management of the school are very good. These aspects were found to be 'very good' at the last inspection, but are much improved since then. There are effective links between management decisions and actions and the continual improvements in standards and provision. The headteacher, subject leaders and governors work together effectively as a team to monitor and evaluate the school's performance and plan for improvement. There is a strong commitment to improvement and very good capacity to succeed. Policies are implemented with a high degree of consistency. The aims and values of the school are very well met through the good teaching, the curriculum, extra-curricular activities and in the very good ethos of the school. The very good support for pupils with special educational needs reflects the inclusive nature of the school, ensuring that all the pupils get a fair deal by being at the school. The very good improvement in the school since the last inspection owes much to the very good leadership and management.
44. The leadership and management of the headteacher are very good. She has been very influential in ensuring a strong emphasis on academic success, particularly for the teaching of the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. Whilst she provides very clear direction that is raising standards, her emphasis on 'building the team' is very evident. The 'Investors in People' accolade awarded last year, gives just recognition to how effectively this has been achieved, with all staff contributing to achieving the school's aims and values. Working in a relationship of strong teamwork with the staff, there is a secure collective understanding of what is working well in the school. This is achieved through the very good professional dialogue that takes place amongst all the staff. The emphasis on good teaching and high expectations of what all pupils can achieve is paying dividends, evident in the well above average results being achieved in English and mathematics by pupils who start the school with average attainment. The headteacher's leadership could be further strengthened by providing a firmer lead in improving the curriculum in the Foundation Stage.
45. The deputy headteacher effectively supports the headteacher in leadership of the school. She meets regularly with the headteacher to discuss strategies for introducing agreed policy changes and supports the monitoring of the quality of teaching across the school. At the same time, she plays an important role as an exemplar of very good teaching practice. The senior management team is newly formed and, although it has yet to impact on further raising standards there is a professional approach of leading by example and supporting the headteacher in management decisions.
46. The school's arrangements for monitoring and evaluating its performance are good, having been introduced since the last inspection. The monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching are good. Teaching is regularly observed by the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and some subject leaders, being well supported by governors. Subject leaders collect examples of pupils' work across the year groups and collate planning. Test results are analysed, weaknesses are highlighted and teaching programmes adapted to meet needs. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been successfully implemented and monitored. The success of these actions is apparent from the amount of good and very good teaching evident and the improving standards seen, particularly in English and mathematics. Overall, data are used well to evaluate the school's success, i.e. the school's added value. Where improvements could be made these relate to:
- Implementing even more rigorous procedures for feedback to teachers on the quality of their work. Currently this has been overly positive with few comments that would help teachers provide even better for their pupils. For example, some worksheets being used are insufficiently challenging for many of the pupils. Similarly, whilst pupils' work is marked and celebrated, it does not provide ways for the pupils to improve further.
 - Refining the curriculum for the pupils in the Foundation Stage to ensure that activities are appropriate for pupils of all abilities;
 - Further improving the use of assessment data to track, predict and challenge the progress of pupils from the time they start the school to the time they leave. At present, this is limited to the pupils in Year 2.
47. The school has successfully established the role of the subject leader for each National

Curriculum subject and religious education, as one of giving strategic direction to raise standards. This was seen as a weakness in the last inspection and is now a strong area of the school's work. The headteacher is able to delegate well and let staff get on with the job, giving them responsibility for implementing improvements. Subject leadership is particularly strong for English, mathematics, science, ICT and music and is a contributory factor as to why the pupils achieve so well in these subjects. There are opportunities for subject leaders to monitor and evaluate the improvements in their subjects, in line with priorities in the school improvement plan. They all have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in their subjects. Similarly, areas for development form the basis of effective subject improvement plans. These prioritise the most important actions that will further improve the quality of provision and the pupils' achievements and are realistically costed. These plans are thoroughly evaluated each year.

48. The governors provide a good level of support for the school. They are well informed about its work and performance and form an integral part of the school team. For example:
- They meet regularly and have a very good knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. There is a committee structure that works successfully. They ensure that all statutory requirements are met and are keenly aware of their responsibilities;
 - They are aware of the most appropriate priorities for inclusion in the school improvement plan and contribute towards its development and evaluation. The 'school improvement group' committee meet at least termly for this specific purpose and then report back to the full meeting. This is good practice;
 - They receive written and verbal reports from the headteacher and subject leaders. These reports are thorough and provide governors with a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for development;
 - They monitor the work of the school, both formally and informally. This may be to understand more about an area of the curriculum or to gain information about other aspects of the school. For example, the numeracy governor provides very thorough written reports following visits to lessons. There is a clear expectation that all governors spend time in the school. The 'governor of the term' is a good initiative, visiting with a specific brief. For example, one governor recently focused on the developments in ICT;
 - New governors are well supported and spend at least half a day in the school to absorb the atmosphere that is Iver Heath School, the class arrangements and some of the procedures that ensure the smooth daily running of the school;
 - They have good arrangements for evaluating the cost-effectiveness of key spending decisions and their impact on the pupils' learning. Financial planning is related to educational priorities. For example, the governors and staff are committed to maintaining the current generous level of teaching staff and learning support assistants. This is a key factor in why the pupils are achieving well in the school. The budget surplus is being well used to enable these arrangements to continue for as long as possible. The principles of 'best value' are applied well. Additional monies and grants are effectively used. The secretary, as 'finance officer', efficiently manages the administrative procedures and financial control.
49. The management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Very good use is made of assessment information to identify pupils with special educational needs and to set clear, focused targets in individual education plans. These plans are of a good quality, setting targets for pupils that are achievable yet challenging. They are implemented effectively and reviewed, although 'short term' steps would ensure that progress is able to be checked at more regular intervals. The expertise of the co-ordinator for special needs is used effectively to extend staff knowledge and understanding of the range of often-complex needs displayed by pupils at the school. For instance, the school has been involved in a national 'Language Research Project', implemented to look at strategies to improve pupils' acquisition of language. It is a mark of the close teamwork that the governor responsible for special educational needs implemented the project. The close working relationship of the teaching staff and their shared high expectations of pupils with special educational needs contribute greatly to the very good progress made by these pupils.
50. The school has a generous number of teaching and support staff to meet curriculum requirements,

a priority in the forward financial planning by the headteacher and governors. In particular, there is now a learning support assistant for each class, which has a positive impact on the achievements of all pupils. The teaching staff are appropriately qualified to meet the teaching and management requirements of the curriculum. There are very good procedures in place for the performance management of staff, much improved since the last inspection. There are annual appraisals for teaching staff and learning support assistants, with targets set that reflect school priorities and individual needs. This is very good practice and reflects the strong team spirit in the school.

51. The school's accommodation is very good, as it was at the time of the last inspection, with further improvements evident. For example, there is now an ICT suite. The use of the obsolete Year 3 classrooms is an additional bonus for the school, enabling music and library skills to be taught in designated bases. The library was underused at the last inspection. There are now timetabled sessions for each class to be taught library skills and opportunities for pupils to take book home to enjoy. However, the storage of books is unsatisfactory. This is because the depth and height of the shelves are inappropriate. The quantity and quality of learning resources are generally satisfactory, as they were at the last inspection, although the range of books in the library is too limited to encourage research skills. The resources to support ICT have particularly improved since the last inspection. Resources for pupils with special educational needs are good. The school's income and expenditure are below average. Given the good teaching and the difference that this makes to the pupils' achievements by the time they leave, the school provides good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In the context of its many strengths and the good quality of education it already provides, the school should now:

(i) Further improve the curriculum for nursery, rising fives and reception classes, by:

- using the recommended 'stepping stones' in planning, in order to more effectively meet the needs of the different ages and abilities of the children;
- implementing an assessment system that will build up a picture of each child's progress over time, identify what they need to learn next and ensure that these needs are systematically planned;
- ensuring that the standard of the outdoor curriculum matches that provided inside and that all adults have a clearly defined role.

(See paragraphs 1, 14, 22, 35, 37, 44, 46, 54, 55, 62 and 63)

(ii) Refine the use of assessment data, by:

- implementing a system for tracking, monitoring, challenging and evaluating pupils' progress across the school;
- using the good school policy to relate comments in marking to the objectives of the lesson, the level of help needed and the next steps the pupils need to take in their learning;
- evaluating the appropriateness of the worksheets used for recording learning, to ensure that they are sufficiently challenging for all pupils;
- establishing short-term steps in the individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs, providing the means to regularly check progress towards set targets;
- introducing the procedures for assessing non-core subjects as already planned.

