

INSPECTION REPORT

FARNHAM COMMON INFANT SCHOOL

Slough

LEA area: Buckinghamshire

Unique reference number: 110344

Headteacher: Mrs J R Coleman

Reporting inspector: Stephanie Denovan
17718

Dates of inspection: 14th – 17th October 2002

Inspection number: 246985

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Beaconsfield Road Farnham Common Slough
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr M J Cooper
Date of previous inspection:	26 th January 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
17718	S Denovan	Registered inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Geography Religious education	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
8986	P Andrew	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
27799	A Nicholson	Team inspector	English Science Design and technology History	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
19667	C Paine	Team inspector	Art and design Music Physical education Educational inclusion English as an additional language	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Farnham Common Infant School is an average sized school for boys and girls aged four to seven. There are 134 pupils on roll (including 24 who are part time): 68 boys and 66 girls. The school is situated in the village of Farnham Common on the busy A355, north of Slough. Pupils are organised into five single age classes, rising to six in January. Children are admitted three times annually and attend school for mornings only for the first term. Most children live in owner-occupied homes. They are from mixed backgrounds with many families from favourable socio-economic circumstances. Most pupils come from white UK backgrounds. Only a few have English as an additional language. Those that do also speak Bengali, Punjabi and Hindi at home but hardly any are at the early stages of learning English. About 11 per cent of pupils have special educational needs, which is well below the national average. These are mostly pupils with mild learning difficulties. Some pupils also have hearing impairment and minor physical difficulties. Few pupils have a statement of special educational needs. No pupils are in receipt of free school meals, which is well below the national average. Last year 14 pupils (nine per cent) either joined or left the school other than at the usual time of admission or transfer. The number of summer born pupils who attend the school is higher than normally found. When children enter the school, their attainment is above average except in writing where it is below. Since the school was last inspected in 1998 it has changed its status from First to Infant. It no longer has a Nursery or Year 3.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Farnham Common Infant is a good school with some very good features. Standards are mainly above average except in English and history where they are average. The quality of teaching is good overall with some very high quality teaching in mathematics. Pupils achieve well. Overall the leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher provides very strong leadership and she is currently managing the school well through a period of considerable staffing changes. The school provides satisfactory value for money overall; standards and teaching are good but the school's unit costs are high.

What the school does well

- Pupils achieve above average standards by the end of Year 2 in all subjects except English and history.
- Maintains good quality teaching.
- Ensures that excellent policies and systems in place underpin its work.
- Ensures pupils' very good attitudes to learning and very good behaviour contribute to the very good relationships throughout the school.
- It is well led by the headteacher.
- Develops very good links with parents, which ensures their regular contributions and involvement.
- Ensures that pupils with special educational needs make good progress as a result of providing good support from teaching assistants.
- Provides very good accommodation, environment and resources to support learning.
- Sustains very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

What could be improved

- Standards in English, particularly pupils' phonic skills (linking letters to sounds).
- The amount of problem solving in mathematics and opportunities for pupils in science to plan their own investigations.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in January 1998. Since that time the school has improved well in a number of ways. Standards are higher and more pupils are achieving well. There is more very good teaching. The leadership and management overall are more effective. The science standards have improved from below average to above average. The higher attaining pupils are achieving far better than

last time. Curriculum planning is more thorough. The school improvement plan is more sharply focused. Provision for pupils under five has improved. The school has the capacity to raise standards further, particularly in English.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on National Curriculum test results. (Schools are compared with similar schools on the basis of the number of pupils eligible for free school meals).

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

Children start the Reception year with above average levels of attainment, except in writing. They make good progress and exceed the early learning goals (the nationally expected standards) in all areas of learning except writing. This is because they are not taught phonics at a fast enough pace and there are not enough opportunities for them to write independently. Inspection findings show that standards across the school and by the time children are seven are largely above average except in English and history where they are average. On the whole most pupils achieve well. Because they are supported fully, pupils with English as an additional language do as well as other pupils. Those with special educational needs and higher attainers also do well because tasks largely meet their needs. In the 2002 national tests for seven-year-olds, standards in reading and writing were in line with the national average for all schools. Compared with schools in similar contexts, they were below average in reading and well below average in writing. Standards in mathematics were above average for all schools but only average in comparison with similar schools. Standards in reading and writing are not high enough due to pupils' lack of phonics skills. Standards in mathematics are being maintained. Standards in science, religious education and information and communication technology are all above average by the end of Key Stage 1. Over the last five years the trend in attainment either has been rising steadily or has been maintained. However this year standards in reading and writing have fallen owing the pupils' insecure grasp of phonics. Whole school targets for pupils to reach have been attained in mathematics and writing and only just missed in reading. At the higher Level 3 mathematics and reading targets were exceeded but fewer pupils reached the higher levels the school expected in writing.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning. They listen well to instructions and they work diligently.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils behave very well in lessons and at all other times around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils are sensible, accept responsibility and help and support each other well. Relationships are very good.
Attendance	Good. Pupils are keen to attend school.

The school places great emphasis on pupils' personal development and this is taught well through

personal, social and health education and religious education lessons and reinforced during the daily acts of collective worship. Pupils work industriously and they are keen to learn.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is good overall. Some of it is either very good or excellent. Only a tiny amount is unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching in Reception is mainly good because careful planning ensures tasks are structured in small steps. The quality of teaching for numeracy is good overall with some very good features. This includes skilful questioning, good pace and a high level of challenging tasks. The quality of teaching for literacy is broadly satisfactory and occasionally good, although there are shortcomings in the teaching of basic skills for five to seven-year-olds. Where teaching is less effective, pupils are expected to sit and listen for too long before starting their work. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress as the tasks they are given meet their needs and teaching assistants support them well. Higher attaining pupils generally make good progress as they are challenged sufficiently. Pupils' learning is good overall. This is because they generally acquire new knowledge and skills at a fast rate. Most pupils know how to improve their work. They are not always expected to think and learn for themselves through solving problems.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good overall. The curriculum is broad and balanced and generally meets the needs of all pupils. There are good links between subjects so that skills learned in numeracy and information and communication technology are reinforced elsewhere.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Teachers and support staff adapt tasks well to meet the needs of these pupils. Pupils make good progress in lessons because of high quality support from teaching assistants.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Very good. The school provides effective support for the few pupils who do not speak English as their home language.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall. Provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural development is very good and provision for their spiritual development is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The personal support and guidance given to children are very good and the monitoring of their academic performance is good.

The school works in partnership with parents very well. Parents' involvement and contribution to the work of the school and their children's progress have a positive impact on learning. There are many strengths in the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils, particularly during book, art and music weeks. The teaching of phonics is introduced too late and too slowly for pupils to write well enough by the time they leave the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good overall. The headteacher provides very good leadership and there is clear educational direction. Most subject co-ordinators are providing good leadership and management.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governors are involved closely with the work of the school. They act as good critical friends and share with the headteacher in providing clear strategic management.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The school effectively monitors and evaluates pupils' performance, planning, teaching and the quality of learning.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school's finances and very good quality resources for learning are used well to support learning.

The very good accommodation and learning resources are ensuring above average standards and good quality learning. The headteacher is skilfully managing current recruitment problems and new staff receive very good support. The very good leadership and management by the headteacher is a strength of the school. The school is applying the principles of best value to its work well. It challenges the performance data achieved, tracks and compares pupils' progress from baseline to national tests, consults with parents regularly about its effectiveness and compares prices when buying to obtain the best quotes.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Friendly caring secure atmosphere. • Experienced headteacher. • Pupils with special educational needs are supported well. • Valuable special weeks for art, music and book week. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Able pupils challenged fully. • Easier communications between the governors, Friends and the school. • Wider range of homework. • Greater provision for out of school activities.

