

INSPECTION REPORT

**LIMES FARM NURSERY AND INFANT
SCHOOL**

Chigwell

LEA area: Essex

Unique reference number: 114962

Headteacher: Mrs J Tunney

Reporting inspector: Mrs E Pickford
23128

Dates of inspection: 7th – 10th October 2002

Inspection number: 24517

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant school and nursery

School category: Community school

Age range of pupils: 3 - 7

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Limes Avenue
Chigwell
Essex

Postcode: IG7 5LP

Telephone number: 020 8501 1115

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs Joy Madeiros

Date of previous inspection: February 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23128	Esme Pickford	Registered inspector	Mathematics Science Design and technology	Characteristics and effectiveness of the school The school's results and achievements Teaching and learning Leadership and management
9420	David Martin	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development Pupils' welfare and health and safety Partnership with parents and carers
27301	Cynthia Messom	Team inspector	Foundation stage Special educational needs Art and design Music Religious education	The quality and range of pupils' learning opportunities including provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.
27773	Faith Mackenzie	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology History Geography Physical education Educational inclusion English as an additional language	The assessment of pupils' attainment.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Limes Farm Infant School and Nursery is a smaller than average community school situated on the fringe of Chigwell, within the Limes Farm estate. Most pupils live close to the school in local authority houses and flats and a minority in privately owned houses, some of which are rented. There is a high changeover of pupils; as families grow they move out of the area into larger accommodation. Over a quarter of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, which is above average. Pupils are drawn from a wide variety of cultures and backgrounds. The percentage of pupils who speak English as an additional language is higher than in most schools but the majority of these 20 pupils speak English with appropriate fluency for their age.

The nursery, which was opened in 1998, provides 52 places for children to attend either a morning or afternoon session. Attainment on entry to the school shows a full range of ability, but is generally well below that expected for four year olds, especially in early literacy and numeracy skills. Children move into the reception class at the start of the term in which they have their fifth birthday. The 113 children in the Infant school, at the time of the inspection, are taught in five classes and grouped according to age. Further reception classes are formed as children join the school in the spring and summer terms. Class sizes vary from 17 to 29. Ten per cent of pupils are on the special needs register which is below average, although the school does have a very high percentage of below average pupils. The special needs of pupils identified include moderate learning difficulties, autism and emotional and behavioural problems. Two per cent of pupils have statements of special educational need, which is average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Limes Farm Infants and Nursery is a good school. Overall, the leadership and management of the school are good. Pupils enjoy school, have good attitudes to learning and behave well. The quality of teaching is good overall and very good in the nursery and reception classes, which enables pupils of all abilities to make good progress. Standards are improving and in the 2002 tests were average in writing and mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs and those speaking English as an additional language achieve well in relation to their attainment when they start school. The school is very effective in promoting strategies to make sure pupils are included in all lessons and have equality of opportunity. It provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The exciting opportunities and very good teaching in the Foundation Stage (nursery and reception classes) gives children a very good start to their education.
- The leadership and management of the school, provided by the headteacher, are very good
- Teaching and learning throughout the school are good, resulting in good achievement by pupils.
- The rich curriculum provides pupils with a good variety of learning opportunities, which are carefully matched to their needs.
- There are very good systems for assessing pupils' attainment and progress.
- The school's commitment to do its best for each pupil and the strong caring support provided by all adults results in very good relationships and personal development.
- The very good provision for pupils' social and moral development creates a harmonious school community.

What could be improved

- The below average standards in English and mathematics seen during the inspection need raising.
- Basic skills of cutting, making and drawing are below average and should be regularly taught and practised.
- There is no secure outdoor teaching area for the reception classes to use.
- Parents are not sufficiently involved in their children's learning either at home or in school.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Good improvement has been made since the school was inspected in February 1998. All the key issues have been tackled effectively. Standards have improved in information and communication technology as a result of staff training, improved resources and a broader curriculum. The school now has schemes of work in place for all subjects and very good assessment systems to regularly monitor pupils' progress. Subject leaders take greater responsibility for organising and developing their subjects. The school is benefiting from the nursery class which opened in September 1998. During the last year standards in reading, writing and mathematics have improved considerably, partly due to target setting. Training has taken place to enable governors to support the school more effectively. Staff training and lesson observation have improved the quality of teaching in literacy and numeracy lessons. The school has the commitment and is well placed to continue this good all round improvement.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
Reading	E	E	D	B
Writing	E	E	C	B
Mathematics	E	E	C	B

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

In the 2002 national tests, pupils aged seven achieved average results in writing and mathematics and below average results in reading when compared to those in all schools nationally. Compared to schools with a similar intake, standards were above average in writing and mathematics and average in reading. Due to target setting, the impact of the nursery class and the slightly higher ability of this year group, the 2002 results show considerable all-round improvement compared with previous years. Pupils of all abilities achieve well, including those with special educational needs and especially those speaking English as an additional language. The most able pupils achieved above average standards in the tests. Teacher-assessed results in science were average overall when compared nationally, with a small percentage of pupils achieving the higher Level 3. Standards of work seen in the current Year 2 during the inspection were below average in reading, writing and mathematics due to the overall lower ability of this group of pupils. Standards in science were found to be average. In Year 2 pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and those speaking English as an additional language, make good progress. By the end of Year 2 standards are above average in physical education and average in information and communication technology, music and religious education. In history and geography standards are below average due to the low level of literacy skills and pupils' limited background knowledge. Standards in art and design and design and technology are below average due to pupils' difficulties in developing basic creative skills rather than a lack of design ideas.

Children in the nursery make good progress from the well below average standards seen in most areas of learning when they join the school. During the reception year children continue to make good progress in communication, literacy and language, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development and emotional and personal development. Despite the good progress made only a minority of children achieve the standards expected nationally in these areas of learning by the end of the reception year. Overall standards are below those expected. The oldest children, who have had two or three terms in the reception class are closest to the expected standard.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and are keen to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils behave well in lessons, in the playground and when moving around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils work and play together harmoniously. Adults and pupils treat each other with considerable respect.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory and well below the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is good throughout the school and promotes consistently good learning. Teaching in the nursery and reception class is consistently very good and sometimes excellent. The teachers and their assistants have a very good understanding of how young children learn. There is a strong focus on developing clear routines and widening children's experiences and vocabulary to ensure they settle quickly and grow in confidence. In Years 1 and 2, teaching is good and builds effectively on the good start established in the earlier years of the school. Particular strengths in all teaching are detailed planning and high expectations of how all pupils should behave and how much they should achieve.

The teaching of English is good and enables pupils to improve their skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing from very low levels on entry to the school. The teaching of mathematics is good and makes good use of resources to support pupils' learning. The school is very effective in teaching basic literacy and numeracy skills. Relationships and classroom management are very good and this means that pupils work purposefully in lessons. Most pupils try their hardest and work at a good rate. Support staff work effectively alongside class teachers and make significant contributions to pupils' learning. As a result, pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language work with as much commitment and concentration as others in their class. Teachers thoroughly assess and monitor pupils' progress and use the information well to set targets and plan lessons to meet pupils' needs.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum is rich and balanced, satisfying the requirements for literacy and numeracy, whilst giving pupils good access to other subjects. A satisfactory range of visits, visitors and additional activities enrich the curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Provision for statemented pupils is good and enables them to make good progress. Pupils on the special needs register have appropriate individual education plans and support in class which enables them to achieve well.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Most of the pupils who are bilingual are reasonably fluent in English but are given support in subjects where they need to develop or extend their vocabulary. This enables them to make good all round progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Good. The very good provision for moral and social development encourages pupils to take responsibility for their actions, work co-operatively, respect others and develop a sense of community.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school has very good systems for monitoring pupils' academic performance, behaviour and personal development. All pupils are known individually by staff, who take a keen interest in their welfare. Procedures for child protection and monitoring health and safety are satisfactory. Attendance is not monitored thoroughly enough.

The school provides good information for parents through newsletters, written reports and parents' evenings. Staff are accessible to parents at the beginning and end of school. Very good information is provided for parents about what is being taught on a weekly basis. There is good communication with parents through the home/school diary. Parents do not regularly help in classes but are willing to help with visits. Some support their children's learning well by encouraging them to read at home and do their homework.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good overall. The headteacher provides strong leadership for the staff team and has quickly earned the respect of the school community. Other subject and area leaders work hard to support colleagues, provide training and raise standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. The majority of the governing body has only recently been appointed. They are enthusiastic and are keen to increase their involvement in shaping the direction of the school. During the changeover period duties have been fulfilled by a small group of experienced governors.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school has a clear idea from the self evaluation that has taken place where its strengths and weaknesses are. Test results are carefully analysed and targets set for improvement. Expertise and good practice within the staff is shared well.
The strategic use of	The school makes good use of the funding it receives to provide pupils

resources	with the best possible support in class and good quality resources to enable good progress to be made. Good use is made of grants for staff training. Financial management is good and expertise is purchased from a local consortium. Governors monitor spending and best value for money is sought on purchases.
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The school is adequately staffed with suitably qualified teachers to teach the nursery and reception class and the National Curriculum and religious education in Years 1 and 2. The indoor and outdoor facilities in the nursery are good. The hall, library and computer suite are timetabled to be used efficiently. The spacious outdoor play areas are well equipped. Some classrooms, especially the reception classrooms, are too small to support the range of activities and movement of children expected. There is no secure area for these classes to work outdoors. Generally resources are good.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children enjoy school. • Teaching is good. • Children make good progress. • Parents are happy to approach the staff if there are any problems. • The school is well led and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of additional activities. • The amount of homework.

Inspectors agree with parents' positive comments. They found the additional activities, including visits and the homework set appropriate for the age of the pupils.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children enter the nursery with levels of attainment which overall are well below those expected for this age. Although, they make good progress during the Foundation Stage by the time they enter statutory schooling in Year 1, at the end of the reception year, only a minority are likely to attain the Early Learning Goals, with the remainder still below expected levels. Most children are closest to the expected standard in their emotional, personal and physical development. Standards in speaking and listening, early reading, writing, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development are generally below average. School assessments made at this stage show that although there is a full range of ability the school has a much higher percentage of below average children than is found nationally. The overall ability of year groups can vary considerably and accounts for fluctuations in attainment. Children are given a very good start to their schooling in the nursery and reception classes and this positive support is maintained throughout the school.
2. The school's results in National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds at the end of Year 2, in 2002 show a considerable all round improvement compared to previous years. Standards were average in writing and mathematics and below average in reading in comparison to schools nationally. When compared with similar schools, in terms of the percentage of pupils that are eligible for free school meals, standards are above average in reading, writing and mathematics. A quarter of pupils achieved the higher Level 3 in reading, spelling and mathematics. Teacher-assessed results in science were average when compared nationally and remained similar to those of the previous year. Assessment shows the overall ability of this year group to be higher than normal for the school. However, the tests results clearly indicate the good progress that is achieved by pupils during their time at the school from a position where results were consistently well below the national average.
3. Work seen during the inspection found standards in reading, writing and mathematics in the current Year 2 to be below average, but the ability of the year group is considerably lower than last year. The improving upward trend from well below average has continued and shows good achievement by pupils over time from a low starting point. This is as a result of good teaching and assessment, which enable lessons to be planned to provide specific support and challenge for each individual pupil. It reflects the school's particular success in target setting and creating a learning environment that supports and motivates all pupils, boys and girls, those of all attainment levels and those who speak English as an additional language. Pupils with special educational needs (SEN) make good progress throughout the school, so that by the time they leave, they are well on the way to attaining expected levels for their age. This is due to early identification, appropriate intervention and the good teaching and support given.
4. By the end of Year 2, standards in speaking and listening are currently below average, although pupils are given good opportunities to express themselves and make good progress. Their range of vocabulary is narrow, although staff work hard to develop this, and many pupils lack the confidence to answer in class. Good strategies are used to encourage pupils to listen attentively to the teacher and each other, but a significant majority find it difficult to sustain their concentration for any length of time. The difficulties in speaking and listening limit achievement in most areas of the curriculum. Although standards in writing are below average, pupils undertake a wide range of written work and are confident to 'have a go' at spelling unfamiliar words and include punctuation in their stories. Handwriting progresses well and pupils overcome earlier difficulties with pencil control. Work is presented to a high standard. Reading is below average but most have acquired skills to attack unfamiliar words. Many of the pupils just need more practice to develop confidence and fluency and extra encouragement at home.
5. Standards of work seen in mathematics were below average. Pupils are improving their number