(See paragraphs 18, 23, 27, 35, 36, 46, 49, 53, 59, 68, 70, 73, 75, 81, 87, 92, 95, 96, 99, 100, 109, and 114)

In addition, the governors should also consider including in the action plan:

- further improving standards in art and design, design and technology and history which, whilst not

below expectations for the age, have not improved as well as other subjects

(see paragraphs 3, 6, 83, 87, 88, 90 and 97);

- improving the range and storage of books in the non fiction and fiction libraries
(see paragraphs 51, 67, 99 and 100);
- continuing to work with parents to further improve existing levels of attendance
(see paragraphs 12, 33 and 41).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	42
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	34

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	18	16	7	0	0	0
Percentage	2	43	38	17	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	Y1 – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	25	130
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		2

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	Y1 – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		16

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	4

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	11
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	15

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data – 2002	5.5

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data - 2001	0.1

National comparative data - 2001	5.6
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National comparative data - 2001	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	33	31	64

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	28	30	30
	Girls	29	30	30
	Total	57	60	60
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (91)	94 (89)	94 (94)
	National	84 (83)	85 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	28	30	31
	Girls	30	30	29
	Total	58	60	60
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (89)	94 (94)	94 (94)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

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

No of pupils on roll
56
0
7
0
0
0
0
5
0
0
1
0
0

Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0

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

1
0
1
56

0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y1 – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Average class size	23

Education support staff: Y1 – Y2

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	125

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	47.5
Number of pupils per FTE adult	8

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
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	£
Total income	421,974
Total expenditure	403,149
Expenditure per pupil	1,884
Balance brought forward from previous year	27,046
Balance carried forward to next year	45,871

Recruitment of teachers

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

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	230
Number of questionnaires returned	100

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	82	17	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	69	29	1	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	68	31	1	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	38	53	3	1	0
The teaching is good.	76	23	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	46	40	8	2	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	78	20	2	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	67	28	0	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	55	38	4	1	1
The school is well led and managed.	80	17	1	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	69	29	0	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	48	36	8	2	3

Other issues raised by parents

Eighteen parents attended the pre-inspection meeting. Almost all were very complimentary in their responses. There were three concerns raised by a very small minority of parents outside those covered by the parent survey. The first referred to the quality of the information they receive to help them support their children's homework for mathematics. The second related to disruption to learning caused by the use of supply teachers. The third was the short notice given for change of dates for staff training days. The inspection found that all these concerns were not substantiated. However, the school should evaluate the quality of each worksheet for mathematics homework to ensure that all are appropriate.

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

52. Since the previous inspection, the school has made sound progress in implementing the nationally recommended curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage. The Foundation Stage encompasses the nursery, rising-five's, and reception classes. The satisfactory quality of provision reported in the last inspection has been maintained and standards in some areas of learning have improved. A wide variety of activities is provided and these ensure that the children achieve at least appropriately in most areas of learning. Nursery records show that the children's attainment on entry to the nursery is generally as expected for their age in all areas of learning. The quality of teaching is judged as sound overall. However, some of the teaching observed was good and, on one occasion, it was very good. By the end of the Foundation Stage most children are reaching the standard that is expected for their age in communication language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development. In these areas, the teaching is sound and children make appropriate progress. All children make good progress in personal, social and emotional development and in speaking and listening. In these areas, the teaching is good and standards are above expectations by the end of the Foundation Stage.
53. Two part-time teachers and a full-time nursery nurse staff the nursery. There is an additional member of staff who works with a child with special educational needs. One teacher works in the mornings and the other in the afternoons. At the time of the inspection, 65 children are in the Foundation Stage of their education. Fifty-one children attend the nursery part-time and a further 15 attend the rising-five's class in the mornings only. A part-time teacher, who also acts as the co-ordinator for the Foundation Stage, staffs this class. A classroom assistant supports her. At the time of the inspection there was no reception class, but the work of the previous reception class was used to provide information about the quality of the curriculum and about the standards attained at the end of the Foundation Stage. All members of staff place the highest emphasis on personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, and mathematical development. Sometimes, however, the frequent use of simple work sheets in activities related to language and literacy and mathematics make it difficult to ascertain exactly what the children know, understand and can do. Worksheets are also used to record the scientific aspects of knowledge and understanding of the world. These are often inappropriate for the task and do not make the children think hard enough. The lack of annotation about how much help and support the children had with the tasks they have recorded also makes standards of attainment difficult to judge at the end of the reception class. The class teacher's records and the performance of the children who have just entered Year 1 would indicate that the children are capable of higher standards in writing, mathematics and science than those seen in the work samples examined.
54. The curriculum provided for the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. The activities provided are planned to address all six areas of learning. However, plans only indicate which adults will be working with the children when an assessment of attainment is planned. Also, planning is not sufficiently linked to the 'stepping stones' identified in the nationally recommended curriculum guidance for these children and the progress children make is judged only against the end of Foundation Stage Statements. Whilst records of children's progress are kept, the knowledge that the teachers gain from assessing the achievements of the pupils is not yet used to plan the next steps in their learning. As a result, whilst children make satisfactory progress in most areas of learning, it is not as high as it might be if planning and assessment were more clearly linked to the different abilities of the children. The school is aware of this has and made appropriate plans for improvement.
55. The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are sound. Parents are kept well informed about the curriculum and advised of ways in which they can help their children at home. The space inside the classrooms is generally used well. The school is aware that further

improvements need to be made to planning and provision outside in order to provide high quality activities. This will enable the children not only to initiate their own activities, but also to provide them with opportunities to explore ideas and interests in depth, learn from one another and through appropriately planned adult support and intervention.

Personal, social and emotional development

56. By the end of the Foundation Stage, most children have exceeded the early learning goals in this area of learning. They make good progress in developing self-confidence and self-esteem because of the strengths of the provision and the good role models demonstrated by the staff. Children new to the nursery benefit from seeing what the older children do and all rise to staff's expectations that they will take care of their own needs and join in what is going on. Children settle in very quickly as they soon gain confidence from knowing the routines and pattern of the sessions.
57. Children come happily into their classes and learn to share and take turns. They respond very well to the staff, they sit quietly and listen when required. They try very hard to follow the teacher's instructions and interact very well both with one another and with adults, taking their cue from the very good role models set by the staff. As a result, they learn to help each other, say please and thank you and are polite and friendly towards one another. Should disagreements arise the staff help the children to sort things out and advise on how to avoid similar problems in the future. This helps children to make very good progress in understanding and respecting the rights and opinions of others. In both the nursery and rising fives' class the children are able to concentrate for a long time when engaged in tasks that interest them. In the nursery, children are helped to persist with activities through the sensitive intervention of the adults. For example, when playing in the café, the nursery nurse helped sustain interest and concentration very well by joining in the children's play. The nursery snack time is an integral part of the teaching day where children find where to sit by reading the name card set out on the table. Staff foster good manners by encouraging pupils to say please and thank you. However, opportunities for encouraging children to take on responsibilities, for example by handing out the plates and passing round the food are missed. When playing in the nursery garden, the children take turns and share when playing with the bikes and scooters and, when one boy fell over, another quickly went to his aid. He helped his friend to his feet, checked that he was not hurt and then the two of them began to play together. In both the nursery and rising fives' class children tidy away the things they have used quickly when asked.