The inspection team agrees with the positive views of parents. They consider that able pupils are challenged to achieve well. The inspection team considers that the homework given, which mainly relates to reading and the seasonal activities offered are appropriate for an infant school. The inspection reveals good links between the school and parents. The headteacher is available to parents at the start and end of school and parents have a weekly opportunity to discuss their child's progress with teachers.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Throughout the school, standards are largely above average and pupils achieve well because of good quality teaching. The only exception to this is in English, particularly writing and history where standards are average. Pupils' progress in these two areas is hampered by their lack of confidence and underdeveloped skills when writing. Although the intervention programme of Early Literacy Support (ELS) is taught at the end of term 1 in Year 1, pupils struggle to build words from their sounds. This has not hindered the ability of average and higher attaining pupils to read because their main strategy is remembering words by sight, but it does have a negative impact on the ability of the youngest children, who need a range of strategies to support them as developing writers. The linking of sounds and letters (phonics) is not taught quickly enough in Reception and the lack of opportunities for children to write independently means that standards in writing are only average by the time pupils leave the school at seven. For example, in a lesson seen in Reception, although writing groups were supported and adults encouraged children to talk about their ideas for writing they were not encouraged to write for themselves to develop confidence in themselves as writers.
2. In the National tests in 2002, seven-year-olds attained average standards in reading, writing and science (teacher assessment) and above average standards in mathematics. In comparison with similar schools, results are average in mathematics, below average in reading and science (teacher assessment) and well below average in writing. However, results in these same tests at the higher level 3 are much better, with reading standards being in the top five per cent nationally, writing and mathematics standards above average and science (teacher assessment) well above average when compared with all schools nationally. The weakest area is in standards of writing, which are not high enough. Over the last five years and since the school was last inspected in 1998 standards have been rising although they have dropped this year in reading and writing due to the lack of confidence with building words from their sounds as already outlined. Targets set at whole school level are within the range for average standards in mathematics and writing and only just missed in reading. At the higher levels, targets were exceeded in mathematics and reading but fewer pupils than expected gained level 3 in writing. These targets are sufficiently challenging.
3. Across the school, the rate of achievement for most pupils is good, except in their ability to build words from their sounds. The individual education plans of a significant number of children with special educational needs show they have weaknesses with phonics, both segmenting letter sounds and blending them. Achievement for pupils with special educational needs is good when they receive good support from teaching assistants who support them in classrooms. Individual education plans show pupils make good progress with targets. This very good support often occurs in mathematics such as in the Year 2 lesson seen when a teaching assistant worked with a small group in the quiet room adjacent to the classroom to improve their skills with number. Pupils' progress is good in Reception, exceptionally rapid in one of the Year 1 classes and satisfactory in the other and generally good in Year 2. The rapid progress in Year 1 is due to excellent teaching. This is needed because at the end of the Reception Year children are mixed to form the two Year 1 classes. This brings together children who entered the school part time in the summer term with those who have experienced two terms full time and one term part time. The school identifies its pupils who show a gift or talent in particular areas. When identified they have individual education plans to ensure their needs are met.
4. Few children have English as an additional language and a tiny minority are at an early stage of learning the language. Their progress is tracked carefully by the school and care is taken to ensure that children who are absent from school because they are abroad, reintegrate carefully back into the school. The emphasis at first is on settling them down before progress is assessed and tasks tailored to meet their needs. By the end of the school, these children achieve as well as others. Overall higher attaining pupils achieve well because skilful teaching meets their needs

by providing challenging and extended tasks. For example, in an excellent Year 2 mathematics lesson, extension work was planned for pupils to develop confidence and skills with estimating length.

5. In the Foundation Stage, children work at generally above average standards except in writing and their overall achievement is good. They are likely to meet and even exceed the Early Learning Goals on entry to Year 1 in all areas except writing. The youngest children are not taught phonics rapidly enough and standards in writing could be higher. Children are making largely good progress in personal, social and emotional development, physical and creative development and knowledge and understanding of the world. There are good relationships and they show positive approaches to learning. This is similar to that found when the school was last inspected in 1998. In their mathematics work children enjoy singing number rhymes and they know numbers which are one more than a given number. In their creative work they are encouraged to make choices, such as when making models of Humpty Dumpty. They are confident with information and communication technology and work independently on a nursery rhyme program using the mouse confidently to select pictures. Children listen well and try hard to improve their skills such as when developing a sequence of movements. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is consistently good.
6. Attainment for five to seven-year-olds in literacy is average, but because of pupils' lack of confidence with writing there is a limited contribution from other subjects. Consequently there is a tendency towards expecting pupils to complete worksheets. There are good standards in speaking and listening as pupils have a rich and varied vocabulary. Attainment for five to seven-year-olds in numeracy is good. There are many good opportunities to develop pupils' numeracy skills in science and geography, such as through data handling. These help to ensure that standards in number and calculations are above average by the end of the school.
7. Standards elsewhere are largely above average except in history. In science, pupils complete some good investigations but there are limited opportunities for them to devise their own ways of collecting information. Standards in art and design and technology are above average due to the wide variety of materials used and experiences given. There is a good range of work covered. Attainment in geography exceeds what is normally expected, because pupils have a well-developed sense of place, such as in the work comparing a Scottish island with their local area. Standards in history are average. There are strengths in the visits and trips to widen pupils' knowledge, such as to a local canal centre, but pupils' lack of confidence to write independently hampers the recording. Standards in information and communication technology, music, physical education and religious education are all above average. Again this is because there is a good range of activities for pupils and these subjects are generally taught well. The good standards achieved, for example in science and religious education have a positive impact on pupils' personal development.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. This is a school with a very strong ethos based on the principle of providing pupils with high quality early years education. It is this principle that leads to high expectations in most aspects of school life. These high expectations are very evident in the way in which pupils behave, their attitudes to school and their learning, the relationships within the school and pupils' personal development. This ethos is a significant strength of the school and has a very positive impact on pupils' education. Pupils are keen to come to school and have positive attitudes to learning; these are seen in all the evidence collected in the classrooms and are supported by the answers to the parents' questionnaire and at the meeting with parents. Pupils' behaviour throughout the school in lessons, at lunchtime and in the playgrounds is very good. Parents think it is too. Pupils' good behaviour is encouraged and developed by the consistent manner in which all the staff apply the school's policies. There is no evidence of oppressive behaviour and none was seen during the inspection. There are no exclusions.
9. The youngest children in the Foundation Stage listen well to instructions, they work together

constructively and they have very good attitudes to learning. Personal development and very good relationships develop from the calm and positive atmosphere of the school. In lessons, pupils cooperate very well, give each other encouragement and listen attentively to the teachers and each other. In the playgrounds there is a friendly atmosphere with all pupils participating in games and activities. The school provides many opportunities for pupils to accept responsibility and undertake tasks within the school community. These opportunities are eagerly grasped by pupils and carried out with enthusiasm. For example, there is a daily task for two Year 2 pupils to visit all classrooms during registration and note the names of all present for use by the midday supervisors at dinner time. The school's physical environment both inside and outside is very well looked after and during the school day the pupils play their part in keeping the school looking very neat and tidy. Attendance at 95.6 per cent is good and above the national average; unauthorised absence is below the national average. The incidence of late arrival is low. Registration is carried out promptly and efficiently at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

10. The quality of teaching is mainly good across the school. It is good in more than one in two lessons and has some very good features in more than one in three lessons for five to seven-year-olds. There is a wide variety in the quality of teaching in Year 1 from excellent to just below satisfactory, although overall it is good. This is because when the two Reception classes are mixed together before pupils enter Year 1 some teachers find it challenging to meet the needs of pupils who have been in Reception for only a few weeks while at the same time stretching the older pupils. However there is also excellent teaching in Year 1. The quality of teaching in Year 2 is mainly good with very good teaching in almost one in two lessons. Teaching to the youngest children is consistently good and this will ensure they exceed most of the Early Learning Goals, except writing, by the end of Reception. The amount of very good teaching is now higher than when the school was last inspected in 1998 and the amount of less than satisfactory teaching is lower. The quality of teachers' planning has improved.
11. The excellent teaching is in mathematics for five to seven-year-olds. It is excellent because:
- previous learning is reviewed at the start of the lesson and skills are systematically built upon;
 - a wide variety of methods is used to challenge all pupils and consolidate learning; and
 - the plenary extends the learning into what is to follow in the next lesson.

For example, during one lesson pupils were taught how to estimate and measure the length of lines and the plenary extended the learning when pupils were asked to estimate, then measure the length of their hands.

12. Very good teaching occurs with the youngest pupils in Reception, in physical education, information and communication technology, in music, history, again in mathematics and also in other year groups. The characteristics of the very good lessons are:
- good quality resources and well organised lessons, which support learning;
 - effective questioning of children to probe for understanding;
 - plenty of opportunities for pupils to evaluate their work; and
 - very good management of time by teachers.

For example, in a very good lesson seen with a small group of Year 2 pupils they evaluated their sequence of instructions when programming a moveable robot and achieved success as a result. In a music lesson with Year 2, the teacher showed very good questioning skills when developing pupils' knowledge of notation. Good lessons were seen across most subjects. In science, a good lesson with Year 1 enabled pupils to build a good bank of knowledge because the teacher made good links between this subject, design and technology and art. Where lessons are just satisfactory but without elements of very good or good teaching it is because:

- spelling and handwriting tasks are not matched fully to the needs of pupils;

- in English and religious education there are some missed opportunities to develop pupils' ideas and enable them to share their work; and
- the plenary discussion when teaching letter sounds is not targeted on pupils' needs fully.

