

INSPECTION REPORT

LEIGHTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Peterborough

LEA area: City of Peterborough

Unique reference number: 110743

Headteacher: Mrs F Bateman

Reporting inspector: Mr D Page
1028

Dates of inspection: 13 – 16 January 2003

Inspection number: 247037

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 and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Orton Malbourne Peterborough
Postcode:	PE2 5PL
Telephone number:	01733 232 949
Fax number:	01733 237 059
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs T Harber
Date of previous inspection:	December 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
1028	D Page	Registered inspector	Science Information and communication technology Design and technology Educational inclusion English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? School's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
9798	V Ashworth	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?
15474	J Fairclough	Team inspector	Mathematics Art and design Religious education	How well is the school led and managed?
21893	V Brittain	Team inspector	Geography History Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
18370	K Johnson	Team inspector	English Music Physical education Areas of learning in the Foundation Stage	

The inspection contractor was:

Nord Anglia School Inspection Services

Strathblane House
Ashfield Road
Cheadle
Stockport
SK8 1BB

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33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Leighton Primary School is bigger than most other primary schools, with 332 pupils compared to the national average of 242. The attainment on entry, as measured by standard tests, is well below the local and national averages. Six per cent of pupils come from the ethnic minorities, the largest single group being of Asian heritage. There is one refugee at the school. Three point six per cent of pupils learn in English as an additional language, four of whom are at an early stage of language acquisition. This is higher than in most schools. Of the four languages other than English spoken by the pupils, Urdu and Gujarati are the most frequent. Thirty per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals which is above the national average. Thirty two per cent of pupils have special educational needs including statements, which is above the national average, and 2.2 per cent have statements, which is above average. Most pupils with special educational needs have moderate learning difficulties and a significant number have specific learning needs such as dyslexia. The percentage of pupils who leave and join the school during the year is very high. The ward in which the school is situated exhibits significant social deprivation.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The effectiveness of Leighton Primary School is very good. Standards on entry are well below the national expectation and the school helps pupils make good progress so that they leave the school with standards raised. Teaching is generally good and leadership and management are both very good. The school is very effective at ensuring all its pupils play a full part in the life of the school and that equality of opportunity is extended to all. Given how effective the school is, its context, and the money it receives, the school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The headteacher has a very strong grasp of the issues which are important for the school, and is very good at enabling her staff to perform well.
- The subject co-ordinators' role, including the monitoring of the subject, is very well developed.
- The school's evaluation of its performance is very effective at identifying clear priorities for development.
- The school is highly committed, and has very well co-ordinated approaches, to ensure all its pupils play a full part in the life of the school.
- The provision for special educational needs is a strength of the school, and the well-trained and skilful learning support assistants make a significant contribution to this.
- The provision for pupils' social and moral development is very good.
- Through good teaching, the school is successful in helping pupils to make good progress.

What could be improved

- Teachers need to provide more planned opportunities for pupils to develop their skills of speaking.
- The length of teaching sessions needs to be reviewed to ensure that they provide pupils with the best situations in which to learn.
- Higher attaining pupils need to be provided more consistently with appropriately challenging work.

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 December 1997. It has made excellent improvements since then, addressing all the key issues thoroughly. Pupils are now taught the full curriculum in design and technology; information and communication technology, and religious education. Assessment is now used very well to monitor the progress pupils make, and to provide information for teachers to plan their lessons. Management procedures are now in place which effectively monitor and raise the quality of

teaching. Strategic planning is now firmly linked to the budget, and the statutory requirement for a daily act of collective worship is now met.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	E	C	D	C
mathematics	D	B	E	D
science	B	A*	C	B

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

The attainment on entry, as measured by standard tests, is well below the local and national averages. As a consequence, while pupils generally make good progress in the reception classes, their current standards are below expectation and many will not achieve the expected standards by the end of the year. By the end of Year 2 in national tests in 2002, pupils' level of attainment in mathematics was above the average, in writing was broadly in line with the average, and in reading was below the national average. Teacher assessment in science indicated that pupils' standards were in the top 5 per cent of schools nationally. In comparison to similar schools on the basis of free school meals, standards in writing and mathematics were well above the average, and were above the average in reading. Over the last five years, the trend in reading has been broadly similar to the national trend. Performance in writing has varied greatly, but over the last three years has been above the national trend. The improvement in mathematics has been faster than the national trend over the past five years. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls, or between the performance of pupils of different prior attainment, or those learning in English as an additional language. By the end of Year 6 in 2002, standards in science were in line with the national average, below the national average in English, and well below the average in mathematics. In comparison to similar schools on the basis of free school meals, standards in science were above the average, in English were in line with the average, and in mathematics, below the average. With the exception of the current year, the improvement in English, mathematics and science for the previous four years has been above the national trend. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls. The school did not achieve its extremely challenging targets for the percentage of pupils expected to achieve level 4 or above in English and mathematics. In lessons and work seen, pupils' standards in English are generally around expectation by the end of Year 2. Standards for the particular cohort currently in Year 6, which has a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, are below expectation. Standards in speaking are lower than other aspects of the subject. Pupils' standards in mathematics are generally around expectation by the end of Year 2, and, for the cohort currently in Year 6, below expectation. In science, standards by the end of Year 2 are below expectation and are in line with expectation by the end of Year 6. All pupils achieve well.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy the sense of belonging and all those spoken to would not wish to be at any other school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. There is a calm and friendly atmosphere within the school, and this is a very good improvement since the last inspection.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils are quick to volunteer to help each other when support is needed, and they respect other people's feelings.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. The school works hard, and with some success, to improve attendance.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	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.

Overall, teaching at the school is good and leads to pupils making good progress. During the inspection, 26 per cent of teaching was very good or excellent; 43 per cent was good, and 30 per cent was satisfactory. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. In reception classes, teaching is always satisfactory or better in all the areas of learning and is good overall. In English, there is good emphasis on the teaching of basic skills. Generally, the good learning is underpinned by the very good relationships established between teachers, support staff and pupils. In mathematics, all teachers make good use of learning support assistants and this makes a major contribution to the learning of pupils with special educational needs. In science, the teaching is good overall. Very good strategies are in place in all subjects, which are designed to ensure that all pupils play a full part in lessons, regardless of gender, ethnicity, special educational need, learning in English as an additional language, or level of prior attainment. Literacy and numeracy are taught satisfactorily across all subjects.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The school rightly gives priority to English and mathematics within a broad and balanced curriculum. However, the distribution of time for some subjects means that lessons are taught in more than one session. This detracts from learning.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Pupils on the special educational needs register are fully included in the school's curriculum. Those who are particularly gifted are recognised and their progress is managed well.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. The school caters well for the small number of pupils learning in English as an additional language.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. The school's curriculum is enriched by the very good provision overall for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and this is a strength of the school.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. The school takes very good care of its pupils and has established a safe secure environment where all pupils, regardless of ethnicity, special educational need, gender, or prior attainment have an equal opportunity to do their best.

The school has very effective links with parents.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The very good leadership of the headteacher has given clear direction to the work of the school. Senior managers monitor the effectiveness of subject managers. The whole thrust of school management is to raise standards in teaching and learning.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. The governors' annual report reflects the enthusiasm and determination of the governors to involve parents as fully as possible in the learning of their children.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The school has very good procedures for using the opportunities provided by appraisal and performance management to link individual development objectives to the overall development of the school.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. Planning and the link to the use of resources are now very good.

The quality of provision of staffing, accommodation and learning resources at the school is very good, and the school works well to achieve the best value for the money it spends.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents feel comfortable approaching school. • The school expects children to work hard. • The teaching is good. • Children are making good progress. • Behaviour is good. 	

Replies to the questionnaire filled in by parents before the inspection indicated that they hold strongly positive views about the school. Nearly all parents supported the positive statements above. A very small percentage of replies, (6 per cent), indicated dissatisfaction with the amount of work given to children; the management of the school, and the range of interesting activities provided for the children. The inspection team found evidence to support all of the parents' positive views but no evidence to support the very small percentage of negative ones.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

- 1 The attainment on entry, as measured by standard tests, is well below the local and national averages. As a consequence, while pupils generally make good progress in the reception classes, their current standards are below expectation and many will not achieve the expected standards by the end of the year. By the end of Year 2 in national tests in 2002, pupils' level of attainment in mathematics was above the average, in writing was broadly in line with the average, and in reading was below the national average. In comparison to similar schools on the basis of free school meals, standards in writing and mathematics were well above the average, and were above the average in reading. Over the last five years, the trend in reading has been broadly similar to the national trend. Performance in writing has varied greatly, but over the last three years the trend has been above that found nationally. The improvement in mathematics has been above the national trend over the past five years. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls, or between the performance of pupils of different prior attainment.
- 2 By the end of Year 6 in 2002, standards in science were in line with the national average, below the national average in English, and well below the average in mathematics. In comparison to similar schools on the basis of free school meals, standards in science were above the average, in English were in line with the average, and in mathematics, below the average. With the exception of the current year, the trend in improvement in English, mathematics and science for the previous four years has been above the national trend. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls. The school did not achieve its extremely challenging targets for the percentage of pupils expected to achieve level 4 or above in English and mathematics.
- 3 There is a wide range of attainment on entry to the reception classes but, for most children, attainment is well below the national average and is particularly low in their communication skills. Children are making good progress in all six areas of learning. However, few are likely to reach the early learning goals by the time they leave the reception classes, except in their physical development. There are no differences in achievement between boys and girls and the very good provision for a child with special educational needs ensures that he is achieving as well as others.
- 4 In lessons and work seen, pupils' standards in English and literacy are generally around expectation by the end of Year 2. Standards for the particular cohort currently in Year 6, which has a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, are below expectation. Standards in speaking are lower than other aspects of the subject. Pupils' standards in mathematics and numeracy are generally around expectation by the end of Year 2, and, for the cohort currently in Year 6, below expectation. In science, standards by the end of Year 2 are below expectation and are in line with expectation by the end of Year 6. Standards in other subjects are generally around national expectation throughout the school. Standards in art and design are above expectation.
- 5 Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their individual targets. Their needs are identified at the earliest possible stage. Information gathered from teachers, parents and relevant outside agencies such as medical and educational departments is used to provide good individual learning plans.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- 6 The quality of pupils' attitudes towards their school and work is very good. The pupils' behaviour and personal development, particularly the relationships with members of staff and each other, are also very good. These make a substantial contribution to the calm and friendly atmosphere within the school. This is a very good improvement since the last inspection.
- 7 The pupils show great enthusiasm for their school in everything they do. They enjoy the sense of belonging, and all those spoken to would not wish to be at any other school. There is a very positive attitude to learning throughout the school which is encouraged from the moment children enter Reception. Most pupils show interest in their work and are able to share and co-operate with others. Many pupils are able to demonstrate good levels of concentration and effort in lessons and are keen to join in all school activities. They want to learn, and try hard to succeed.
- 8 Behaviour throughout the school is very good. There have been no exclusions over the last year. Pupils are aware of the high expectations of their teachers and behave accordingly. Very good behaviour was also observed in the playground and at lunchtime, where the school's emphasis on social development is having a positive impact.
- 9 The headteacher and staff consider it a very high priority to develop relationships. Their examples as role models make a very good contribution to the education provided. The caring attitude is evident throughout the school community. Pupils are quick to volunteer to help or accompany each other when support is needed. Pupils are taught to respect and understand other people's feelings. There are 'friendship stops' in the playground where anyone who needs a friend to play with, or speak to, can wait until someone stops to help them. The pupils understand the reasons for this initiative and it works well. They are very polite and considerate to adults coming into the school and look for opportunities to be helpful. They are generally very willing to enter into conversation when given the opportunity and are able to relate to adults in a pleasant manner. There is no evidence of bullying; racism or sexism in the school. Any incidents which do occur are dealt with immediately and discreetly. Pupils are taught to think about what they do and respect each other's feelings and this is very evident in their attitude towards each other.
- 10 The pupils are willing to take responsibility when this is offered and regard it as a privilege. There are opportunities during Years 5 and 6 to volunteer as 'Breakfast Buddies' and wear striking yellow caps and aprons to show the pupils who they are. The Buddies act as waiters and look after the diners during this valuable early morning activity. During lunchtimes the lower school is supported by volunteers from Years 5 and 6 to assist those who need a little extra help. Pupils help in the classroom when asked and take registers back to the office. The school recognises that more opportunities can be provided to develop initiative and to encourage pupils to take responsibility. Plans are already under way. Attendance is unsatisfactory and below the national average. Unauthorised absence is broadly in line with the average. The school is working hard to address the situation.
- 11 The school is very successful in helping pupils on the special educational needs register to develop good attitudes to work and raise self esteem. Consequently pupils are fully integrated in all school activities. The school's inclusive policy is actively followed in classrooms. Pupils' needs are recognised and adults are sensitive to