Communication, language and literacy

58. The quality of teaching and provision is good in both the nursery and reception classes. The adults generally structure their teaching well to develop children's spoken language. Through the daily class and group activities the children learn to join in rhymes, songs and familiar stories. All these activities help children to practise speaking and to increase their vocabulary. Staff encourage pupils to listen to one another and not interrupt. Sometimes, however, the questions asked are such that they require only one-word answers, such as 'What else grows on a tree?' Usually, however, they talk to the children as they work and encourage them to comment on their own activities. When the children volunteer information it is clear that most of them can use complex sentences and explain things very well. During the discussion on trees one girl said, *'Its next to my neighbour's lawn and it has bendy branches. It has black fruit shaped like bananas'*.
59. The teaching of reading and writing is satisfactory. Adults read stories to the children and encourage them to discuss the pictures. The older pupils are encouraged to act out the stories they have heard and change the books they take home frequently. They are taught to recognise letters and sounds. In the nursery, the children were learning about the letter 'h' by watching a video. During this lesson opportunities were missed because all children, regardless of the time they had spent in the nursery, watched the video together. The teacher followed up the programme with a selection of articles beginning with 'h' to help the children relate what they had seen to things in the classroom. However, the lesson was inappropriate for some of the children who were not interested and fidgeted throughout the lesson. Some of the children in the nursery and in the rising fives' class already know how to write their name and form letters correctly. A

significant few are slower to form their letters. In the rising five's class the children are encouraged to bring items in from home to add to their 'sound table'. In one lesson observed, the teacher used some good strategies to reinforce pupils' learning of initial letter sounds by linking them to the days of the week. 'What letter did yesterday start with? What will the first letter of tomorrow be?' The children then had some fun practising writing letters, using marker pens on white boards. This task was then followed by the completion of a worksheet and colouring in pictures. This activity lacked sufficient challenge and did not require the children to think hard enough. However, the children were very well behaved and most stayed on task. In both the nursery and rising fives' class, children would benefit from greater opportunities to practise writing during their play by, for example, chalk boards outside and office / free-writing areas indoors.

Mathematical development

60. By the end of the reception year, most children meet the early learning goals. They make appropriate progress and teaching is sound overall. At the start and end of every session in the nursery, the children engage in counting activities and sing number rhymes. They are given opportunities to use number puzzles and games and helped to learn the mathematical language of shape. The children could recognise that the surface of a cut orange is a circle and this knowledge was reinforced by opportunities to print, using pieces of cut fruit. The children also have opportunities to print patterns using different mathematical shapes; they sort toys and fruit into sets and lay tables in the 'café', setting out the correct number of places and cutlery. They take the customers' orders and become familiar with different coins. The skills the children learn in the nursery are built upon successfully in the rising fives' class when children take part in a daily mathematics lesson. Children learn to recognise and write numbers to ten, to use numbers in familiar contexts, and are beginning to learn about addition and subtraction. In the good lesson observed, the teaching methods used were well matched to the age and stage of development of the pupils. There was a wide range of mathematical activities provided for the children and both the teacher and the classroom assistant were deployed well to help move children forward in their learning.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

61. On entry to nursery, the general knowledge of most of the children is average for their age. During their time in the nursery, rising fives' class and in the reception class the children make satisfactory progress in making sense of the world and teaching is sound overall. By the end of the reception year, most children attain the standard expected for their age. Children in the nursery learn about healthy eating and sort fruit from vegetables. They know that to stay healthy it is important to eat a balanced diet. They begin to understand about the jobs that adults do. At present the children are learning what it means to be a customer or member of staff in a café. The reception class children continue to learn about the jobs that people do through role-play in the 'airport' established in the classroom. Here, play is linked appropriately with the idea of travel and learning about other countries such as France. By the end of the reception class, children can name the common parts of the body and of plants. They can name some everyday things that move by pushing and some that move when they are pulled. They are beginning to understand the concept of a 'fair test'. All three age groups engage in designing and making. They use large and small construction toys, card, paper, paste and glue to learn how to build, cut, stick, join and fold, creating a wide variety of models, cards, and notebooks to use in their play. In the nursery, rising fives' and reception classes the children learn how to use computers independently. They can use the mouse to click on the icons that operate simple computer programmes, and the rising fives' class children can use a painting programme to create pictures. By the end of the reception year children are beginning to use the computer for writing. Computer skills are taught systematically throughout the Foundation Stage. However, the good lesson taught to the rising fives' in the computer suite during the inspection would have been even better if only half the class had been taught at once. There is a systematic approach to assessing and recording pupils' achievements in computer skills, which would enable the teacher to split the class into two manageable groups.

Physical development

62. In this area of learning, the children make satisfactory progress and the teaching is sound. By the end of the reception year, children meet the standard expected for their age. From the earliest days in the nursery the children are encouraged to put on their own coats and get changed for PE lessons. Most of the children rise to the challenge and succeed. In the lesson observed in the hall, the teaching was sound and the children made satisfactory progress. The lesson would have been improved had it been shorter, with half the class taught at a time. The newer, less able children were not able to achieve the tasks planned and six children ran around the hall with little control and these children were not clear about what 'a space of your own' meant. As a result, whilst the lesson was appropriate for the older, more able children in the group, the others spoilt the lesson. In the sound dance lesson observed with the rising fives' class, all children changed quickly and efficiently and clearly understand about the use of space and how to move with control when running around the hall. They can adjust their pace on instruction and stop on command. All this shows that children have made appropriate progress since starting nursery. The lesson would have been improved if it had been planned in a systematic way in accordance with the dance strand of the early learning goals.
63. Opportunities for the children to engage in high quality activities out of doors in the nursery are limited by lack of appropriate resources and because the planning for outdoor play is insufficiently focused. The rising fives have no discrete outdoor play area and the area used by the reception class is still being developed. The school is aware of these deficiencies and plans are afoot to address them. In the nursery, rising fives' and reception classes the children have opportunities to practise and refine their fine motor skills by the use of a variety of tools, implements and equipment across all areas of learning. They use thick and thin pencils, brushes and felt tips and learn to cut out carefully. By the end of the reception year, they have good hand control and form recognisable letters and words.

Creative development

64. This is another area where teaching is sound overall, children make sound progress and attain average standards. The examples of the work from last year show that children are given the opportunity to use and experiment with a wide variety of media, tools and textures. They learn about opposites such as black and white; have opportunities to experiment with printing, make collage pictures and paint pictures. Through daily class and group lessons, the children learn to listen to and join in rhymes and songs and to play percussion instruments. By the end of the reception year, children are beginning to understand about using loud and quiet sounds for different effects and how to make a fast or slow sound. They learn to sit quietly and listen to music for short periods of time. In the nursery, rising fives' and reception classes the children are encouraged to dress up and act out stories heard in the different role-play areas available to them.

ENGLISH

65. Inspection evidence shows that standards are well above what would normally be expected by the age of seven in both reading and writing and are much improved since the last inspection. Then, standards were judged to be average, with above average attainment in speaking and listening. Since then the school has placed much emphasis on developing basic skills and, in particular, planning a curriculum which both challenges and extends the most able pupils. This has resulted in standards rising at a rate more rapid than has been seen nationally. On entry into Year 1, pupils are achieving expected levels. As a consequence of the very skilled teaching in all Year 1 and 2 classes, the pupils make very good progress. This includes those pupils identified as having special educational needs, much of which is due to the very good support they receive from learning support assistants.
66. In all classes, the pupils achieve high standards in speaking and listening. Well-planned, structured, daily opportunities are timetabled, which enable all pupils to develop and extend their skills. Both teachers and learning support assistants provide very good role models and pupils are encouraged to listen carefully to questions and to develop the skill of using the question to form part of the answer, rather than merely giving one-word answers. Teachers regularly introduce new vocabulary, carefully explaining the meaning of each word, enabling pupils to widen their

vocabulary, such as 'human and physical features' in a geography lesson. As part of the very good personal and social education curriculum the pupils are taught the skills of what makes a good listener, which was the class target during the week of the inspection. All pupils know they need to 'look at the person who is talking and not interrupt'. There are many good opportunities for the pupils to extend their skills by working in pairs or groups. Here, the courtesy and consideration they show for others and their awareness of others' needs is a notable facet of their work. It is a regular occurrence to hear, '*That's fantastic Emily*', '*I'm being kind to James and letting him have another turn*', or, even to inspectors, '*Why don't you use my pencil, it's sharper*'. Frequent opportunities to talk before an audience have a very positive effect on pupils' abilities to express themselves accurately and use language effectively to explain, enquire and compare. An exemplary case was of a six-year-old boy with significant language difficulties who confidently explained to the whole class about 'Harry's Adventures' with him the evening before, (Harry being the class teddy). He spoke in clear sentences, with little support from his learning support assistant and was able to answer questions asked by others in the class.