For example, in a Year 2 lesson, the teaching missed opportunities to link handwriting with improving pupils' phonic skills and as the pace of the lesson slowed some pupils lost attention and motivation.

13. A small minority of lessons is just below satisfactory. This is because the level of tasks is not always well matched to pupils' needs, learning points are not always made explicit and pupils are expected to sit passively and listen to the teacher for too long. When these features are present, progress slows and this particularly affects higher attaining pupils who lose momentum.
14. The good quality teaching and good progress pupils make have a major impact on the standards reached and maintained. Pupils acquire new knowledge and skills at a generally good rate because time and resources are used well by teachers. The good opportunities for improving numeracy skills across the curriculum enable pupils to apply these skills to build up a secure knowledge base. Pupils develop their ideas, for example, in art and information and communication technology because they are mostly challenged by the tasks. Pupils are interested in their work and mainly sustain concentration because teachers manage pupils' behaviour well and they have high expectations of them. The only areas where not enough is expected of pupils to think and learn for themselves is when the use of worksheets restricts progress, or when phonics teaching is too slow and it is introduced too late. Most pupils understand what they have to do in lessons and they are aware that target setting is helping them to understand what they need to do to improve.
15. The quality of teaching in literacy is satisfactory overall. Strengths of the teaching include good teacher questioning, but there are shortcomings in the teaching of phonics. Pupils recognise initial sounds well but they struggle to blend medial sounds in the centre of words. This hinders the quality of their writing. The quality of teaching in numeracy is good overall. Pupils are gaining confidence with mental calculation because of the good oral/mental starters to lessons. There is a good structuring of tasks into small steps to enable pupils to build their skills of number and calculations. Not enough opportunities are provided for pupils to decide what mathematics they need to use to solve problems. The quality of teaching in science is satisfactory overall. The same strengths of good teacher questioning and structuring knowledge to enable pupils to link and build on what they already know, as seen in literacy and numeracy teaching, can be seen in science. The weakest area is the lack of opportunities for pupils to plan their own investigations and devise their own ways of collecting information.
16. Teaching in other subjects is largely good. It is very good in music and physical education because lessons are well managed and pupils are expected to show responsibility and independence, such as when assembling apparatus. They are praised throughout lessons, which develops self-confidence. Teaching in information and communication technology, design and technology, history, geography and art is mainly good. This is because ample opportunities are provided for pupils to discuss and share their learning. Teaching in religious education is satisfactory.
17. The school mostly meets the needs of all pupils well. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the good support from skilful teaching assistants and teachers. The teaching methods used are inclusive, such as in mathematics varying the difficulty of questions to meet pupils' needs. Teachers work with the special education needs co-ordinator to write and review pupils' individual education plans that record targets and progress effectively. Pupils with English as an additional language receive good support to settle them into school, particularly following long absences. Pupils that are gifted and talented are identified and given work to meet their needs. Last year the school had identified quite a number of these children but they have not identified as many this year. Homework is mainly reading in Reception and Year 1. In Year 2, pupils in addition to reading take home spellings to learn. This is in line with national guidance given for pupils of this age.

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

18. The curriculum meets the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education well. The curriculum provides a good range of worthwhile opportunities. There are real strengths in the curriculum through the special weeks for art, music and developing pupils' knowledge of books and through personal and social education. The youngest pupils in the Reception class receive an appropriate curriculum based on the Early Learning Goals. In the Foundation Stage, the curriculum is carefully planned to address all areas of learning. Activities are planned around a theme, for example, nursery rhymes and they are generally interesting and enjoyable. At this early stage in the year there are limited opportunities for pupils to make choices and to work independently, although this is planned for later in the term. Attainment in writing is not as good as it could be because there are few opportunities for children in the Foundation Stage to write independently. The basic phonic skills to support independent writing are not taught early enough. As a result pupils in Years 1 and 2 lack confidence in themselves as writers.
19. The balance of activities for pupils in Years 1 and 2 is good. This is an improvement since the school was last inspected in 1998, when there was inadequate time for science and religious education. Planning through themes enables teachers and pupils to make links across subjects, which allows the pupils to achieve well. This planning is carefully monitored by co-ordinators to ensure coverage of all National Curriculum subjects. Some subjects are well enhanced by trips out, visitors to school and the special weeks. History is supported well through visits to the Chiltern Open Air Museum and to Batchworth Lock. The school has a very useful wooded area within the grounds, which enhances many curriculum areas well, especially science. The school has planned the English curriculum to allow time for pupils to write at length. This is well supported by some subject areas, where pupils have additional opportunities to write, such as in religious education. In other subjects, such as in history, there is overuse of worksheets, which restricts these opportunities and adversely affects the standards achieved by some pupils. Some extra-curricular activities are provided. There is short tennis in the spring and summer terms and a gardening club. As this is an infant school, the extent of this provision is appropriate.
20. All subject policies contain clear statements about equal opportunities. Pupils in the school have very good access to all areas of the curriculum irrespective of gender, ability, ethnicity or special need. The provision for pupils with special needs is good and these pupils make good progress because of the way in which teaching assistants work closely with teachers to meet their needs.
21. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. Pupils are given opportunities to reflect on what is important to them in assemblies and religious education lessons. Teachers encourage pupils to delight in the wooded area and the wildlife associated with it. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. The school provides very good opportunities for personal, social and health education. Pupils are taught about healthy eating and lots of work is completed about personal safety. The good provision for personal, social and health education underpins most curriculum areas and there is a strong emphasis on caring for the individual. Provision for pupils' social development is very good. Adults in the school model very good relationships. They help pupils to develop positive attitudes towards each other and to their work in school. Opportunities are provided for pupils to work together collaboratively, for example in mathematics lessons and when acting out a story in the role-play area. Provision for pupils' cultural development is very good. Visiting authors and storytellers visit the school as part of book week. There are visits by musicians and by theatre groups. Resources for art include a good range of visual images, which are multicultural and multi-faith. Pupils have the opportunity to hear music from a range of cultures each morning during the acts of collective worship.
22. The school has good links with the local community and these links are well used to support the curriculum. For example, the local firemen visit the school to talk about fire safety. A local employer helped the school to develop the sensory walk in the wooded area. The school has good

links with partner institutions. There is a private nursery on the school site where good links continue regarding children's progress and there are good procedures for passing on essential information to the local junior school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

23. The school takes good care of its pupils and this is a significant strength. The good provision reported at the last inspection has been maintained. The procedures for child protection are in place and thoroughly understood by staff. All the standard health and safety checks are satisfactorily carried out. The school has one welfare assistant and twelve other members of staff with first aid training. This is very good provision. There is a clearly defined behaviour policy, which is consistently used by all staff across the whole school. The very good behaviour of pupils demonstrates the value of the behaviour policy and the effectiveness of the school ethos of self-discipline and respect for others in the school community. The procedures for monitoring attendance and late arrival are good. The headteacher ensures that all unexplained absences are followed-up and parents contacted. The success of these procedures is seen in the good level of attendance and the low rate of unauthorised absence. Late arrival is noted and checked each day by the school secretary. The teachers and staff know the pupils very well. Thus the personal development of pupils is very well monitored both on an informal basis and through the written annual reports. Pupils receive very good educational and personal support. This support is well recognised by the parents as is shown by the answers to the parents' questionnaire and in the comments made by parents during the inspection. All staff sign an Internet code of practice to ensure pupils' safety.
24. The school has comprehensive and effective systems in place for analysing performance data, including information about the youngest pupils when they enter school. The headteacher takes a lead in this work and information is shared with all staff. The quality of assessment has improved since the school was last inspected in 1998. Assessment information for the youngest pupils is based on the Qualification and Curriculum Authority's Stepping Stones and this is ongoing throughout Reception. All pupils have a reading age assessment in the term of their sixth birthday. Together with an assessment for the Early Literacy Strategy (ELS) these are used to identify pupils who need support through this scheme and those who may need further investigation of a special educational need. The school also uses this information as an early indicator of pupils likely to achieve the higher Level 3 in reading in the Key Stage 1 national assessments. Pupils in Year 2 are also assessed through the Pre-Chiltern test and further support is put in place for those who need it. Progress in mathematics is tracked through the RM 'snapshot'. Information provided by these tests is also used effectively by the headteacher to check the effectiveness of the core skills curricula. Teachers regularly monitor the effectiveness of their planning and identify pupils who need additional support or who have performed particularly well. This information is used well to inform later lessons. Pupils are set good individual targets, which they know, understand and are proud to achieve. Overall, the comprehensive assessment in use helps to ensure most standards are above average.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

25. Discussions with parents during the inspection, answers to the parents' questionnaire and comments at the parents' meeting all show that parents have very positive attitudes to the school. The school encourages parents to take an active part in the life of the school. Parents are well informed of the progress their children are making. The partnership of the school and the parents makes a vital contribution to the progress the children make and it is a significant strength. The school has built upon the positive relationships noted in the previous report. The school has a wide range of very effective links with the parents that encourage and enhance learning. Parents and governors come into school on a regular basis to hear children read, help in many ways in the classroom and those from different cultural backgrounds use their experiences to broaden the understanding of pupils. With the backing of all the parents, the active Friends of the School raises considerable sums of money each year used to enhance pupils' learning. The Friends of the School helps and encourages parents to meet together socially thus strengthening the whole

school community.