- skills as a result of new teaching strategies and resources. They are becoming more confident with shape and measure but have great difficulty explaining their thinking and using mathematics to solve everyday problems.
6. In science the standards of work seen were average. Science has been an area of relative strength and standards have risen over time. This is the result of the carefully structured curriculum followed in Years 1 and 2, which is taught well and encourages pupils to investigate and use their senses. The practical approach suits the pupils for whom literacy skills may not be a strength. The good assessment system is not entirely dependent on written work. Sound scientific knowledge and understanding are developed and good progress made in overcoming a low level of background knowledge and a narrow vocabulary.
 7. Standards seen in information and communication technology (ICT) meet expectations and have risen considerably since the last inspection. The scheme of work has been revised to cover all aspects of the National Curriculum. Staff training has improved teachers' confidence and ICT is taught well. The new ICT suite has enabled pupils to have increased access to computers and develop their skills. Literacy, numeracy and ICT are used well across the curriculum and help pupils to apply and extend their skills in a variety of ways.
 8. Standards were found to be above expectations in physical education, due to the PE specialist who shares her expertise with staff and regularly teaches other classes. The subject has high profile in the school and develops pupils' natural ability and they achieve well.
 9. Expected standards were seen in music and religious education. In geography and history standards were below expectations due to pupils' background knowledge and literacy skills. In art and design and design and technology immature drawing and cutting skills contribute to the below average standards seen. Pupils have plenty of ideas for design.
 10. In most subjects good teaching, supported by good planning of a broad range of learning opportunities, has overcome the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection and raised standards.
 11. The school has been particularly successful in creating a very positive learning environment to include all pupils. This is particularly relevant for the proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Most of them have specific problems with reading and writing although a significant minority also have emotional and behavioural difficulties. They achieve well, making good progress towards their precise individual targets as a result of the good teaching and the very good extra support they receive from the school's team of classroom assistants. They enable these pupils to become fully involved in group learning tasks and help them to retain their focus during whole-class sessions. The needs of the proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language are met effectively and they achieve at least at same rate as other pupils, sometimes beyond. The small number of higher-attaining pupils are challenged successfully by the activities planned for them and the expectations that teachers have of what they should achieve. In the National tests they generally achieve the higher Level 3.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. Pupils have good attitudes to school and their learning. Children in the nursery are happy to come to school on a part-time basis and settle quickly into school life. In the reception class they develop confidence and concentration and are happy to stay for lunch and enjoy the playground. Pupils show enthusiasm, for instance in their singing during assemblies and interest and pride in the work they do in class and willingly participate in the other activities provided by the school. Pupils are courteous in their dealings with each other and with adults, are friendly in their approach to visitors and, for instance during meal and playtimes, form very good relationships. They show respect for the feelings and beliefs of others, value friendship, are polite and are aware of the impact of their actions on others. A special feature of the school is that all of the children are valued and respected by the adults. Pupils reciprocate these feelings in their attitudes to other pupils, for instance by their enthusiastic clapping for the performances of others during achievement assemblies.

13. Pupils have a number of opportunities to show initiative and to exercise personal responsibilities, which is an improvement since the last inspection and these are enthusiastically and conscientiously carried through. For instance, pupils participate in meetings of the School Council, act as classroom "Table Leaders", assist in the hall and office at lunchtimes and carry out various classroom tasks. Some pupils volunteer to be playground friends, to make sure everyone is included in games and they also take charge of playground equipment. Some pupils arrange their own sales to raise money for charity.
14. Pupils are capable of working collaboratively; for instance, in science lessons they often work in pairs when carrying out investigations and in the computer suite take turns to operate the computer. In mathematics lessons pupils play games in groups, take turns and follow the rules.
15. The behaviour is good throughout the school because pupils respond well to the school's positive behaviour policy and know what is acceptable. They adjust their behaviour appropriately to different situations. Pupils are aware that oppressive behaviour, such as bullying, will not be tolerated. Staff are vigilant and follow up concerns quickly and therefore almost no such incidents occur. Pupils distinguish right from wrong, obey the school rules and develop personal qualities such as thoughtfulness, honesty and respect as well as an understanding of others. There were no exclusions of pupils from the school during the last academic year.
16. Attendance was well below the national average in the academic year 2000/2001. Unauthorised absences were broadly in line with national averages. In the last year, the overall attendance rate has improved, with rates of both authorised and unauthorised absence decreasing. The punctuality of pupils arriving for the morning session is satisfactory. Registration and lessons start on time. There is an efficient and well ordered start to the day with pupils settling quickly after spending time reading with their parents. This has a positive effect on their attitude towards school.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. The overall quality of teaching is good. In the 43 lessons observed, five per cent of teaching was excellent, 41 per cent was very good, 48 per cent good, five per cent satisfactory and the remaining two per cent unsatisfactory. Standards in teaching have improved since the previous inspection, when only 18 per cent was very good. The good quality of teaching reflects the strong commitment to provide the very best learning opportunities for all pupils including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
18. The special qualities of the staff are a strength of the school. They are a hard working, committed and conscientious team who support each other well. The majority of the teaching staff have worked in the school for some time but are still keen to take advantage of training, keep up to date and effectively embrace change. They are experienced and use a wide range of calm approaches to engage difficult pupils and develop concentration. Staff are vigilant and monitor pupils' personal development very closely. Paper work is efficient and methodical. The quality of marking and assessment is of a very high standard. Classrooms are well organised and enhanced by attractive displays of artefacts and pupils' work. Staff have gained the confidence of parents and keep them well informed.
19. The teaching of children in the Foundation Stage is very good overall and at times excellent. This enables all children in the nursery and reception classes to make a good start to their schooling and achieve well. Excellent planning provides children with a wide range of stimulating and relevant practical learning activities in all six areas of the curriculum. Staff have excellent knowledge of the needs of children of this age. They know the children very well, provide good role models and create very good relationships. Expectations are high and activities are well matched to each child's capabilities. Children are given very good opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills and to widen their very basic vocabulary. There is very good management of the children and good strategies used to develop their social skills and concentration. The classroom and learning activities are well organised and children are constantly working and learning as they move from one activity to another. There is excellent use of day-to-day assessment of individual

children's responses. Teachers' planning takes account of this assessment and this leads to all children being included and their specific needs being fully catered for. Children in the reception class have the advantage of using the hall and indoor apparatus for PE as well as benefiting from regular lessons in the ICT suite. In these formal timetabled lessons, where pupils receive very good direct teaching, they are prepared well for National Curriculum work in Year 1. The teachers, nursery nurse and classroom support assistants work well together, ensuring that all children develop confidence and independence in a caring and safe learning environment. They provide good training opportunities for the students working in class. Practical outdoor activities are restricted for the reception classes as they have no fenced outdoor area at present.

20. Teaching is good in Years 1 and 2. The good teaching is evident throughout the curriculum and shows considerable improvement in information and communication technology and design and technology since the last inspection. The overall higher standards of teaching are contributing significantly to the good progress that pupils make in their learning throughout the school and the rise in standards recently.
21. The characteristics of the good and better teaching include detailed planning to meet the full range of pupils' needs with interesting learning activities. Teachers have high expectations of pupils. The very good management of pupils results in calm, purposeful working atmospheres in classrooms. Teachers are very aware of pupils who need additional support and plan effective help for them using the classroom support assistants. These support staff and students training to be teachers are well briefed so the quality of their guidance is good. Pupils are fully integrated into the activities and supported well; for example, when asking and answering questions. The relationships between teachers and other adults in the classroom are very good and a strength of the school. These have a positive impact on pupils' attitudes to learning, making them keen to get started on their work. Teachers use questions and prompts skilfully, ensuring that pupils of all capabilities are fully involved in whole-class discussions by phrasing questions in different ways. Thus lower-attaining pupils gain confidence from being able to contribute successfully and average and higher-attaining pupils are challenged to think and explain their reasoning using longer sentences and correct vocabulary. Classroom assistants are used effectively to monitor and record oral responses. Lessons are generally well paced and structured so that time is used efficiently. Teachers use classroom support well to encourage older pupils to sustain their effort, something which many find difficult. Resources are used effectively to support pupils' learning.
22. The pace of some lessons can be slow at the start because pupils have difficulty in recalling learning that has taken place some time ago. The science lessons which spread over the whole afternoon do not always have enough practical activities to sustain the concentration of all pupils. In the least successful art and design lessons the content was too difficult for the majority of pupils to achieve because of their low level of basic skills.
23. Teachers' subject knowledge is used well to devise relevant schemes of work and to plan appropriate lessons. Lesson planning takes place in year groups to ensure that pupils' learning builds successfully on what has been learned earlier. Individual lesson plans provide clear objectives for the specific learning to be achieved by pupils. In most lessons, teachers helpfully discuss these learning intentions with pupils and constantly remind pupils of them as the lesson progresses. At the end of the lesson learning is effectively shared and evaluated by the pupils. Teachers often discuss how the learning is to be developed in the next lesson. Parents are given very good weekly information about what their children are learning.
24. The teaching of basic literacy skills is good. Teachers are implementing the National Literacy Strategy successfully by providing a good range of activities that are matched well to groups of pupils with different needs. Teachers provide good opportunities in subjects other than English, to develop pupils' speaking, reading and writing skills. This is particularly evident in ICT, science, geography and history, where pupils' work contributes to their progress in the basic skills of English. Sessions known as 'circle time', when pupils hold discussions about issues that relate particularly to their personal development, are successfully used by teachers as opportunities for the development of speaking and listening skills. The National Numeracy Strategy is implemented well and teaching has improved as a result of recent training and the adoption of methods which

are more suited to the needs of these particular pupils. Pupils are effectively encouraged to develop their oracy skills by using mathematical vocabulary in discussion and to explain their reasoning. Good links are also made with other subjects such as science, ICT and design and technology, when pupils are involved in calculating, measuring and presenting information in graphical form.

25. All children in the nursery and reception classes achieve very well and in Years 1 and 2 achievement is good. Pupils' in the Foundation Stage put a lot of intellectual and physical effort into achieving within the experiences that are provided for them. Elsewhere pupils show satisfactory determination and perseverance. Teachers ensure that pupils' work output and the pace at which they work are good. Most tasks set are completed by the end of the lesson and no unfinished work was seen in the work samples. Pupils' learning is also helped significantly by teachers' very good understanding of how skills in one subject can be consolidated by experiences in another subject. Literacy and numeracy skills are extended when pupils are provided with suitable opportunities in their computer work. Pupils are encouraged to work independently, in pairs and in small groups, sharing ideas.
26. There is consistently good teaching of pupils with special educational needs. Work is carefully planned to meet their particular learning needs effectively. Teachers work and plan closely with each other and, where necessary, with colleagues from specialist agencies to devise suitable activities throughout the curriculum. Teaching assistants make a particularly important contribution to the teaching and learning team. They work closely with teachers on a daily basis to provide sensitive and caring support that successfully promotes pupils' learning. They are clearly aware of the targets set in pupils' individual education plans so that all the adults involved are pulling together and helping pupils to learn. They achieve the fine balance that is needed to provide the levels of support that are necessary for these pupils to succeed, while at the same time enabling them to work independently when required. Appropriate support is given to pupils who are learning English as an additional language (EAL). They are given good support by specially trained assistants to develop specific subject language, in the areas that they are studying in class. They are often given support with their written work to develop grammatical structures. Teachers skilfully encourage them to develop their oral confidence in class discussions. EAL pupils' progress records are maintained by the class teachers and weekly literacy targets set.
27. The use of homework is satisfactory. All pupils have regular practice in the basic skills of reading and spelling to consolidate their learning in lessons. Teachers are developing activities, such as mathematical games, to encourage parents to become more involved in their children's learning at home.