them. A particularly notable initiative is the YMCA support scheme which helps pupils who have personal and emotional difficulties to develop positive relationships.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

- 12 Overall, teaching at the school is good and leads to pupils making good progress. During the inspection, 26 per cent of teaching was very good or excellent; 43 per cent was good, and 30 per cent was satisfactory. In reception classes, teaching is always satisfactory or better in all the areas of learning and is good overall. Staff have correctly placed a high emphasis on personal, social and emotional development during the first term in order to facilitate learning in other areas.
- 13 In English, there is good emphasis on the teaching of basic skills. Generally, the good learning is underpinned by the very good relationships established between teachers, support staff and pupils. Teachers use their good subject knowledge to plan their work well. Teachers mark pupils' work carefully and comments generally help them to evaluate what they have done. In mathematics, all teachers made good use of learning support assistants and this made a major contribution to the learning of pupils with special educational needs. Very good strategies are in place which are designed to ensure that all pupils, regardless of gender, ethnicity, special educational need, or level of prior attainment, play a full part in lessons. The strengths of teaching are in the planning of lessons; use of assessment; management of pupils, and the use of classroom support. In science, the teachers' questioning effectively encourages the pupils to review their learning from the previous lesson and this helps them to develop self-confidence. As the teachers circulate amongst the working pupils, their dialogue with them helps them to make good progress. Due to the relatively low standards in speaking which pupils exhibit on entry to the school, teachers need to create more opportunities for pupils to develop their skills in speaking. On occasion, higher attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged.
- 14 Pupils on the special educational needs register are usually taught in small groups within the classroom. Teachers plan suitable work well matched to pupils' learning needs. Well-trained learning support assistants use their skills very effectively to help pupils make progress with literacy and numeracy. Some pupils are selected for specific literacy or numeracy support according to their individual needs. Occasionally pupils may be withdrawn from groups for one-to-one tuition. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers and assistants know pupils well, understand their specific needs and establish a positive climate in which pupils' progress is recognised.

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

- 15 Since the last inspection there has been excellent improvement in the school's curriculum, which includes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school plans for children in Reception classes using the new National Curriculum for the Foundation Stage and there is now a good balance between the six areas of learning.
- 16 The curriculum for pupils in Years 1 to 6 is wide and varied and there is a good range of learning opportunities. The school rightly gives priority to English and mathematics in order to raise standards further and to enable pupils to transfer their skills to other subjects. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are fully in place and are being used effectively to raise standards. There are weekly lessons for extended writing and these are sometimes used well to consolidate literacy skills as well as develop understanding in other subjects. For example, teachers in Year 3/4 classes used this time well when pupils wrote poetry and diaries related to their history topic on the Romans. There is good emphasis on the development of key vocabulary in all subjects. Mathematical skills of measuring and data handling are consolidated across the curriculum, particularly in science. Planning in all subjects identifies very good opportunities for the use of information and control technology and these are enriching provision. Homework is planned weekly for each age group and used well throughout the school to consolidate learning.
- 17 There are policies in place for all subjects which give teachers adequate guidance about how a subject should be taught. The school has adopted nationally agreed guidelines for all National Curriculum subjects, and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education and these have been used to produce schemes of work. In science there are now good, planned opportunities for pupils to carry out investigational work in order to develop skills as well as knowledge. There has been a very good improvement in the provision for information and communication technology, design and technology and art and design. However, the allocation of time for subjects other than English and mathematics, usually in the afternoons, is restricted and sometimes means that lessons are split and taught in more than one session. This makes learning less effective.
- 18 The curriculum is very well planned to meet the needs of all pupils, although on occasions, higher attaining pupils need to be provided with appropriately challenging work. Pupils with English as an additional language are very well cared for to ensure they have access to the curriculum. Pupils on the special educational needs register are fully included in the school's curriculum. Individual learning plans are used effectively to ensure work matches their specific needs. Pupils with additional personal difficulties are very well supported in lessons so that they benefit from opportunities to work alongside peers and achieve well. Those who are particularly gifted are recognised and their progress is managed well. Additional targets are set for them so they are challenged at a higher level.
- 19 There is very good provision for personal, social and health education. A detailed scheme of work enables lessons to be planned which allow pupils, for example, to explore feelings and relationships. They have opportunities to discuss moral issues such as the need for rules in school and to explore issues such as the position of asylum seekers within their local community. Pupils are taught from an early age about healthy eating and care of the body, including drug awareness. Older pupils receive sex education in line with the school's policy. Assemblies make a good contribution to the sustaining of good behaviour and personal development. The

school's positive atmosphere, and the way it strives to include all in the life of the school, reflects the very good provision in this area.

- 20 A good range of activities is provided outside lessons to enhance the curriculum. A specific part of the curriculum budget is designated for enrichment activities to enhance work in the classroom. At present there are lunchtime and after-school clubs or activities related to sports, dance, instrumental tuition, science, French, sign language and gardening. All these are well supported. Although most provision is for pupils in Years 3 and above, there are plans to extend activities for younger pupils. They are open to all pupils, regardless of gender or prior attainment.
- 21 The local and wider community make a very good contribution to the pupils' learning and to their personal development. For example a community worker from a local church is a regular volunteer at the school breakfast club and he has developed a good relationship with pupils. The community policeman takes part in assemblies. There are links with local religious groups, and pupils have visited mosques, temples and churches. Good use is made of the locality in the teaching of geography, and field trips are organised regularly, for example, to Hunstanton to compare Peterborough with a different type of settlement. Visits are made regularly to consolidate learning in other subjects. Pupils from the school take part in local and regional events such as sports competitions and dance festivals. Adults from the community, including local businesses, regularly visit the school to listen to pupils read.
- 22 Very good links are maintained with local pre-schools and secondary schools. This ensures that pupils' education is continuous as they progress to adulthood. Staff from local playgroups have attended joint planning meetings with teachers to share good practice. Secondary schools have become involved in the school's curriculum and at present run activities in dance, French and science, alongside school staff. The importance of links with colleges is recognised and co-ordinated by a member of the senior management team. The school supports students on work experience from schools and colleges, including those training to be teachers.
- 23 The school's curriculum is enriched by the very good provision overall for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and this is a strength of the school. There have been improvements in all areas since the last inspection. Parents are happy with the attitudes and values which the school is promoting and the positive effect which they are having on pupils' personal development.
- 24 Provision made for pupils' spiritual development is good. There are planned opportunities in lessons to reflect on the wonders of science and the emotions which great works of art, music and literature can evoke. For example, children in reception strengthened their knowledge and understanding of the world as they investigated pieces of ice, delighting in the way it melted in their warm hands. Pupils explore religious values and beliefs in religious education lessons and by visiting local churches, mosques and temples. The development of spiritual awareness is good in some, but not all, collective acts of worship. In one class there was a sensitive discussion of how it feels to lose a loved one and how best to remember them. Pupils had good ideas on how to help a boy whose grandfather had recently died.
- 25 The provision for pupils' moral development is very good and the school promotes a strong moral code. A discipline policy is in place and there are clear expectations of what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. Pupils are well aware of the school and class rules and know the difference between right and wrong. They know what to do in the cases of bullying. As a result behaviour in and around school is very good

and most pupils show a good degree of self-discipline. Personal, social and health education lessons often involve pupils in discussing behaviour towards each other and other moral issues. For example pupils in Years 5 and 6 have discussed issues such as the moral implications of the First World War and considered the issues of offering refuge to asylum seekers.