26. The quality of information provided for parents is very good and has improved since the previous inspection. There are three or four newsletters each term and also letters explaining the curriculum. The annual reports are clearly written and give a very good record of the standards reached, progress made and pupils' targets for future development. Meetings are held in the autumn term giving parents the opportunity to learn how their children are settling into the new school year and in the spring term to discuss attainment and progress. These meetings are very well attended. In the summer term parents have the opportunity to discuss the annual reports with teachers. Class teachers are available for meeting any parents wishing to raise matters for a short time each Thursday. At the end of the school day the headteacher together with the welfare assistant is outside the school as the parents collect their children. These provide very good opportunities for parents to discuss the needs of their children regularly. Parents make a significant contribution to children's learning both at home and in school and this positively reinforces children's all-round development.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

27. The headteacher is a very effective leader and this has ensured that standards of attainment, the rate of pupils' progress and the quality of education pupils receive is good overall. As a leader, she gives clear educational direction to the school. She knows its strengths and weaknesses and she knows exactly what needs to be done to maintain continuous improvement. The quality of her management skills is also very good. She tracks the progress of pupils through work sampling and monitors and evaluates the school's performance through careful analysis of data and visits to classrooms. The deputy headteacher has been in post for just a month but her role and the extent of tasks to be delegated to her have not yet been finalised. This will be an important step for the school as the headteacher is co-ordinating the work in at least six major areas. The deputy headteacher is a good mentor to the newly qualified teacher. All new teachers to the school receive very good support. The school has faced considerable recruitment difficulties recently, but the headteacher has ensured through good support for new teachers that this is not having an adverse effect on the school. The leadership and management skills of subject co-ordinators are varied but generally good, particularly in mathematics, information and communication technology, music, physical education and religious education. Because co-ordinators keep good evidence of pupils' work they can easily see where there are weaknesses in provision and this helps all teachers to see what is expected of pupils at various levels. Co-ordinators agree the focus of observations with teachers and this is helping to improve upon areas for development. The school has not highlighted the weakness in the teaching of phonics although it is aware of the lack of continuity between Reception and Year 1.
28. The governing body fulfils its responsibilities and statutory functions effectively. Governors are fiercely protective of the school because they have full confidence in the headteacher managing its day to day running and they know it is a good school. Individual governors become acquainted with the school's work visiting literacy, numeracy and science lessons. Through written reports they share this information with all governors, which keeps them well informed. School policies are discussed at the curriculum committee of governors and referred to the full governing body for approval. Governors provide good support to the school in the monitoring and development of the curriculum. The governor with responsibility for special educational needs visits the school weekly and spends time in the classroom of pupils with the most severe special needs. In this way she is very aware of the support, care and attention they receive. The governors are fully involved with school improvement planning and, through the detailed performance data supplied by the local education authority, they are well aware of the standards of the school. They satisfactorily hold the school to account for its performance and they are helping to shape its strategic direction.
29. Overall the leadership and management of the school has improved from satisfactory at the time of the last inspection to good currently. The school effectively monitors and evaluates its performance. Baseline testing carried out within the first half term of pupils entering the school provides an indication of pupils' attainment from which progress is measured, targets are set and pupils with special educational needs are identified. Commercial tests in Year 1 in reading and

mathematics show pupils' progress and are a good indicator of attainment in standard assessment tests by the age of seven. Results of national tests are analysed thoroughly. Subjects are monitored by co-ordinators in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science and the quality of teaching is carefully monitored by the headteacher mainly as part of performance management. Policies, planning and schemes of work are reviewed regularly and adapted where necessary to secure improvement. There is good advice and support from an external consultant for special educational needs.

30. The quality of resources is very good. Curriculum resources stimulate pupils' learning and the accommodation is used well to support it further. The only exception is the below average number of computers. The school has identified this as needing improvement. Spending decisions are closely linked to improvement planning. The school applies the principles of best value well. It challenges itself through analysis of performance data, compares results with national averages and consults with parents about their views of the school. A resources working party has been in place for 18 months for governors to discuss and ensure best value. The school benefits from a considerable amount of money raised by parents annually to support pupils' learning. Spending is wisely targeted on the most pressing needs. There are good links between planning and spending. The school improvement plan follows the format of the Ofsted framework for inspection closely; it is a useful tool for development. It is a four-year plan with clear statements about how it will know the actions have been successful. It is reviewed very thoroughly and amendments made where necessary. This is also one of the main ways the school diagnoses its own strengths and weaknesses. This plan represents an improvement since the school was last inspected in 1998.
31. This is a well-run school. A particular strength is the wide range of excellent systems and policies in place to aid the smooth running of the school. These are consistently applied and adhered to by all staff. For example, subject policies are very helpful, particularly for new teachers and set out clear expectations. Effective use is made of information and communication technologies such as electronic mail, especially by the headteacher and deputy head. There are good systems in place to monitor the school budget. The school has two new teachers since September of this year and one is a newly qualified teacher. They are receiving very good support. They are given time away from the demands of the classroom to plan lessons and become familiar with the National Curriculum. There is some excellent teaching within the school, which they are benefiting from, by observing. There is a good balance of experienced and relatively new staff to teaching and well experienced support staff.
32. There are seven broad aims of the school, which encompass all aspects of its work. The school provides all pupils with access to and enjoyment from the National and wider Curriculum, regardless of their beliefs, gender, ethnic origin, ability or family circumstances. This inclusive policy underpins its work. All children are valued and made to feel welcome. Relationships are very good and children and adults are proud of their school. Pupils with special educational needs receive well-targeted support from skilful teaching assistants and consequently they make good progress with developing their knowledge, understanding and skills.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

33. The headteacher, staff and governors should:
- (1) Raise attainment in English further by:
- increasing the rate at which pupils from Reception to Year 2 are taught phonics (linking sounds to letters);
 - increasing the opportunities for pupils to write independently and reducing the number of worksheets in use; and
 - ensuring pupils have the correct pencil grip when writing.
- (Paragraphs: 1, 3, 6, 15, 18, 36, 43, 44)*
- (2) Provide more opportunities for pupils to think and learn for themselves by:

- increasing the amount of problem solving in mathematics; *
- creating more opportunities in science for pupils to plan their own investigations and devise their own ways of recording.

(Paragraphs: 15, 49, 50, 56)

Other areas that should be included in the action plan:

- increase the number of computers in the school. *

(Paragraphs: 30, 69)

* The school has identified these areas for development as part of their improvement plan.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	29
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	14

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	2	8	6	11	2	0	0
Percentage	7	27	21	38	7	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 three percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	134
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
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	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	9

Attendance

Authorised absence 2001

	%
School data	4.2

Unauthorised absence 2001

	%
School data	0.3

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	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	31	24	55

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	26	29	30
	Girls	22	22	23
	Total	48	51	53
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	87 (91)	93 (91)	96 (93)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	28	29	28
	Girls	23	22	22
	Total	51	51	50
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (91)	93 (93)	91 (93)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

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

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
97	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
3	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
5	0	0
28	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.5
Average class size	27.0

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	72

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
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	£
Total income	345,701
Total expenditure	339,883
Expenditure per pupil	2,327
Balance brought forward from previous year	12,682
Balance carried forward to next year	18,500

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4
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	123
Number of questionnaires returned	79

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	67	29	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	43	52	4	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	63	35	0	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	29	57	8	1	3
The teaching is good.	43	51	3	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	23	56	11	4	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	58	37	3	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	57	38	3	1	1
The school works closely with parents.	33	52	10	4	1
The school is well led and managed.	56	39	3	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	57	41	0	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	15	43	23	1	13

Other issues raised by parents

The Registered Inspector received 17 responses from parents. Most were very supportive and parents felt the links with the school were excellent, they praised the friendly atmosphere and they appreciated the special art, music and book weeks. Overall they were delighted with the school. Other issues raised by parents concerned the teaching of handwriting, new staff at the school, the balance of homework and defensive school reactions.