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

28. The curriculum provided is very rich and varied and is both wide ranging and of good quality. National Curriculum requirements are well met for all subjects in Key Stage 1. The recommended Foundation Stage is implemented fully for children in the nursery and reception classes and the provision of religious education is in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus. The curriculum contributes well to the development of pupils' academic and personal and social and emotional development. The curriculum prepares pupils well for the next stage of their education.
29. The issues highlighted at the last inspection have all been addressed. Appropriate time is allocated to all subjects, which have policy statements and schemes of work based on government-recommended schemes. However, the monitoring of planning, teaching and learning in some subjects, such as geography and history, needs further attention by subject leaders to ensure that a full range of the subject is covered in all classes across all year groups. Careful consideration has been given to designing a curriculum that is stimulating, interesting and relevant to pupils. It fully reflects the community from which they come as well as giving them many insights into the wider world they live in, both past and present.

30. The curriculum for pupils in the Foundation Stage based on the recommended areas of learning is very good. The school offers an interesting and exciting range of good quality learning opportunities linked through common themes. The work is well planned and builds on pupils' previous knowledge and experiences.
31. Most National Curriculum subjects and religious education are taught in a systematic, well-structured way that builds on pupils' prior knowledge and understanding and successfully leads them on to the next level of their learning. However, at present there is no systematic progressive teaching of the key skills in art and design and design technology to help pupils overcome their difficulties.
32. There is very appropriate emphasis on the teaching of English and the school has been careful to adapt the National Literacy Strategy to meet the specific needs of pupils. As a significant number of pupils have English as an additional language, the school places a strong emphasis on the need to make a rapid acquisition of speaking, reading and writing skills in English a top priority. This is achieved with great success by linking planning for special needs and English as an additional language with work in literacy to constantly improve and reinforce these skills. The National Numeracy Strategy has been well implemented, is firmly in place and is beginning to raise standards.
33. The provision for personal and social and health education, including citizenship is firmly established in the school and is of good quality. Drugs education is tackled informally and sex education is covered in science and personal, social and health education lessons.
34. The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs is good. Their needs are identified early and there is a good range of curriculum support, provided both through ensuring that lessons match pupil need when they are planned and also through the pupils' individual educational plans, which are appropriate, relevant and well met in practice by class teachers, SEN teachers and classroom assistants all working well together.
35. A strength of the school is that all pupils are fully included in its life, enabling them to benefit from all social and learning opportunities provided. The principle of equal opportunities is firmly embedded in every aspect of the school and is clearly stated in all policies. Limes Farm is a school in which pupils and staff are greatly valued and given every opportunity to thrive and grow successfully. Staff demonstrate good behaviour strategies such as respect, care and welfare and how to resolve conflicts for the pupils.
36. The curriculum is enhanced by a number of visits to places of interest that are closely linked to pupils' studies and a small range of visitors to the school. Visitors have included people from Waltham Abbey Museum and a group of firemen complete with fire engine. Pupils have visited the Queen Elizabeth Hunting Lodge, the Bethnal Green Toy Museum and St Winifred's Church.
37. The school provides a satisfactory range of out-of-school activities including a gym club and tennis organised by Epping Forest Leisure and football-training sessions run by Tottenham Hotspur Football Club. The school has well-established links with the local community including the local Anglican church, the residents' association, the Gurdwara and the local police and fire service. There are good links with the pre-school playgroups. Links with the adjacent junior school are good for SEN pupils but elsewhere links are only just starting to develop.
38. The provision for spiritual development is satisfactory and pupils are given opportunities in lessons to reflect on the beauty of literature, art, nature and music and to develop insights into values and a range of religious beliefs. They learn to appreciate the wonder of human senses and bodies and to appreciate and respect each other and live harmoniously together. The uniqueness of individuals and promotion of their self-esteem are given a very high priority by all adults. Pupils are all given opportunities to experience spiritual aspects of worship, including awe and wonder in assemblies.
39. Pupils' moral development is very well promoted. Principles based on a recognition of right and wrong underpin the policies for behaviour and the scheme of work for personal, social and health

education and for citizenship. Opportunities are regularly provided to promote moral values such as caring and respect for others, courtesy and fairness. For example, a number of charity collections have been held in the school, including selling butterfly hair slides in aid of the local children's hospice. Pupils quickly learn to take responsibility for their own actions and to think before they act. They learn how to say sorry and make restitution and how to befriend those who are feeling lonely in the playground. Lessons are regularly given about famous people who have shown virtue such as Grace Darling and Mary Seacole.

40. The arrangements for promoting pupils' social development are very good. There are many opportunities provided for all pupils to take responsibility, show initiative and develop an understanding of living in a community. For example, some pupils look after playground equipment, registers and classbooks. All pupils are encouraged to help each other and to be friendly and kind. All classes have discussed and formulated rules for each class that are in accordance with the school ethos and these are very effective in promoting a happy community. The taught programme of personal and social development has a strong influence on pupils' development. Pupils are encouraged to support a range of charities and some have taken the initiative and organised little sales themselves. The headteacher involves pupils in whole-school decisions, for example, the pupils suggested ways in which the playground could be improved and chose new equipment for all pupils to play with. Pupils are developing a strong sense of justice and learning to care in their community and are very socially aware.
41. The promotion of pupils' cultural and multicultural development is satisfactory. There is an emphasis on teaching pupils to appreciate a range of cultural traditions through curricular provision, extra-curricular activities and also ongoing themes and festivals such as Christmas, Diwali and Harvest Festival. Pupils' cultural development is fostered by visitors to the school such as Asian musicians and dancers and by visits to art exhibitions and musical concerts.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

42. The school's provision to ensure the safety and welfare of pupils is good. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well by individual education plans and a staff who are sensitive to their particular needs. This enables them to make good progress and to be involved in a range of educational opportunities. Children at the Foundation Stage are very well cared for in the nursery and reception class, which helps them to settle quickly and to develop independence and confidence. The school provides a secure and safe learning environment for all pupils. Staff know pupils very well and they are alert to their individual, physical and emotional needs. This makes a strong contribution to pupils' progress and achievements. The satisfactory provision for sex education and drugs awareness which is included in the curriculum effectively promotes pupils' awareness of the need to care for themselves and for others.
43. Since the last inspection, assessment, as part of an upgrading of a range of curriculum policies and schemes of work, has been a focus of attention. Much has been done to improve the assessment systems, particularly in English, mathematics and science in order to provide detailed evidence for national tests. Pupils are also tested upon entry to the school with a baseline entry test. Individual pupils' test results are recorded on a special computer program and their progress is tracked, in the core subjects. There are other assessments undertaken in English to chart pupils' progress in other areas; for example, the learning of sounds and key words. In other subjects assessment takes place at the end of a unit of work.
44. The results of pupils' test performance as recorded on the 'Target tracker' are used well to inform future teaching and learning. For instance in English the teacher identifies both medium and short-term learning goals and pupils are given specific support or differentiated activities to enable progress towards attaining these goals. Parents also are informed about weekly learning objectives. The school marking procedures indicate that teachers also provide day-to-day formative feedback for pupils on their progress. The headteacher uses the 'Target tracker' information to monitor test results across the school and also monitors the attainment of different groups of pupils; for example, those with special educational needs, or pupils for whom English is an

additional language. In many subjects teachers have assembled portfolios of work to assist teachers in grading pupils' work. Overall, the assessment system constitutes a strength of the school's curriculum provision.

45. The procedures for child protection are satisfactory. All teaching staff have received recent training to reinforce procedures but this has yet to be extended to support staff. Practices and procedures for ensuring the health and safety of pupils and other aspects of their welfare such as their medical needs, are also satisfactory. Safe use of tools and the movement of equipment are appropriately highlighted in lessons. Regular risk assessment prior to visits, checks of structures and testing of equipment and systems, including fire drills, are organised. The school has recently received the report of an audit of health and safety by the local education authority and is dealing with the areas identified for improvement. The policy for health and safety is due to be reviewed. A new premises committee is to be formed at the next governors' meeting and a specific governor is to be appointed to provide an overview of health and safety matters, to replace the retiring officer.
46. There are good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and eliminating oppressive behaviour. All class teachers encourage positive behaviour through a consistent approach and employ a number of good strategies to ensure that they can teach and pupils can learn. Each class has its own set of class rules and a behaviour diary is established in partnership with parents for any child who causes particular concern. The headteacher holds regular meetings with midday assistants to ensure that lunchtime behaviour is good. The school has good strategies to deal with any racist language and behaviour. The effective rewards system, including the award of stickers and weekly achievement assemblies, provide considerable encouragement for pupils to do their best in all the activities offered. There are a range of agreed sanctions, although these are not often required.
47. The register for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) is well kept and up to date. Information gathered from all sources is available and shared at regular meetings between staff and external support agencies. The two pupils who have statements of special educational needs are very well provided for, all advice is up to date and pupils receive all the support required as detailed in their statement. The school is aware of and uses well the support available for SEN within Essex LEA and other agencies. Good links are established for these pupils with the Junior School to enable Year 2 SEN pupils to transfer with ease, ensuring continuity and continuing progress.
48. The school carries out monitoring and takes subsequent action in order to promote good attendance and punctuality. For instance, late pupils are recorded and all absences are followed up in order to establish the reason. The parents of pupils who give particular concern are contacted and, if necessary, the educational welfare officer is informed. This has led to a slight improvement in the overall attendance rate last year. Comments are made in the annual reports of pupils with poor attendance or punctuality records. The school has introduced rewards for pupils to encourage good attendance. However, not all registers are completed accurately and consistently. The school's new computerised registration system has not been fully implemented. Absence patterns are not sufficiently analysed in order to continue to improve attendance rates.
49. The procedures and practices for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal and emotional development are very good. Class teachers keep very detailed records on every pupil in their class which are exceptionally useful and provide a good record of the development made and difficulties overcome during a year. Good provision is made within the curriculum for pupils to discuss issues and share feelings; for example, about things which make them happy. The pupils enjoy the toy gorilla who spends time in classes looking for things that make him happy and reports back his observations in 'circle time'. Pupils are eager to discuss and reflect on his comments. The recent initiative to develop playground games and the "playground friends" helps pupils' social development and widens their circle of friends. There are very few disputes at lunchtime because pupils are fully occupied. Adults watch carefully and intervene to diffuse situations before problems arise. The School Council is developing well and enables pupils to have a voice in the school community.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