- 26 The social development of pupils is very good. It is enhanced by the very strong relationships between staff and pupils. Pupils play and work together harmoniously. Collective worship aims to promote a sense of community and the development of social skills feature strongly in chosen themes. For example, the Christian story of the Feeding of the Five Thousand was used to promote the understanding of the need to share and care for each other. Personal, social and health education lessons are used to boost pupils' confidence and self-esteem and to discuss subjects such as the development of positive relationships with others. There are opportunities in class for pupils to work in groups and learn to co-operate. This was seen to good effect in one reception class as some children held their thick fabric taut to enable others to cut out a winter hat for teddy. Counsellors trained to support pupils with social and emotional problems run anger management and self-esteem classes. Pupils in all classes undertake tasks that promote the smooth running of the school and develop responsibility. Year 5 and 6 pupils are very conscientious and effective in preparing the hall for whole school assemblies and performing other duties around the school. An initiative by some pupils has led to 'Friendship Stops' being set up in playgrounds which encourages children to include others in their play. Year 5 and 6 pupils have recently brought in details of a Blue Peter campaign to provide water to Third World villages and are keen to raise money to support it. Other charities are regularly supported.
- 27 The provision for cultural development is very good. Its importance is reflected in the use of school funds to pay for most visits and visitors. Pupils have many opportunities to learn to appreciate the richness of their own and other people's cultures through assemblies, displays and lessons in all subjects such as music, art and design, geography and history. These are enhanced by a very good range of artefacts and resources, including high quality wall hangings and tapestries from around the world. Last year, all pupils in Year 3 and above were taken to the theatre to see 'Arabian nights.' For most, this was their first experience of a theatrical production. It was enhanced by a return visit from cast members and the production team who explained how plays are staged. Topics on India and Dominica give pupils an understanding of different ways of life, developing their respect for other cultures and traditions. These activities, together with their work in religious education, prepare pupils well for living in a diverse society.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- 28 The school takes very good care of its pupils and has established a safe secure environment where all pupils have an opportunity to do their best. There are very effective measures in place to provide support and guidance for all pupils and the headteacher and staff know the children well. This is a very good improvement since the last inspection.
- 29 Procedures for child protection are very well established and very effective. The headteacher receives regular training and works closely with the staff to make sure that all those pupils in need have the appropriate support. The school has regular contact with outside agencies and a great deal of care is taken with this aspect of the school's work. Additionally there are very effective procedures in place to check on the health, safety and well-being of all. Safe use of the internet is effectively addressed.
- 30 There is very close monitoring of academic performance and personal development from the moment the child enters the school. Comprehensive records are kept on all aspects of development which are monitored regularly. The pupils are very well supported in everything they do. The YMCA initiative has been introduced into school for those pupils who need extra support in order to gain more confidence. This scheme works well and is enjoyed by all those who take part.
- 31 Effective procedures are in place for promoting good attendance and punctuality. Parents understand that the school must be informed of any unexpected absence on the first day and most respond to this request. Registers are completed quickly and appropriately and returned to the office twice a day. Attendance and punctuality contribute substantially to the attainment and progress of the pupils. Unfortunately, however, some parents continue to take their children on family holidays during term time, which disturbs the learning process.
- 32 There are very good procedures in place to support and promote standards of behaviour. The comprehensive, positive behaviour policy works well. The pupils have also been involved in the formation of class rules. Behaviour is monitored at all times and recorded where necessary. The school is very successful at eliminating oppressive behaviour. The adopted practice is prevention rather than cure. This is very well supported by the school's personal, social, health and citizenship education programme, which promotes and encourages an orderly community.
- 33 The school places a high premium on work to ensure all pupils enjoy equality of opportunity. This extends to those of minority ethnic heritage as well as those with different levels of prior attainment. The personal development of pupils with special educational needs is very well monitored by teachers and support assistants. All adults know pupils very well and deal sensitively with their various needs through school intervention or with the help of outside agencies. Progress is rigorously recorded both in diaries kept by learning support assistants and through regular formal assessments. Individual learning plans are reviewed regularly and take account of the views of the pupils.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- 34 The school has developed strong links with parents. The survey of parents' views before the inspection and at the pre-inspection meeting showed that parents are generally highly satisfied with the school's provision. This is a good improvement since the last inspection. A small number of parents expressed concern about recent staff mobility and mixed age grouping. However, all agree that the teaching is good and nearly all say that their child likes school. They feel that the school works closely with parents, that their children are expected to work hard and are making good progress.
- 35 The school's links with parents are good and start early with a well-established induction process. Parents are encouraged to come into school to share any concerns with the headteacher or class teachers. This open-door policy works well and the parents are appreciative of the care and attention that the school gives to their children.
- 36 There are good opportunities for parents to become involved with the work of the school. Some are able to help in the classroom with readers or with information and communication technology. Some support the breakfast club, and four parents serve on the governing body. The school runs computer courses for parents together with basic skills in literacy and numeracy in order to assist parents in supporting the pupils' work. Sessions are also held for parents of Reception pupils to help them support the development of reading at home. Special events such as harvest festival and the popular Christmas concert are shared with the parents. Most lower school parents hear their children read regularly and many support their learning at home. The school is anxious to involve parents in their children's learning and a copy of the homework policy is included in the pack sent to parents.
- 37 Parents receive good quality information and detailed annual reports on their children's progress. The school attaches great importance to the home school agreement which most parents sign. There is a good quality school prospectus which details all aspects of school life. This information is regularly updated. The governors' annual report to parents, and newsletters from the headteacher and phase leaders, are all written with the parents in mind and are clear and informative. There are parent consultations each term which are well attended, and where individual pupil targets are discussed. The parents are appreciative of the school's efforts and feel that they are kept very well informed.
- 38 Parents of pupils with special educational needs are informed of any concerns at the earliest stage and are welcomed by the school to discuss courses of action. They take part in the review process by contributing their views as to the most suitable provision for their children. Parents are very appreciative of the school's commitment to children's education and welfare.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 39 There has been excellent improvement in the leadership and management of the school since the previous inspection. There is now a well-structured senior management team that focuses very well on the development of the school. Subject coordinators have management time and monitor the teaching and learning in their subjects. Senior managers monitor the effectiveness of the subject managers and the whole thrust of school management is to raise standards in teaching and learning. The school improvement plan is now clearly focused and matched well to financial resources. Financial information and budget decisions are shared with governors

and spending is focused on identified priorities. Staff development is excellent, with training directed to improvements in teaching and learning. Classroom assistants are well qualified for their work, especially in support of pupils with special educational needs. Governors now have a clear understanding of the work of the school. Committees meet regularly and monitor the progress of developments thoroughly.

- 40 The very good leadership of the headteacher has given this clear direction to the work of the school. There is a very clear vision of the way in which the school should develop, and corporate decision making by the teachers with management responsibilities means that there is a strong commitment to the developments in teaching and learning. Strengths in teaching are used well to influence the work of other teachers and to better meet the learning needs of the pupils. The aims of the school are evident throughout all development projects with a clear focus on the welfare of the pupils and their readiness to benefit from the teaching they receive. Curriculum developments have given a high priority to raising standards in literacy and numeracy with a current focus on information and communication technology. Assessment information is used to develop better learning opportunities for the pupils through emphasis on identified learning needs in the planning of the teaching. The steady rise in the performance of the pupils in national tests reflects this structured development in the work of the school.
- 41 The governing body carries out its role in the management of the school very well and fulfils its statutory duties. A clear view of the work of the school comes from their very good understanding of the developments that are made. This positive contribution to the work of the school is a result of the very good committee structure that oversees curriculum, strategic developments and finance. The skills of outside support agencies are used to support their very good management of the school, and training in their role means that they are in a very good position to have a positive influence on future developments. Procedures to check the effectiveness of teachers' professional performance are used well to sharpen the focus of these developments and to improve the standards of teaching. The chair of governors meets regularly with the headteacher and so makes a constructive contribution to the ongoing work of the school. The governors' annual report reflects the enthusiasm and determination of the governors to involve parents as fully as possible in the learning of their children.
- 42 Job descriptions for subject coordinators include a clear requirement to develop the curriculum provision for all pupils by monitoring teaching and learning through observation of planning, lesson delivery and analysis of pupils' work. Members of the school management team monitor this development, and training opportunities are provided to improve teaching and support for all groups of pupils. In particular the learning support assistants are trained by outside agencies and receive accredited qualifications in recognition of their skills. This very good focus on improving the quality of teaching is a major factor in the rising standards achieved by the pupils.
- 43 The school has very good procedures for using the opportunities provided by appraisal and performance management to link individual development objectives to the overall development of the school. Priorities in literacy are supported by performance targets that are linked to standards of teaching and improvements in pupil progress. Procedures are excellent for helping new staff to become effective as quickly as possible. Visits are arranged prior to teachers and learning support assistants taking up their appointments. Personal contacts are established with other teachers and class responsibilities are allocated that make best use of particular skills. Newly qualified teachers are supported very well, with opportunities to observe best practice and to develop their teaching skills. Mentors are trained in the process

of supporting these teachers and are used well when class groupings partner newly qualified teachers with experienced teachers.

- 44 Very good awareness of the direction in which the school needs to develop and the sharing of these objectives with all staff have brought a very good commitment to the success of development projects. Success has been achieved as a result of the corporate discussion amongst the teachers and governors about what needs to be done and how to evaluate the outcomes of the projects in such a way as to know what needs to be done next. This means that the school has successfully improved teaching and learning through the development of the management structures of the school. As a result standards are rising steadily. However, developments have not yet focused on the pupils and strategies for raising the expectation of their own performance by individual pupils are not fully developed. For example, target setting is not sharply focussed on personal attainment and the learning needs of the individual pupil.
- 45 Provision for special needs is managed very effectively by the special educational needs co-ordinator. There is very strong support from the link governor, whose understanding of this aspect of provision is an asset to the school. Governors have given special educational needs provision a very high priority and to that end provide funding well in excess of the budget allocation. The success of this positive action is reflected in pupils' attitudes, their endeavour and the good progress made under the very skilful guidance of teachers and learning support assistants. The school takes full account of the revised Code of Practice and staff are kept up to date with training and changes of practice. There is suitable access and provision inside the building for disabled persons.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

46 In order to improve the quality of provision and the standards attained by pupils, the governors, headteacher and staff should address the following:

1. Raise pupils' standards in speaking by:
 - a. providing in-service training for staff to develop a broader range of teaching strategies which encourage pupils to speak;
 - b. ensuring that opportunities for pupils to develop their skills of speaking are identified in teachers' planning for all subjects and areas of experience, and by
 - c. raising the profile of the monitoring of pupils' standards in speaking.

(Paragraph numbers: 4; 13; 54; 56; 65; 70; 121.)

2. Ensure the various lengths of time allocated to teaching sessions provide pupils with effective situations in which to learn by:
 - a. reviewing the structure of the school day;
 - b. reviewing the time allocation to different sessions;
 - c. ensuring all sessions are long enough to encompass a clear introduction, main activity and clear summary, and
 - d. ensuring no sessions are so long as to make it difficult to maintain pupils' concentration.

(Paragraph numbers: 100; 115; 120.)

3. Ensure higher attaining pupils are provided more consistently with appropriately challenging work by:
 - a. incorporating different levels of challenge in teachers' planning for all subjects, and
 - b. identifying higher attaining pupils within all teaching groups in the teachers' planning, for whom more challenging, or extension work needs to be provided.

(Paragraph numbers: 13; 18; 74; 80; 84; 117; 121; 126.)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

60

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

27

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	14	26	18	0	0	0
Percentage	3	23	43	30	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	-	332
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	-	102

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	-	9
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	-	89

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	12

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	39
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	17

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.0
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.4
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	31	22	53

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	28	28	30
	Girls	19	20	22
	Total	47	48	52
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (84)	91 (89)	98 (93)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	28	27	31
	Girls	20	20	22
	Total	48	47	53
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	91 (89)	89 (80)	100 (98)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	27	22	49

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	18	17	25
	Girls	15	12	21
	Total	33	29	46
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	67 (72)	59 (81)	94 (98)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	15	25
	Girls	7	6	21
	Total	18	21	46
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	37 (77)	43 (85)	94 (100)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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
213		
8		
89		
3		
1		
1		
2		
3		
0		
0		
6		
2	2	
1		
0		
0		
2		
1		

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 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	13.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25
Average class size	28

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	18
Total aggregate hours worked per week	348.5

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	-
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	-
Total number of education support staff	-
Total aggregate hours worked per week	-

Financial information

Financial year	2001/02
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	£
Total income	721,941
Total expenditure	749,994
Expenditure per pupil	2,351
Balance brought forward from previous year	41,051
Balance carried forward to next year	12,998

Number of pupils per FTE adult	-
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	332
Number of questionnaires returned	93

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	63	33	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	73	26	1	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	62	35	0	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	56	37	8	0	0
The teaching is good.	76	23	0	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	66	31	2	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	74	26	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	75	25	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	60	37	2	0	1
The school is well led and managed.	69	25	5	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	65	32	0	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	48	40	5	0	6

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

Overall, the provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good.