67. Standards in reading are well above national averages at the age of seven. Progress is very good and there are some very capable readers in all classes. Pupils clearly enjoy reading and look forward to changing their books each morning. They have very good attitudes to reading and are able to express preferences about what they like to read. Many Year 2 pupils are able to read fluently and expressively, showing enjoyment of texts as they expand on the themes, such as what it would be like to have a witch as a cleaner at their school. They make effective use of taught skills of breaking words into parts to read unfamiliar words in stories, correcting their error when they realise that what they have said does not make sense. Pupils are developing technical vocabulary with which to talk about books and know words such as 'author', 'illustrator', and 'title'. They read a variety of texts and Year 2 pupils know the difference between fiction and non-fiction books. They have very good library skills and can use books to research topics that interest them, making good use of contents and index pages. Their learning and use of texts would be further enhanced through improving the quality and range of books in the library. Improved shelving and storage of books would enable pupils to locate and return books more readily. Home/school reading records provide an effective way for parents to support reading. Whilst these provide the opportunity for a two-way dialogue between parents and teachers, teachers do not currently suggest short-term targets to enable parents to best support work at school.
68. Standards in writing are well above average at age seven. This represents very good progress across Years 1 and 2. Year 2 pupils are able to compose a question to find factual information as well as how to construct quite complex sentences, using a variety of punctuation, such as '*As quick as a flash, the flying carpet began to fly extremely fast, Biff and Kipper fell off!*' Most pupils spell common words accurately and use their understanding of spelling patterns very well, using 'try pads' to make very good attempts at spelling unfamiliar words. They write for different purposes including sequencing text, re-telling stories and making information books about their favourite animal. There are good opportunities for pupils to practise and extend writing skills in other subjects, for instance imagining themselves to be Queen Elizabeth I locked in the Tower of London. They are encouraged to write imaginatively and, by the age of seven, can create characters and introduce them into an imaginary setting. Pupils show pride in their work and most have very good presentation skills, using clear, joined handwriting by the age of seven. This is less evident where worksheets are used to record work, some of which are inappropriate for the ability of the pupils. Here, some are too repetitious of well-known concepts. Others give a higher priority to colouring than the literacy skills being taught. The setting arrangements in Year 2 have had a very positive impact on raising standards through the provision of stimulating, well-matched activities. Pupils in each set, including those with special educational needs, make very good progress in their writing, in the main because of the high level of adult support they receive. There is very good use of a variety of learning strategies, such as using the computer to edit text, to maintain pupils' interest and engagement in their learning.
69. The quality of teaching is very good and has been a major factor in the high standards attained. Teachers use the National Literacy Strategy creatively to inform their planning. They give careful consideration to linking the learning between lessons and pupils are given the opportunities to practise and extend taught skills through applying them to new learning situations. A very good

example of this was the opportunity for pupils to read a piece of text, then use speech bubbles to write what the characters might have said. Plenary sessions at the end of each lesson are used particularly well to ensure that pupils have met the learning objective and to extend their learning still further. The very good learning is characterised by the very good relationships between teachers and pupils, the sharing of lesson objectives so that the children know what they are expected to learn and the very high expectations teachers have of all pupils. The teachers give plenty of opportunities for the pupils to be involved with their own learning, such as the use of a traffic light system, where pupils indicate how easy or difficult they found an activity. Very good use is made of structured, open questioning to motivate and check understanding and pupils respond very positively to this questioning. Teachers work in teams to plan work to stimulate learning for pupils of all abilities. Exemplary use is made of learning support staff who work very effectively to ensure that pupils reach their full potential. Even during whole-class sessions, support staff sit with the pupils they are responsible for and unobtrusively provide guidance and further explanation. Staff enthusiasm contributes greatly to the very positive attitudes seen. Pupils enjoy sharing texts and resources, always co-operating and collaborating positively. Pupils work hard, sustaining concentration for some considerable lengths of time. They show much independence and maturity, for example moving swiftly to English sets, and are active participants in their learning.

70. English is very well co-ordinated by the deputy headteacher. Her expertise, enthusiasm and ability to access latest research has been very well used to support all staff in developing their knowledge and skills, most notably recently in the teaching of reading. Through lesson observations, evaluating samples of pupils' work and monitoring the plans made by teachers, she has a clear vision of the strengths of the subject and has clear 'action plans' for aspects that need further development. Assessment procedures are good overall. The staff meet regularly to look at and agree levels of achievement in writing in Years 1 and 2. National tests are evaluated effectively and the information is used to compare each pupil's attainment to predicted targets. Where assessment could be further improved, this mainly relates to introducing regular tracking of each pupil's progress, to ensure that targets are sufficiently challenging, but realistic. It is also due to the marking of pupils' work not always adhering to school policy.

MATHEMATICS

71. Since the last inspection, standards attained by the pupils have risen substantially, and many aspects of the way the subject is taught have much improved. At that time standards were described as average. Now, by the time the pupils leave the school, attainment is well above average, with increasing numbers attaining the higher level, Level 3, in the end of year tests. This represents very good achievement and is a result of the very good teaching. It is also due to the setting arrangements in Year 2, which ensure that there is a closer match of work to prior attainment. This means that pupils are being appropriately challenged, with good opportunities for pupils to move on to work usually set for older pupils, once they have grasped the objectives set for their age group. The whole-school approach to the teaching of mathematics has also helped improve standards. For example, the good implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has had a very positive impact on the pupils' ability to carry out mental calculations quickly and accurately. Pupils enter Year 1 with abilities in mathematical development that are average for their age and make continuous, very good progress to enable them to reach standards that are well above average when they leave. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress. Here, the work set matches their capabilities well and this, together with the quality support they receive in class, ensures they achieve as well as they are able. Almost all pupils attain the expected level by the time they leave, albeit within the lower end of Level 2.
72. By the end of Year 1, most pupils have a secure knowledge of addition and subtraction to ten and can count, write and order numbers to 100. They can work out doubles up to 20. They find change from 10p and work out what they could buy with 20p. For the current Year 1, most can count backwards from 20. They are beginning to understand the operation of subtraction as being the inverse of addition, using numbers to ten for the more able and numbers to five for the less able. Here, in working with a partner, they show they can give careful instructions to their partner. A typical example of the effectiveness of this paired work was demonstrated by one pupil stating,

'I've taken four away from six. I've got one, two or zero left' which brought a carefully thought out response of '2'. Year 1 pupils start to understand and interpret simple graphs. For example, following a three-minute traffic survey into 'how busy the road outside the school is' they could tell from the pictogram they produced as a class that cars were the main offenders. By the time pupils leave the school the majority show a good understanding of number and place value. Almost all are easily able to carry out addition and subtraction problems with two-digit numbers. They look at pattern in number and can confidently count in twos, fives and tens. They can interpret simple data. For instance, in looking at a weather chart they can find out how many sunny/windy days there are in March. The most able can find several ways of paying for an item, costing for example £2.33, and can find the fewest coins to pay for the item. They start to understand the fractions of half, quarter and third. They can solve simple problems and learn strategies to help them find the answers. For example, during the inspection week, the middle set in Year 2 were solving addition and subtraction problems to 20, having been taught to use 'jottings' to help them. Almost two thirds of the pupils in this set could explain how they were tackling the task. This involved reading the problem and identifying which operation they needed to employ, either addition or subtraction, before recording 'quick' jottings to help them find the answer. For example, one pupil explained what to do, *'We've got to look at numbers in the writing, then we do the jottings, then we take away or add and put the answer in the box'*. These pupils were working well above the expected level for this time of year. All pupils learn to recognise and name common two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes, knowing terms such as 'faces', 'edges' and 'corners' by the end of Year 2. They measure length, mass, capacity and time. For instance, in Year 1 they learn 'o'clock' and 'half past'. By Year 2, they can add five minutes to the time shown on a digital clock.

