

INSPECTION REPORT

**ST JOHN'S CE VC
INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL**

Radlett

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117383

Headteacher: Mrs. J. Shanks

Reporting inspector: David Wynford-Jones
23138

Dates of inspection: 31st March - 3rd April 2003

Inspection number: 247772

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

© Crown copyright 2003

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Nursery
School category: Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils: 3 to 7 years
Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Gills Hill Lane
Radlett
Hertfordshire

Postcode: WD7 8DD

Telephone number: 01923 856594

Fax number: 01923 856594

Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Dr. Martin Bigg

Date of previous inspection: 12th - 15th January 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23188	David Wynford-Jones	Registered inspector	Science Information and communication technology Physical education	What sort of school is it? How high are the standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9907	William Orr	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
29695	Jill Lance	Team inspector	English Art Design and technology Music Religious education Special educational needs Education inclusion	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

5565	Bimla Thakur	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Mathematics Geography History English as an additional language	
------	--------------	----------------	---	--

The inspection contractor was:

PkR Educational Consultants Ltd
6 Sherman Road
Bromley
Kent
BR1 3JH

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	12
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	15
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	18
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	21
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	22
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	24
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	27
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	28
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	33

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St. John's Infant and Nursery School is a popular and oversubscribed Church of England Voluntary Controlled School. It is about the same size as the average primary school. There are 174 full-time pupils on roll, aged 5-7. In addition, 25 boys and 25 girls aged 3-5 attend the nursery, opened in 1999, on a part-time basis. The school is organised into six classes, two in each year group, (Reception, Year 1 and Year 2). The school sets for literacy and numeracy in Years 1 and 2. The majority of pupils live within the school's catchment area. Many travel some considerable distance from neighbouring towns and villages. Pupils come from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds and live in a mix of private and rented accommodation. The school's intake reflects the whole ability range but overall pupils' attainment on entry to the Reception classes is above that found nationally. Eight pupils have an ethnic minority background and four speak English as an additional language reasonably fluently. Six per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals and this is well below the national average of 18 per cent. Twelve pupils are on the special needs register, 11 are on school action plus*, one pupil has a statement of special educational needs. The percentage of pupils on the special educational needs register is well below the national average.

*(School action plus is where the school requests the help of external services.)

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides a good education for all its pupils. Pupils consistently achieve well above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. The vast majority of pupils, including the gifted and talented, make good progress. Those with special educational needs and those for whom English is not the mother tongue make very good progress. Teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good and is good overall. Pupils' very good attitudes towards school contribute significantly to the progress and standards they achieve. The leadership and management of the school are sound overall with some good and very good features. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils attain high standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards are well above those found nationally and in similar schools.
- Teaching is good throughout the school; many lessons are taught to a very good standard.
- Provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good.
- Pupils' relationships and their understanding of the impact of their actions on others are excellent. Their behaviour and attitudes to work are very good as is their attendance at school.
- The teachers and other adults provide very positive role models. The shared commitment of all staff and the strong caring support provided for all pupils makes a significant contribution to the progress they make.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is not the mother tongue is very good and leads to very good progress by those pupils.

What could be improved

- The curriculum, by reducing the time spent on literacy and numeracy-associated

activities and increasing the time to teach art and design, design and technology, music, ICT, RE, PE, history, and geography.

- Procedures for tracking pupils' personal and academic progress in many subjects from the time they start school.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection in January 1998. Overall, the key issues have been addressed satisfactorily. Communications and relationships with parents have improved significantly. Parents are consulted and action taken following the analysis of their comments. Policy documents have been updated, most are of sound or better quality but some remain undated. It is not clear when or if the governing body approved the policies and when the policies are scheduled for review. The Foundation Stage Curriculum policy is satisfactory and has been agreed with the governing body. It is being implemented satisfactorily. The school development plan is sound but further refinements are required. The success criteria and monitoring and evaluation sections lack clarity and rigour. Provision for pupils' cultural education is now good. The governing body receives regular financial updates from the headteacher. The Resources Committee plans and monitors the budget appropriately. Standards within the school, particularly in the core subjects, have improved as have the quality of teaching and the leadership and management of the school. The school is well placed to continue to make further improvements particularly in the planning and teaching of foundation subjects.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar school s	
	2000	2001	2002	2002	
reading	A*	A*	A	A	very high standard A*
writing	A*	A*	A*	A*	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
mathematics	A*	A	A	A	

The school consistently achieves very high standards in reading, writing and mathematics. In 2002, in the National Tests at the end of Year 2, the percentages of pupils attaining Level 2 (the nationally expected level) and the higher Level 3 are well above the national average and those of similar schools. In writing, in 2002, the school's performance is in the top 5 per cent of schools nationally. Over the last four years, the high standards pupils achieved by the end of Year 2 in reading, writing, and mathematics have been improved on a year-by-year basis. The overall pattern of improvement is better than the national trend. Pupils make good progress in these subjects. The school exceeded its challenging targets in reading, writing and mathematics. Non-statutory, challenging targets have been set for 2003. Standards seen during the current inspection in Year 2 were generally consistent with previous results. In science, teachers assess pupils' attainment to be well above that found nationally and in similar schools. Inspection evidence confirms that pupils' attainment is at least above national expectations. Pupils make good progress in science. By the end of Year 2 pupils' attainment in history, geography and Religious Education is above national expectations, and is in line in art, design technology, information technology, music and physical education. Given the abilities of the pupils, higher standards could reasonably be expected in these subjects. Appropriate challenge is provided for more able pupils to take their learning forward

particularly in English, mathematics and science. In other subjects they are not challenged to the same extent. Overall, the progress made by pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is not the mother tongue is very good. The school has received two achievement awards for the standards it achieves.