Strengths

- The quality of relationships between staff and children.
- The very good teaching of early reading skills.
- The quality and use of assessments of children's learning.
- The improvements since the last inspection.

Areas for development

- The provision of planned speaking opportunities throughout the school year.
- More activities which encourage the children to take the lead and enable them to develop their imagination and curiosity and to practise their skills.

47 There is a wide range of attainment on entry to the reception classes but, for most children, attainment is well below the national average and is particularly low in their communication skills. Children are making good progress in all six areas of learning. However, few are likely to reach the early learning goals by the time they leave the reception classes, except in their physical development. There are no differences in achievement between boys and girls and the very good provision for a child with special educational needs ensures that he is achieving as well as others.

48 Most children begin the Foundation Stage of their education in local playgroups. They start school in the September of the year in which they are five. Parents are welcomed as partners in the education of their children and many take the opportunity for informal chats with staff before school begins. Very good links are maintained through the home/school record books and by regular information about the curriculum. Workshops are held to enable parents to share in the teaching of reading and this makes a valuable contribution to children's learning. There are formal termly meetings to discuss children's progress.

49 The Foundation Stage is very well led and managed. Very good links have been established with pre-school providers to enable staff to build on earlier attainment. Detailed planning ensures that the curriculum is securely based on the new National Curriculum for pre-school and reception children. Plans for each term show what will be taught for each area of learning, and staff have ensured that good use is made of the outdoor environment to enhance provision. Assessments made early in the year are used to plan work that matches the children's learning needs. The attainment and progress of the children are continuously assessed and monitored and the information gathered is used well to plan work that challenges and interests them. Planning has clear objectives that match the learning needs of the children and this enables staff to focus their work on developing specific knowledge and skills. A theme for each half term provides a good link between the areas of learning. Resources are good. They are used well to provide good learning activities and this contributes significantly to the good progress made by the time children leave the reception classes. The use of the outdoor play area is well organised so that both classes have regular access.

50 Teaching is always satisfactory or better in all the areas of learning and is good overall. It was good or better in over three quarters of lessons. Particular strengths are: the teaching of basic skills, especially for early reading; the very good use of assessment which ensures that all children work at their own level; strong relationships, and very good class management. Teachers, nursery nurses and learning support assistants work very well together to plan, teach and evaluate the children's learning. There is a caring, harmonious working atmosphere in which all children are valued and supported equally so that they all achieve well. Occasionally children spend too long in whole-class sessions. Support staff could sometimes be used more effectively to enable them to spend more time working with smaller groups. There is sometimes too much emphasis on teacher-directed learning and too little 'free choice' activities which enable children to exert some independence while learning through investigation and play.

Personal, social and emotional development

51 Children already have very positive attitudes to their learning. They enjoy coming to school and have formed very good relationships with the staff. Routines are well established and children know what is expected of them. As a result of this, their behaviour is very good. Many children are able to dress and undress themselves for physical education lessons without adult support. Children's concentration in group and class sessions is good. They listen to each other well, but most still need lots of encouragement to speak. Almost all children persevere and stay on task when working independently at a chosen activity. However, their co-operative skills are not yet developed. There is little collaborative play when, for example, they play together with construction kits or in the imaginative play areas. Children enjoy the responsibility of taking the class register to the office. Most willingly help to tidy up at the end of each session. Despite their good progress in this area most children will not reach the early learning goals by the end of the year.

52 The quality of teaching is good. Staff have correctly placed a high emphasis on personal, social and emotional development during the first term in order to facilitate learning in other areas. Children are happy and secure. Teachers are sensitive to the needs of the children and strive to increase their confidence. They do this by providing appropriate activities and by the relevant use of praise to boost self-esteem. The provision of an ordered routine gives security to young children. There are high expectations that children will care physically for themselves. For example, when changing for physical education lessons, children are encouraged to have a go first, help each other, and then ask an adult for help if needed. Children are sometimes given too much guidance about activities and this limits their independence to choose for themselves and to initiate learning experiences. However, most activities are structured well to allow children to learn independently.

53 There are some opportunities for children to learn to co-operate when working in groups. For example, some children held thick fabric taut to enable others to cut out a winter hat for teddy. Staff use playtimes and beginnings of sessions well to talk to the children informally and this contributes to the very good relationships between staff and children. They listen to what children have to say and value their contributions. Children are taught the school rules and why they are important. In a good lesson the teacher used her own experiences of friendship to help children to think about what makes a good friend and why it is good to be friends with each other.

Communications, language and literacy

54 Most children will not have reached the early learning goals for literacy by the end of the year in reception, although, they are making good progress overall. Children's speaking skills are still well below average. Many children do not pronounce words

clearly or put them together properly to form a phrase or a simple sentence. Their vocabulary is poor when compared to most children of their age. This hinders their ability to express what they know and understand. A good number lack the confidence to speak in a group situation.

- 55 Children have learned a wide range of action rhymes and enjoy performing them. They have regular, daily opportunities to share their news and to talk about their experiences. Listening skills are well developed. Children enjoy listening to stories and sit attentively for an appropriate length of time. They are developing their early reading skills well. They know the format of a story and recognise that print has meaning. None are yet ready to read simple text although many have a small sight vocabulary of known words and some can attempt to make sense of unknown words using initial sounds and picture clues. Most children can explain what is happening in stories read to them and use pictures to predict what might happen next. Higher and average attaining children 'read' stories to adults by using the pictures, sometimes using story language. They are beginning to learn the sounds of letters. Early writing skills are developing and most children understand the purpose of writing. Some regularly 'write' by themselves and can confidently 'read' back what they have written. The early writing of higher attaining children shows the use of some initial letters correctly as they attempt to write words. Most children recognise their own names and almost half can write first names without the use of their name card. Role-play areas such as the 'estate agents' and focused literacy sessions are well set up to encourage children to write. Writing sessions are linked to topics to give a purpose to writing. Activities are provided to trace over lines and circles and children are learning how to form letters.
- 56 The quality of teaching is good overall and has a positive impact on standards. There were planned speaking opportunities during the first half term but the low level of speaking skills indicates that this should still be a priority. Staff introduce and develop new vocabulary well, using it in different situations. However, there are not enough opportunities for pupils to practise using new words. Questioning does not always demand an extended answer and sometimes children are allowed to reply in single words or phrases. Role-play is used to develop spoken language; in a new role-play situation, an estate agents, the support assistant became involved and this enabled children to take on a role and communicate with each other.

Mathematical development

- 57 Through well planned practical activities children are developing an understanding of number, pattern, shape and measurement. However, most will not achieve the early learning goals for mathematics although all are making good progress. Many children can recite numbers correctly to ten and some to 20 or higher. Average and higher attaining children can consistently collect a number of objects, to six, and some to ten. In one activity a child was able to work out the correct number mentally when one more was added to different groups, whilst an average attaining child had to start counting each time more animals were added to the set. The good use of sand and water play successfully increases the children's understanding of capacity. Most children can complete a simple repeating pattern. They have had lots of experiences with two-dimensional shapes and, as a result, all know their names and most children can describe them.
- 58 The teaching of mathematics is good and children achieve well. Staff plan a wide range of structured and unstructured learning activities to extend children's understanding of different mathematical concepts. Teachers make use of every opportunity to count, to recognise numerals and to introduce simple addition and subtraction. Number songs and rhymes are used frequently for this purpose. Good

consolidation takes place when students play dice games with small groups of children. Very good learning took place in one class when the teacher used the children's bears to develop the concept of taller than and shorter than. Children enjoyed predicting, then measuring to see if they were right. Well prepared and resourced activities gave further opportunities for consolidation. Children working with play dough made bears to compare their size. Non-standard measures were introduced when children measured their bears using towers of cubes.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

59 Most children enter reception classes with limited knowledge and understanding of the world around them. They are hindered by the lack of vocabulary to express what they know. Despite the good progress which they make, most will not achieve the early learning goals in this area. Children have begun to observe the weather this term and most are beginning to understand that it changes day by day. Many had little understanding of the relationship between water and ice but well chosen activities enabled them to see the link, and they found out by their own experiences that ice becomes water if held in a warm hand. By using a range of fabrics and fasteners children have found out about their properties. Children enjoy using large and small construction toys to build recognisable structures and vehicles. Most are able to cut out and stick shapes independently. Children are learning to use the computer keyboard and mouse but, as yet, have limited skills.

60 Teaching is good overall and children are provided with a wide range of stimulating activities to explore the natural and man-made environment. However many of the activities are carried out in whole group situations where children have less opportunity for intense, first-hand experiences, or to talk about their experiences and discoveries. When group activities were provided, teaching and learning were very good. For example, a group of children made hats for teddies. Well chosen resources enabled them to choose a fabric for themselves, cut out a suitable shape and experiment with ways to fasten it. Very good, open questioning enabled children to think through their ideas and to explain what they were doing. Good independent skills were developed. Story times and odd moments are used well to extend children's knowledge and understanding of the world around them.

Physical development

61 Most children are on course to reach the standards expected for this area of learning by the time they are ready to start in Year 1. Children in both classes have regular physical education lessons, including the use of gymnastic apparatus. They are learning to move in different ways and are developing an awareness of space. Some children understand that exercise makes their heart beat faster. In the playground, children confidently ride tricycles and manoeuvre other wheeled vehicles with good regard to others. Finer physical skills are developing well. Some children show good control of scissors when taking part in cutting and sticking activities and most are learning to hold pencils and paintbrushes correctly.

62 The quality of teaching in physical education lessons was good and children are achieving well. Warm up activities help children to recognise changes to their bodies as they exercise. Clear explanations, and the use as role models of well co-ordinated children, are enabling them to move successfully in different ways, and to develop spatial awareness. Class management is good and children listen and behave well; this has a positive effect on their learning.

Creative development

63 Children make good progress in this area but most will not achieve the standards expected nationally. They are learning to express their feelings through exploring a

range of media and materials. They enjoy painting imaginatively; one child was excited to see that she had made a new colour by mixing paints. The Home Corner and the 'estate agents' are used for imaginative play, although, many children need support to develop this. Children sing often, listen to music and play musical instruments. They show real enjoyment in these sessions. Children explore the sounds made by a range of percussion instruments and many are beginning to tap out simple rhythm patterns. In a dance lesson, about half the class were able to move expressively to music, successfully capturing the idea of snow falling by the movement of their bodies, particularly their hands.