73. Teaching is consistently very good and this has had a major impact on the standards attained. This is an improvement since the last inspection when teaching was described as generally satisfactory. As a result, the pupils achieve very well in lessons and over time. Teachers have very good subject expertise, and plan appropriate activities well matched to the pupils' needs. Time is used to maximum advantage, including the speed at which Year 2 pupils sensibly transfer to, and return from, their sets. All teachers make clear to the pupils what they are expected to learn, with clear lesson objectives for both the mental session and the main activity. The mental mathematics sessions at the start of each lesson are increasing pupils' confidence to manipulate numbers. Instructions for the main tasks are precise and previous work is reinforced before being extended. Very good teaching strategies are employed throughout the session. For example, in the lower Year 2 set, the teacher used a kinaesthetic approach, for example 'clapping' when counting and 'pushing away' each coin when paying for items. Similarly, there was effective use of deliberate teacher error to help focus the pupils and encourage skills of self-correction. There were delightful examples of puppets being employed to enhance learning, for instance Mr Hoppity the frog demonstrating 'counting on' in a Year 1 class, by hopping along the sock number line from a variety of starting numbers. The learning support assistants are particularly well deployed, helping evaluate the pupils' performance by recording the strengths and weaknesses experienced by individual pupils in each lesson. This ongoing assessment is good practice. Teachers have a very clear picture of what each pupil can and cannot do, which enables them to set appropriate work to extend pupils' learning continuously. Expectations are high and relationships with the pupils are very good. This means that pupils are confident to ask for help and are encouraged to evaluate their own understanding at the end of the lesson by indicating whether or not they have fully understood the objective for the lesson. All the pupils have very positive attitudes to their learning. They listen attentively, concentrate hard, and are eager to learn. Correct mathematical language is emphasised in all classes, so that the pupils confidently use and understand mathematical terms. For example, the teacher in the upper Year 2 set used 'total', 'number operation' and 'denomination' when giving instructions about paying for toys. Where teaching could be further improved, this mainly relates to the overuse of worksheets, some of which are insufficiently challenging or too repetitive of practising concepts already known. At the same time, marking does not adhere to the very good school policy by indicating where pupils' work could be improved in the future.
74. Teachers emphasise basic literacy skills in their mathematics lessons, so that these are being developed alongside mathematical skills. For example, reading skills were being deployed in the

lower set in Year 2, where pupils needed to read the problem before being able to solve it. Mathematical skills are developed through work in other subjects too. This represents good improvement since the last inspection. For example, the pupils just into Year 1 explore repeating patterns through printing with paint. Pupils in Year 2 learn simple co-ordinates through their geography and literacy work about 'Goldilocks and the three bears. Here, they used their class map to work out the co-ordinates; for example, *'the house is in B3'*. ICT supports mathematical development very successfully. For example, the pupils in Year 1 reinforce their sense of direction by programming the Roamer to move 'up, down, left and right' to reach toy animals. By Year 2, this is extended to writing instructions down both before and after using the Roamer. Similarly, the higher attaining Year 2 pupils confidently explore the 'toy shop' program to solve problems with money, using all coins up to £2.00 to pay for a toy. Last year, the pupils in Years 1 and 2 benefited from a day's workshop 'Tilehouse', hosted by a local school, where a range of activities and investigations were well planned for the pupils to enjoy.

75. Assessment arrangements have improved and are now good overall, although more work is needed. Ongoing assessments are maintained, which are used well to plan further work and reinforce learning. The 'number of the week' initiative is helpful here. The results of national tests are evaluated to plan more effectively. Pupils' end of year attainment in the aspects of mathematics is passed to the receiving teacher. However, individual pupils' progress is not tracked and reviewed until Year 2. Therefore there are missed opportunities to set challenging targets to further extend learning. The pupils are set individual targets for improvement, which are reviewed half-termly, one Year 2 example being, 'to understand that halving is the opposite of doubling'. This is good practice. However, at the time of the inspection, whilst the older pupils knew where to find their target for this half term most were unable to recall what it was.
76. Homework, set fortnightly, supports learning well. Some parents expressed concern that the worksheets were often difficult to comprehend. The inspection found that the vast majority were of good quality, giving pupils good opportunities to reinforce their learning (often through problem solving) and providing parents with very good opportunities to feedback to teachers on the level of help given and any concerns they may have. However, all worksheets should be thoroughly evaluated to fully address parents' anxieties.
77. The management of the subject is very good. The subject leader is becoming increasingly involved in the systematic monitoring of the development and progression of pupils' knowledge and skills. She maintains a portfolio of work for each year group, updated termly and representing the differing abilities. Her monitoring of teaching and learning is now well established and she has a very clear picture of standards of teaching and learning. Her 'action plan' is well focused on raising standards. Both she, and the governor with responsibility for mathematics, keep the governing body fully informed about the standards attained and the latest developments in the subject.

SCIENCE

78. Standards in science have improved a great deal since the previous inspection, when they were seen to be average. The 'setting' of pupils in Year 2 has had a positive impact and standards are now well above the national average, with almost half the pupils attaining Level 3 in the assessments made at the age of seven. Evidence from pupils' work, displays around the school, discussions with pupils and in the lessons observed, indicate that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make very good progress.
79. Pupils in Year 1 can describe simple features of objects, living things and events observed. They can name parts of the body and of plants. They know that plants need water and light to grow. They know that light and sound come from a variety of sources and can explain why it is dangerous to look at the sun. They can recognise a variety of different sounds and know what happens when you move away from the source of the sound. Year 2 pupils can sort things into sets and explain the basis of their groupings. They can recognise that different living things grow in different places. They can describe how pushes and pulls make things speed up, slow up and/or change shape and direction and they are beginning to understand what constitutes a 'fair test'. Pupils are very interested in their science lessons, behave very well and try hard.

80. The quality of teaching in science is never less than good and very good overall. In the lessons observed in Year 1, the pupils were learning to recognise the similarities and differences between people. The teachers use questioning techniques effectively, initiate discussions and help pupils to learn from one another. Sufficiently challenging activities were provided, well matched to the different abilities of the children in the class. The teachers' classroom management skills are very good and they use classroom assistants very well to help and support the least able pupils. At the end of the lesson, the teachers check pupils' understanding well by discussing with them what they have learnt and encourage them to show and explain their work to the rest of the class. There are good links with other aspects of the curriculum, for example, making a pictogram of pupils' hair colour supports work in mathematics. ICT is used well to support the subject, for example when presenting their findings as a graph on a computer. During the inspection, Year 2 pupils were learning about materials. They are taught within three sets, arranged by prior attainment, where the work is carefully matched to the different needs of the pupils. As a result, together with skilled teaching, all pupils make very good gains in their learning. The pupils demonstrate very good attitudes to learning and to one another. They ask thoughtful questions and are able to apply their previous knowledge and understanding to the lesson. One pupil in the higher attaining set was amazed to learn that rubber was collected in liquid form and wanted to know how it was changed into rubber gloves and sheets. Pupils in the middle set used the correct vocabulary to describe how materials change giving answers such as, '*It's now breakable, it's not rigid any more,*' and '*It's delicate – that means it's easy to break.*' They were also beginning to identify other materials that change when heated, for example, egg and bread. In the lower attaining set, the consistently good teaching and class management skills helped pupils to concentrate, collaborate well with one another, answer questions and make good progress in their learning. As a result of good and very good teaching most children in Year 2 are attaining above average standards for their age.
81. The subject leader is new to the role, but is being supported well by the senior management team. The management of the subject is sound at present and is likely to become good. Already, the leader has implemented a new scheme of work based on national recommendations and the policy for science has been rewritten. She attends regular meetings organised by the newly appointed adviser for science in the local education authority. These she finds helpful and supportive. However, the present assessment scheme recommended by the authority does not fit with the new scheme of work. The school plans to up date its assessment procedures very soon. At present, there is insufficient time available to the co-ordinator to monitor the teaching of science.