Children in the nursery and in the reception classes make good progress in all areas of learning. By the end of Reception Year most pupils meet and frequently exceed the Early Learning Goals (the nationally expected standards for the age) in communication, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, and in their physical and creative development. Children with special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language make very good progress.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to school are very good. The vast majority of pupils are enthusiastic, like school and are keen to take part in lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils behave very well in class and around the school. They show respect for each other, there is no evidence of bullying or harassment. Overall, behaviour is very good..
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development and relationships are very good. Staff and pupils show high levels of mutual respect. Pupils are trusted and this encourages them to be responsible.
Attendance	Attendance is well above the national average. There are no incidents of unauthorised absence or exclusions.

Pupils are keen to attend and enjoy school. The ethos of the school provides pupils with the opportunity to grow in confidence and to develop respect for each other and adults. The pupils' very good attitudes towards school and each other contribute significantly to the progress they make and the standards they achieve.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching is good overall and promotes good learning, particularly in speaking, listening, reading, writing and numeracy. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. The quality of teaching varies slightly between classes in different subjects. In the nursery and reception classes there is a strong focus on developing clear routines and providing opportunities for children to develop their independence to ensure they settle quickly, grow in confidence and become active learners. This ensures pupils make good progress in all areas of learning. As a result most achieve or exceed the levels of attainment identified in the Early Learning Goals. In years 1 and 2, teaching is good and builds on the work undertaken in the Foundation Stage. The management of pupils and detailed lessons plans, which inform and guide teaching, are particular strengths.

The teaching of literacy and numeracy is very good throughout the school. Teachers place a considerable emphasis on developing pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding in these areas of the curriculum. In English, pupils develop their speaking and listening skills well. Teachers provide the pupils with many opportunities to practise these skills. The school has an effective strategy for teaching reading, writing and mathematics. This results in pupils achieving standards well above all schools and schools in a similar context. In mathematics, teachers make good use of resources, including computer programs and robots. Relationships with the pupils are very good. This results in pupils paying attention in class and trying their best. Support staff work well with the teachers and contribute much to the development of pupils' learning and the progress they make. The support for pupils with special educational needs is very good; as a result they make very good progress. Teachers of Y1 and 2 pupils thoroughly assess their work in the core subjects and use this information to set targets. In the nursery and reception classes, the school is in the process of reviewing its assessment and tracking procedures. The quality of teachers' marking is satisfactory. However, teachers place too much emphasis on the teaching of literacy throughout the school day at the expense of the foundation subjects. Teachers are very good at involving parents in their children's learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school offers a broad curriculum but overall there is some imbalance. The time devoted to literacy is often to the detriment of the foundation subjects.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision is very good and enables pupils to make very good progress. Pupils on the SEN register have appropriate individual educational plans and receive good support in the class. This enables them to achieve well.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Provision is good. Pupils settle quickly and make good progress in the nursery and reception classes. In years 1 and 2 they make very good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision is good overall. Provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good, cultural development is good and spiritual development satisfactory. Good progress has been made in developing pupils' cultural awareness from the time of the last inspection.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares well for its pupils and there are good systems for monitoring pupils' academic performance in the core subjects. Systems for monitoring pupils' progress in the foundation subjects are not as rigorous. Procedures for monitoring, child protection and health and safety are good. All members of staff take a keen interest in the welfare of all pupils.

The school works well in partnership with parents and provides good information to parents through the prospectus, the governors' annual report to parents, regular newsletters, and parents' consultation evenings. Written reports to parents do not contain sufficient detail on pupils' attainment and what they should be working on next. Teachers are accessible to

parents at the end of the school day. Parents are very good at supporting their children at home and many regularly help out in school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Leadership and management of the school are sound overall. The headteacher provides good leadership and management of the school and is supported soundly by the deputy head. Subject co-ordinators are satisfactory overall. The co-ordinators are committed to raising standards of work and behaviour and are developing their roles appropriately but as yet do not challenge their colleagues sufficiently.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil their responsibilities satisfactorily and are very supportive of the school. They are continuing to develop their understanding of their roles and responsibilities, taking a more active role in the leadership of the school and in holding it to account.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Test results are analysed and challenging targets are set. Systematic monitoring of the quality of teaching in the core subjects is in place. Insufficient emphasis is placed on promoting higher standards in some foundation subjects.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes good use of funding to provide pupils with the best possible support within the class to enable good progress to be made, particularly in the core subjects. Governors are beginning to monitor the allocation and expenditure effectively and to ensure they get the best value for money on purchases. Good use is made of grants for staff training.

The school is staffed to an appropriate level with suitably qualified and experienced teachers to meet the needs of children in the nursery, reception classes and Years 1 and 2. Administrative and support staff contribute significantly to the smooth running of the school and the progress pupils make. Resources are of suitable quality and adequate to meet the needs of the curriculum. Space is at a premium and good use is being made of all areas. The financial surplus has been used well to provide additional teaching space. The outdoor play areas provide pupils with good opportunities to develop their agility.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The high expectations the school promotes • The quality of teaching • Pupils' like going to school • Pupils' behaviour and attitudes • The way the school is led and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school working more closely with parents. • More information on their child's progress.

The inspectors agree with the parents' positive views of the school. The inspectors found that the school is working much more closely with parents than at the time of the last

inspection. There are good systems in place should a parent wish to have more information about their child's work or progress, but the annual reports on pupil progress are not sufficiently detailed, particularly in the early years. The school is planning to address this point.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Standards in the National Tests, at the end of Year 2, are consistently well above average in reading, writing and mathematics when compared with the national results and those of similar schools. (i.e schools with a similar percentage of pupils eligible to take free school meals). In 2002, the school's performance in writing is in the top 5 per cent nationally. Progress in these subjects is very good.
2. Since the previous inspection and over the last four years, the high standards pupils achieve by the end of Year 2 in reading, writing, and mathematics have improved on a year-by-year basis. The overall pattern of improvement is better than the national trend.