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

It should be noted that this inspection occurred very early into the autumn term when these children had been in school part time for only a few weeks.

34. Standards for children in the Foundation Stage are broadly above average and overall they achieve well due to good teaching. Children are mainly on track to exceed the Early Learning Goals by the end of Reception, except in writing. These standards have been maintained since the last inspection. The teacher plans the curriculum carefully so that children can work towards the Early Learning Goals (the standard children are expected to achieve before joining Year 1). Stepping Stones (progressive steps towards the goals) are used well in planning. Because it is early in the term these are not yet closely linked to the achievements of individual children. Baseline assessments for previous intakes show that children have standards which are above those expected for their age on entry to school, except in writing, where standards are below those expected. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good in most areas of learning except in writing. The teacher's enthusiasm is reflected in children's eagerness to learn. There are very good relationships in the class, both between children and between children and adults. This helps children to feel secure and to take part in class activities confidently. This confidence is further promoted by the clear routines the teacher has established, for example, all children know what is expected of them at 'tidy-up' time. However, there are few opportunities for children to plan their independent activities.

Personal, social and emotional development

35. By the time they leave Reception, most children are likely to exceed the Early Learning Goal in this area. These children are enthusiastic about learning and put a great deal of effort into what they do. They mostly listen well and understand classroom routines. Children work well with each other, for example when making up and acting out a story in the 'baker's shop'. They organise themselves, getting physical education kit and putting their clothes tidily and they are confident when tackling new tasks. There are not yet enough opportunities for children to get the resources they need without adult help. However, the classroom is carefully organised and well resourced to promote independence as the term progresses. Teaching is good.

Communication, language and literacy

36. The teaching of most basic skills is carefully structured and promotes good learning. Children enter the Reception class with a generally high level of attainment in reading, speaking and listening. Most are confident to start a conversation with friends and with new people. Children use language to develop their play in an imaginative way, for example, when playing in the 'baker's shop': "Everything's all ready now, I'll go and find some customers." Most are interested in books and enjoy following a story. They can talk about their favourite books and recall the main parts of familiar stories. Most children can identify initial sounds in words and the most able can identify some written letter sounds. Most children are likely to exceed the Early Learning Goals, for speaking and listening and for reading. Teaching is mainly good. Pupils enter the Reception class with attainment in writing, which is generally below the average level for Buckinghamshire. The development of early writing skills is not as well developed as it could be. Structured writing sessions are adapted to meet the needs of each child. Children begin by writing over the writing of an adult, then underneath. However, children do not see themselves as writers and insufficient encouragement is given for them to write as part of their play in order to achieve the Early Learning Goal for writing. The very slow introduction of letter sounds in Reception means that children have limited strategies to write independently. Dependency on adult support affects the pace of writing in Years 1 and 2.

Mathematical development

37. Most children are making sound progress in using numbers and teaching is largely effective. They can touch-count accurately to ten and some can recognise and order numerals to five. Most can calculate one more than and the most able pupils are beginning to understand the term less than. Pupils work well with apparatus to support their counting skills, but are less confident when recording in their workbooks. The workbook tasks slow the rate at which some children learn because of the writing skills needed. Given their good levels of attainment in mathematics on entry most pupils are on track to achieve and perhaps exceed the Early Learning Goal for this area of learning.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

38. Attainment is good in this area. Pupils enjoy exploring a collection of silver objects. They have opportunities to design and make three-dimensional models, for example, Humpty Dumpty on his wall. They are helped to develop their understanding of the natural world by discussing the weather chart each morning. They can use a computer mouse accurately to select images from a nursery rhyme program. Many children are already achieving aspects of the Early Learning Goal for this area and should exceed expectations by the end of Reception. Teaching is good.

Physical development

39. Children are developing very good skills in most areas of physical development and most children have already achieved the Early Learning Goal for this area because the quality of teaching is good. Most can use paint and glue with a degree of independence and are given good opportunities to improve their cutting skills. They use a variety of construction kits to make models, which represent familiar objects. They move around the hall without colliding during physical education. They work with great concentration in these lessons and are beginning to put together a sequence of movements involving changes of direction well. They line up without pushing each other and sit in a space on the carpet when required. There is no secure outside play area which children can use as part of their choosing activities. However, good use is made of the woodland environment, nursery play area and main playground to ensure children have opportunities to climb and engage in adventurous outdoor play and these represent improvements since the school was last inspected in 1998.

Creative development

40. Most children are likely to exceed the Early Learning Goal in this area. They can discuss music they have listened to and remember the instrument. They sing songs with actions and can change from loud to soft singing. They can change the speed at which they sing and can copy a simple clapping rhythm. Their drawing and painting skills are developing well. For example, they can draw pictures to show the further adventures of Humpty Dumpty. They are beginning to enact imaginary situations through their play, for example when using small world toys. The quality of teaching is good overall.

ENGLISH

41. Results in the 2002 national tests show that standards for seven-year-olds were average in reading, writing and spelling. When comparing national results in 2002 with those in similar schools, standards were below average in reading and well below average in writing. This represents a significant fall over the last few years where the trend in above average standards had been maintained in both reading and writing. However good standards have been maintained at the higher levels, with attainment in reading for these children being in the top five per cent nationally and above average standards attained in writing and spelling. Inspection findings are in line with these results. Reading, writing and spelling standards could be higher for average and lower attaining pupils. On entry to Reception, reading standards are above the average for

Buckinghamshire but a significant number of children enter with below average standards in writing. Although the school has a system for teaching phonics (the sounds that letters make) it does not teach it coherently or rapidly enough from Reception through to Years 1 and 2 for all children to gain these basic skills progressively. The school admits children at three points in the school year: September, January and April. At the start of Year 1, these pupils are mixed into two new classes. As a result, children who have only had one term part time are working in the same class as children who have experienced two terms full time and one term part time. Higher attaining children in Year 1 consequently repeat the early stages of phonics learning such as hearing the sounds in speech and recognising sounds in the initial and final position in words. This and the segmenting (breaking a word into its sounds) and blending (combining sounds in words) of simple words should have been taught in Reception. This holds back pupils' attainment in reading and writing by the end of Year 2.

42. Standards are similar to those found at the time of the last inspection. Girls have consistently achieved higher levels than boys in English but the gap is much less than that found nationally and is not significant. Pupils with special educational needs receive appropriate support from the teacher or teaching assistants during lessons to meet the targets in their individual education plans. In the spring term in Year 1, a teaching assistant provides effective support through early literacy support (ELS) for a small group of children to catch up with writing, reading and speaking and listening skills. Few children with English as an additional language are at an early stage of learning the language but they do receive support from teaching assistants to help them reintegrate back into the school when they have been away on extended visits abroad. Their progress is consequently good. The whole school target range for pupils reaching average standards in reading was not quite reached; it was attained in writing. The target for reading at the higher level was exceeded but it was not reached in writing. The school expected more pupils to reach the higher Level 3 than did. Pupils' literacy standards are average overall but pupils do not apply their skills sufficiently well in other subjects. This is because of pupils' lack of confidence in writing. As a result, there is an overuse of worksheets for pupils to record their writing, which is particularly noticeable in history where standards are average.
43. By the age of seven, pupils achieve average standards in reading. Higher attaining pupils do well. They have good individual support for reading and the work completed at home with parents makes a major contribution to standards of reading in school. Pupils regularly take home words to learn and very good support from parents ensures this happens. Pupils have been taught to rely very heavily on remembering the images of words differentiated by overall shapes and patterns. Also they have been taught to rely on picking up the contextual clues as strategies for reading. While these are good methods not enough emphasis has been given to blending and segmenting sounds in words, resulting in problems when children face unfamiliar words. This in turn has a knock-on effect, hampering their confidence with writing because they struggle to spell regular words when writing independently. Even the most able readers lack strategies to deal with new words. Most can identify the initial sound, but find it hard to break up a word into sounds, especially when there are combinations of letters making one sound.
44. Standards in writing by the end of the school are broadly average although too few pupils are likely to achieve higher levels. Although there are dedicated lessons for the teaching of handwriting, too many pupils have an incorrect pencil grip, which is not corrected in these lessons. Teachers provide very good resources for pupils to use, such as word banks, individual word walls, wordbooks and 'have a go' strips. However, these resources rely on recognising whole words and many pupils find it hard to attempt any but the simplest words alone. This affects pupils' confidence and they will wait to have their own attempts checked before writing the word in their books. They therefore write at a slow pace, and many avoid using the interesting vocabulary they use in their speech. There is a good range of writing across the school, including stories, poems and factual accounts.
45. Pupils are on target to exceed the national standards in speaking and listening by the time they leave the school. They enjoy discussing stories and they can make good suggestions about what might be included in their own writing. Many have a wide range of vocabulary and put together complex ideas confidently, for example, when suggesting how else the ferryman in the Katie

Morag story might earn a living.