ART AND DESIGN

82. By the time of the inspection, there had been no teaching of art and design this term. This is because art and design is 'blocked' with design and technology, with timetabling indicating that it will be taught later in the term. The judgement about standards is based on discussions with pupils and teachers, the scrutiny of planning, developing portfolios and photographic evidence, together with the limited work on display from the previous year. It is not possible to make a judgement about the standards of three-dimensional work, since the school has not retained evidence to support this. From the evidence available, standards in other aspects of art are broadly average. Since pupils enter Year 1 meeting expectations, they make sound progress during the two years. Pupils with special educational needs tackle the same tasks as their peers and make similar progress. This represents similar findings to the last inspection. With such limited evidence available, it is not possible to make a secure judgement about the quality of teaching, although the evidence suggests it is sound.
83. Pupils' observational skills are developing satisfactorily. They examine and draw a variety of objects, such as in Year 1, where the pupils draw old and new toys linked to their history topic. In Year 2, they use a view finder to observe different images in the school grounds, then transfer these skills to selecting and pasting a magazine image onto paper before finally using their imagination to create a realistic background to the image. The finished products were of good quality for seven-year olds. However, too many observational or imaginative drawings are of poorer

quality, particularly those in pencil or crayon, where they are often carelessly produced with insufficient attention to detail. It is this lack of consistency of care and control which is the prime reason for standards being judged average overall, despite some work being of a higher standard. The recently re-introduced books for sketching are a good initiative for recording observational drawings to show progression of skills. However, the paper is of poor quality, slightly carbonised, which means that drawings show through to underlying pages. At present, the quality of work in these books is not good enough, because the pupils are neither taking sufficient care nor paying enough attention to detail. At the same time, work is undated and it is unclear what the task entailed. Overall, teacher's expectations are satisfactory, but there is some lack of consistency in the quality of work that the pupils are expected to produce. This is a key reason why standards have not shown a similar level of improvement to that seen in most other subjects.

84. A variety of different media is used, such as paint, wax, felt pens, pencils and collage, to create pleasing images. For example, the pupils in Year 1 undertake wax rubbings of patterns in the playground, such as drain covers. They have recently experienced printing, using small construction equipment, such as Lego. These are the start of a longer project investigating texture; to result in a mural made from clay tiles. Pupils in Year 2 start to consider sculpture. They select natural objects from the school grounds to create a group sculpture on tabletops. Photographic evidence indicates that these were of sound quality. All the pupils experiment with mixing paint colours. In Year 1, they use two primary colours to make a secondary one. This is extended in Year 2 to using three primary colours. Here, the pupils experiment on the real effects of mixing colours, producing good quality colour wheels. This is a good opportunity to develop the pupils' spiritual development through the unexpected.
85. The scheme of work for art and design is appropriate for the age of the pupils, covering the elements of the subject, shape, line, colour, pattern and texture. There are good opportunities for the pupils to work on their own, as part of a group or as a contributor to a whole-class product. Appropriate time is allocated to the teaching of the subject during the year. Pupils are introduced to work of other artists and begin to use these opportunities to develop their own skills. For example, pupils in Year 1 have studied the work of Monet and produced work in a similar style. However, there is no systematic coverage of the work of other artists and overall too few opportunities are provided. There are many examples of art supporting other subjects, so that the pupils are practising and refining skills outside 'blocked' time. Here, work is generally of a good quality. For example, in supporting investigational work in science the pupils in Year 1 produced a group collage of a pond.
86. ICT is well used to support the subject, for example in the use of 'paint programs'. Here, Year 2 pupils created pictures for the calendars they took home last year. They used the same program to make three-dimensional patterns, which they then 'jigsawed' as part of their work in design and technology. The termly 'art day' is a good initiative to inspire and motivate pupils, with photographic evidence indicating good opportunities for using skills of investigation and imagination. For instance, in Year 1, pupils experimented with blowing three colours of paint to see the effects made. They produced a delightful class collage of an imaginary fish, which was then used to inspire descriptive words in literacy, such as 'hairy' and 'cuddly'. In Year 2, pupils used their colour mixing skills well to produce good quality watercolour paintings depicting autumn scenes.
87. Overall, there has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. For instance, there has been good improvement in planning for progression and continuity, there has been some monitoring of the subject and ongoing assessments are maintained. However, whilst standards are no lower than before, some areas from the last inspection have been insufficiently addressed. For example, in differentiating activities to better meet the needs of all the pupils and developing procedures for assessing the quality of artwork. These are key reasons why standards have not improved in line with most other subjects. However, the school is well placed to rectify these issues. For example, the school is set to implement assessment procedures. Added to this, the subject leadership for art and design is good. Although only in post for a year, the subject leader is well aware of the deficiencies and had begun to address them. She has begun to monitor the quality of teaching through planning and re-introduced portfolios of evidence from Year 1. Her

'action plan' for improvement is focused on raising standards. For example, she has identified the need for greater differentiation and is currently phasing out the use of ready made paint colours in favour of pupils mixing their own, using the primary colours of red, blue and green. Resources are adequate, well ordered and stored.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

88. It was possible to observe only one lesson during the inspection. Additional evidence gathered from the scrutiny of the pupils' work, looking at teachers' planning and talking to pupils and teachers, show that standards by the age of seven are average and that pupils make sound progress given their starting point on entry to Year 1. Those with special educational needs complete similar tasks to their peers and make similar progress. At the time of the last inspection standards were judged to be above average at the end of Year 2. Pupils were found to have high levels of skill in using handtools. This is still the case, but, when the full range of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding is considered, their overall attainment is found to be average. There has been satisfactory improvement overall since the last inspection. All elements of the subject are now taught and the deficiencies highlighted in the last report have been addressed. There is now an effective policy for the subject; there is progression of skill development with the school, using national guidance to ensure that the subject is taught in a systematic manner. Teachers plan a balanced programme of activities, including food technology and pupils evaluate their own work. However, standards have not shown a similar improvement to that seen in most other subjects.
89. In Year 1, pupils make gingerbread men and fruit drinks and prepare cereals. For example, in making a bowl of cereal one pupil listed the ingredients for the 'design' as *'cocoa pops, milk, sugar'*, then recorded the 'making aspect' as *'Put the cocoa pops in a bowl. Put the milk in. Put the sugar in the bowl. Eat it'* before evaluating how tasty it was. Here, there were good links to work in literacy through making lists. Similarly in making porridge there were effective links to literacy through the story of 'Goldilocks and the three bears' and, through weighing, to mathematics. This makes learning more relevant for the pupils. Year 1 pupils make simple sliding mechanisms. For example, they make card slides to move a bear up and down or to move a car along a road. They use split pins as a simple lever to move the wings on a bird, using cutting and joining skills. In Year 2, they further refine these skills. They make textile pictures on a paper backing and develop sewing techniques, joining felt shapes to a hessian backing. They can use simple weaving skills linking with work in art and design. They make hand puppets, starting with drawing their designs and identifying what materials are needed. All pupils are made aware of the need for safety, for instance in the correct handling of scissors.
90. From the lesson observed and scrutiny of pupils' work in Years 1 and 2, the quality of teaching is at least sound. It could be improved if a greater consistency of finish was expected of pupils for the final products. This is a key factor in standards not being higher than they are. In the observed Year 2 lesson, the pupils were practising sewing techniques in preparation for joining fabric to make a textile product (a puppet) in future weeks. Here, all pupils were clear of the task of the lesson and where it would lead in future lessons. They learnt the correct vocabulary of 'running stitch' and overstitch', and understood how to tackle the task, chanting with the teacher *'under, over the edge of the card'* as she effectively modelled the task. The children worked very well in pairs, assisting each other and talking about their work. For example, one pupil said, *'I'll hold that down'* with another responding *'this is tricky'*. However, almost all pupils completed the task easily and quickly and there was insufficient challenge to extend their learning further. As such they made sound progress, overall. The pupils were encouraged to think about their work and how it could be improved. Thus, assessment is ongoing, with pupils involved in the process. The learning support assistant was very well deployed, helping evaluate the pupils' performance by recording the strengths and weaknesses experienced.
91. Good use is made of ICT to support 'design' work. For example, in Year 2, pupils use a 'Lego' program to construct a town or a building. They combine the art aspects of a paint program to cut, glue, join and reassemble their picture as a jigsaw. The pupils benefit from visitors coming to support work in design and technology, most recently a performance from a puppeteer. Here, the

pupils were shown examples of different types of puppets, to include bottle puppets (as made in Year 1), hand puppets (as made in Year 2) and stringed puppets.

92. Subject leadership is good. The co-ordinator has been in post for less than two years and shows good subject knowledge. She has made a start on monitoring the quality of teaching through planning, one lesson observation and the introduction of portfolios of evidence from reception classes upwards. She is aware of a greater need for differentiation to challenge all pupils. Formal procedures for recording and assessing progress over time are not in place, although the school has planned to introduce these shortly. Resources are adequate and appropriately stored.