Pupils make very good progress in these subjects. The progress made by pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is not the mother tongue is very good. This is an improvement on the satisfactory progress made during the last inspection. The school has received two achievement awards for the standards it achieves.

3. The vast majority of pupils attend the nursery before starting mainstream school. Their attainment on entry to the Reception classes is above the national average. Learning in the Reception classes builds on the good start they receive in the nursery. Work seen during the inspection showed that by the end of the Foundation Stage most pupils attain or exceed the standards identified in the Early Learning Goals - the nationally expected standard for children of this age. As a result, pupil attainment is above the national average when they enter Year 1. They continue to make good progress and by the end of Year 2, their overall standards are well above the national averages in English and mathematics and above the national expectations in science, history, geography and religious education. Their attainment in art and design, design and technology, information technology, physical education and music is in line with national expectations. Given the background of the pupils and the good start they receive within the Foundation Stage, higher standards could reasonably be expected in the subjects where attainment is only in line with national expectations.
4. In Years 1 and 2 pupils speak confidently and use a good range of vocabulary. In response to good questioning from the teachers, pupils are able to use subject specific language to construct relatively complex sentences that convey the meanings clearly, e.g. using prepositions in work on direction in numeracy. They listen carefully to their teachers and their peers in lesson time. Pupils take full opportunity to contribute verbally to the lessons, particularly in "speakers corner". Pupils are developing their reading skills well. They use a variety of strategies to support and interpret the text. Most pupils have a good knowledge of phonics and blending. Although standards in writing are well above the national average and those of similar schools, the skills are not always transferred to other subjects, e.g. to design and technology (DT) and information and communication technology (ICT). Occasionally, the developments of pupils' skills in writing are being restricted in other subjects with the use of undemanding worksheets. Limited use is made of ICT to develop pupils' writing skills. Some pupils, in Years 1 and 2, are experiencing difficulties with letter formation and handwriting. This goes unchecked in most books other than the handwriting books and pupils do not consolidate these skills. Pupils' work on display in the classrooms is generally of a good standard.
5. Standards of work seen in mathematics are well above average in numeracy and other areas of the mathematics curriculum. Pupils are developing a good mathematical vocabulary and using it appropriately in the oral mental starter. They respond quickly and enthusiastically to the questions and can offer good explanations for the strategies they used for their calculations. Good use is being made of ICT to support learning. Pupils are able to create and interpret block graphs. In Year 1 pupils are beginning to formulate simple directional instructions using the terms forwards, backwards, turn, left, right, move "x" squares.
6. Pupils' attainment in science, assessed by their teachers in 2002, is well above the national expectation at level 2 and the higher level 3. Standards of work seen are also above national expectations and show an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are gaining a good understanding of subject specific language, and can talk confidently about the work they have undertaken on growing broad bean seeds. They are also developing a good understanding of the concept of fair testing and relate it to

their work in Year 1 on plant experiments and in Year 2 on forces. Many pupils are able to record well their observations in tabular and diagrammatic form. Progress is good.

7. Pupils' attainment in history and geography are above national expectations. Pupils use their literacy skills well to support their learning in these subjects. In geography and history pupils are developing their geographical and historical knowledge well in their study on Radlett. They use their tabulating skills well and discuss various buildings and their purpose with interest. In religious education pupils' knowledge and understanding of the various aspects of the Locally Agreed Syllabus is above the expected levels. They talk confidently about different religions, artefacts and places of worship. Progress is satisfactory.
8. In information communication technology (ICT) design and technology (DT), physical education (PE), art and design and music, attainment is in line with national expectations. Pupils are developing well their knowledge of computers and how to operate them. Many can use the mouse effectively and know how to "drag" items across the screen. There is some evidence of the use of computers to support the work in literacy and numeracy but overall it is limited by the numbers of computers available for use within the school. In art and design and DT, pupils are not working independently or creatively in many lessons and this prevents them from reaching the higher standards of which many are capable. In physical education many pupils have good body control and awareness of space but in some lessons pupils' skills are not sufficiently developed through direct teaching and pupils are frequently unaware of the correct techniques. In music, pupils are able to sing in tune, memorise words and are developing their ability to use instruments. However, teachers' subject knowledge restricts the development of the curriculum and hinders pupils' progress. In addition, insufficient time to teach these subjects contributes significantly to slower progress. Progress in these subjects is barely satisfactory given the level of attainment on entry to Year 1.
9. There are no significant differences in attainment or progress between boys and girls in any subject.
10. Across the school, pupils with special educational needs make very good progress in their work, especially in literacy and numeracy. They are well supported by the teachers and classroom assistants and their progress is monitored and evaluated effectively by the SENCO.
11. Pupils for whom English is an additional language (EAL) make good progress in the nursery and reception classes and have access all activities. In Years 1 and 2, the older EAL pupils are fluent in English and take a full part in all activities. They reach at least equivalent standards as their monolingual peers by the end of Year 2 and make very good progress.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are all very good. Parents rightly regard these as strengths of the school. The high standards identified in the last report have been sustained. Pupils under five already show mature and positive attitudes. All pupils are keen to attend school and to learn. For example, pupils arriving at school in the morning move quickly and quietly to lessons and settle down immediately to work. They work well together and share equipment and resources. Pupils at morning assembly listen attentively to a story with a strong moral message and they sing hymns in tune, which they clearly know well, with obvious pleasure. Pupils in the nursery, though eager to complete colouring in work sheets, nevertheless stop immediately

when instructed. Pupils with special educational needs respond well to the challenges and the work that matches their needs. These positive attitudes contribute greatly to the pleasant sense of purpose in the school and all pupils enjoy challenging work.