- 64 The teaching of creative development is good overall. Planning shows that a wide range of activities is provided to enable children to express their feelings whilst they explore and create. A well planned dance lesson, with well chosen music, enabled many children to interpret the music well. On occasion there is insufficient staff intervention in independent activities to engage children in expressing themselves creatively.

ENGLISH

Overall, the quality of provision in English is good.

Strengths

- Teaching is good
- Pupils achieve well
- Pupils show good attitudes to work and behave well in lessons
- Subject is led and managed well

Areas for improvement

- Standards in writing at the end of Year 6
- Pupils' speaking and listening skills throughout the school

- 65 Standards seen in reading and writing are broadly in line with national expectations for pupils at the end of Year 2. Speaking skills are below expectation. By the end of Year 6 standards in reading and writing are below expectations. This is a similar picture to that shown in the most recent national tests. The test results also show however, that pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 achieve well when compared with similar schools, given their very low attainment in language skills when they start school. There is no significant difference between girls' and boys' attainment. Over time, standards are rising in line with the national trend, despite not reaching the very challenging targets set by the local authority. A high proportion of the school's pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs and exhibit learning difficulties. The high proportion of such pupils affects the number likely to reach the higher levels in reading and writing.

- 66 The recently revised reading scheme, and strategies for teaching early reading skills, are having a positive impact on standards in Years 1 to 4. Most pupils make good progress from first starting in the reception year to achieve the standards expected of them by Year 2. They are enthusiastic readers who enjoy talking about their favourite book and stories. They read confidently and use their knowledge of letter sounds well to work out the meaning of unfamiliar words. Pupils show an increasing knowledge of words and understanding of what they read. For example, one pupil in Year 2 explained the meaning of someone in the story 'edging past' and how lights became

'dimmer'. Pupils know the difference between fiction and non-fiction books and understand the use of contents and index in order to find information. The library is well used to support pupils' progress in literacy.

- 67 Pupils continue to make steady progress in Years 3 and 4 but the new strategies and approaches to reading have not had the same impact on standards amongst pupils in Year 5 and 6, where almost one third of the group have special learning needs. Although most pupils can read text, their levels of understanding and knowledge of words is weak. Many are still hesitant readers. Mispronounced words are common and pupils are unable to work out meaning of words such as 'interior' from the context of the sentence. More able readers can talk about favourite authors such as Jacqueline Wilson and J K Rowling but knowledge of recognised classic novels is sparse. A small number of pupils supplement their school reading with a selection of books at home, but attitudes to reading generally are complacent.
- 68 Most pupils in Year 2 express their ideas clearly in writing. Sentences are sequenced logically and pupils make good use of their knowledge of letter sounds to attempt spelling unfamiliar words. Most pupils use capital letters and full stops correctly. More able writers use additional punctuation such as speech marks. Handwriting shows satisfactory control and consistency in size of letters and spacing between words. There is a satisfactory range of writing which includes narrative, descriptive 'winter poems' and instructional texts such as 'safety rules for using electricity' or 'how to make a moving person'. This links writing well to other subjects. There is an increasing range and purpose to writing in Year 3 and 4. Newspaper reports with headlines such as: 'Lion Escapes From Zoo' stimulates some lively factual writing. Pupils show their ability to adapt a more thoughtful style when writing poems and diaries of a Roman soldier.
- 69 By the end of Year 6, most pupils communicate ideas clearly in a variety of styles. Higher attaining writers use paragraphs consistently to organise their ideas, and spelling and punctuation are generally correct. However, in most pupils' writing there is a reluctance to use adventurous language to gain a richer effect, and spelling of common words such as 'earlier', or 'their' and 'there', are too often misspelled. Handwriting is taught well so that most pupils develop a clear legible style. There is a satisfactory range of writing to be seen in other subjects such as history and religious education. There is some good historical research for example, by pupils in Years 5 and 6 in 'Britain Since 1950', and some clearly written evaluations of products made in design and technology. 'A recipe for a Happy School' stimulated some imaginative ideas resulting in good writing.
- 70 Many pupils are confident when speaking informally about the things which interest them and readily engage in conversation. In more formal situations, such as class discussions, speaking skills throughout the school are insufficiently developed. Pupils are often unable to express ideas clearly because they cannot think of the precise language they need. Some pupils mumble and are inaudible when answering. Opportunities to encourage speaking skills, such as: open-ended questions which require an explanation; reading aloud; drama, and role play situations, do not feature strongly enough in teachers' planning.
- 71 There is good emphasis on the teaching of basic skills. In Years 1 and 2, letter sounds are taught consistently so that pupils develop satisfactory skill levels in early reading and writing. The National Literacy Strategy is firmly embedded in the school's curriculum, consequently punctuation, grammar and spelling are taught systematically throughout the school.

- 72 The quality of teaching and learning is good and results in the good progress and achievement seen. Pupils who are on the school's register for special educational needs make good progress overall against the reading and writing targets set for them because of the level of support they receive, both in the classroom and through additional literacy support. Generally, the good learning is underpinned by the very good relationships established between teachers, support staff and pupils. Teachers value the contribution to lessons which all pupils make, regardless of gender, ethnicity, special educational need, or level of prior attainment. Teachers are sensitive to all pupils' needs, including those learning in English as an additional language. Lower attaining pupils are given time to share their work and ideas with others, and there is an expectation that all pupils behave respectfully. As a result attitudes to work and behaviour are generally very good and this contributes significantly to pupils' overall progress.
- 73 Teachers use their good subject knowledge to plan their work well. They are clear about the skills pupils are expected to learn so teaching is brisk and usually made interesting by teachers' good choice of resources. For example pupils in Years 5 and 6 wrote some exciting poetry containing good descriptive phrases because of the clear examples shown to them in the poems 'Muddy Boots' and 'Swamp Romp'. Homework is set regularly, which supports pupils' learning of basic skills such as spelling and grammar. Higher attaining pupils in Year 2 are given the added responsibility of setting their own targets for spelling.
- 74 Teachers mark pupils' work carefully and comments generally help them to evaluate what they have done. The good knowledge which teachers have of their pupils' ability helps them to plan work which mostly provides an appropriate challenge. However, there are occasions when more could be expected of higher attaining pupils within literacy groups. Sometimes teachers set too many targets for one lesson. When this happens, teaching and learning are not sufficiently well focused. Some teachers' use of time within lessons is not well balanced. For example some Year 1 pupils spend too long sitting in a group on the carpet. As a result they become restless, lose concentration and do not learn as well as they should. Though most pupils are motivated well because of the teachers' enthusiasm for the subject, writing does not have a high profile around the school in displays.
- 75 Good leadership by the two co-ordinators has established strong teamwork and a commitment to improve standards. Consequently there have been significant improvements since the last inspection in: the quality of teaching; staff development; the organisation of the curriculum, and resources for literacy. There is also a steady rise in standards. Developments in the subject are managed well. Co-ordinators have a clear overview of strengths and areas for development and have set realistic priorities. Progress and standards are monitored effectively. The range and quality of books for English is good and they are used well to support literacy skills.

MATHEMATICS

Overall, the quality of provision in mathematics is good.

Strengths

- Teaching is helping all groups of pupils to make good progress.
- Analysis of pupil performance is used well to inform teachers' planning.
- The support for pupils with special educational needs is very good as a result of the valuable contribution of learning support assistants.

- Lesson planning and the management of pupils are very effective.
- The regular use of information and communication technology is improving the learning of all pupils.

Areas for improvement

- Greater challenge for higher attaining pupils.
- Greater use of numeracy in other subject areas, such as science and geography, so that use of mathematics in everyday life becomes more apparent.
- Develop a greater use of mathematics skills in problem solving situations.

76 Performance by pupils by the end of Year 2 in the 2002 national tests was above the national average, and well above the performance of similar schools. Improvement in this performance over the past few years has been above the national trend. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls. However, teacher evaluations show relatively lower performance in the number aspect of the subject.

77 The performance of pupils by the end of Year 6 in the 2002 national tests was well below the national averages and below the performance of similar schools. The trend over the last few years is one of improvement that is better than the national trend. Although there was no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls, there was a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the year group. When compared with performance from the beginning of Year 3, progress is well below that for pupils in similar schools. However, there is very high pupil mobility at the school and a significant proportion of pupils who took the assessments in 2002 were not attending the school during Year 2.

78 By the end of Year 2 standards in lessons are only just in line with those expected for pupils of this age. However, progress is good for all pupils, including those with special educational needs, from a starting point that is well below expectations on entry to the school. Higher attaining pupils make calculations such as $59+9$ and $74-11$, as well as understanding the operations of multiplication and division. However, much of their knowledge is at a basic skill level and they do not develop its use in more complex situations. Average attaining pupils can identify on which day the 15th of a month will fall from a calendar; sequence numbers to 100 and name three dimensional shapes such as cone, cube and cylinder. However, they do not know about the properties of regular shapes and solids. Lower attaining pupils can put the months of the year in order and make amounts with coins to 20p. They can carry out addition and subtraction calculations with numbers up to 20 and can recognise shapes such as square, triangle, circle and pentagon. However, they do not work with numbers greater than 20.

79 By the end of Year 6 standards of attainment are below those expected of pupils of this age. Proportions of pupils with special educational needs are high and, although they make good progress, the whole pupil group has only recently felt the impact of improved teaching. Progress is good when considering the attainment of the pupils when entering Year 3. Higher attaining pupils know about properties of quadrilaterals and can calculate area and perimeter of simple rectangular shapes. However, they do not use these ideas in work with more complex shapes or develop skills such as the use of accurate angle measure to construct shapes or calculate angles within shapes by using relationships. Average attaining pupils make addition and subtraction calculations with numbers such as 433 and 526. They know about simple probability and identify events that are more or less likely. Knowledge of fractions includes recognising that $\frac{1}{4} = \frac{2}{8} = \frac{3}{12}$ and that 25% is the same as $\frac{1}{4}$. However, they have weak knowledge of multiplication tables and have little experience of

multiplication and division calculations. Lower attaining pupils can use a number line to find $39=61$ and complete simple measurements in centimetres. Recognition of basic shapes and solids such as square, rectangle, octagon or cone, cube and triangular prism is secure but they do not record the properties of these shapes.