GEOGRAPHY

93. By the end of Year 2, pupils attain standards that are above national expectations. This indicates good improvement since the last inspection, when standards were seen to be average. Teachers' planning has significantly improved. This now identifies a 'ladder of skills', providing pupils with a wider range of experiences. As a result, pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, are provided with a broad curriculum that enables them to make good progress.
94. By the time they leave the school, pupils have acquired a good knowledge and understanding of geography. For example, they can locate France in an atlas and draw simple plans of their route from school to the local church with some accuracy. They develop good understanding of key geographical concepts and use the correct vocabulary. For instance, in investigating life in Tocuaro, Mexico, seven-year-olds are able to use the terms 'physical and human features' to describe the location. They know that human features include the school and the church whereas physical features relate to the mountains and the trees. They can discuss similarities and differences between two contrasting locations, recognising that Tocuaro and Iver Heath both have a school, but that there are no mountains in Iver Heath. By using an ICT database, pupils can conduct an enquiry into how humans affect their environment. They survey traffic outside the school and can express views, for instance, about the parking problems experienced by their parents when driving to school.
95. The teaching of geography is good overall. The teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and plan carefully to challenge all ability levels. The good teaching focuses on clear learning objectives, a balance between listening and activity and an element of fun. Very good use is made of the Internet to extend pupils' learning, for example in seeking information about Tocuaro. Teachers use a range of strategies to motivate and excite pupils. For example, Year 1 pupils were eager to sequence their route using photographs of their trip from school to the church. They did this to help out 'Pirate Ted' who *'can't go ANYWHERE without a map'*. Very careful questioning by teachers links learning to previous lessons as well as to other subjects and is used well to assess pupils' understanding. The pupils respond well to the subject, they contribute thoughtfully to the lessons and co-operate very well when working within groups or pairs. However, teachers need to review the use of worksheets for pupils to record work, ensuring that all are appropriate for all levels of ability.
96. The leadership of geography is good and the subject co-ordinator has identified clear strategies for further improving teaching and learning, such as introducing a greater range of investigational work. She provides a good level of support for teachers through accessing good resources and identifying where ICT can be used to support pupils' learning and develop their skills of enquiry. Assessment of geography is in its early stages. Here, the school is aware of the need to implement new procedures and has already planned to implement the criteria provided by the local education authority. This will provide the teachers with a clearer understanding of the standards that pupils are attaining.

HISTORY

97. Due to timetabling arrangements, there was no opportunity to observe any history lessons.

Consequently, there is insufficient evidence on which to make a secure judgement on the overall quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2. Judgements on the curriculum and standards are based on discussions with pupils and staff, scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' work from the previous year. Although evidence was very limited, it is clear that, by the age of seven, pupils attain standards which meet national expectations and that they make sound progress during the two years. This is similar to the judgement made in the last inspection. Standards have not improved at the same rate as seen in most other subjects, because there is some lack of opportunity for pupils to use their research skills to investigate for themselves. There are good links made to other areas of the curriculum, for example, English and ICT.

98. Pupils in Year 1 develop a sense of the passage of time. For example, they are able to sequence three objects such as a spinning top, a teddy bear and a Barbie doll and describe them, 'this is very old, this is old, this is new.' They extend this understanding through experiencing a Victorian afternoon where they dress in Victorian clothes, attend a Victorian school room and actively take part in tasks, such as washing and ironing. From this they are able to compare simple similarities and differences between artefacts, for instance a flat iron with an electric iron. They are able to sort a range of artefacts such as kettles and toys into 'Victorian' and 'Present Day'. Pupils also begin to make judgements about life in times past and realise that washing and ironing in Victorian times *'are hard work'*. Such 'real life' experiences promote pupils' good attitudes towards the subject.
99. By the end of Year 2, the pupils have refined and developed these skills, so can sequence the major events in the life of Elizabeth I, start to perceive why historical characters acted as they did, note events which affected them and how they may have felt. For instance, in writing a letter as Elizabeth I on her imprisonment one pupil recalled, *'I have been in the Tower of London for many days. There is a nice guard. He lets people in to see me'*. Pupils extend their understanding of chronology and the differences between past and present times through investigating the website, for example, to find out about seaside holidays in the past. Year 2 pupils say that *'the computer room is handy because we go on the internet and find out about a long time ago'*. They use the library to research what it would have been like to have been a Tudor child, comparing this to their own life and drawing some conclusions, such as 'not liking to have to eat rabbit'. However, such opportunities are restricted by a lack of sufficiently good library resources. Pupils also develop skills of enquiry through the annual 'Grandparents' Day'. By composing and asking questions such as, *'What did you do on Coronation Day?'* they are able to compare aspects of the 1950s with their experience of 'Jubilee Day' at school. However, opportunities such as this are limited. This is because worksheets are generally used, which overly prescribe the way in which pupils record their work.
100. The subject leader is knowledgeable and enthusiastic. She has addressed the shortfalls in history identified at the last inspection and supported staff in planning a curriculum that is focused on key skills. This, together with the purchase of resources to support the new scheme, provides appropriate challenge for pupils of all abilities. Teachers are in the early stages of assessing the pupils' progress in history, although they are soon to implement new assessment procedures using criteria provided by the local education authority. The subject leader is aware of future needs, such as increasing the range and quality of books available in the library so that pupils have full opportunities to develop research skills. Within her role she has monitored planning and identified links to other subjects, so ensuring that time allocation is used appropriately to cover the history curriculum.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

101. Standards in ICT have improved a great deal since the previous inspection when they were judged to be below national expectations. . ICT is now a very strong area of the school's work. Standards are well above average and the use of technology has a high profile throughout the school. Pupils learn at a very good rate because they are given plenty of opportunity to practise and develop their information technology skills. The oldest pupils are very confident in using computers and use them well to support all subjects of the curriculum. As a result, by the end of Year 2, they are confident in their word processing skills, their ability to save and retrieve work and

in using ICT to sort and present data. They can use computers to 'draw' and 'paint' pictures and patterns and can change the colours, size and style of font used. They are able to manipulate programmable toys linked to the computer.

102. The pupils make very good progress throughout the school and have opportunities to use computers from their earliest days in the nursery. The skills learnt in the Foundation Stage are built upon systematically in Years 1 and 2. As a result, all pupils are confident in using computers and will happily work in pairs and individually in the classroom. The less able pupils are often paired with more able pupils to help them get maximum benefit from whole class lessons. Those with special educational needs make very good progress, being very well supported by learning support assistants. All pupils co-operate very well with one another in the computer suite when having formal, weekly lessons in ICT skills. They listen to instructions well and try very hard to follow them. As a result, the pupils' skills are built up at a fast rate.
103. The teaching of ICT is now very good. Skills are taught systematically. Teachers give clear explanations and demonstrations, which help the pupils to learn very quickly. Sometimes they teach the whole class a new skill or how to use a new program. At other times, the pupils learn in a more 'hands on' way. Pupils are also given plenty of opportunity to practise, using ICT to support their learning in other subjects such as English, mathematics, science and art lessons. This cross-curricular approach supports pupils' learning very well. A new system for recording, checking and rewarding children's progress has recently been introduced to link with the scheme of work. This system is tailored well to the needs of the pupils and the skills of the teachers. All teachers now have a clear picture of what the children know, understand and can do and what they need to do next. Pupils are also very clear about the skills they have learnt because they are rewarded for their achievements with certificates each time a new skill is mastered.
104. The subject is very well led and managed. The co-ordinator has been instrumental in raising standards in the subject since the last inspection. The policy has been revised and the school has adapted and modified the nationally recommended scheme of work very well to meet the needs of the school. Targets for raising standards in ICT across the school have been set. All teachers have received the recommended training. Resources are now very good, having improved considerably and a computer suite has been set up. The school has good regard to health and safety, with safeguards implemented to ensure that no child can access the Internet without supervision. A very well attended computer club further enhances the curriculum.