13. At the time of the last inspection behaviour was very good and there was no evidence of bullying or racism. This is still the case and pupils' behaviour is very good and often excellent at almost all times around the school and in lessons. However, in some isolated instances a few pupils tended to misbehave, due to lack of early intervention, where the quality of teaching was less than good and they were not sufficiently challenged. The pupils are both pleasant natured and naturally courteous. Without instruction they hold doors open for visitors, staff and other pupils. They smile readily and greet everyone in a friendly but mannerly and appropriate way. Pupils move around the school in a purposeful but considerate manner. They show respect for all property and deposit litter in bins. The school and the grounds are completely free of litter and graffiti. No pupils have been excluded from the school in the last four years.
14. Personal development and relationships are much as they were at the time of the last inspection. The pupils choose to co-operate with each other and adults and they are tolerant and sensitive to each other's needs. Pupils are naturally inclusive in their relationships and they work and play constructively together. For example, in the nursery pupils advise each other how to complete tasks such as forming letters in shaving cream or assembling alphabet letter shapes. They are socially mature and know how to listen to others, take turns to speak and share opinions. Pupils with special educational needs make similar gains in personal development and relationships. All pupils work confidently and readily seek advice or support from the teachers or other staff where needed. At the end of a lesson, two Year 1 pupils, a boy and a girl, spontaneously hug the teacher and thank her for her help.
15. Pupils in the playground at lunch-time play vigorously but with consideration for others. No child is excluded and many boys and girls play in mixed groups. Pupils happily take part in daily routines such as transferring attendance registers between classrooms and the office or removing litter bins from the play ground. The great majority of pupils arrive in good time for school in the morning. They waste no time in assembling after breaks or in moving around the school between lessons.
16. Attendance is very good and well above the national average. Unauthorised absences are below the average and there were virtually no unauthorised absences during the past year. This reflects the school's vigilance and parents' willing co-operation and contributes much to the pupils' learning and progress.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. Overall, teaching throughout the school is good. Thirty-eight of the forty-eight lessons or parts of lessons (79 per cent) were taught to a good or better standard. Seven lessons (15 per cent) were taught very well. The remaining lessons were taught to a satisfactory standard. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. The scrutiny of pupils' work from last September confirms that the quality of teaching is consistently good.
18. Good teaching was observed in all classes, and very good teaching in four classes. There are slight variations in the quality of teaching between parallel classes. Much of the variations in teaching between the parallel classes can be attributed to teacher subject knowledge or teacher self-confidence. There were examples of satisfactory teaching in six of the seven classes. These lessons tended to be in some of the foundation subjects, for example art, PE, and ICT

19. The quality of teaching has improved since the time of the last inspection when overall, 36 per cent of the teaching was good or better. Teaching in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 was satisfactory. It is now good in both these key stages.
20. The good quality teaching reflects the strong commitment of the teachers and the headteacher to provide good learning opportunities for all pupils, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
21. The teachers are hard working. They are a committed, conscientious team, who support each other well. They are willing to learn from each other and are prepared to share their expertise. They plan together well. Their long-term and short-term planning is detailed. This provides a good basis for improving the quality of teaching and ensuring the pupils are making good progress. As a result pupils are keen to learn, behave well in a variety of situations and quickly develop self-confidence and self-esteem. Teachers have the respect of the parents and, through informal contacts, keep them well informed on the individual progress their child is making. The teachers are very good at involving parents in supporting their children's learning especially in literacy and numeracy.
22. The teaching in the Foundation Stage is consistently good. The adults work closely as a team and their interaction gives the children very good role models for their own personal development. There is a consistency of approach that provides the children with security. This enables them to settle quickly into the school routine and to build their confidence. Very good strategies are in place to develop children's social skills and to develop their ability to concentrate. As a result they work hard and make good progress. Good planning provides children with a wide range of stimulating, interesting and relevant learning activities in all six areas of the curriculum. Practice within the classroom does not reflect the sterile and unimaginative approach that the class timetables suggest. Teachers have good knowledge of the learning needs of the children of this age and activities are well matched to meet their needs. However, systems for recording children's progress are not used consistently. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are gradually introduced to prepare children for their work in Year 1. Basic skills of reading, writing and children's understanding of number are taught very well. Provision for all areas of learning is good, and appropriate use is made of the outdoor play areas and large equipment.
23. Teaching is good overall in Years 1 and 2. Good teaching is evident in most subjects and shows considerable improvement since the last inspection. Teachers generally use questioning strategies effectively and target individual pupils with appropriately differentiated tasks. Thus, all groups of pupils are challenged and make good progress, particularly in literacy and numeracy. The more able are not always challenged sufficiently in music, art and design, DT and PE. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their mother tongue make very good progress. Classroom assistants are well briefed and contribute well during the lessons. However, there are times, particularly at the start and the end of the lessons' when they are not always being used effectively.
24. In the very good lessons, the pupils learn and make good progress. Teachers demonstrate good or better levels of subject knowledge. They identify precisely and share the learning objectives and have a clear structure to the lesson. They maintain a quick pace and challenge all pupils. Teachers manage pupils well and involve them in well-designed tasks.