46. The quality of teaching seen during inspection was satisfactory. In the best lessons, the teachers use good questioning to ensure that pupils recognise the main theme of a story. For example, again the Katie Morag story of the New Pier deals with people's reactions to change. Pupils are encouraged to speculate about what might happen next. Pupils are shown how to put ideas together to make a story of their own. Where teaching is less good, the lesson is slow and dominated by the teacher. There are limited opportunities for pupils to work together or to share their ideas with their classmates and not enough opportunities for pupils to grasp phonics. Pupils throughout the school have very good attitudes to their learning. They listen carefully and respond well to their teachers. They settle quickly to independent work, although they tend to be overly dependent on the teacher in written tasks.
47. The medium-term planning for English does identify the work to be covered in learning letter sounds, but this work is introduced at a much slower rate than recommended in the National Literacy Strategy. Skills such as blending consonants and knowing the sound made by two vowels together, such as 'ea' and 'ie' are being introduced almost a year later than in most schools. The subject co-ordinator works with the headteacher to monitor standards in English and she has had opportunities to observe teaching. She has correctly identified the need to improve the number of pupils achieving Level 3 for writing and has introduced some elements of the Year 3 programme into Year 2 for the most able pupils. The co-ordinator effectively produces the medium-term plans for all staff each term. The school portfolio shows a good range of writing. Good support for English is provided through the annual book week, which includes visits from authors.

MATHEMATICS

48. Children enter the school with well-developed numeracy and mathematical skills. By the time they are seven, standards are above average and these levels are being maintained. There has been good improvement in the standard of mathematics throughout the school since the last inspection. Results in the 2001 national tests show that standards for seven-year-olds were above average. When comparing these results with those in similar schools standards were average. Results in the 2002 national tests indicate that above average standards have been maintained and that a greater percentage of pupils achieved at the higher Level 3 than in 2001. Over the last three years the trend in attainment has been rising steadily. Throughout this time there has been little difference in the attainment between boys and girls. Inspection findings show standards throughout the school are above average. This is because there is some high quality teaching and a careful building on to the skills pupils have already attained. Pupils with special educational needs are making good progress. They are well integrated into lessons and supported by teaching assistants. The whole school target range for pupils reaching average standards in mathematics was reached and it was exceeded at the higher level. Target setting is accurate and each pupil has individual targets to reach in this subject.
49. By the age of seven, pupils achieve above average standards in shape, space and measures as most can estimate lengths and draw and measure lines accurately. In an excellent lesson seen in Year 2, the teacher used a variety of very good practical strategies to support pupils when estimating and measuring objects. The plenary discussion reinforced and extended the learning further. Pupils are developing their confidence with understanding place value and how to add decimals. Their standard of problem solving is average but this is not high enough given their well-developed skills in other mathematical areas. Insufficient opportunities were observed for pupils to select the mathematics needed to solve problems and to think and learn for themselves. The school has identified this need to improve pupils' problem solving skills in its improvement plan. Tasks are occasionally over-directed and the overuse of worksheets and workbooks restricts pupils' ability to record answers using a variety of methods. When last inspected there was a good range of work on investigations.
50. Standards in number and calculation work are above average by the time pupils are seven. Pupils confidently double numbers and they know that counting back relates to subtracting numbers. In

another excellent lesson seen with Year 1 on calculating numbers, which were more than and less than, the teacher constantly challenged pupils with harder numbers, such as 'What is six less than 23?' In this lesson a wide variety of practical strategies were used to ensure pupils had grasped the idea of doubling and counting. Pupils counted the spots on one side of a ladybird and then copied it on the other side. With their eyes closed the teacher dropped cubes into an empty tin as pupils counted. This reinforcement and skilful building up of skills enables pupils to grasp each new idea well. Standards in data handling are above average. Pupils gather data about themselves in Year 1 and answer questions from pictographs well. This work is extended into Year 2 through conducting traffic surveys but pupils are not expected to raise their own questions about the information shown. This is another reason why their problem solving standard is only average due to restricted opportunities to explain their mathematics.

51. Overall the rate of achievement for lower attaining pupils is good. They receive questions at their level during the mental/oral start to lessons and work with support from teaching assistants throughout. For example, to reinforce counting forwards and backwards one or two more or less than, the teaching assistant took a small group into the hall with large cut out dinosaur footprints to jump back or forward. These practical activities support pupils' learning very well. Pupils have individual targets to work at improving and they know what these are. Skilful questioning, such as in a lesson seen in Year 2 on classifying three-dimensional shapes challenges higher attaining pupils. A few gifted pupils know how to add and subtract two, two-digit numbers mentally and the place value in numbers such as 3216. They receive work to extend their thinking and make good progress as a result.
52. The quality of teaching varies from excellent to satisfactory but it is good overall with some very good features. Skilful questioning to deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding and high challenge are consistent characteristics of very good and excellent lessons. These qualities, coupled with building onto the skills pupils already have, ensure all pupils make good progress. This is achieved by reviewing the learning from the previous lesson and providing feedback on the areas pupils find difficult. However, throughout lessons, there are limited opportunities for pupils to explain how they arrived at an answer and explain their reasoning. Very occasionally teachers spend too long on the oral/mental starter and main teaching part of the lesson, which causes pupils to fidget and lose concentration. In a Year 1 lesson, which was just satisfactory, it was because higher attaining pupils were repeating, for example, the learning of doubles, they were already secure with. In Year 2, teachers do not always remind lower attaining and average pupils to use number lines or squares to help them and this causes their progress to slow. However, some teachers do use other children to support pupils' learning such as in the lesson seen where a teacher asked, 'who can help her with counting the four coins to make 35p?' Planning is consistently good throughout all classes and there is some very good teaching to small groups to take their learning forward quickly. Learning objectives are very clear and build the learning in well-timed short steps. All teachers motivate and enthuse pupils so that their behaviour is very good. Pupils' listening skills and their attitudes to learning are good. They settle down quickly to activities when working independently. Pupils self correct when they make errors, which shows they are very aware of their own learning. Pupils are keen and anxious to contribute in lessons and they persevere with their learning. They work enthusiastically and enjoy their mathematics work. All of these features have a positive effect on the overall good progress pupils make.
53. Other subjects across the curriculum contribute very well to the progress made in numeracy and mathematics, such as the data handling work in science and the map work co-ordinates in geography. The leadership and management of the subject is very good because the co-ordinator is strong and the governor responsible for numeracy, visits and writes reports to inform other governors of developments. The co-ordinator produces the medium-term plans for the whole of Key Stage 1 to enable a good progression of skills. The quality of resources is very good and this ensures pupils receive mathematical ideas at their particular level. In the spring term of Year 1 and again in the autumn term of Year 2, pupils take assessments, which help to track their individual progress and highlight areas of weaker attainment across the school. This enables teachers to target their teaching before pupils take national assessment at the end of Year 2. There is very good leadership and management of this subject because the monitoring and evaluating leads to improving performance.