50. Parents, in their responses to the inspection questionnaire, at the parents' meeting and in discussion during the inspection, largely expressed positive views of the school and what it achieves. Governors say that the current and former parents hold the school in high regard. On the questionnaire a small minority expressed concerns about the amount of homework and the range of extra-curricular activities that are available. Inspectors consider that the homework set is appropriate for pupils' age and that the visits and activities arranged are satisfactory for an infant school. Staff are very conscious of the high cost of visits and restrict them to one a term. They bring visitors into school in order to cut travel costs.
51. The school has worked hard to establish links with parents. Good information is provided through regular newsletters and weekly information about what is being taught in class. More detailed curriculum information is displayed in classrooms where parents can see when they take their children into class each morning. Parents are kept well informed about their children's progress through termly parents' meetings and in the informative written annual reports where they are told the targets set for improvement. Parents have the opportunity to discuss the reports and other aspects of their child's education and appointments are arranged conveniently to suit the particular needs of parents. Response from parents is generally satisfactory, however many parents do not sufficiently involve themselves in their children's learning by encouraging them to read, write and draw at home. Parents of children learning English as an additional language are very supportive and their encouragement out of school contributes to the very good progress the children make.
52. Teachers have regular contact with parents and carers as they bring and collect children from school and often information is exchanged. Good communication is established with some parents through the home/school diary. There is a meeting for new parents prior to their child's entry into school, although they do not have the opportunity to visit whilst the nursery is in session. The school is planning to have some of the essential documents, such as the brochure, translated to establish stronger links with parents who are not so fluent in English. Parents and friends enjoy supporting their children by coming along to the termly class assemblies. They appreciate this new opportunity to see the school community at work.
53. Parents are happy with the support and progress made by S.E.N. pupils, and communication with parents is good both by letter and in meetings. Arrangements for parental involvement for pupils on higher stages of SEN, including statemented pupils, are good and parents receive good information. Annual reviews are organised well, the appropriate people are invited and the necessary paperwork is completed very well. The headteacher is very committed to ensuring that there is quality SEN provision in the school and takes a strong lead in this area, seeking out extra funding wherever she can.
54. Very few parents come into school to assist in classrooms on a regular basis, although a high percentage of parents have younger children to look after, which makes this difficult. Parents do help on visits, sometimes taking time off work so that they can come along. The joint parent-teacher association shared with the junior school has been disbanded due to lack of support. The school recognises that it needs to do more to gather and take into account the views of parents and involve them more in the life of the school.
55. The school prospectus meets statutory requirements and provides clear information about the school curriculum and organisation. There is a signed home-school agreement which sets out clearly the attitudes and standards of behaviour expected and is used well if problems arise.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

56. The leadership and management provided by the headteacher, deputy, subject co-ordinators and governors is good overall. The headteacher provides very good leadership and very clear educational direction for the work of the school. In the short time she has been in post she has gained the confidence and respect of the whole school community by setting and achieving clear priorities and targets. From the self-evaluation which has taken place training needs have been

established. The good support and training provided, especially by the local authority, has been effective in raising standards. The staff team is effective and committed to the continuous improvement of the school.

57. The co-ordinators manage their areas of responsibility effectively and make significant contributions to good curriculum planning. Since the last inspection co-ordinators have worked with colleagues to develop good schemes of work and assessment systems. The very good scheme of work for science has led to the relative strength of the subject in the school and the average standards achieved. Subject leaders in science and physical education regularly share their expertise by exchanging classes. All co-ordinators give good support to their colleagues, monitor planning, sample work and have a development plan for their area. The school is now well placed to extend the roles of the co-ordinators to monitor teaching and standards in their subjects and share the good practice still further.
58. Despite having several vacancies and some new members, the governing body is satisfactorily fulfilling its responsibilities. Recent training has taken place to enable new governors to develop an understanding of their role. Responsibilities for health and safety and special educational needs have yet to be allocated. Last year, under new chairmanship and with the support of the headteacher, a school improvement plan was made which identifies a range of short-, medium- and long-term priorities and clear targets. These targets are monitored by the governors at their meetings. The governors are becoming more involved in the curriculum, discussing new policies and making some classroom observations. The governing body is developing strategies for evaluating the school's effectiveness, such as monitoring the school's National Curriculum test results. The professional expertise of individual governors is used well; for example, a builder gave good support when the computer room was being built. The retired headteacher of a nursery school helped with the setting up of the nursery class. The vicar helps to foster links in the community and is a regular visitor to the school. There is considerable enthusiasm within the governing body and a determination to give improved support to the school.
59. The monitoring of teaching and the curriculum by the headteacher and deputy is good. Monitoring has recently been linked to literacy and numeracy and individual targets have been set for performance management. Staff have considerable individual strengths in subject knowledge and these are successfully shared to contribute to whole-school development in the curriculum and teaching.
60. The school's aims and values are very appropriate and well communicated to staff and parents, reflecting the strong team commitment among staff and governors to provide the best education for each individual pupil. This commitment is reflected in the good ethos and values that the school promotes. The school fosters very good relationships and these are valued by parents. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is managed very effectively and positively influences children's attitudes to learning. The leadership and management of special educational needs by the SENCO are very good. Together with the whole staff she promotes the full inclusion of all pupils. The resources allocated for these pupils are used efficiently. The co-ordinator effectively manages a team of learning-support assistants, as well as ensuring their continuing professional development and that of the other teachers. The school is well on the way to implementing the new Code of Practice for special educational needs. The particular needs of the pupils who speak English as an additional language are also managed well.
61. The school has number of qualified and experienced teachers to meet the needs of all pupils and cover the full requirements of the National Curriculum. They have well-defined responsibilities and work very co-operatively as an effective team. Teachers and pupils are well supported by a good number of effective classroom and learning-support assistants. They make valuable contributions to the work of the school and in particular to the good progress made by pupils with special educational needs. The efficient administrative staff, caretaker and cleaners are valued team members. Their duties are carried out promptly and pleasantly and they contribute significantly to the smooth running of the school.
62. Arrangements for training are good and closely linked to the schools priorities for improvement.

Teaching staff are eager to keep up to date and embrace new initiatives. Considerable training has been given to classroom support staff to enable them to be as effective as possible. Induction procedures are good for supply teachers and new members of staff, enabling them to settle quickly and successfully into their new roles. It has been some time since a newly qualified teacher joined the staff.

63. The quality of the accommodation is satisfactory and effectively supports teaching and learning by providing all the facilities and teaching space necessary to teach all subjects of the National Curriculum effectively. There is a large hall where everyone can gather for whole-school assemblies. Classrooms are small, especially for reception class activities. The learning environment is enhanced by attractive and informative displays. Adequate playground space and well equipped playing fields give pupils sufficient space to enjoy playtimes and physical education activities. The large library area is also used for music and television lessons to create space and prevent sounds disturbing other lessons. The open courtyard has been developed into an attractive wildlife area. The accommodation is maintained and cleaned to a good standard and provides a stimulating learning environment for pupils. At the time of the previous inspection, the nursery was not built. Since then, the area has been well maintained, has attractive displays and makes a very good contribution to early learning. However, the outside area for supporting reception children's outdoor activities is unsatisfactory. The school is aware of this. A fenced and secure area needs to be provided to improve the outdoor facilities and opportunities for imaginative play in the reception classes.
64. The quantity, quality and range of learning resources are good and effectively support all areas of the curriculum. They are readily accessible and used well throughout the school to enhance the quality of education provided. The library area is very attractive with good stocks and good displays, but is situated well away from the classrooms and only accessible to pupils in lesson time. All classrooms have at least one computer and all pupils have regular use of the computer suite to develop their technological skills.
65. The overall efficiency of the school is good. It has built successfully on the sound standards of financial planning reported at the time of the previous inspection. The high underspend which had accumulated to improve the accommodation and to build the ICT suite has been allocated. Many of the planned improvements to the accommodation have been made, new resources purchased and the underspend reduced to a more acceptable level. The headteacher and governors have developed structured procedures that effectively support the school's educational priorities. A good example of the school responding to the analysis of its current position is the increase in the number of classroom support assistants, in order to provide continuity for each class and more regular support for all pupils. Good use is made of new technology in all aspects of school life to improve efficiency levels and to support the curriculum. Resources are used effectively to support teaching and learning, particularly in English, mathematics, science, physical education and information and communication technology.
66. The school successfully applies the principles of best value for money. Full consideration is given to alternative providers for services such as financial and technical support and resources in order to acquire cost-effectiveness and as a result money is spent carefully. The school's day-to-day financial controls and procedures are good and supported by a finance manager so that the headteacher and governors to have up-to-date information and can closely monitor spending decisions. The most recent financial audit of several years ago made a small number of recommendations and the school has not yet responded to all of these. The local authority monitors the school budget regularly.
67. Taking into account the well below average levels of attainment on entry, the improvements in standards attained, the good teaching and learning which take place, the good leadership, the good quality of education provided and the unit costs, the school provides good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

Governors and the headteacher should consider the following when planning for school improvement:

- (i) Continue to raise standards in English and mathematics by:
 - developing pupils' speaking and listening skills and extending their vocabulary;
 - giving more opportunities for pupils to use their reading skills to find information for themselves; and
 - providing more informal classroom situations for pupils to use mathematics to solve problems.

(paragraphs: 3-5, 84-89 , 92-97)
- (ii) Provide more direct teaching of the basic drawing, cutting and modelling skills in art and design and design and technology and give regular opportunities to practise these.

(paragraphs: 10,105,111, 114)
- (iii) Provide a secure outdoor teaching area for use by the reception classes.

(paragraphs :19, 63, 75)
- (iv) Seek out additional opportunities for parents to become involved in their children's learning at home and in school.

(paragraphs: 27, 52, 54, 90, 98, 105)

Other issues that the school should consider when drawing up the action plan:

- Raise attendance levels by recording accurately and analysing absence patterns thoroughly.

(paragraphs: 16, 49)
- Governors with responsibility for special educational needs and health and safety, should establish regular contact with the staff involved and monitor provision.

(paragraph: 58)
- Ensure that action is taken to implement the outstanding recommendations of the audit report.

(paragraph: 66)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	43
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	30

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	18	21	2	1	0	0
Percentage	4.5	41	48	4.5	2	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	113
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	28

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	11

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	20

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	16

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.7

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.4

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year (2000/1).

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	22	27	49

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	20	20
	Girls	21	23	22
	Total	39	43	42
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (74)	88 (71)	86 (87)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	20	20
	Girls	23	20	23
	Total	42	40	43
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (76)	82 (84)	88 (92)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British - Indian
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
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
66	0	0
0	0	0
3	0	0
7	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
2	0	0
3	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0
3	0	0
0	0	0
3	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
3	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18
Average class size	22

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	159

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
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	£
Total income	478,525
Total expenditure	446,207
Expenditure per pupil	2,507
Balance brought forward from previous year	67,554
Balance carried forward to next year	99,872

Number of pupils per FTE adult	13
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	5

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1.3
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	120
Number of questionnaires returned	34

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	74	23	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	51	40	9	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	49	46	3	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	23	40	20	0	9
The teaching is good.	63	31	3	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	49	43	9	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	69	26	3	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	54	43	9	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	46	49	6	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	60	37	3	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	49	46	0	3	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	14	26	23	9	26

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

Personal, social and emotional development

68. Most children enter the nursery with lower than average levels of maturity, but they make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development, become more confident with adults and with each other. Through the very good teaching provided most children attain most aspects of this Early Learning Goal by the end of the reception year. Many children settle quickly into school life and are confident and happy to come to school. The children generally establish good relationships with each other and with the adults in the nursery and reception classes. Most initiate interaction with other children and adults, but a few are too shy and have to be encouraged to interrelate by adults. They are generally kind and gentle to each other but a significant minority show aggression towards others in play. However, skilful intervention by staff quickly teaches them how to relate kindly to others and share their toys.
69. The children concentrate well when they are involved in a task, which is due to the careful matching of the activity to the level of capability of the children and the gentle encouragement by staff to persist until the task is finished. They are learning how to behave well in whole class and small group activities, as well as when working and playing independently. They are developing a clear sense of right and wrong, share their toys with each other and help each other with tasks. They comfort each other sensitively when they are upset and in the reception class a few are confident enough to organise themselves and others in group play. A significant minority of the children are, however, too shy or lacking in confidence to organise themselves and take the initiative. They wait for others to help them or tell them what to do. However, skilful adult intervention is steadily improving their confidence.
70. The children in the reception class have learnt how to take turns co-operatively and they are learning to respect other people's ideas, opinions and religions. Children understand the class rules and know what behaviour is expected of them. In all classes children learn to be polite and say "Thank you " to other children and adults. Children in the nursery are learning to tidy up after activities and take care of equipment, and in the reception class they do it as a matter of course. They know that they must put their coats on when it is cold outside and must wash their hands when they are dirty and after using the toilet.