25. In the satisfactory lessons, the strengths in the teaching outweigh the weaknesses. The strengths listed above are in evidence but to a lesser degree. In the occasional lesson, the learning objective is sometimes confused with the activities, i.e pupils are told what they are going to do, not what they are going to learn. Questioning strategies are not being used effectively to challenge and to deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding of the topic. Insufficient use is made of opportunities to teach pupils specific skills; for example, in a physical education lesson pupils were invited to demonstrate actions, appropriate use was made of praise but there was no evaluation of the movement or teaching points made to improve performance. Other pupils were not given the opportunity to practise what they had observed. As a result, pupils do not make as much progress in these lessons.
26. Teachers use the National Literacy Strategy guidelines well and plan literacy sessions thoroughly. There are examples of very good teaching. For example, a Year 1 teacher, working with the lower ability group, used a glove puppet "Jake the Snake" in an imaginative way to capture and sustain the pupils' interest. The lesson started briskly which enlivened pupils and set the tone for the rest of the session. The balance of the lesson was very good and included opportunities for shared reading and writing, guided reading and individual work. Pupils developed their listening skills well and were eager to follow "Jake's" instructions when forming different letters. The pupils benefited from the teacher's very good subject knowledge and enthusiastic style. Very good questioning provoked reflective thinking on the feelings and expressions of individuals in the story. This made a significant contribution to pupils' personal development. The lesson was conducted with good humour and a desire to improve pupils' literacy skills and love of literature. At the end of the lesson learning objectives were revisited and pupils showed through their sustained activity and written and oral responses that they had made very good progress.
27. The National Numeracy Strategy (NNS) is firmly established with the school and taught confidently. This contributes to the progress pupils make and the well above average standards achieved. The NNS guidance underpins the teaching of numeracy and mathematics. Planning is consistent and improved from the time of the last inspection. Lessons are planned according to the National Numeracy Strategy guidance, start with an oral/mental starter and proceed to direct teaching, group activity and an appropriate plenary. Many younger pupils have opportunities to explain what they are doing or what patterns they recognise in a number sequence. In the oral mental starter good use is made of various strategies suggested in the National Numeracy Strategy including the use of fan/petal cards, dry wipe boards, and response partners. Pupils are encouraged to develop their oracy skills by using mathematical language in discussion and in explaining their reasoning. Sound links are being developed with other subjects and ICT is being used for pupils to record and present data using block graphs.
28. When teaching is very good, lessons begin briskly, engage and challenge all pupils and enable them to explain their particular strategies for solving problems. Work is sufficiently differentiated to challenge the more able and individual support clarifies misconceptions or reinforces understanding.
29. The very good teaching skills the teachers have developed for the delivery of the literacy and numeracy lessons have not been transferred to the teaching of some of the foundation subjects, for example in art and design, PE, and music.
30. Teachers know their pupils well and make good use of assessment in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science to identify and monitor pupils' progress and to plan the next stage of learning. Systems for recording pupil attainment in these

subjects are good. However, the systems for tracking progress in the foundation subjects and pupils' personal development are not as rigorous. There is no common format, teachers record their notes independently and frequently rely on memory.

31. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and appropriate use is made of praise. However, there are very few comments to say how improvements could be made or if additional support has been needed to overcome difficulties. Poor presentation and unsatisfactory handwriting are rarely commented upon. In Year 2, some pupils, experiencing difficulties with their handwriting and letter formation receive little guidance in books other than their handwriting books.
32. Teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good and pupils make very good progress towards their individual targets. Expectations have risen significantly since the time of the last inspection when pupils with special education needs made satisfactory progress. The tasks offered to these pupils are well matched to their level of attainment. The teachers and learning support assistants work together well to ensure appropriate support is offered to individual pupils. Pupils whose mother tongue is not English are well supported by adults in a similar way and make very good progress in Years 1 and 2. Teachers provide additional challenge for the more able and pupils who are identified as gifted and talented, although more challenge could be reasonably expected of some these pupils in many of the foundation subjects.
33. There is a well-established routine for the setting of homework. The homework tends to focus on the development and consolidation of basic literacy and numeracy skills with little or no broadening of pupils' knowledge through researching other subjects. The school provides appropriate guidance for parents to support their child's learning. The work undertaken at home contributes significantly to the progress the pupils make and the overall standards the school achieves.

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

34. The school meets its statutory responsibility to provide the full range of National Curriculum subjects and Religious Education. There is a daily act of collective worship. National recommendations for the Foundation Stage are also met.
35. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is a broad and balanced. Although there is a broad curriculum in Years 1 and 2, the balance is unsatisfactory because too much time is devoted to literacy and numeracy to the detriment of the foundation subjects. There is an over-emphasis on the end of Key Stage national tests and as a result insufficient time is devoted to the teaching of art and design, design and technology, history, geography, music and ICT. Pupils could realistically achieve higher standards in these subjects. All pupils are taught literacy and numeracy at the same times each morning. This rigid timetabling prevents the foundation subjects receiving a more equitable amount of time each week. In turn, the application of literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum is hindered by these arrangements and places some pressure on resources. However, within this arrangement, ability setting within year groups and the alternating of teachers between them have a positive impact on standards. English and mathematic results are very good and these are reflected in the national tests.

36. The improvement since the last inspection is good. Curriculum policies and schemes of work are in place and provide good planning guidance. This was a key issue in the last inspection. The good practice of staff frequently reviewing, and of governors systematically evaluating policies and schemes of work, ensures the curriculum meets the diverse learning needs of all pupils and contributes to pupils with special educational needs making good progress.
37. The provision for pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is good overall. The very good provision for pupils' moral and social development is a significant strength of the school. It contributes to pupils learning confidently together, taking very good responsibility for their own learning whilst being sensitive to the needs of others. Consequently, pupils learn in a positive and productive atmosphere. The provision for pupils' cultural development is good and has improved considerably from the last inspection when it was a key issue for improvement. The provision for spiritual development is satisfactory, as there are insufficient planned opportunities for pupils to reflect on their work.
38. The very good provision for pupils' social development begins from the first day they enter the school so that by the end of Year 2 they are self-assured learners. Teachers and their assistants act as good role models, teaching pupils the importance of developing good relationships based on valuing each other, co-operation, kindness and responsibility. School assemblies emphasise these values, often by actively involving pupils. They gain very good insights into what being a good citizen means. This is achieved, for example, when pupils support their peers. In addition pupils perform in a concert in the autumn term and help organise fund raising activities for 'Red Nose Day' and by raising money for other charities. Pupils are taught to respect the property of others and to use school resources with care, including computers, books and musical instruments. From Year 1, pupils are expected to accept responsibilities; for example, they take turns to be classroom monitors and return attendance registers to the office. In Year 2, they proudly assist in turning music on and off at the beginning and end of assemblies. They are taught the importance of waiting their turn for food at lunch-times and this contributes to this occasion being a pleasant social time when pupils chat happily together. Some very good teaching results in pupils rapidly changing from one activity to another to the count of five, so that little time is wasted.
39. Planning and provision for pupils' moral development are very good. Staff use behaviour management strategies very effectively, with very good use of praise, to ensure pupils behave very well. As soon as pupils join the school they learn the importance of the school's "Golden Rules" that teachers and their assistants apply with expert consistency. In assemblies, pupils are reminded of how to behave. In religious education lessons, pupils learn about the importance of rules that govern behaviour that are so similar in many faiths. In literacy lessons, they learn how the actions of characters in stories affect the feelings and behaviour of other characters. For example, in a Year 2 English lesson pupils learn how the actions of the stepmother of Ye Shen, made her feel sad. During physical education lessons and during time in the playground they learn the importance of fair play. Staff provide very good examples of integrity, honesty, fairness and keeping promises. Teachers and their assistants spend time talking to pupils about the effects that good as well as less desirable behaviour have on others. Pupils know they will be fairly treated and they know the difference between right and wrong.
40. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is sound overall, with some good aspects. For example, high quality teaching of literacy leads to pupils wondering at the