- 80 Since the last inspection there has been very good improvement in the provision of mathematics. Standards are rising as a result of the improved quality of teaching and the very good use of assessment to monitor the progress of pupils. Learning needs are identified from assessment information so lessons better match the abilities of most pupils. Marking is now constructive and helps pupils to understand their strengths and how to improve. The subject managers guide and monitor the teaching provision well and up to date records are maintained of pupils' progress. All classrooms have access to a very good range of software so that the skills of information and communication technology can be used in support of learning in mathematics. However, the provision of appropriate challenge for higher attaining pupils is not fully developed. The development of calculation skills is not well balanced by their use to explore relationships in problem solving situations.
- 81 Teaching and learning is good throughout the school. There was no unsatisfactory teaching, and some very good teaching for a class of Year 3/4 pupils, and some excellent teaching for a class of Year 1 pupils. All teachers made good use of learning support assistants and this made a major contribution to the learning of pupils with special educational needs. Very good strategies are in place which are designed to ensure that all pupils, regardless of gender, ethnicity, special educational need, or level of prior attainment, play a full part in lessons. Good class management provides equivalent learning experiences for pupils who may have been withdrawn from class for a variety of reasons.
- 82 The strengths of teaching are in the planning of lessons; use of assessment; management of pupils, and the use of classroom support. As a result, pupils made learning gains through working hard and gaining understanding due to the guidance from learning support assistants. Where teaching was less successful, expectations of what the pupils might achieve were not high enough. In these lessons, teachers' subject knowledge was insufficient to make the links between shape, space and measure. Consequently the interest and concentration of pupils were less developed.
- 83 Where teaching was excellent, challenging questions explored the relationships within the counting system for Year 1 pupils. This gave them a familiar setting as the teacher developed ideas about 'more than' and 'less than'. This led to subtraction and ways to complete the calculation of the difference between numbers such as nine and four. Constant repetition of counting sequences involved all pupils and maintained their concentration. They were all involved in evaluating the answers of others and in confidently making suggestions about how they arrived at their answer. This clear focus on careful counting and one to one matching gave the pupils a strong respect for the precision of the number system and the need for accuracy in calculations.
- 84 Question and answer sessions involved all pupils in the responses. Several pupils were wide-eyed with dawning realisation about methods for finding the difference between numbers by matching cubes and counting the differences. When the class moved on to activities the higher attainers were challenged to find pairs of numbers with a stated difference and this involved them in the use of the methods that they had learned. However, where teaching was less effective, questions focused on individual pupils so that the rest of the class was not actively involved. Inappropriate challenge for higher attaining pupils meant that they found easy combinations of numbers that

would add to 20, rather than needing to overcome the challenge of finding, for example, three numbers that are next to one another and add to 21.

- 85 The very good development in the management structure of the school means that mathematics is led well by one manager for each section of the school. These teachers support and develop the teaching of other teachers by monitoring their planning and observing lessons. They maintain a close eye on performance and analyse assessment results for development areas. The current focus on developing the progression from mental to written calculations, and the solution of word problems, has resulted from that analysis. A portfolio contains samples of pupils' work for all aspects of the curriculum that is matched to National Curriculum levels. The samples contain information about objectives for lessons and are a useful resource for other teachers to evaluate the quality of the work from their current pupils.

SCIENCE

Overall, provision in science is good.

Strengths

- Co-ordination, including the monitoring of teaching and learning, is very good.
- The degree to which all pupils are involved in science lessons.
- The experimental aspects of science are addressed well.
- Improvement since the last inspection.
- Teaching is good.

Areas for improvement

- Further develop the opportunities for speaking.
- Further develop the use of information and communication technology.

- 86 The attainment on entry, as measured by standard tests, is well below the local and national averages. Teacher assessment in science in 2002 indicated that pupils' standards were in the top 5 per cent of schools nationally. Overall, by the end of Year 2, in lessons pupils are generally working just below national expectation. Higher attaining pupils are able to classify foods as either fruit and vegetables or meat and fish for example. They are able to match these groups of foods with their purpose in our diet. They are beginning to appreciate the need for a balanced diet. These pupils are working around national expectation. Average and lower attaining pupils are able to carry this out with support.

- 87 Higher attaining pupils are able to identify common objects that require electricity. They are able to compare how batteries and bulbs work together in simple circuits. They are beginning to be able to link the outcomes that they observe with the changes they make in the circuits. These pupils are working around national expectation. Average and lower attaining pupils require significant support in order to carry out this work.

- 88 By the end of Year 6 in 2002, standards in national tests in science were in line with the national average. In comparison to similar schools on the basis of free school meals, standards in science were above the average. With the exception of the current year, the trend in improvement in science for the previous four years has been above the national trend. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls.

- 89 Overall, by the end of Year 6, in lessons pupils are generally working close to national expectations. Higher attaining pupils are able to describe the reasons behind the movement of the sun across the sky. They are beginning to understand how shadows are formed and how these change with the sun's movement during the day. These pupils are able to describe how solids, liquids and gases can be converted between each other. Higher attaining pupils are able to apply this knowledge to explain the link between water evaporating from the sea and rain falling on the land. Lower attaining pupils approach this work with difficulty. Even with significant support from the teachers, their work shows limited understanding of the ways solids and liquids and gases are related to each other.
- 90 Pupils are generally keen to contribute to discussion and listen attentively to the teacher's exposition. Pupils show interest in the subject and work well both independently and in that small groups. Many pupils have a limited attention span but respond well to teacher's admonishments.
- 91 Overall, teaching and learning in science is good. Pupils make good progress as a consequence of good teaching. In one good Year 2 lesson pupils were encouraged to classify a wide range of different materials. The teachers' questioning effectively encouraged the pupils to review their learning from the previous lesson and this helped them to develop self-confidence. As the teacher circulated amongst the working pupils, her dialogue with them helped them to make good progress.
- 92 In one good Year 6 lesson in which pupils were encouraged to discover how sounds are made, a good range of musical instruments was used which ensured pupils were well engaged in the work. A good contribution was made by the learning support assistant who worked in a well-focused way helping pupils with special educational needs to make good progress. A good summary of the lesson ensured pupils were involved in the reviewing what they had learned. All pupils, regardless of ethnicity, special educational need, gender or prior attainment, or whether learning in English as an additional language, were effectively encouraged to participate fully in the lesson and to realise that their contributions were much valued.
- 93 The scheme of work for science is comprehensive and effectively addresses the National Curriculum programme of study. The school has concentrated on developing the practical aspects of science, and as a consequence this aspect of the subject is particularly well served. When appropriate, pupils are encouraged to develop their literacy and information and communication technology skills in the context of their work on science.
- 94 Assessment is used well to inform teachers' planning and to ensure that individual targets for improvement are set for pupils. The science co-ordinators have developed a very comprehensive set of pupils' work which has been accurately marked in line with the standards of the National Curriculum. This excellent resource is currently under-used to ensure all staff are clear about the standards of work to expect of pupils.
- 95 The two co-ordinators for science work together jointly to develop the subject, one of them monitors the subject in the lower school, while the other concentrates on the upper school. Their role is very well developed and they have very good systems for identifying the development priorities for the subject. These systems are based on monitoring of both teaching and pupils' work, and this is very effective at leading to clear, well-focused priorities. Since the last inspection the subject has made excellent progress, particularly in the use of the assessment data to inform planning, and in the quality of the scheme of work.

- 96 Resources to support science teaching are extremely well organised and there are many boxes containing equipment for each of the topics and more are being developed. A very careful audit of information and communication technology software has been carried out and purchases made as a result.
- 97 Very detailed evaluations of teaching strategies are carried out and these lead to the teachers modifying their subsequent work. The co-ordinators' files are carefully scrutinised by the headteacher and very specific and highly focused guidance is given on ways to improve. As a consequence of such evaluation, the greater emphasis on practical work in science has been very successful.

ART AND DESIGN

Overall, the quality of provision in art and design is good.

Strengths

- Good teaching that provides a wide range of experiences for the pupils.
- A curriculum that enables skill development and takes good account of national guidelines.
- A developing use of information for communication technology in support of learning in art and design.

Areas for improvement

- A better distribution of time for the teaching of art and design.

- 98 By the end of Year 2, standards are above those expected for pupils of this age. Portrait drawing to a prepared outline shows good use of shape, proportion and detail, with shading used to give effects of light, shade and texture. Accurate placing of features is successful in expressing the character of the sitter, and colour is used sensitively with good effect. Effective tile designs show good use of dots, dashes, shading and pattern. Work on display illustrates good use of information and communication technology in the design of an irregular grid with selected blocks of colour distributed with attractive effect.
- 99 By the end of Year 6, standards are again above those expected of pupils of this age. Sketching is well developed and use of shading for texture and perspective bring reality to images such as a still life of an old shoe. Proportions are accurate and the vertical aspect of perspective is maintained in a drawing of a row of houses that stretch into the distance. The use of paint is also good, with dot painting in the style of Seurat effectively recreating the development of colour and texture from a mixture of dots in primary colours. Brush technique is good when pupils use colour for effect in a replication of 'The Scream' by Munch. Year 3/4 pupils use information and communication technology to develop very good symmetrical designs. They are precise and use attractive images as they repeat effectively across the paper.
- 100 Teaching and learning in art and design are good. Teaching is always at least satisfactory and there is some good teaching in the lower school and some very good teaching in the upper school. The good subject knowledge of the majority of the teachers, and the provision of progressive skill development leads to effective teaching. As a result pupils in almost all classes are enthusiastic and produce work of good quality. The good teaching of Year 1 pupils used good examples of patterns in nature to develop an awareness of the range of possibilities. Good vocabulary was used and the interest of the pupils was apparent in their comments as they observed

that a pattern '...goes quite different in the middle, sort of silvery'. Later, they searched the classroom for interesting examples of pattern that could be found by rubbing paper with a crayon over a rough surface. Pupils' progress is not always supported by the length of art and design sessions.

- 101 Older pupils in Year 3/4 followed explanations carefully as they were shown how to use shading to create different effects. The teacher then talked through a wide range of pictures by famous artists such as Van Gogh, Gauguin and Klimt. As a result of this very good teaching, all pupils were fully absorbed in their work as they used shading in different directions, together with texture effects from intensity of shading on their mainly accurate outlines. However, weak subject knowledge was evident in the less effective teaching where questions were used in an effort to get pupils to identify features about a picture. The curriculum requirements of evaluation and appraisal were satisfactorily developed but the lesson did not give pupils sufficient guidance about planning a drawing or using shading for effect. The result was that pupils made mainly poor attempts at copying the pictures that the teacher placed around the classroom.
- 102 Since the last inspection the manager for the subject has maintained standards and supported other teachers well in the delivery of the curriculum. National guidelines have been successfully incorporated into the clear programme of skill development. Links with other subject areas, such as information and communication technology, mathematics and geography, have been developed. A portfolio of evaluated pupils' work has been maintained so that teachers will have a reference point against which to evaluate the work of their pupils. This represents satisfactory improvement in the subject from the already good provision that was in place at that time.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Overall, the provision for design and technology is good.

Strengths

- The highly developed co-ordination of the subject.
- Improvement since the last inspection report has been excellent.

Areas for improvement

- The opportunities for work with resistive materials could be further developed.