Communication, language and literacy

71. Children's communication, language and literacy, with a few exceptions, is generally well below expectations for age on entry to the school. They develop well in the nursery and reception classes, however because their starting point is low, most will not reach the Early Learning Goal by the end of the Foundation Stage. A number of children only speak single words and do not have the vocabulary to explain what they want to say. One boy who wanted to say that the lettuce leaf was rough and bumpy could only run his fingers over the leaf and make sounds when a bump occurred. Very good teaching and support in developing language skills, both written and spoken, are given by staff to children with special educational needs or English as an additional language. The work is carefully matched to their individual education plan and they are making good progress.
72. Most children chatter about their play in all classes. A few will explain what they are doing to visitors and a few will initiate conversations with each other and negotiate positions. For example, children 'playing in the supermarket' were able to choose what they wanted to buy, hand over their money and take their shopping home. Two little girls invited an inspector to the party they were

going to have in the nursery when the fruit salad was made. The staff are aware of the differing language needs of the children. They are very good at providing support for the shy children and assisting them to develop confidence in speaking in group situations and at times to tell something with support to the whole class. They are also very good at challenging all children to further develop their language skills.

73. All the children love listening to stories, and taking part in reciting rhymes and singing jingles and songs. They make up their own stories in play using small-world toys, teddies and dolls and outdoor play as starting points. One little girl in the Nursery sat typing in the office and chattered on the phone as though she was a secretary in an office, copying language she had heard. Children are at different stages of recognising letters and sounds. In the reception class a few know quite a number of the letters of the alphabet and their sounds, but most are still struggling to learn quite a small selection. Children in the reception class enjoy illustrations in books and also have favourite books, which they handle carefully. They can hold books the correct way up, and turn the pages in order. They point out individual words in pages and can recognise a few simple words. The majority can recognise and write their first name. All children make marks on paper and a few can write letters to form simple words or copy the teacher's writing with good pencil control, but generally poor pencil control and a low level of manipulation skills is hampering standards in writing.

Mathematical development

74. Provision for children's mathematical development is good. Levels of mathematical development are well below average for the great majority of the group when they start school. The nursery provides a wide variety of appropriate games and activities to widen their experience. Sand and water play helps children to develop ideas of weight and volume, while puzzles and construction toys help develop ideas of shape and size. Most of the youngest children in the nursery can count to three. As a result of the many opportunities given to count, some of the older nursery children can chant numbers to 20 and beyond. Most children can count the number of spots on a dice and up to five animals on the computer screen, matching these to a number at the bottom of the screen. A minority show that they can order the numbers to five. Most children find it very difficult to use their number skills to solve simple problems. Very few children can write numbers for themselves by the end of nursery. Children have a good knowledge of colours and shapes. They know the names of two-dimensional shapes such as circles, squares, triangles and rectangles but have greater difficulty with three-dimensional shapes. They enjoy shape jigsaws and puzzles. Some children can select two shapes to continue a pattern. Knowledge and use of mathematical vocabulary are well below what is expected when children start school and staff work hard to develop these. By the time they are in reception children have a broader background knowledge and good practical experience of mathematics and are prepared for a more structured approach to numeracy.
75. At the end of reception most of the older children are able to chant numbers from zero to 20 and count accurately to nine. They can recognise numbers up to five the more able up to 10. Most children can write some numbers for themselves. Children in their first term in reception were learning to order the numbers zero to five at the time of the inspection. The least able were working with numbers up to three whilst the most able were working to five and they could count backwards and forwards including zero. By the end of reception some are starting to understand that combining two groups of objects is addition. A few can find one more or one less than a number from one to ten using a number line. The teacher questions skilfully and matches questions to ability in order to improve children's mental agility. The language of mathematics is carefully developed and children are encouraged to use the correct terms in their oral answers but language development is still below that expected for their age at the end of the year. Group activities are closely matched to ability and good adult support given. Children are continually encouraged to revisit areas of learning to reinforce and extend their learning. This is often approached through mathematical games. Children continue to have difficulty applying their knowledge to help them solve problems and repeat more complex patterns. The progress of children of all abilities is good. The very good structured teaching moves the learning forward as quickly as possible but the majority of children do not achieve the Early Learning Goals by the

start of Year 1. The small classrooms and lack of a secure outdoor area restrict regular access to sand and water experiences.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

76. Most children come to school with a below average understanding and knowledge of the world outside their immediate family situation. Although they make good progress in this area, they are unlikely to meet the Early Learning Goal by the end of the Foundation Stage.
77. In both classes, children examine shells and stones collected from the beach and in the nursery they examine a pineapple and pomegranate with a magnifying glass and learn to identify fruit and items of salad as they cut them up to eat later. Children enjoy meeting short-term visitors to the nursery such as a cat, a snake and a group of firemen who came to show them their uniforms and a fire engine. They enjoy exploring the nursery garden and collecting grass and leaves and clearing rubbish. They learn about their senses and parts of their bodies such as nose, eyes, hair, wrist and elbow. They can relate such knowledge to their own experiences while playing. For example, two boys chatted about what they were going to have for tea that night and tastes they enjoy, as they 'cooked spaghetti bolognese' in the home corner.
78. In the nursery, children create pictures on the computer using the paint spa program and use a mouse proficiently to click on the commands. In the reception class their skills in ICT are very well developed and exceed the Early Learning Goal, as they use the space bar, return key, cursor and caps lock efficiently, in the computer suite. Children use construction kits to build, make models using commercial and found materials, cut and stick paper, print vegetables and fruit and make collages. Children throughout the Foundation Stage enjoy opportunities to learn about other cultures, different religions, languages and cultures. They celebrate festivals, eat food, dress up and some children listen to stories on tapes and look at books in their own mother tongue. Children are beginning to develop a sense of time. They happily recount what they did at school yesterday, as well as what they are going to be doing at the weekend and in the holidays.

Physical development

79. Children's physical development is generally in line with what is expected for children of their age on entry to the nursery in some areas such as movement. Most children have had little experience of colouring, drawing and cutting before coming to school and development in these areas which need fine finger control are below expectations. They make good progress and by the end of the Foundation Stage, most will achieve the Early Learning Goal, in areas such as movement and the use of space, but most will not achieve the goal in areas which require fine finger control.
80. In the nursery, in their outdoor play, children are learning good awareness of space and others, by balancing well on tricycles and other wheeled toys, steering them with skill and travelling at speed, yet being able to stop when required. Children run, jump and hop all over the outdoor area and climb, balance and slide with confidence and safety on the climbing apparatus. This equipment, however, is insufficiently challenging for the boldest and most able. In a physical education lesson in the hall, children in the reception class were able to perform very controlled movements on mats and benches and roll and catch a ball with care, perfecting their skills with great persistence.
81. Throughout the Foundation Stage, small-world toys, paintbrushes, jigsaws, threading beads on a string, pencils and small and large construction equipment, help children develop their physical skills and manipulation and good progress is made. Children in the nursery dance rhythmically to music and throw and catch balls with skill, showing a good sense of space. They put away their outdoor toys carefully and efficiently.

Creative development

82. Children enter the nursery with skills well below those expected for their age and although they make good progress throughout the foundation stage, most do not achieve the Early Learning Goal by the end of the Foundation Stage. They are offered a good range of activities, including drawing,

model-making, painting, imaginative play and music. Children's creative attempts show increasing imagination and confidence as they move through the Foundation Stage. Children enjoy making music and singing songs and are extending their repertoire of songs, nursery rhymes and jingles. They play instruments in time with the music, do actions to the songs and clap repeated patterns.

83. Children play imaginatively in the home corner and shop, dressing up in suitable clothes and shoes and mimicking adult talk and behaviour. A wide range of props and role play by adults extends their imagination well. Two little girls in the Nursery put their doll in the pushchair and took her for a ride in the park, encouraging her to "Sit still and be a good girl". Cooking, eating and drinking are enjoyed throughout the Foundation Stage and these and other opportunities to smell and feel give children good opportunities to respond to sensations and explore their senses. Children react openly to stories expressing humour, kindness and sadness and in the reception class a few are beginning to relate these stories to incidents in their own lives.

ENGLISH

84. At the time of the inspection standards in English were judged to be below national expectations overall by the end of Year 2. However, most pupils achieve well and make good progress as they move through the school. At the start of Year 1 pupils' literacy skills are below those expected for their age. National test results at the end of Year 2 indicate a broad trend of improvement, with some fluctuations in different year groups, in standards over last three years in reading and writing. The improvement in standards can be attributed to the good teaching seen in Years 1 and 2 and to the range of curricular developments that have taken place since the last inspection. The school has implemented the National Literacy Strategy well and has undertaken initiatives with shared reading, involving parents and taken steps to improve writing standards. Pupils with special educational needs and pupils for whom English is an additional language, are identified and well supported. The recommendations of the last inspection report have been met.
85. In Years 1 and 2 in reading, teachers build upon the skills that pupils have acquired during their good grounding in the Foundation Stage. Standards in reading are below average for most pupils. However, pupils are given good support and encouragement to develop their reading skills. As part of the Literacy Strategy pupils learn the sounds that different letters make and learn to combine these to build words. They are taught to isolate syllables when reading unknown words. They use this knowledge to help them work out unfamiliar words. Many of the Year 2 pupils also use other strategies, such as identifying context cues, in their reading. Some pupils are becoming fluent, confident and keen readers and have developed the ability to read simple stories independently. Pupils understand the difference between fiction and non-fiction and are able to use alphabetical skills to select books and use spelling aids and 'Have a go' spelling books. They are able to understand the terms 'author' and 'title' and were able to provide simple summaries of texts. They are assisted ably by their teachers and classroom assistants, who are fully informed about lesson plans and who identify and meet the needs of individual pupils well. There is a good match of resources to the needs of special educational needs' pupils and pupils for whom English is a second language. Parents are encouraged to be involved in the home school reading diary.
86. The Literacy Hour has provided a framework in which teachers can use a variety of texts and strategies to not only develop pupils reading skills, but also provide a stimulating forum for the development of new vocabulary and ideas. One example of this was the use of the big book, 'Frog and the wide world' in Year 2. In this lesson pupils discussed the meaning of such words as 'foreign' and 'dismayed'. Pupils make good progress through the reading schemes and are given access to a range of non-fiction materials. The school provides a well-organised range of up-to-date and suitable reading texts for individual and group reading and each class has a well organised reading area. There is appropriate provision of extra literacy support for pupils as required.
87. Standards in writing are below national expectations, although pupils make generally good progress during Years 1 and 2. Pupils undertake a very wide range of written work and, as part of the Literacy Strategy, are given opportunities for extended writing. For example, they write descriptive and expressive accounts, poems, instructions and letters. There was a very good

example of letter writing to Katy Morag on the Isle of Struay, which included good examples of sophisticated punctuation. Pupils retell simple stories in a logical order. In their writing, some pupils use appropriate punctuation, such as full stops, letter spacing and capital letters, in Year 2. Their work books show good progression in handwriting skills. Most of the pupils have good pencil control and form letters correctly. In Year 2 some pupils have made good progress with writing skills and are encouraged to be aware of speech marks and the use of question marks and exclamation marks, in context. There was evidence that pupils are using drafting and redrafting procedures to improve their work and also ICT in a variety of ways. Pupils are confident in writing their names with ICT and writing short sentences for labelling purposes, experimenting with a variety of fonts. There is some variation in the standards of spelling seen. By the end of Year 2 the more able pupils are able to spell longer words, using strategies; for example, breaking syllables down and using simple spelling aids and a number of pupils spell more common words correctly. The teachers promote spelling development with the use of word banks, word books and dictionaries. The Literacy Hour is used well to promote spelling and encourage language awareness; for instance, the identification of 'u' sounds, in one Year 2 class. The teaching of topics, linked to the Literacy Hour, works well and provides a broad scope for the promotion of writing opportunities; for instance ordinal instructional writing, 'How to make a face mask'.