ways poets and authors touch our emotions. A visitor is currently helping Year 1 to experience the joy of working with clay, and in music pupils are beginning to identify the mood of different pieces of music. However, there is scope to plan for further planned spiritual development in these and other subjects. Pupils are reminded of the school's values and aims through teaching, and in the many written notices. Pupils in Year 2 visit both a church and a synagogue and spoke with reverence about these experiences. In literacy, history and geography and religious education lessons, pupils are given some opportunities to learn about beliefs and ways of life different from their own. Teachers value pupils' thoughts and efforts by providing times for pupils to appreciate their own efforts and those of others. All this sound provision ensures pupils learn within a school atmosphere that respects them as individuals, their feelings and their thoughts, so that they all feel special and want to do well.

41. The provision for cultural development is good. Effective planning ensures that pupils learn how people in different parts of the world live. They learn about music from different parts of the globe in assemblies and in lessons. In literacy lessons, pupils improve their skills when reading stories and poems from different cultures and good planning for religious education teaches pupils about faiths different from their own. For example, a Jewish parent visited the school and shared some customs and traditions with pupils. Pupils in Year 2 have visited a synagogue and a church and appreciate the similarities and differences in places of worship of two different faiths. As pupils grow older they have limited opportunities to work alongside artists, and theatre groups that visit the school. There is good potential to develop this further. Teachers are becoming increasingly aware of the cultural and linguistic diversity within the school, and beginning to use a variety of multicultural resources to support pupils' learning, reflecting this diversity in their teaching. This is evident in displays in many classes, but more so in the Nursery, where the whole ethos is multicultural and very welcoming for pupils from all backgrounds. This is helping to raise pupils' self-esteem and an awareness of other cultures, values and beliefs. The provision for cultural development has improved since the last inspection and is enabling pupils to respect and learn from the diversity of cultures that surround them.
42. There are very good strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy skills and these are soundly reinforced in some other subjects. For example, pupils are expected to spell words correctly in accurately punctuated sentences when writing about events in history. In Year 2 geography lessons, pupils write good explanations of their study of China. When pupils do research using books and word-process work on computers they achieve well. However, the use and development of the high level literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects are not promoted sufficiently in other lessons, for example the use of measuring in design and technology
43. Planning for the use of the five computers in the library is sound but the weekly allocation of time for ICT is insufficient. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of ICT has grown recently as they are taught skills which they apply well to reinforce learning when they return to the classroom computer. Opportunities for pupils to consolidate learning, for example, to improve spelling, are being built into the curriculum. There is greater scope for ICT to support progress in other subjects.
44. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and a strength of the school. Inspectors agree with parents that pupils with special educational needs make very good progress. Provision for these pupils is very well organised and planned so that teachers know pupils' individual learning needs well and are able to prepare and deploy teaching assistants very successfully to help them learn. Parents are fully involved in reviewing their children's progress, working in good partnership with the

school to help their children learn. The school works effectively with outside agencies. The high quality provision explains why some of the pupils are removed from the school's special educational needs register during the course of one year.

45. Provision for pupils who learn in English as an additional language is very good. The school's highly inclusive nature ensures that individual needs of pupils are met very well. On a day-to-day basis, teachers are aware of the extent of the pupils' linguistic needs, and use appropriate strategies to meet pupils' specific needs. This helps to ensure equal access to the curriculum. During lessons, additional support from learning support assistants is effective in accessing activities at pupils' levels of need and in gaining confidence, for example, in applying mathematics in shopping contexts, and in practising newly learnt ICT skills.
46. The school makes good use of the community to enrich, improve and support pupils' learning. Parents are actively involved in the life of the school and there are close links with the local church. A parent plays the piano for assembly and singing three times a week. There are plans to increase links with the community in English and art by using local storytellers and artists to work with pupils. Good planning also results in visitors' contributions to school assemblies being followed up to improve learning in religious education lessons.
47. There is sound provision for extra-curricular activities. Pupils' wide learning experiences include a good range of out of school visits, twice yearly fairs organised by the Parent Teacher Friends Association and an Easter Bonnet Parade in Radlett. Year 2 pupils have a well attended lunch-time library club and in the autumn term pupils form an orchestra to support singing in the school play.
48. There are good measures to ensure children settle swiftly and happily into the Nursery class and to make sure Year 2 pupils are well prepared for their next school and that the transition is achieved smoothly. Children visit the Nursery prior to admission and the deputy headteacher from the junior school visits pupils in Year 2.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