- 103 Overall, by the end of Year 2, standards are close to the national expectation. When making Christmas decorations, higher attaining pupils were able to carefully cut and stick various materials to make an angel. Lower attaining pupils had more difficulty in achieving a neat finish. Year 1 pupils are encouraged to appreciate textures when they assemble 'Texture Boards' using a good range of different materials.
- 104 Year 3 pupils are able to design and make a purse after researching the suitability of materials. They are generally able to plan their work and some are able to evaluate the outcomes. Higher attaining pupils are beginning to be able to make suggestions for improvement. While some need help to finish off sewing, their standard of work is close to the national expectation. Higher attaining pupils need less help and are working above expectation.
- 105 Overall, by the end of Year 6, standards are close to the national expectation. When Year 5/6 pupils designed and made pop-up books, higher attainers were able to carry out the design stage in detail following much discussion. These pupils evaluated and improved their designs as they progressed and were working above national expectation. Lower attaining pupils needed much support to carry out the planning and their evaluation was poorly developed. They were working below national expectation.
- 106 Discussions with pupils revealed that they are keen and enthusiastic about the subject and enjoy the practical aspects. It was not possible to observe any design and technology lessons during the week of the inspection. On the basis of the extensive portfolio of work available, teaching is clearly effective in helping pupils to make good progress in the subject in their time at the school. Appropriate opportunities are sought to use information and communication technology to support learning in the subject, such as word-processed evaluations.
- 107 The design and technology curriculum is based effectively on the national guidelines. As a consequence, all elements of the subject are covered well throughout the school. The scheme of work is well planned and ensures pupils get very good opportunities to develop the skills needed for the subject. Pupils are given good opportunities to use various joining techniques, including: sticking; sewing; weaving; tying, and clipping. Very good opportunities exist for pupils to work with food, and construction kits are used well.
- 108 When appropriate, pupils are encouraged to develop their literacy and information and communication technology skills in the context of their work on design and technology. For example, when Year 5/6 pupils designed and made pop-up books. This exciting work combined the use of word-processing with moving pictures in attractive books. The opportunities for work with resistive materials could be further developed.

- 109 An extremely comprehensive and exemplary set of materials helps teachers to determine the standards of pupils' work to some considerable accuracy. This is illustrated with photographs of pupils' models and is closely related to the levels of attainment of the National Curriculum. The outcomes of the assessment of pupils' work, and of the effectiveness of individual lessons, are both used effectively to inform teachers' subsequent planning.
- 110 The co-ordinators' role is highly developed and includes monitoring of teachers' work and planning, and collection and monitoring of pupils' work. Co-ordinators are able to observe other teachers teaching and provide very detailed and helpful feedback. Appropriate and helpful support has been sought from the local education authority. Staff meeting time has been used to identify the strengths and areas to develop across the school. This very well focused discussion has led to clear identification of issues to develop. The headteacher's monitoring of the co-ordinators' work results in effective celebration of the strengths, and very detailed and very well-focused suggestions for further development.
- 111 An extremely comprehensive set of documentation supports teachers in their work in this subject. The outcomes of lessons are thoughtfully evaluated and the conclusions effectively inform subsequent planning. The development plan for the subject is comprehensive and well focused on appropriate priorities. As a consequence, improvement since the last inspection report has been excellent.

GEOGRAPHY

Overall, the quality of provision in geography is good.

Strengths

- The development of map skills across the school.
- The use of the school's locality and field trips to enhance pupils' experiences.
- The use of information and communication technology to support learning.

Areas for development

- Continue to monitor and improve provision in order to raise standards further by Year 6.

- 112 No geography was taught in Year 2 last term and consequently there was little evidence of younger pupils' work. Standards were judged by talking to pupils in Years 2 and 6. They are average for pupils in both year groups and this is similar to standards at the time of the last inspection. All pupils are achieving at the same rate regardless of gender, ethnicity, learning in English as an additional language or special educational need.
- 113 Pupils in Year 2 have a good knowledge of their own locality and can describe physical and man-made features such as houses, shops, parks and trees. They know what they like and dislike, for example, that the park has been spoilt by graffiti. They have just started learning about the island of Dominica and know that the climate is hot, trees are 'different' and that it is an island because it has 'water all around'. Higher and average attaining pupils know that a map is 'like looking down' and they recognise the shape and position of the British Isles on the globe and in an atlas. One pupil said, perceptively, 'We're small in the world but it's big for us'. They know the countries of the United Kingdom and that they live in Peterborough. These pupils are achieving well because of their below average starting point when they begin school.

- 114 In Year 6, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of the elements of the geography curriculum they have studied. They can use atlases to find information and have used maps with four figure grid numbers. Most pupils have a good knowledge of the effect of humans on the environment and can recognise ways in which it could be improved, for example by reducing pollution. They have a satisfactory understanding of the differences between settlements and, after a field trip to Hunstanton, they can compare it with Peterborough in terms of position, and physical and human features. They understand that in Hunstanton employment might revolve around tourism because of its location. In their latest topic on rivers, pupils are beginning to understand the water cycle and the effect of water supply on human life. Their progress over time in acquiring knowledge and skills is satisfactory.
- 115 Teaching is good overall. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and explain clearly to pupils what they are going to do and what they are going to find out. Activities provide challenge for all pupils and well-chosen resources enable pupils to be fully involved in their own learning. In a Year 5/6 class, very good use was made of a CD-ROM simulation to engage lower attaining pupils in making decisions about how and why to bring a water supply to an Ethiopian village. They were very well supported by an assistant who made sure that important vocabulary was understood and that all pupils made effective contributions to decisions made. Secure class management and good relationships between pupils and teachers lead to calm and purposeful working environments with pupils fully on task. In a Year 3/4 class, co-operative skills were developed as pupils worked together to locate places on maps. Pupils work with enjoyment, concentrate hard and take pride in their work and this has a positive effect on their learning. Very good use is made of different areas for fieldwork. Pupils' progress is not always supported by the length of geography sessions.
- 116 The leadership and management of geography are very good. Although standards have remained the same since the last inspection, there have been good improvements in provision and the subject is well placed to raise standards. Geography has an important part to play in the personal development of pupils. For example, Year 6 are beginning to examine moral as well as social and cultural issues in their Water topic. Very good use is made of information and communication technology, for example, by the use of CD-ROMs, videos and the internet. There are very good assessment systems in place to judge and record what pupils know and can do. Lessons are evaluated in order to influence future planning. The monitoring role of the co-ordinator is very well developed and she has a clear view of standards. A portfolio of work is kept as an aid to teachers when assessing pupils' work. Planning, and completed work, is checked and feedback given to staff. The co-ordinator has begun to monitor teaching and learning. As a result of one observation she identified a weakness in the development of map skills. This problem has now been addressed and the teaching of map skills across the school has improved.

HISTORY

Overall, the quality of provision in history is good.

Strengths

- The regular use of visits and visitors to enrich provision.
- The use of information and communication technology to support learning across the school.

Areas for Development

- Continue to monitor and improve provision in order to raise standards further by Year 6.

- 117 Standards for pupils in Years 2 and 6 are at expected levels when compared with schools nationally. During the last inspection, standards for older pupils were above average. This year there is a high proportion of pupils who have special educational needs which affect their learning, in Year 6. Despite these pupils making good progress, this affects attainment overall. Nonetheless, higher attaining pupils in Year 6 could be given further challenge. Pupils generally are achieving well throughout the school, regardless of gender, ethnicity, learning in English as an additional language, or special educational need.
- 118 Pupils in Year 2 can talk knowledgeably about the Great Fire of London, how it started, why it took hold so quickly and the implications for people's safety. Some understand that without eyewitness accounts, such as the diaries of Samuel Pepys, we would know less about the fire because there were no cameras to record events. They can recognise the distinction between the past and the present and use and understand appropriate vocabulary such as a 'week', a 'year' and 'long ago'. Year 2 pupils are achieving well because of their below average starting point when they begin school.
- 119 Pupils in Year 6 have satisfactory knowledge of people's lives in Britain in the 1950s and subsequent decades. In their study of schools they recognise differences between provision in the 1950s and today, particularly in the use of technological aids. They realise that we can find out about history using primary and secondary sources, and that primary sources, such as eyewitness accounts, are more numerous for recent history. They understand the importance of archaeology in finding out about ancient civilisations. Higher and average attaining pupils understand why two or more accounts of an event may be different according to the observer's point of view. The regular use of timelines for pupils from Year 3 onwards has enabled Year 6 to gain a good sense of chronology. As a result they can place events and people they have studied into their correct time periods. Their progress over time in acquiring knowledge and skills is satisfactory.
- 120 Teaching was seen only in Year 1 and it was satisfactory. Both lessons were the first history lesson for pupils and were an introduction to finding differences between modern toys and those of the past. Pupils had brought in their own toys to describe and discuss. In one lesson the teacher failed to establish if the pupils had any understanding of the meaning of 'history', 'the past' and 'the present' when she used these terms. Although pupils enjoyed examining their toys, they quickly established that new toys looked 'shiny', 'clean' and 'not scratched.' By the end of the lesson most pupils were able to identify some characteristics of new toys and to suggest that grandparents might be used to find out about older toys. Opportunities were missed to relate the passage of time to pupils' own experiences. Pupils' progress is not always supported by the length of history sessions.

- 121 Both lessons gave good speaking opportunities as pupils asked questions about the toys. Good class management and relationships ensured that most pupils were able to listen and to stay on task. One lesson was affected by the tight schedule of lessons in the afternoon and was eventually completed in three short sessions. This affects pupils' learning. There was insufficient evidence to make a firm judgement on the quality of teaching in other year groups. In Year 2, well chosen activities such as sequencing events, reading Samuel Pepys' accounts of the Great Fire and then writing their own, as well as comparing maps of London before and after the fire, help to develop pupils' understanding. Work from Year 3/4 classes shows good development of historical skills alongside knowledge and understanding. For example, pupils have used the evidence of Celtic artefacts to decide what it tells us about the Celts and have used other evidence to begin to understand the points of view of the Celts and Romans. Work from Year 5/6 classes shows no obvious differences in work expected from higher and from lower attaining pupils. Sometimes, higher attaining pupils are provided with insufficient challenge.
- 122 The leadership and management of history are very good. There have been good improvements in provision since the last inspection, including resources, and these should help to raise standards as younger pupils move through the school. Very good use is made of information and communication technology by, for example, the use of CD-ROMs, videos, and the internet. Visits and visitors are used to bring history to life. A recent topic on World War Two involved interviewing an evacuee as well as a day, acting in role, at Duxford air museum. Literacy skills are developed well; good examples of this can be seen in Year 3/4 where pupils develop their historical understanding through drama and poetry. Pupils begin to find information from their own research from Year 3. There is a very good assessment system in place to record what pupils know and can do and a portfolio of work is kept as an aid to teachers when judging attainment. There are very good systems in place to enable the subject leader to monitor teaching and learning, planning and pupils' completed work. This has enabled her to give relevant feedback to class teachers such as the amount of work expected and the planning of work for different attainment groups.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Overall, the provision for information and communication technology is good.

Strengths

- Very good co-ordination of the subject.
- Behaviour and attitudes of pupils.
- Improvement since the last inspection.
- Pupils make good progress.
- The National Curriculum is addressed well.