MUSIC

105. Standards in music have improved significantly since the last inspection, from being average by the age of seven to well above average. This is due to the increased emphasis on the subject and the knowledge and skill of the co-ordinator who teaches music to all Year 2 classes. There are also other musical members of staff whose skills are used well in the classroom. There is a new policy and a new, nationally recommended scheme of work to support the teaching and learning of music systematically throughout the school. Pupils with special needs are well supported by able classroom assistants and make very good progress.
106. In Year 1, pupils can sing simple songs from memory and identify different ways sounds can be made and changed. They have opportunities to work as part of a group using percussion instruments, keeping time to music. They can recreate long and short sounds. These skills are built on successfully so that, by the end of Year 2, most pupils can sing accurately at a given pitch with clear diction and expression. They work with others to compose, perform and record extended sequences of sounds of varying duration to produce a 'musical sandwich' of long and short sounds. They can repeat and recreate short rhythmic phrases accurately and choose appropriate sounds in response to visual stimuli, for example when shown pictures about weather. They can play simple accompaniments, keeping a steady pulse, with more able pupils playing tuned accompaniments.
107. During the inspection, two music lessons were observed. In a good lesson seen in Year 1, the teacher was building on pupils' previous learning in the Foundation Stage well, effectively

developing pupils' listening skills by use of a listening game. The pupils were very enthusiastic and keen to answer. The teacher's good relationships with the pupils, together with her appropriate use of well-deserved praise, ensured that the pupils made good progress. In the lesson taught by the co-ordinator in the Year1/2 class the teaching was excellent. The lesson was very well planned and the pupils were engaged in active learning throughout. The teacher's skilled management of the pupils, her very good subject knowledge and knowledge of the pupils' different abilities, coupled with the brisk pace of the lesson ensured that pupils learnt a great deal in a very short time. Throughout the lesson, the children were very well motivated, listened carefully and joined in, often taking the lead. The teacher's sensitive intervention at the first sign of the leader faltering ensured that all pupils succeeded. Pupils rose to her very high expectations and the quality of learning could not have been improved. It was clear that the teacher had successfully inculcated a love of music into the whole class.

108. The co-ordinator's enthusiasm for the subject gives inspiration to both teachers and pupils. Teachers are encouraged to share their favourite music with the children during assembly and opportunities are provided for pupils to experience the work of modern and traditional musicians. Music is played quietly as pupils enter and leave the hall in assemblies, creating a calm and thoughtful atmosphere. Pupils are always told the composer of the music they hear.
109. The curriculum is enhanced in a variety of ways. Every term, a different year group gives a performance, which includes musical activities. Periodically, visiting musicians perform in school. For instance, children have recently heard Asian and classical musicians play and, each Christmas, the Salvation Army play carols in the courtyard. The school also has a choir, percussion group and two recorder groups. There are plenty of musical resources in the school and the subject is very well led and managed. There is not yet a system for assessing the attainment and progress of pupils in music. The school is aware of this and has plans to address this.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

110. By the end of Year 2, standards in physical education are well above average. The quality of teaching is very good and pupils show very good attitudes to their learning. Consequently, pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve very well. Teachers successfully include all pupils in all aspects of provision made for the subject. Improvement in the subject since the last inspection is very good. At that time, standards were judged average and the quality of teaching was satisfactory.
111. Pupils in Year 1 achieve well in gymnastic skills when they develop a variety of ways of balancing on different parts of the body. When they prepare for exercise they join in the 'warm up' routines, showing good awareness of themselves and others moving around them. The quality of their work is enhanced by opportunities to evaluate both their own and others' performance and by helpful comments from their teacher. In the Year 1 lessons observed, the teachers had good subject knowledge, used time and resources well and classroom assistants were used effectively to support pupils with special needs. There were very good relationships and high expectations of behaviour. The pupils responded by behaving very well, trying hard and, consequently, they made good gains in their learning.
112. In the very good dance lesson observed in Year 2, the teacher recapped on pupils' previous learning very well and structured the lesson to build on skills previously taught. Only when she was satisfied with the performance of all pupils did she move the lesson on. Nevertheless, because the tasks were pitched at exactly the right level and the pupils were very well motivated to learn, the lesson moved on at a brisk pace. The children moved swiftly from working in pairs to a group of four and were successfully able to combine two sequences of actions to music to make a complex dance based on the movements of machines. The standards attained were high and children were able to communicate their ideas effectively, not only in words, but also through their movements. Through skilled teaching the pupils were able to rise to and meet the challenges posed by the teacher and all the learning objectives of the lesson were fully achieved.

113. The curriculum is greatly enhanced by a variety of extra-curricular clubs. These include, country dancing, tennis, which is run by members of the local Tennis Club, and football. The football club is run by a coach from Wycombe Wanderers and operates for six weeks each term. He also teaches games skills to both Year 1 and 2 pupils for six weeks in the summer and autumn term as an integral part of the school's curriculum.
114. The quality of the leadership and management of the subject are good. The teacher has very good subject knowledge. The policy has recently been rewritten in line with the changes made to the curriculum. The scheme of work is based on nationally recommended guidelines. The teacher pays very good attention to health and safety procedures. She has been on many courses and provides advice and in-service training for staff. She checks all the teachers' plans to ensure that the curriculum is being systematically followed. So far, she has had no opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching and, as yet, there is no whole-school system for assessing the progress of individual pupils. Resources for the subject are good.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

115. Standards in religious education exceed expectations of the Buckinghamshire agreed syllabus for pupils aged seven. This represents both good achievement and good improvement since the last inspection. Pupils make good progress in all classes in Years 1 and 2.
116. Much of the work in religious education is based on knowledge of celebrations and Christian teaching. For example, pupils are taught that Jesus is a friend to all people in the world and respect that everyone is different. They show good awareness of the principal features of Hinduism. For instance, in Year 2 they can describe what happens at a Hindu wedding, using correct vocabulary such as 'mandap' (the tent under which the marriage takes place) and 'paniter' (scarf). All pupils know a range of stories from both the Christian religion and the Hindu faith and can recall aspects of the story they heard about the god Ganesh. They are aware of main festivals in the Christian and Hindu year, such as Christmas, Easter and Diwali and celebrations such as baptisms and weddings. By the time they leave the school, pupils can compare similarities and differences between the two faiths, such as the fact that couples make promises to each other in both Christian and Hindu weddings.
117. Teaching of religious education is good, having improved from satisfactory since the last inspection and is a key factor in the above average standards being attained. Teachers' good subject knowledge and planning ensure that pupils experience a variety of activities that extend thinking and understanding. For example, Year 1 pupils benefit from visits to the local church. They experience a 'christening service' led by the priest. As a consequence they know the font is used for baptism, saying, *It's for Christenings...he puts water on the baby's head and he draws a cross with oil!* They also begin to develop a deeper understanding of key principles within the Christian faith; *'someone was put on the cross to save us...not Father David!'* Likewise, one parent spends time with Year 2 pupils to deepen their understanding of the Hindu faith. She shares family photographs and artefacts to demonstrate how she celebrates Diwali. All teachers use effective questioning, which enables pupils to develop their speaking skills and teachers to carefully assess pupils' understanding.
118. The school successfully integrates the teaching of religious education into its daily life. The reflective nature of religious education successfully pervades other areas of the curriculum, such as personal and social education. It makes a good contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. At the core of these is respect and care for others and consideration of what is special, providing a clear link to the overall philosophy and very positive ethos of the school and the emphasis placed on respecting everyone. For example, in 'circle time' observed in one Year 2 class there was a focus on the weekly 'class target' agreed across all classes, *'to be a good listener'*. The rules of 'good listening' were recalled, with responses from the pupils including, *'listen to the person who's talking', 'look at them' 'don't interrupt' and 'don't have your back to them'*. The listening activity then focused on partner work, exchanging views of favourite food and explaining to the rest of the class. This provision has a very positive impact on

encouraging respect and tolerance for others as well as maintaining high standards of behaviour.

119. Acts of collective worship effectively support the programme for religious education. For example, there is a very good weekly 'Celebration Assembly', during which teachers present shields to pupils whom they have noticed putting into practice some of the ideas talked about in lessons. The priest, Father David, regularly leads acts of collective worship within the planned themes and this aspect makes a good contribution to pupils' religious education. During the week of the inspection, his theme focused on Jesus being at the centre of our lives. This was well explained by involving the pupils. Several were asked to wear a hat, each representing the people from one country. Then the pupils linked hands, representing 'all the people in the world' with a final hymn being sung 'He's got the whole world in his hands'.
120. The subject leader has good subject knowledge and much enthusiasm. She has worked hard to establish and implement the personal and social education programme and has identified clear links to the existing religious education curriculum. This now provides themes that make sense to all pupils and have become a feature of their daily lives at school, contributing to the very good relationships enjoyed by everyone at the school.