49. The school cares well for its pupils. It is a caring school with inclusive ethos. EAL pupils and pupils with special educational needs are integrated well into the school community and are motivated to learn. Relationships are harmonious and all pupils are enthusiastic about coming to the school. The good level of care for pupils, identified in the last inspection report, has been sustained.
50. Procedures for Child Protection are effective and comply with locally agreed guidelines and national requirements. Teachers know the pupils well and work closely with parents to ensure the pupils' educational and welfare needs are met. Parents and pupils agree that St John's is a caring school and teachers and support staff provide very good role models. These are further strengths of the school. The good level of provision has been sustained since the last inspection.
51. There are sound links with the pre-nursery play-group. Induction meetings for nursery children are held and parents are encouraged to stay for a short time during the first few weeks until new pupils feel secure. This ensures the children settle quickly. Home-school agreements provide clear guidelines for parents and pupils. New parents receive a detailed information on procedures and pastoral advice in the prospectus and in the induction booklet. There is a good system for pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 to place their written concerns and worries in a worry box. These concerns are dealt with appropriately by the class teachers. During fun days everybody dresses up, this includes the staff who enter into the spirit of the occasion, and are not afraid to "look silly". Good procedures are in place for pupils moving to the junior school. They have a number of induction visits and meetings with their new teachers.
52. The policies and procedures for health and safety and related matters such as trips out of school or lunch-time supervision are good. Accident and emergency records are well maintained and there are regular health and safety and fire risk inspections and assessments. There is good first aid provision and a dedicated medical room. Approved medications are administered by the midday supervisors and parents are contacted immediately any concerns arise.
53. The school liaises closely with the main junior school by, for example close induction practices for new Year 3 pupils, games and PE facilities are shared, Year 2 pupils use the swimming pool and St John's holds the sports day at the junior school playing fields. Pupils also exchange visits to watch plays in each school.
54. The school places much importance on promoting good attendance. Parents co-operate well with the school and there have been virtually no unauthorised absences during the past year. The manually completed attendance registers are appropriately maintained. Any unexplained absences are rigorously pursued by the school and, where necessary, by the Educational Welfare Worker who liaises closely with the school.
55. Procedures for identifying and supporting pupils with special educational needs are good and meet statutory requirements. All teachers are aware of the SEN Code of Practice and implement it consistently. Individual education plans are of good quality with clear targets for progress.

56. Monitoring and support of pupils' personal development are satisfactory overall. It is good in the nursery and reception year and teachers in all years know the pupils well. However, it is less satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 where monitoring is not imbedded in the curriculum, there is little formal recording and teachers use only informal assessments to report to parents. Pupils are encouraged to enjoy wider experiences and think of others and they generously support pertinent local and national charities. Nursery pupils visit parks and an animal centre. Year 1 pupils go on day trips to zoos and safari parks and Year 2 pupils go on a residential trip. Pupils in the main school walk through the village for the annual Easter bonnet parade which is locally supported. A performance of a school drama has appeared on television.
57. The school's management of behaviour is very good. Rules are positive, simple and well understood by all. Teachers and other staff provide very good role models. In the great majority of lessons teachers' expectations ensure that all pupils enjoy and are fully engaged in their work and only minor sanctions are needed. On the rare occasions where offences are repeated or more serious the headteacher and parents may be involved. There have been no pupils excluded from the school during the past year. There is no evidence of bullying or racism.
58. In Years 1 and 2, the monitoring, support and record keeping systems of pupils' academic performance in English, mathematics and science are good. Teachers have a good knowledge of pupils' attainment in the other subjects but formal systems for recording pupils' attainment and progress in these subjects are not in place. In the nursery and reception classes, teachers know their children well and use this knowledge to plan the work effectively. However, the existing systems for recording and tracking children's academic and personal development are not being used consistently. The school is in the process of reviewing the procedures. There are no agreed systems for tracking children's attainment and progress from the Early Learning Goals into Key Stage 1 of the National Curriculum. In all classes, pupils' progress is reviewed regularly through the teacher's close knowledge of individual pupils. These regular reviews ensure that pupils receive appropriate support. Where concerns arise about a pupil's progress the head teacher and parents are advised. If necessary, the special needs co-ordinator is involved and support from outside specialists, such as educational psychologists, speech and language is obtained.
59. There are good informal procedures for assessing and meeting the needs of EAL pupils. Teachers support any particular language and cultural needs that arise. Teachers for the younger children have sought additional guidance from external agencies, to see how best they could support the EAL children and meet their individual specific needs. They have carried out the initial assessment of needs, but specific targets, for some children, to develop their language have not been set. Procedures for tracking individual progress for EAL pupils are being developed.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

60. The school works well with parents and welcomes opportunities to further increase their involvement in the school. This is a significant improvement from the time of the last inspection.
61. Parents' views of the school are positive. A high percentage of parents, about 60 per cent, responded to the parents' questionnaire. The vast majority of parents agree that pupils like school and make good progress, behaviour is good and the school helps pupils to become mature and responsible. Parents also agree that teaching is good and teachers have high expectations, the school is well led and managed and that they

are comfortable to approach the school with questions or concerns. Parents are less satisfied that there is the right amount of homework or that they are well informed about pupils' progress. They are also less certain that the school works closely with parents or that there is a good range of activities outside lessons. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting expressed high levels of confidence in the headteacher and all the staff. A number of parents would appreciate increased physical education and team games for pupils.