Areas for improvement

- Further develop the use of the co-ordinators' portfolio of work as a training resource for teachers.

- 123 By end of Year 2 higher attaining pupils are able to use painting and drawing programs with confidence and some precision, producing attractive pieces of work. These pupils are able to use a graph-drawing program to represent the results of simple surveys they have carried out, such as the eye colour of their friends. Lower attaining pupils are able to use this software producing simpler patterns with less proficiency. Generally, pupils are able to use information and communication technology to produce and share their ideas in a variety of forms and standards are close to the national expectation.
- 124 Most pupils in Year 4 are able to generate and then change text on the computer and can record their work, saving it to disk. Pupils are working around national expectation. Higher attaining pupils are able to use more facilities of the word processing software and demonstrate greater confidence than average and lower attaining pupils.
- 125 By the end of Year 6, pupils are beginning to be able to use graphical programs to represent their designs of classroom layout. They are able to use spreadsheet programs to generate well-presented histograms of the outcomes of surveys they have carried out. They are able to use the word processing packages creatively to enter and amend text and present it in an attractive way. Pupils are able to use presentation software to share their views with their peers, and to use databases to analyse and present data. Generally, standards are close to the national expectation.
- 126 Overall, teaching in information and communication technology is good. In one good Year 4 lesson, the purpose of the lesson was carefully explained to the pupils which ensured that they were clear as to why they were carrying out the task. Pupils were well-supported to acquire and use specialist subject language, although at times this would be more effective if a few words were chosen as the focus for the week. While pupils are working at the computers, the teacher held well-focused dialogues with them which ensured that they were effectively challenged to make good progress in skills. On occasion, higher attaining pupils are insufficiently challenged and more opportunities could be created to encourage pupils to speak. The subject has made excellent improvements since the last inspection report, particularly in the range of resources available, such as the acquisition of an interactive whiteboard; the way the National Curriculum is addressed, and in the quality of teaching and learning.
- 127 The National Curriculum for information and communication technology is thoroughly addressed, and in particular the broader aspects which focus on the nature of information, are given high prominence. Individual information and communication technology lessons deal very well with helping pupils to develop the skills of information and communication technology. The widespread opportunities which pupils have to use information and communication technology in other subjects ensures that they gain experience in applying the skills they have learned in useful situations. The school has just introduced an interactive whiteboard and teachers are already incorporating this into their lessons where appropriate. There is equality of provision for all pupils, regardless of ethnicity, gender, learning in English as an additional language, or special educational need.
- 128 The co-ordinators have developed extensive monitoring files which include examples of pupils' work. This resource is currently under-used to support the co-ordinators' work with their colleagues, leading to a wider appreciation of the standards of which pupils are capable. The co-ordinators use the assessed work very effectively to help inform the development of the subject and to identify priorities. The co-ordinators have a very clear view of the strengths and areas for development of the subject and

a recognition that their work is focused on improving pupils' learning. This effectively drives their work. They are very confident, both about the subject itself, and their role as co-ordinators. They work very well together and very effectively canvass the views of their colleagues. As a consequence the subject is developing well and is well placed to develop further. The provision for supporting pupils with special educational needs is good, including specialist hardware.

MUSIC

Overall, the provision for music is good.

Strengths

- Improved curriculum because of new scheme of work
- Teachers' confidence has improved

Areas for improvement

- The range of tuned instruments

129 Pupils attain the standards expected for their age by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils sing tunefully showing appropriate control of pitch and rhythm. They listen to and follow an accompaniment well. Assemblies are used effectively to introduce pupils to a wide range of music. During the inspection week the theme was 'persuasive music' used in advertising. Pupils were enthusiastic about matching the music they heard to the advertisement for a mobile phone.

130 Since the last inspection a revised scheme of work has been introduced which deals satisfactorily with the shortcomings surrounding listening to and appraising music which were identified previously. Teaching quality has also improved and assessment arrangements are now in place.

131 The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Some highly effective teaching was seen in one lesson which helped pupils achieve a very good understanding of how lyrics convey mood and feeling. In that lesson the teacher was very clear about what pupils were to learn. This was shared with the pupils so they knew what was expected of them. The use of animated film about World War One and well chosen lyrics from a song recalling events of World War Two clearly showed pupils how lyrics can persuade people by stirring up their emotions. School staff teach groups to play the recorder. This helps those pupils who take part to achieve well.

132 Resources were also used effectively in lessons for pupils in Years 1 and 2. In these lessons the teachers ensured that all pupils were actively engaged in music making. Pupils used percussion instruments to explore how sounds are made as well as changes in pitch and dynamics of sounds. They repeated simple rhythmic patterns. Pupils in Year 2 began to introduce different layers of sound while following a strong beat. The range of tuned instruments currently limits pupils' experiences in this area.

133 Music is managed effectively by the co-ordinator, who has been responsible for introducing a scheme of work which supports planning and teaching well. There is a good range of untuned percussion instruments and the number of tuned instruments is being enhanced.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Overall, the provision for physical education is good.

Strengths

- Standards achieved in dance are better than typically seen because of good teaching
- The subject is led and managed well

Areas for improvement

- Opportunities for the youngest pupils to develop skills and interests outside of lesson time

134 By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards in physical education are in line with expectations. This is a similar picture to that at the time of the last inspection. Since then, teaching quality has improved and pupils now achieve well in all areas of physical education, particularly dance, which was the main focus for learning during the time of the inspection. Most pupils are well co-ordinated, showing fluency and control of their movements. They work imaginatively and with a sense of purpose. The scheme of work which was previously incomplete is now well established. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 make satisfactory progress in swimming. Most become competent in the water and learn to swim by the time they leave the school.

135 The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, and accounts for pupils' good progress and achievement in the area of dance where the performance of some pupils is better than expected for their age.

136 Lessons are planned well, usually linking dance to pupils' learning in other subjects. In a lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6 for example pupils explored through movement the changing elements of weather. This was linked to their current geography topic. Teachers of pupils in Year 1 used dance to help promote personal development by getting the pupils to work in pairs to practice gentle movements. Teachers work enthusiastically, demonstrating techniques to enhance pupils' performance. Most lessons are filled with activity so that pupils are challenged both physically and intellectually through dance. Relationships in lessons are very good. Pupils' efforts are valued and celebrated so they work without inhibition, and are willing to try out new skills to improve their own performance. Occasionally lessons do not have sufficient vigorous activities or changes of pace. There is little evidence of information and communication technology being used by pupils to evaluate their performance in the subject.

137 The curriculum is enhanced by a reasonable range of activities provided outside of school time which include soccer skills, cross country and a dance club taken by a specialist teacher from a local secondary school. Plans are well underway to provide specialist dance tuition during school time and to extend the range of outdoor adventurous activities. The school recognises that there are insufficient opportunities for pupils in Years 1 and 2 to develop their interests in sports outside of school. Teams compete regularly in tournaments for local schools. There is equality of opportunity in physical education for all pupils, regardless of ethnicity, gender, learning in English as an additional language, or special educational need.

138 Subject leadership and management are good. The co-ordinator during the relatively short time since her appointment has raised the profile of physical education through her professional skills and commitment to improve. Areas for development are

identified because of effective monitoring which results in positive action such as training in 'outdoor adventurous' skills. Resources for physical education are good and used effectively.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Overall, provision for religious education is satisfactory.

Strengths

- A structured curriculum that follows the locally agreed syllabus and ensures good coverage of world faiths.
- Pupils good factual knowledge about world faiths.
- The knowledge and understanding of teachers in the upper school is good and this helps pupils to learn.
- Good opportunities are taken to make visits to centres of worship and to receive visits from practitioners of faiths.

Areas for improvement

- Better subject knowledge for some teachers so that pupils of all ages experience good teaching.
- More opportunities for pupils to make comparisons between different faiths.

140 By the end of Year 2, standards are broadly in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils know about the parables of Jesus, they know about the New and Old Testament and can write accounts of the Christmas story. They know that religious writings are found in special books and that different religions have their own special texts. They have a basic knowledge about world religions such as Sikhism and Islam, and higher attaining pupils have written accounts about why Sikhs visit Gurdwara as part of religious pilgrimage.

141 By the end of Year 6 standards are broadly in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Islam has recently been studied in depth and pupils have good factual knowledge about the Muslim faith. They have written about Muhammad, (peace be upon him) and Islamic prayer, studied the daily routine of Islamic worship and know about Ramadan and the five pillars of Islam. Islamic food requirements, fasting and the requirements of prayer at the Mosque have also been studied. Analysis of work on display shows a celebration of pupils' work and good links with art and literacy. Representations of prayer mats show good decorations in the Islamic style by Year 5/6 pupils. The pupils' literacy skills are used well in written work about the five pillars of Islam. It is factual and seeks to explain the religious reasoning, while showing good awareness of the magnitude of the vision of Muhammad, (peace be upon him).

142 Since the last inspection there has been good improvement in the teaching of religious education. There is now a policy and scheme for the teaching of the subject. Most teaching shows good knowledge of other world faiths, and visits and visitors give the curriculum greater meaning for the pupils.

143 Teaching and learning in religious education are good in the upper school and satisfactory in the lower school. None of the teaching was less than satisfactory and there was some good and very good teaching in the upper school. Planning, teaching methods, use of resources and management of pupils were the strengths of the teaching. These gave meaning to lessons and led to good interest levels in the pupils. As a result, they produced good work and showed pride in presentation and

the good use of colour and image in their artwork. However, there was a strong emphasis on factual knowledge and this restricted the opportunities for pupils to explain similarities and differences between religions. Where teaching is very good, the teacher has a clear idea of the purpose of religious education. They speak confidently about Hinduism and develop awareness in the Year 3/4 pupils of the 'Big Ideas' of religion such as worship and deity.

- 144 The pupils show good levels of prior learning as they recall factual knowledge such as 'Puja' meaning worship and 'Aum' meaning the sound of God. One pupil explains the idea of God as 'A being with power over you'. A very short extract from a video about Hindu worship leaves the pupils with strong and powerful images of the act of worship. The pupils are then able to show good factual knowledge as they use words such as 'Mandir', 'Prashad' and 'Marti' when the teacher sets out the artefacts of worship with great respect. The use of a Hindu pupil in some of the explanations makes the learning special for the pupils and they follow the lesson intently. Learning is very good as the pupils gain a wealth of information in a meaningful setting and pupils gain a deeper understanding of the 'Puja' as well as factual knowledge about the act of worship. In answer to a question about the many arms of one of the images one boy observes that it represents the god being wiser and cleverer.
- 145 The coordinator for the subject shows good leadership and has assembled a portfolio of pupils' work to illustrate the standards that pupils might achieve. However, she has not yet fully developed the confidence of all teachers in the teaching of religious education. There is also a resource shortfall that is currently being addressed in the provision of collections of books to support the delivery of topics on other world faiths.