88. Standards of pupils' speaking and listening skills are below national expectations, although they are given good encouragement to express themselves and to develop these skills. Most pupils lack confidence in their speech and cannot express themselves succinctly, some using Standard English. For instance, in a Year 2 geography lesson most pupils responded to the teacher's questions in single-word answers rather than in extended, explanatory, speech. Teachers work hard in all subjects to develop and extend pupils' vocabulary. The teachers provide very good role models of clear and concise speech and ensure that pupils have equal opportunities to express themselves and to contribute to class discussions.
89. The quality of teaching is good. Since the last inspection teachers have benefited from additional in service training in respect of the National Literacy initiative. They have good knowledge and understanding of the subject and are implementing the National Literacy Strategy effectively. They move lessons along at a good pace and give proper attention to all aspects of the work, adapting it appropriately when necessary to meet the needs of pupils at all stages of language acquisition. Teachers work within a sound planning framework and they maintain pleasant and encouraging relationships with pupils, so that there is a very good atmosphere in which lessons are conducted. They keep a good day-to-day check on how well pupils are progressing, use this information to match work to pupils' different levels of attainment and use a good range of appropriate resources to help pupils learn. They make regular notes about pupils' progress and make suitable provision for pupils of all abilities. Liaison between teachers and support staff is very good and this ensures continuity and progression in these pupils' learning. Teachers generally have high expectations of what their pupils can learn and ensure that pupils have equal access to learning opportunities. There are good procedures for record keeping and assessment, including tracking pupils' test and task results on a regular basis, to inform future lesson planning. Teachers also mark pupils work carefully and encourage them to make improvements as appropriate.
90. The use of homework is satisfactory and parents are invited to become involved on a day to day basis with the pupils' reading books and in target setting. Parents are also involved in the setting of learning objectives for those special educational needs pupils with individual education plans. Weekly literacy targets are also posted in the school, to inform parents and pupils. Parents of children who speak English as an additional language are very supportive at home and this contributes significantly to the very good progress they make in English. Many parents do not do enough to encourage their children to practise reading and writing at home.
91. This subject is led and managed very well by the English co-ordinator. The range of initiatives undertaken since the last inspection, including upgrading of all policy guidance and schemes of work and new resources have improved provision, and resulted in improved standards in reading and writing. The Literacy Strategy has been monitored to ensure its effective implementation and the subject co-ordinator is aware of the quality and standards of work throughout the school. The subject is kept under review and there are good systems to ensure that aspects in need of

development or improvement are identified and responded to.

MATHEMATICS

92. The 2002 National Test results at the end of Year 2 show that standards are average. Standards and achievement have been gradually improving over the past three years but remained well below the national average. Several factors have contributed to the significant improvement over the last year. Firstly the overall ability of the year group tested in 2002 was higher than previous groups of pupils and they had the benefits of more focused teaching, resulting from the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy. The school has worked hard over the last year to move away from a commercial scheme of work and develop activities and provide resources that are more closely matched to the particular needs of the pupils in this school. Training has helped teachers to improve their planning and make best use of the support provided by classroom assistants. Good assessment procedures have been introduced to track pupils' progress effectively. Teachers use these assessments well to plan future lessons and regroup pupils for activities in lessons.
93. Standards of work in the current Year 2 are below expected levels overall as a result of the proportion of pupils in the age group with special educational needs, or of below average ability and a lower proportion of higher attainers. The school's assessment data shows that this age group started school with well below average attainment in mathematics. In addition, most pupils joining the school at later stages were either below or well below average. Taking these factors into account pupils achieve well, making good progress to attain their present standards.
94. Teachers ensure that mathematics lessons are fully inclusive and that all pupils are wholly involved in all mathematical activities. This enables all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, to achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. Almost all make good progress in their learning. Teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very well organised and teaching assistants are well briefed to develop pupils' confidence and understanding. They provide strong support for teachers and pupils. In all lessons seen, this ensured that pupils sustained their concentration well when engaged in small group tasks and during whole class sessions. At the same time the sensitive nature of the support encourages pupils to develop their capacity as independent learners.
95. The majority of pupils start Year 1 with below average skills in mathematics. However, they make good gains in their knowledge and understanding of number and in the other aspects of mathematics including shape, measuring and handling data as they move through the school. In particular, as a result of the emphasis that teachers place upon the basic skills, pupils make good progress in acquiring strategies to deal with number problems, something they find very difficult. By the end of Year 2, most pupils develop a secure knowledge of the place value of each digit in numbers to 99, adding and subtracting numbers to 20 and beyond. They are familiar with mathematical operations and mathematical signs and some use these accurately to make up number stories. They estimate and measure length accurately and tell the time to the half-hour and some to the quarter. They identify the particular features of common two- and three-dimensional shapes and construct block graphs to record their birthdays and creatures found in the courtyard. Pupils use their mathematical skills satisfactorily to support their learning in other subjects. For example, they are involved in drawing graphs, sorting materials into sets and taking accurate measurements in science, handling data with computers using timelines in history and measuring in design and technology.
96. Teachers have been trained and supported in their adoption and recent development of the National Numeracy Strategy. They use it consistently to guide their planning and in this way ensure that pupils' learning builds progressively as they move through the school. This has been a major factor in the improvements to the quality of teaching and learning since the previous inspection. The three-part lesson structure is firmly established and most lessons begin with a mental mathematics session. Teachers work hard to achieve a brisk pace in this part of the lesson, as pupils are often slow to respond. Very few pupils have the skills to explain their thinking clearly, although staff regularly encourage this and are patient and supportive when pupils try. In a lesson in Year 2, the class drew a shape on their white board which had been carefully described to the

class by a pupil. Most pupils could name the shapes described but had difficulty drawing them. Only one pupil in the class had the skills to sketch a hexagon. Very good use is made of group games in the main part of the lesson, which are well matched to pupils' abilities and develop their number skills in an enjoyable way. The school has recently bought attractive resources to encourage practical involvement and these are well used in lessons and enjoyed by pupils. The school has worked hard to make the best use of the plenary, or final phase of the lesson. As a result pupils are becoming more confident in evaluating their learning and using mathematical language in class discussion.

97. The quality of teaching and learning is good. The very good relationships established within the classroom are the key to successful teaching and are at the heart of teachers' skilful management of behaviour. Their encouraging manner ensures that both they and their pupils enjoy the lessons and the subject. Pupils see that their contributions are valued and all are encouraged to join in discussions. Teachers skilfully direct questions to pupils who are reluctant to contribute and responses are noted by classroom assistants. Teachers plan carefully to provide appropriate levels of challenge for the range of attainment within in the class.
98. Mathematics is well managed and this has made a significant contribution to the improvements since the previous inspection. Arrangements for homework are satisfactory. In one class some mathematical games made by the teacher are taken home. This is a good strategy to involve parents more actively in their children's learning. Teachers assess pupils regularly against National Curriculum levels. In addition individual targets are set termly. The school has plans to explain these targets more fully to pupils and parents and provide suggested activities to be carried out at home to support them. Mathematical training is being provided for the adult support, which is now in place in all classes. Some observations of teaching made by the co-ordinator and numeracy consultant have identified areas for improvement and enabled good practice to be shared. Links are developing with the numeracy governor, who has started to make some classroom observations.

SCIENCE

99. In 2002, teacher-assessed standards at the end of Year 2 were close to the national average. Standards achieved by seven-year-olds have improved steadily over the last three years, with a significant increase in the number of pupils achieving the higher Level 3. During the inspection standards in the current Year 2 were found to be average overall with a similar number of pupils working at the higher level.
100. Pupils make good progress in experimental and investigative science. Pupils of all abilities achieve well due to the relevant tasks set and the appropriate levels of support given to develop thinking. They use their senses well and learn to look more closely when investigating different materials. Good support is given by the teacher and classroom assistant to help pupils communicate their findings both orally and in writing. Pupils are encouraged to predict what will happen when they experiment, for example, 'Which ball is easiest to move by blowing?' and most pupils can give reasons for their suggestions. More able pupils are starting to understand the need for a fair test and know why it is important to use the same sized container and the same quantity of water and soil when investigating the conditions needed for seed growth. Most pupils enjoy experimenting and discovering for themselves and work well in small groups.
101. Pupils develop a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of living things through the variety of experiences they are given in school, although many have limited background knowledge and a very basic vocabulary. This was seen in Year 1 lessons when pupils were discussing pictures of objects and deciding if they were living things. Nobody in one class knew the word 'hoof' to describe a zebra foot. Even the most able group were not sure whether a cabbage was living because they did not think it grew. Year 2 pupils can name the external parts of the human body and a flowering plant. They know that animals and plants need certain conditions to live. They closely observe different seeds, grow them and know about the life cycle of plants. They can describe materials using appropriate scientific vocabulary and sort them according to their differences and similarities. They know that heating and cooling can change materials, such as

bread and ice cubes. Pupils know that everyday materials such as playdough can be changed by stretching and bending. They understand the dangers of electricity and join a simple circuit to light a bulb and test conductors. They can make a toy car go faster or slower and change direction by changing the slope of the road or the surface it is travelling over. Pupils know that darkness is the absence of light and can name light sources in the classroom. Pupils learn to care for themselves and the importance of exercise and healthy eating. They learn to care for the animals and plants in the school environment and this makes a considerable contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

102. The teaching and assessment of science are good and show improvement since the last inspection. Planning is detailed and resources are well prepared to enable all pupils to find out for themselves. Explanations are clear and pupils know what is expected of them in the activity that follows. Teachers question very well and encourage pupils to use scientific vocabulary in their explanations. Pupils are encouraged to recall previous learning at the start of lessons but find this difficult when the topic has not been discussed for some time. Teachers have to work hard to retrieve essential vocabulary and knowledge and this can slow down the pace. Classroom support is very well organised to ensure that pupils of all abilities, as well as those with English as an additional language, are included in activities and given suitable support when recording work. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills. Pupils sometimes draw graphs of their findings and make comparisons using measurements such as footprints or spoonfuls. Better use could be made of information books to improve pupils' background knowledge. The organisation of Year 2 lessons which stretch over the whole afternoon session need to be adjusted to include pupil activity in both parts of the lesson in order to improve the concentration and learning of some pupils.
103. The policy and scheme of work have been revised since the last inspection and provide very good coverage of the required curriculum through a practical approach. However, more-able pupils do not have enough opportunities to devise their own investigations. There are very good assessment systems in place which record pupils' progress in investigation as well as their knowledge and understanding. These provide excellent evidence for teacher assessment at the end of Year 2. Classroom support is used well to record pupils' oral contributions to class discussion, which demonstrate understanding. The assessments made are used well in the planning of following lessons and to make changes to the scheme of work. Marking is of a high standard and annotation is used to summarise discussions with pupils about their work.
104. The subject is very well led by the enthusiastic co-ordinator who has worked with colleagues to produce a scheme of work matched to pupils' needs and effectively supports staff. The work in Year 2 builds well on what has gone before and provides the necessary consolidation and repetition, which these pupils need to support their learning. Links have yet to be established with the Foundation Stage to further improve progression. Resources are well used, of good quality and adequate to deliver the planned curriculum. Visits are made to a museum and science theatre groups visit the school to enrich the curriculum. At present there are no out of school visits to extend pupils' knowledge of living things but the school environment is used well in some topics.