SCIENCE

54. At the time of the last inspection, standards in science were below those expected nationally and progress was judged to be unsatisfactory. The school has made good improvements in the teaching of science and standards are now above the level expected by the end of their time in the infant school. This has been maintained over the last three years, with a significant proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 in the Key Stage 1 teacher assessments in 2002. Inspection evidence shows that pupils of all abilities achieve well, including those with special educational needs.
55. Pupils in Year 2 learn to investigate and categorise materials such as wood, metal and plastic into a number of groups. In work seen, they record these investigations well, although more able pupils have limited opportunities to devise their own recording methods. Most can describe what happens during an experiment such as when toasting bread to investigate change through heating. Some can make simple predictions. These pupils are likely to exceed the expected standards by the end of Year 2. Pupils in Year 1 can describe the life cycle of an apple tree, although some are unsure of the key vocabulary. They investigate forces and magnetism and make an umbrella to find out about waterproofing. There is a great deal of work completed, which is related to safety and to healthy living. This makes a very good contribution to pupils' personal development.
56. The teaching of science is satisfactory overall. In the best lessons, teachers plan carefully so that new knowledge is carefully linked to what pupils already know or can do. Very skilled questioning is used to help pupils share their own ideas, suggest what might happen, or consider new ideas carefully. Where teaching is less good, there are very limited opportunities for pupils to be actively involved in the lesson and they spend far too long sitting and listening to the teacher. In all lessons seen, there were limited opportunities for pupils to plan their own investigations or to devise their own way of collecting information. The teaching of science is enhanced well by the use of the on-site woodland. This also provides good links to the teaching of geography. Pupils in Year 2 also visit the environmental centre at Amersham and produce good work as a result. Year 1 pupils take part in a sensory day at the Child Beale Trust.
57. The headteacher is presently managing this subject, building on the work of a very good co-ordinator who has now left the school. The policy for science teaching is very good, giving clear guidance to teachers. It stresses the importance of learning through investigation with an emphasis on first hand experience. Safety guidelines are clear and there is a very good list of key skills to be developed by pupils. The scheme of work, which is based on the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's document, ensures good coverage of the National Curriculum. There has been good training for staff in areas, which they identified. The work of the co-ordinator has played a major role in raising standards in science since the last inspection.

ART AND DESIGN

58. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection. Evidence from looking at pupils' work and talking to teachers indicates that the oldest pupils achieve standards that are higher than usually seen. This represents an improvement since the last inspection when attainment was average. Pupils entering Year 1 have had varied amounts of experience in art and make good progress by the time they leave Year 2. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and sometimes excel. Pupils in Year 2 have a strong sense of colour and pattern; their book cover designs for 'Tigress' achieve dramatic impact with paint and pastel. These older pupils draw and paint confidently. They print with paint to create different textures in an effective land and seascape illustrating the Isle of Struay. Pupils in Year 1 mix paint colours well to create autumn effects and they achieve good results in printing with leaves and vegetables to explore shape and pattern. Detailed drawings of trees show good observation skills. Pupils achieve very good results when tasks are suitably matched to age and ability. The quality of work on display and in folders indicates that teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and indications are that the quality of teaching is good overall. They plan imaginative tasks that link well to other subjects.

59. Art enjoys a high profile in the school and indications are that the teaching is good overall because of the good standards. Examples of good work by pupils are celebrated in assembly. Pupils also reflect on the selected 'Picture of the week' by a professional artist. An annual art week provides new experiences and techniques such as those inspired by African and Aboriginal art. Artists' work is effectively used to introduce pupils to different styles and media: pupils have produced weavings inspired by Bridget Riley, tissue collage inspired by Matisse and pastel drawings in the style of Cezanne. Pupils enjoy a wide range of two-dimensional opportunities, including textiles, printing and information and communication technology but have limited opportunities to explore three-dimensional art. The subject is well resourced and classrooms share good facilities for practical work. The art co-ordinator provides satisfactory support for colleagues.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

60. No lessons were seen during the inspection. Judgements are based on scrutiny of pupils' work, photographic evidence and displays around the school. At the time of the last inspection, the scheme of work was new and had not yet had an impact on standards, which were broadly in line with those expected nationally. Now that the scheme is fully in place, pupils of all abilities make good progress. Standards in design and technology are above those expected for infant pupils. There is a good range of work covered. Pupils in Year 1 have opportunities to design, make and evaluate a simple musical instrument. They make puppet characters, which are linked to a book used in literacy. They select materials for this task, measure, mark out and cut to shape. They work with food, for example, making a fruit salad, which links to the work they are doing in science. Pupils in Year 2 work co-operatively to design and make a game with four rules. They design, plan and make wheeled vehicles and have good opportunities to evaluate these. For example, one child wrote 'It didn't go straight because the axles were slanted, so I straightened them up.'
61. Although no lessons were seen, indications are that the quality of teaching and learning are good because of the standards of work produced. The co-ordinator is new to this role, but is making a useful collection of pupils' work in order to monitor the range and coverage of the curriculum. She is also putting together a collection of artefacts, which can be used as examples for pupils when they are designing their own work, such as pop-up books. She makes a sound contribution to promoting standards in this subject, but as yet does not fully evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum in raising standards.

GEOGRAPHY

62. No geography lessons were taught during the week of inspection due to the way the curriculum is planned. Judgements are based on the scrutiny of current and previous work, both on display and in pupils' folders and teachers' planning. Standards are above those expected for pupils' age, particularly in map work and this is an improvement since the last inspection. Given pupils' well-developed knowledge and understanding of the world on entry to Reception this shows that good standards are being maintained. Pupils develop and use geographical skills well. The standard of work for the oldest seven-year-olds is good. The topic of houses and homes has been well used to teach geographical skills such as, investigating the uses of structural features and location of the pupils' homes. Environmental work is well developed and pupils know why the environment needs protecting. Pupils have drawn good plans and maps of the school and its grounds and they are involved fully in knowing how to improve their environment.
63. The woodland area, which is part of the school's grounds, provides abundant opportunities for the linking of science and geography to develop pupils' knowledge of their environment. In sharp contrast, the front of the school borders a busy main road where traffic surveys are conducted. In their weather observation work around the school grounds, pupils offer reasons for their results and are beginning to gain confidence in making judgements about their environment. Pupils' mapping skills are developing well through their work on co-ordinates and using a compass. Pupils compare and contrast localities well such as between the island of Coll in the Hebrides and

Farnham and between Batchworth Canal and their own area. Pupils have also successfully made comparisons between Britain and Jamaica. The youngest children are introduced to geographical terms through stories such as Rosie's Walk. There are good links between geography and English through the stories and poems used.

64. The good standard of work indicates good teaching and learning. The school uses units from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's scheme of work judiciously. Planning is thorough and pupils' work shows tasks are adapted well to meet the needs of pupils with differing attainment. Teachers plan well to develop pupils' geographical skills of enquiry and to increase their knowledge and understanding of places and environmental change. Work covered in geography is helping to support pupils' numeracy skills such as when recording observations as part of fieldwork. Currently there is no co-ordinator for geography but all teachers take responsibility for ensuring the programme of study is covered. There is a good policy to support teachers in their planning.

HISTORY

65. A limited number of lessons were seen during the inspection. Judgements are based on these, scrutiny of pupils' work, photographic evidence and displays around the school. At the time of the last inspection, no schemes of work were in place and there had been no recent external training for staff. There is now a good scheme of work in place and the subject co-ordinator has attended courses on 'Practical Thinking through History' and 'Philosophy for Children.' These improvements are beginning to have an impact on standards, so that some of the work by Year 2 pupils is above that expected, although generally standards are in line with those expected in an infant school. Pupils of all abilities make sound progress.
66. Pupils in Year 1 are developing their understanding of different times through topics such as 'then and now' and they can identify similarities and differences between homes and toys from the past. They find out about people from the past, such as Guy Fawkes. Pupils in Year 2 learn about homes 90 years ago by watching video programmes and by having good opportunities to handle artefacts, for example kitchen equipment. Work in history is planned to provide pupils with good opportunities to use their writing skills. However, in lessons seen and in some work sampled, there were missed opportunities to encourage writing and an overuse of worksheets, which constrains what writing does occur.
67. The curriculum is well planned to provide appropriate range and coverage, within year group topics and this is monitored well by the co-ordinator. The curriculum for history is greatly enhanced by visits to the Open Air Museum at Chalfont St. Peter and the Canal Centre at Rickmansworth. Pupils produce high quality work following these visits. Resources for history are good, and the school uses the county loan service to supplement their own stock. The co-ordinator collects samples of work from all classes to show pupils' progress and the range of work covered and she provides sound leadership for the subject.
68. Teaching is good overall. A strong feature of the best teaching is the encouragement of discussion, which in turn helps pupils to begin to speculate on past times. For example, when role-playing a 'washing day' from ninety years ago, the teacher drew pupils' attention to the fact that there were two flat irons and good discussion followed about why that should be. Where teaching was less good, pupils were kept sitting on the carpet for too long with limited opportunities to discuss the topic. Some worksheets were of limited value and restrict opportunities for pupils to use their own writing as a tool for recording what they have found out. The leadership of this subject by the co-ordinator is satisfactory overall. Samples of work are collected to show coverage and standards. Pupils enjoy their history lessons and are generally well-behaved. They respond enthusiastically during discussions and take great care over drawings related to the subject.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

69. Few lessons were seen during inspection, partly due to a theft of computers from the school,

which is currently curtailing the teaching of information and communication technology. The computers have been replaced but they were not up and running during inspection. However, even with these replacement computers the school is not yet meeting the minimum recommendation of computers in a school of this size. The school is aware of this and plans to increase the number of computers. Overall standards across the school exceed expectations and by the age of seven pupils are making good progress with the required skills. There has been considerable improvement in attainment since the school's last inspection. This is because the co-ordinator leads the subject well. She gathers samples of work and evaluates standards. There is a good policy together with an Internet security policy and all staff sign an Internet code of practice. Year 2 parents also sign the children's code of practice for Internet safety. Teachers have started to develop their confidence through training but the on-line learning is not as successful as it could be due to technical problems. The impact of the New Opportunities Fund training was slight. Training amongst the staff has been more successful and the co-ordinator is giving good leadership. She ensures the school complies with software licences where applicable.