ART AND DESIGN

105. Standards in art and design are below national expectations at the end of Year 2. The majority of pupils have below average skills in drawing, colouring, painting and cutting at the start of Year 1 because many do not have the opportunity to develop these activities in play at home. They experience a range of work in art and design, including two-dimensional work, and have experimented with a range of appropriate media including poster paints, watercolours, pastels, coloured pencils and crayons, drawing pencils, collage and paper printing. At present there is insufficient development in three-dimensional work, fabric printing and weaving, ceramics and sculpture, and the multicultural aspect of the subject is weak. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress over the two years.
106. In Year 1 pupils draw self-portraits, using chalk and charcoal, carefully shading their work to good

effect. The same idea is then carried out using poster paint. They make close observational drawings of kitchen utensils from the past such as a flat iron and a washboard, using wax crayons and pencil and linking this to their work in history. Many of these drawings are immature for the age of the pupils and they have difficulties representing shape and proportion.

107. In Year 2 pupils draw still-life pictures of a bowl of fruit using a range of pastels which show some improvement in skills. During the inspection a class were asked to create a jungle picture from their own imagination. Most pupils had very little knowledge of jungle vegetation and the appropriate colours to use. After looking at a painting by Rousseau and observing the many different shades of green he used to make the jungle effect they tried to improve their own pictures. They found this extremely difficult because of their limited skills and lost concentration. There is good integration of the subject into other aspects of the curriculum, for example careful observational drawings in science help pupils develop an understanding of living things.
108. Teaching in art and design is generally satisfactory, although some of the planned curriculum, based on nationally suggested material, is too difficult for these pupils who have below average basic drawing skills. In some classes, where skills are particularly low teachers find it difficult to sustain pupils' interest and learning is unsatisfactory. In the best lessons, art skills are systematically taught in workshop style, building on what has gone before. Pupils can use their own observations, develop their art techniques and learning is good.
109. Pupils are generally well behaved in lessons and watch demonstrations with interest, being careful and creative in their own work. They show an obvious enjoyment in the subject and some useful opportunities for spiritual development were noted as pupils were encouraged to reflect on their own work in art and design and to appreciate the work of famous artists.
110. Leadership and management of the subject are good and teachers are given good advice and support. The co-ordinator has good specialist knowledge of the techniques and skills that need to be taught but has not led any staff training for some time. It is important that this knowledge is used to good effect when the school rewrites the scheme of work to include systematic teaching of key art skills and activities more relevant to pupils' needs and experience. Resources are satisfactory, readily available and well managed. Health and safety aspects when using equipment are emphasised and as a result pupils are careful with paint and scissors. The curriculum is enhanced by visits to art galleries but as yet insufficient opportunities are provided for pupils to work with real artists or to take part in any local exhibitions of their work

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

111. At the end of Year 2 standards are below those expected in design and technology. Provision for the subject is satisfactory. Both teaching and learning are good, as is the quality of the curriculum provided. Pupils' low levels of basic skills in drawing and making prevent them from producing products of the required standard and have a negative effect on attainment.
112. All pupils display considerable interest in the subject and are keen to acquire skills, knowledge and understanding. In lessons they co-operate well in groups and behaviour is generally good. These good attitudes in lessons create a positive atmosphere for working and learning. The attitudes are similar to the previous inspection. Girls and boys display similar interest and consequently they learn and achieve in equal measure. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language receive good support and make similar progress to other pupils.
113. During the inspection pupils in Year 1 were making strong frames, initially from card, finding different ways of joining to make a strong structure. Frames made in a previous lesson were effectively evaluated in class discussion. Pupils were encouraged to talk about the joining materials used and whether the structures were strong enough and how they could be improved. Pupils had experimented well and chose a variety of materials to join the card. They then used their knowledge of stable structures to build a strong frame suitable for a swing. Again, a good choice of materials were available including construction kits and pupils had lots of original ideas

for their work, often combining materials. Most pupils completed the task with varying degrees of success by the end of the lesson. Many pupils lacked the specific skills for cutting, joining and assembling the materials they chose to use. There was insufficient direct teaching of the skills needed to join materials for the majority of pupils to succeed. Pupils using construction kits were most successful.

114. In Year 2 pupils had been investigating and experimenting with winding mechanisms and had a good understanding of the type of mechanism they would use to make a mouse run up a clock. Pupils had very good ideas for their designs after looking at pictures of long case clocks. They knew which shapes, types of materials they would use and even how they would decorate them, as a result of the very good teaching and stimulation generated in the lesson. Pupils' drawings of their intended designs were poor and did not do justice to their ideas. They could list the materials needed to make the clock case, the mouse and the winding mechanism, showing that they had thought through the activity well. Examples seen in work sampling show that pupils regularly generate designs and evaluate their finished work and this shows improvement since the last inspection. Last year pupils had designed and made glove puppets from felt and other textiles, which they were proud of. Other examples of completed work such as crocodiles, which opened their jaws and figures that walked as legs rotated highlighted the difficulties pupils have using scissors and colouring neatly. The roundabouts made by Year 2 pupils at the end of last year showed a better level of skill, although they were not allowed to cut the wood for themselves.
115. The quality of teaching is good overall, which is an improvement since the last inspection where it was unsatisfactory. Following the new scheme of work based on National Curriculum guidance, teachers plan interesting activities for pupils. Pupils have good opportunities to develop and record their design ideas and work with a variety of materials, including food and textiles. There are good opportunities to evaluate designs both orally and in writing. Good examples were seen where pupils had evaluated fishing games made by groups within the class and voted for the best. Currently insufficient emphasis is given to teaching skills directly to compensate for pupils' poor drawing-and-making ability and there are not enough opportunities for them to practise these activities. There is a very good and simple assessment system, which measures pupils' achievements at the end of each unit of work. Pupils' development of skills is not assessed at present.
116. The subject leadership is good and the scheme of work has been developed with staff involvement since the last inspection which has improved planning and teaching. Resources are satisfactory and well organised. At present there are no tools for cutting wood. The co-ordinator does not yet observe the teaching of the subject in other classes, but monitors planning and samples work. She is collecting photographic evidence and samples of work for each topic. It has been some time since design and technology has been the focus for staff development. Basic skills which need to be taught through a consistent approach, in order to raise standards, have yet to be identified. Literacy and numeracy make sound contributions to the subject; for example, pupils are often encouraged to measure accurately so that various pieces of material fit together well. They also develop their speaking and listening skills when discussing their own work and that of others.

GEOGRAPHY

117. By the end of Year 2 standards are below the levels expected for this subject, due to pupils' below average literacy skills. They find it difficult to express their ideas orally and in writing. Most pupils have very limited background knowledge and subject vocabulary. However, pupils achieve well and make good progress as they move through the school. The reasons for this good progress are the good teaching, the sound planning structure for children's learning opportunities and the use of the environment as a resource. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make generally good progress over time in the key subject knowledge and skills. Since the last inspection the school has taken steps to develop a scheme of work, build up resources and to improve the curricular provision.
118. By the end of Year 2 pupils are able to interpret simple maps and plans and identify key features, as well as understanding how symbols can represent features on the ground. An example of this

was the use of the ICT programme 'My World', where pupils were experimenting with mapping symbols. Pupils at this stage are developing a keen interest in the subject and are encouraged by their teachers to express their learning in a variety of ways – via descriptions, map making with associated labelling and illustrations. The teachers provide interesting learning opportunities and make use of the local environment. For instance, Year 1 pupils are encouraged to remember and identify street furniture on their journey to school and to sequence their journey with reference to the items seen. Pupils' work is valued and presented in attractive displays in the classrooms.

119. In Year 2 pupils are developing an understanding of localities which were different from their own, in the context of the Isle of Struay study. They were investigating possible ways of getting to the Isle of Struay from where they lived and this lesson developed useful vocabulary as well as the geographical skills of comparison. Geographical study facilitates pupils' learning in a variety of ways and the teachers have made good links to the development of literacy opportunities when relevant. This was exemplified in the letters which Year 2 pupils had written to Katie Morag on the Isle of Struay, contrasting their own lives with hers. Further examples of the good use of the environment were found in the work which pupils had undertaken last year about 'People who work in our community', plus map work indicating streets and houses in Grange Hill and plans of the school. Pupils' responses in Year 2 indicated that they had made gains in knowledge about the area and in mapping skills in local scale studies. The pupils had also undertaken a local survey on parking and evaluated the findings.
120. Pupils' learning is developed by the good teaching seen. Teachers have good subject knowledge and plan lessons well, within the framework of the school planning structure. They encourage the use of appropriate geographical language. The teachers provide a wide range of opportunities for pupils' learning and tasks are well matched to pupils' abilities, with suitable support for special educational needs pupils and for pupils with English as an additional language. Teachers make appropriate use of praise and encouragement. They use ICT well, to promote more opportunities for research and there were good examples of pupils using map programs and other geographical resources to assist learning. One Year 2 class had an interesting mapping display, which homed in on their area from space, through the use of maps of different scales.
121. The subject is well managed and the co-ordinator has introduced a comprehensive policy and scheme of work. The recommendations of the last inspection have been met and are helping to raise standards. The revised framework provides good guidance for teachers' planning and assessment and ensures the progressive development of pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills. The subject is taught through topics, with end of unit assessments. Resources are well-organised and readily accessible to staff. The co-ordinator has effectively evaluated the school's development needs and monitored teachers' planning and resource provision, although no systematic monitoring of pupils' work or teaching has been undertaken yet. As part of a whole school programme there are plans to undertake appropriate training for co-ordinators in monitoring the teaching and learning, later in the year.

HISTORY

122. By the end of Year 2 standards are below the levels expected for this subject, due to limited background knowledge and below average literacy skills. These factors prevent pupils from fully expressing their ideas and opinions. Since the last inspection the school has developed a scheme of work and assessment procedures. There has also been improvement in the build up of resources, including historical artefacts and the use of the local environment. This has widened pupils' experiences and raised standards. Pupils achieve well and make good progress as they move through the school. The good teaching, the sound planning structure and the good use of the environment as a resource all contribute to pupils' achievement. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those speaking English as an additional language, make good progress over time.
123. In Year 1, pupils are developing knowledge and understanding of people and events in the past, for instance learning about old artefacts, such as irons and chamber pots. In doing so they were at a simple level contrasting the lives of people long ago with lifestyles today. Pupils were encouraged

to observe, touch and describe artefacts and to discuss their use. Pupils produce accurate drawings and descriptive writings. Pupils are encouraged to learn about events in the past, for instance, 'Guy Fawkes' and 'Poppy Day' and how peoples' lives from long ago contrasted with their own lives. The 'War Christmas' activity undertaken with Year 2 pupils last year was a good example of this. There are also examples of the understanding of simple timelines, in the context of 'Family Histories' and 'Teddies'. The school has also arranged visits to local places of interest, e.g. Waltham Abbey, and such visits have effectively promoted interest in and learning about historical matters.