70. The youngest children are taught to use the drawing tools well, such as when designing pictures for the Queen's Golden Jubilee. They use fill and palette to colour outlines and write their names using the text button. These designs were particularly successful. Children use the mouse to make selections such as when dressing a teddy bear and they can drag and drop items of clothing into the correct places. They also use these techniques appropriately when for example, designing their own fish tanks. There are good links with design and technology where children design their own room for the Three Bears by carefully placing the furniture and people into position. In Year 1, this modelling work is extended and pupils use the spray tool well. Using Millie's Mathematics House program children can select and move shapes to design pictures. When word-processing, they use the shift, spacebar and backspace keys successfully. Tasks are planned thoroughly to build on pupils' developing skills. They receive appropriate support from adults to edit their stories and write accounts of visits, such as to Beale Park. They successfully sequence screens such as when completing work on the life cycle of a butterfly. There are good links with numeracy, such as when completing pictographs showing hair colour and their favourite food.
71. By Year 2, pupils communicate information using text, such as The Journey to Bethlehem, which was written, saved and then edited with adult support. In a very good lesson seen with Year 2, pupils worked well, independently of the teacher, to produce a sequence of instructions to control a programmable robot. They developed their ideas to make things successful and gained a good knowledge of recording these ideas to show how to move the robot forward, backward and to make right and left turns. There are good links with geography where word-processing about people and places is saved and edited with adult support and parts of the British Isles map and cities are labelled. Pupils design their own towns by clicking and dragging items from menus. Pupils know how to open their own files, edit and print. When working independently pupils use text, brush, palette and fill very successfully, as demonstrated by their beach pictures. Pupils enter data and print bar graphs of, for example the most popular names and they can plan food for a party using tally charts and pictographs.
72. Teaching is good because tasks are carefully structured in small steps to build success. Teachers know what is expected of children and they provide a good level of challenge in the tasks. Pupils' very good attitudes are helping to raise standards further. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to assess and evaluate the success of their work in lessons and this aids progress. Pupils work well together on tasks, they listen to instructions and concentrate very well throughout lessons.

MUSIC

73. Few lessons were seen during the inspection. Evidence from these, assemblies and discussion with teachers indicates that pupils exceed the expectations for their age. This shows good improvement since the last inspection when attainment was average. It is due to very good teaching. Pupils of all attainment make good progress throughout the school. Many of the oldest

pupils can read and write simple notation, such as crochets and quavers. They clap and play rhythms on percussion instruments and are beginning to create their own rhythmic patterns. They have very good listening skills, for instance in a clapping game, some pupils noticed changes in speed and rhythm and corrected the errors. Pupils can name a range of instruments and play them correctly. Pupils of all ages sing a variety of songs tunefully. In a Year 1 singing session, pupils sang their favourite songs enthusiastically and expressively, varying the speed when appropriate. Even the youngest pupils in the school demonstrate good skills such as remembering and repeating sound and action patterns.

74. The quality of teaching is very good. Effective management of pupils and instruments ensures good skill development and participation by all. In a very good Year 2 lesson, planning for a variety of structured tasks helped pupils make good progress in listening, singing, playing and composing. Pupils quickly develop confidence and self-esteem because they receive plenty of praise and positive feedback. Pupils really enjoy their music lessons and demonstrate good independence in selecting, collecting and replacing instruments. Well-organised and accessible resources develop this independence.
75. The music curriculum provides a good range of activities. Music has a high profile in assemblies where teachers select a different style each week for the pupils to appreciate. An annual music week has a positive cultural impact by providing new experiences of listening to and performing with musicians such as a brass ensemble and a steel band. Subject monitoring is effective because all classes are taught by the co-ordinator. She has good subject knowledge and a clear grasp of pupils' progress and achievements.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

76. By the time pupils leave the school standards are above average, particularly in gymnastics. This represents an improvement since the last inspection when standards were average. Standards are high because of skilled teaching and good provision. Pupils make good progress from Reception to Year 2 and those with special needs participate fully and progress well. Year 1 pupils skip, gallop, stride and jump with confidence and demonstrate a good awareness of space. In a harvest dance, they used different qualities expressively, such as light and delicate, slow and strong and they can remember and repeat patterns of steps, turns and claps. All pupils, even the youngest, co-operate to get out and put away apparatus with remarkable efficiency.
77. Teaching is very good. Well-structured lessons and the good management of pupils, time and equipment ensures that they consolidate and develop skills well. In a very good Year 2 gymnastics lesson, brisk pace ensured that pupils were kept moving and achieved maximum effort. In gymnastics generally, the oldest pupils move confidently across the floor and apparatus with good control and co-ordination. They use the equipment imaginatively to explore actions and develop sequences, persevering to improve their performance. Lessons are of an appropriate length to allow for a range of tasks and time to practise and improve. Teachers pay good attention to the effects of exercise, particularly at the start and end of lessons by planning physically challenging warming up and calm cooling down activities. However, there are missed opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own and others' achievements.
78. Behaviour is excellent. Pupils are attentive and they try hard to improve. Both pupils and teachers follow a good dress code. The planned physical education curriculum provides a good balance of activities, although no games lessons were observed during the inspection. Pupils can learn to play short tennis in the spring and summer terms as an extra-curricular activity. The subject co-ordinator provides good support for less experienced colleagues and an effective scheme of work for gymnastics has a positive impact on teaching and learning. Indoor accommodation is very good and the subject is well resourced.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

79. Standards exceed those expected of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. This represents an improvement since the school was last inspected where standards were in line with

expectations, although pupils' knowledge of religious practices was underdeveloped. Pupils are achieving well because of the dovetailed approach embracing religious education lessons, personal, social and health education lessons and assemblies and daily acts of collective worship. Pupils make good progress in understanding themselves and how they fit into the world. There is a very wide range of work covered including: relationships, belonging, special occasions, people, places and things and learning about the natural world. On entry to the school, pupils' personal development is good. The standards achieved in religious education ensure that pupils' well-developed personal development is maintained. The standard of work for the oldest seven-year-olds is good. The two main religions of Christianity and Hinduism are taught well. Festivals and seasonal events are taught well, such as the Festival of Light - Divali. These are brought to life when visitors from the community share Indian food tasting with the children. The youngest children are told stories such as, The Good Samaritan, The Lost Sheep and Noah's Ark and they can reflect on these when learning how to behave and care for others. There is strong emphasis given to pupils learning about themselves. They are asked to record: 'I like this thing about me...', 'I've got better at ...' This self-reflection helps them to discern right from wrong and good from bad and is helping to raise their self-esteem. This work leads pupils to realise the importance of working hard at their own individual targets. Pupils know how to keep healthy through caring about their diet and exercise. Children are taught how to keep safe on the roads in the home, near water, electricity and what to do if a stranger approaches.

80. The quality of teaching and learning is sound overall and elements are good. In a lesson seen about saying 'thank you' to God for special things, good opportunities were provided for reflection, which contributes well to pupils' spiritual development. Occasionally there are missed opportunities to develop pupils' ideas through asking key questions such as, 'why do we have different seasons' and 'why do we have floods?' This inhibits pupils' learning. Children in Year 1 were reluctant to begin when asked to write a thank you letter to God because they do not have secure basic skills of spelling words from their sounds. In a personal, social, health education lesson on safety, the teacher used skilful questions to ascertain pupils' knowledge and understanding of keeping themselves safe. Pupils have good attitudes to learning and they enjoy their religious education work. The co-ordinator for religious education manages the subject well. Themes are linked to assemblies and the teaching points, stories and poems and activities related to these themes are documented well. This is good support for all staff. The policy and planning for this subject is a vital support for all staff. Pupils' work is reviewed regularly by the co-ordinator and coverage and depth of delivery of the subject is checked. There are satisfactory resources to support the learning in religious education including artefacts.