124. Pupils' progress in this subject is encouraged by the good planning structure and resources available to teachers. The teachers provide a wide range of opportunities for pupils' learning. There is some evidence of the use of reference books and ICT to encourage pupils to find out for themselves. In the lessons seen the teachers gave good encouragement for pupils' discussion and vocabulary development and ensured equal opportunities for pupils. Less able groups were given extra support by classroom learning assistants. The teachers had sound subject knowledge and lessons proceeded with good pace and structure. The lesson content was well matched to the pupils' level of interest and understanding and most pupils gained in knowledge and understanding.
125. The subject is well managed and the co-ordinator has developed a scheme of work, which supports teachers' planning and assessment. It ensures the progressive development of pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills as they move through the school. Resources are well organised and accessible. The co-ordinator undertakes some curriculum monitoring activities, including planning, but does not monitor pupils' work or observe teaching. The subject has not been the focus for development for some time.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

126. Standards at the end of Year 2 are in line with those expected nationally. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is a second language, make sound progress as they move through the school. Teachers use ICT well as a tool to express and develop work in other curricular areas. Very good progress has been made since the last inspection. The school has undertaken a range of procedures to fulfil the recommendations of the last inspection report, including:
- substantial training for teaching staff;
 - the introduction of a comprehensive scheme of work, to promote continuity and progression in pupils' learning;
 - the acquisition of a suitable range of software which links with other curricular areas; and
 - the development of the computer suite.
127. Pupils at the end of Year 2 are using computers with growing confidence and expertise. Most pupils do not have access to computers at home and the skills of the majority are developed in school. The timetabled lessons in the computer suite have enabled all pupils to be taught skills directly on a regular basis. Good opportunities are given for pupils to practise these skills when working in class. The result of this has been the rapid progress made by all pupils in a short time. Most pupils can open, save and print work on the computers and can use simple programs well. For example Year 1 pupils were using a programme to read, identify and label body parts, using the 'drag and drop' function with flair. They worked co-operatively in pairs and showed enthusiasm for the activity. Year 2 pupils can experiment with the 'Colour Magic' program to make complex shapes of their own choosing with simple geometrical shapes. They were able to use many functions of this program well, including the colour and shape functions, plus icons which enabled rotational symmetry to take place. At the end of lessons pupils are encouraged to discuss, present and start to evaluate their printed work. There is evidence of a substantial range of work produced by last year's pupils in which ICT has been used effectively in other subjects. One example of this was the use of ICT in presenting graphical information, about favourite foods and pupils were asked to interpret the graphs. ICT was also used in science, when the pupils recorded the life cycle of a frog. Pupils' work is collected in a folder, which allows ready access and enables

pupils to review their work and evaluate their progress.

128. Teachers plan ICT in unit themes and organise lessons generally well. Because the ICT suite is not very large, the bigger classes are split and take it in turns to use the computers. This ensures that all pupils have equal access to equipment. In the case of a Year 1 class the other half was given a useful task to do, in identifying lower and upper case letters in preparation for a word processing lesson. Good support is given to pupils by the teachers and by classroom assistants. Teachers have good knowledge of the programs and are able to 'troubleshoot' well. The teachers undertake end-of-unit assessments and use these effectively to plan future lessons to match pupils' needs. Teachers have benefited considerably from the training given and are happy to use new technology in a variety of their lessons, which is helping to raise standards.
129. The school exceeds the national recommendations regarding pupil/computer ratios, having one computer for every eight pupils. There are firm plans to obtain more computers to add to the suite and enable the larger classes to allocate one computer to two pupils at a time. This will avoid any situation where pupils do not have instant access to the keyboard and ensure learning time is used efficiently.
130. The co-ordinator for this subject has worked hard to improve provision within the school and has had a considerable influence on the improved standards. She has facilitated the teachers' training programme and developed the resources. She has ensured that appropriate policy guidance and a scheme of work are in place, which supports the teachers well and has helped to develop their confidence. The scheme also makes reference to hardware and pupils are encouraged to be aware of the safe and appropriate use of other items of equipment, for example the digital camera. ICT training is planned for classroom assistants so that they can take a more active role in the lessons and this is beneficial. There is a statement regarding safe use of the Internet, which parents are aware of. The school employs a technician to ensure that equipment is in good working order, enables staff to concentrate on their teaching and provides good value for money. Overall ICT is used very well to enhance pupils learning in most curricular areas.

MUSIC

131. Standards of attainment and rates of progress in music are generally satisfactory and in line with what would be expected for pupils at the end of Year 2. All pupils have experience of performing and composing. They listen to and appraise their own music and music from a wide range of composers, music styles and cultures. They behave well in lessons and obviously enjoy their music-making. When sharing instruments in music composition they work together well and co-operate.
132. At the beginning of Year 1, pupils experience a variety of rhythm, pitch and tempo activities. They use their voices and body parts to sing and clap repeated patterns. They know a small repertoire of songs, which they can sing from memory, observing the correct pitch and tempo of the song. They can recognise high and low sounds, soft and loud timbre and fast and slow tempo and can move in time to the music. They can rehearse and perform with others simple tunes and rhythms which they have composed.
133. In Year 2, pupils continue to develop their skills in composition and work in small groups to compose pieces on tuned and untuned instruments, which they put together in a sequence to form a whole class composition which they perform to each other. They extend their repertoire of songs and learn to read a simple score of three notes and play it accurately on chime bars. They can create and copy complex rhythm patterns and know that the longer notes on the xylophone are lower and the shorter notes are higher.
134. Teaching in music is always at least good and good use is made of learning support assistants to help pupils, especially with composition. Teachers have good musical skills and are confident about teaching music, even when they do not play an instrument themselves. Pupils and teachers obviously enjoy making music together and it greatly enhances the community spirit of the school.

135. Music provision is enhanced by visiting musicians, such as a percussionist and musical theatre groups, who share their expertise with the pupils. Pupils in Year 2 sing together with other schools in an annual local Music Festival. All pupils take part in a summer concert where songs and compositions are performed to parents and friends. Parents comment on the high standards achieved and the confidence the pupils show.
136. Music is well used in assemblies, a range of music of all styles is played as pupils go in and out, and pupils sing in tune enthusiastically and with clear diction. Class assemblies make good use of songs which the pupils know by heart and there are good opportunities in assemblies for the whole school to celebrate and enjoy music together, especially in celebrations such as Christmas, Harvest and Diwali.
137. There are good links with other areas of the curriculum, for example pupils have made their own musical instruments out of found materials in design and technology lessons. They draw pictures of musical instruments using a range of art media and there are good links with literacy when pupils compose music for favourite stories that they have heard the teacher read.
138. There is an effective music policy and scheme of work which are in line with national advice. The co-ordinator leads the development of the subject well, giving advice to staff when needed. As yet there are no procedures for monitoring teaching and learning in the subject, but these are planned for development in the near future.
139. Resources for music are generally satisfactory and are well used. There is a wide range of untuned percussion instruments, including instruments from a number of different cultures. Tuned instruments such as xylophones and glockenspiels are less plentiful. There is a wide range of music for listening and appraising and a good selection of music books to help teachers plan lessons and for pupils to enjoy.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION (PE)

140. Standards in physical education are above expectations at the end of Year 2. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress over time in the key knowledge and skills. There are no noticeable differences between the attainment of boys and girls. Parents who attended the meeting commented on the high standards achieved when Year 2 pupils put on a display for parents at the end of the year. Since the last inspection the school has developed a good scheme of work which has helped to maintain the high standards. Recommendations of the last inspection report have been followed and lighter weight gymnastics equipment obtained. The policy has also been reviewed to incorporate the latest health and safety matters and equal opportunity issues. There is a detailed scheme of work in place, for gymnastics, dance and games, to ensure that the curriculum offered is broad and balanced. The scheme of work ensures that children develop a wide range of progressive skills, in the context of these activities. Good emphasis is given in lessons to the importance of healthy living and fitness.
141. Pupils have an enthusiastic attitude to the subject, are keen to change quickly and spend as much time on the activity as possible. In lessons they listen attentively and concentrate well on the tasks set. They co-operate well with a partner and also within their groups waiting to take turns on the apparatus.
142. By the end of Year 2, pupils show that they can follow instructions to develop safe routines in floor-work gymnastics. They develop precision and control in their movements. In simple games activities; for example, learning to throw and catch balls in different ways, they are developing satisfactory co-ordination skills. This was also shown in their use of hoops. Pupils are able to experiment and then repeat movements learned from their partner. They are able to evaluate and comment intelligently upon the work of their peers, with a view to improving their own performance.
143. The quality of teaching is good. The teachers have very good subject knowledge and enthusiasm and deliver lessons of good pace and timing. They are able to develop pupils' natural ability and the skills which they acquire when playing outside their homes. The lessons seen incorporate

plenty of opportunities for progression from floor skills to the use of apparatus and co-operative work. The planning and assessment of activities are good. Teachers encourage pupils to demonstrate and evaluate their work in order to develop their confidence. The importance of safe routines is emphasised but this does not prevent pupils from experimenting with new ideas and taking risks. Equal opportunities for all pupils are emphasised and the teachers promote positive discipline strategies well.

144. The subject is very well managed and the co-ordinator shares her expertise effectively by supporting other staff, demonstrating techniques, such as maypole dancing, to the school. The co-ordinator regularly teaches other classes to extend pupils' learning and this makes a considerable contribution to the high standards achieved. She has developed a portfolio of photographic evidence of children's past work, which is a good record of the progress made over time. She has effectively evaluated the school's development needs and has plans for the development of teaching and resources. She is working towards extending the range of extra-curricular activities on offer.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

145. Pupils make good progress throughout the school in religious education and their attainment is in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus, by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 2.
146. At the beginning of Year 1, pupils examine the special clothes, food and activities that are connected with celebrations. They start by thinking about their own birthdays and leading on to religious festivals such as Christmas and the Hindu festival of Holi. They know that during Holi people throw coloured powder over each other. In Year 2, they consider what they are thankful for and list trees, people and my house, but especially "Mummy, Daddy and God". They think of ways in which they can thank their daddy, mummy and God for what they do for them. They study more deeply the festival of Christmas and also think about Advent and Harvest. They know that during Advent, Christians are looking forward to the coming of Jesus at Christmas. They also learn about the Sikh religion. They know that all Sikhs wear a bracelet on their wrist at all times, called a Kara, as a symbol that God is one and also that if you visit a Sikh temple you will be given free food that is shared out with everyone.
147. Pupils' behaviour in lessons is generally good and they are very interested in the subject. They enjoy hearing stories from a range of different faiths and are interested to learn about the religious practices of their own and other religions. They are respectful as they explore issues relating to religion and can compare and contrast similarities and differences between a number of religions at a level appropriate for their age.
148. The quality of teaching is always at least good and very good use is made of artefacts, books, real experiences and drama activities to bring the material alive for pupils. Teachers plan their lessons in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus and are careful to teach the meaning of specialist vocabulary and symbols. Good opportunities are given for pupils to develop their speaking skills by answering questions and contributing ideas to discussion. There are good links with other subjects of the curriculum, especially literacy; for example, a Big Book about the Jewish faith was well used in one lesson and in another pupils cut out the sentences which told a Bible story and sequenced them in order.
149. Assemblies are also well used to celebrate a range of festivals from different faiths to tell religious and moral stories and to support the spiritual and moral development of the pupils. There are good links with local places of worship and the local clergy, which enhance the subject further. The focus on religious education in the school's curriculum makes an important contribution to pupils' personal development. They develop an understanding of other ways of life, both in other parts of the world and in multicultural Britain. Religious education helps to create racial harmony because pupils have the opportunity to reflect on their own and other peoples' beliefs and to look at how this might affect on their own behaviour and attitudes.
150. Leadership and management of religious education are good and the previous co-ordinator who has now left the school, did much to raise the profile of the subject, giving advice and help to colleagues on the teaching and content of the subject. She improved the range of artefacts, visits and other resources to enhance and enliven the subject. The headteacher, who is at present acting as the co-ordinator, is maintaining the good support. The school plans to appoint a permanent co-ordinator who can continue to take the subject forward and develop the monitoring of teaching and learning, so that standards can be improved even further.