62. Inspectors agree with the parents' positive views. They also find, overall, that homework is set to be increasingly challenging and to meet the pupils' needs in English and mathematics as they move through the school. Activities and experiences outside lessons are satisfactory and include a number of visits, day trips and residential trips. A number of local people such as a policeman, a bricklayer, a traffic warden, and a baker, visit the school to support relevant topics. There are strong connections with the local Anglican churches and visits from representatives of other faiths.
63. The quality of information provided for parents is good overall. Communications such as the prospectus, governors' annual report to parents, termly school journal, regular newsletters and parent information sheets are inclusive, interesting, informative and easy to read. Parents are thanked for their past and current support and are invited to assist in school. Parents are well informed about events in school life such as the Harvest Festival and invited to attend the Easter bonnet parade in the town. Parents' responses to regular questionnaires help to guide decision-making. For example, a recent survey has led staff to devise a "tick report" to go out to parents at the end of Easter term. A significant number of parents attend the governors' annual meeting.
64. Parents are kept reasonably well informed about pupils' progress. There are two parents' evenings each year. There are also numerous opportunities for informal discussions about pupils and easy access to teachers and the headteacher for private discussions. The annual written reports on pupils' annual progress do not always provide a detailed assessment of pupils' achievements or give clear targets for improvements. Parents would appreciate more detailed information on their child's individual progress and further guidance on how to assist with their work. The inspectors agree that the parental requests are reasonable.
65. Individual teachers have regular contacts with EAL pupils' parents on an informal basis and this helps to understand their individual and cultural needs. These informal contacts are also useful in discussing pupils' progress with individual parents. Teachers have been able to use these contacts productively to get additional books, resources and artifacts, in order to support their topics for study, for example, the topics 'Africa' and 'China', which particularly link with art and geography. In the Nursery, the expertise of bilingual parents is used particularly well as an additional resource for teaching and learning.
66. There is a very good partnership with parents of pupils with special educational needs. They are fully informed about termly IEPs and the progress their child is making.
67. Parents' evenings are very well attended and events such as school discos are usually "sold out". Following a flood in the school library, parents helped the teaching assistants to catalogue the new books. Other parents, governors or friends help with hearing pupils read, assisting with art work and design technology or tidying the school grounds. A parent governor with specialist knowledge provides invaluable practical assistance and has donated computer equipment to the school. Pupils receive visits

and talks from a wide range of local people such as a traffic warden or the local librarian.

68. The "Friends of St. John's" is well supported by both parents and the school staff. They organise both social and fund raising events and contribute significantly to the school's resources. Recent purchases include nursery playground equipment, a physical education climbing frame and a shed. At the Annual General Meeting staff led demonstrations on reading, numeracy and school assessment tests. The deputy headteacher of the main junior school gave a talk to parents about Fair Field school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED

69. Leadership and management are sound overall. The headteacher provides good leadership and is supported adequately by the deputy head. The recommendations in the last inspection have been addressed appropriately and the school has continued to make satisfactory progress overall. Outstanding issues relating to the quality of teaching have been concluded satisfactorily. The subject co-ordinators are at least sound and have made a reasonable start at developing their respective roles. The co-ordination of mathematics and special educational needs is very effective, for example the special educational needs co-ordinator provides very good leadership and ensures the needs of individual pupils are fully met. The governing body operates satisfactorily.
70. The headteacher has provided good leadership in that the staff feel valued. They are fully committed to developing their roles and responsibilities and work together well to improve standards. The work of all staff and the standards the school achieves have been recognised by two achievement awards from the Department of Education and Skills.
71. There have been significant improvements in the overall leadership and management of the school since the last inspection. The school is well placed to build on these improvements and has the capacity to improve further.
72. The school's explicit aims to promote high standards and pupils' personal development are achieved. However, it is not clear if the aims have been reviewed and re-confirmed since the time of the last inspection. The existing system for recording children's progress against the Early Learning Goals in the nursery and reception classes is not being used. There are no formalised systems for tracking pupils' personal development or their progress in the foundation subjects in Years 1 and 2. The school's commitment to developing good relationships is evident. The ethos of the school encourages pupils to show respect for each other and to work collaboratively. It is an inclusive school where all pupils, staff and visitors are valued and welcomed. This is reflected in the way the teachers and other staff work together to provide a happy and calm working environment in which the pupils feel secure and enjoy learning. The relationship with governors has improved and is now good. The governors and senior staff are working much more closely together and with less tension. Links with parents have improved and parents now play a much more active and informed role in supporting their child's learning. All members of staff have a very high commitment to ensure the school succeeds.
73. The headteacher is an effective manager. The teachers are deployed well. They work effectively in their year groups to plan the lessons and teach the pupils. Job descriptions are sound and realistic and have been reviewed recently. The job descriptions provide a clear outline for the development of teachers and co-ordinators.

The office staff provide good support to the headteacher and contribute much to the smooth running of the school.

74. The school has good systems in place for monitoring the development of teaching. Teachers' detailed planning is monitored satisfactorily by the headteacher and deputy head. The headteacher, the deputy headteacher and other staff undertake lesson observations but as yet little use is made of the evaluations to further improve the quality of teaching. The management and provision for pupils with special educational needs are very good. Most pupils' special educational needs are identified at an early stage and outside agencies contacted should this be necessary. The SENCO has a clear view of her role and provides effective co-ordination for special educational needs.
75. Provision is good for pupils with English as an additional language. The school acknowledges the different languages that are spoken at home, in addition to English. However, there is no written policy to guide new teachers in assessing and meeting the language specific needs of EAL pupils at the earlier stages of learning English.
76. Performance management is in place and appropriate procedures are followed at all stages. The targets set are realistic and contribute to the continued raising of standards in the core subjects.
77. The school development plan is broadly satisfactory, it has flaws, but forms a sound basis for further development. The strategies the school has adopted to review and record previous achievements and the involvement of staff and governors to identify future priorities are very good. As a result, the priorities are appropriate to needs of the school. However, the plan lacks clarity, the success criteria, monitoring and evaluation have been subsumed into one column. Some of the success criteria do not link directly to the activity, there is a lack of quantifiable targets, and there are no indications as to who will be responsible for monitoring and evaluating each action. Costs in some cases have not been linked to specific budget headings.
78. The school has set non-statutory, challenging targets in reading, writing and mathematics for 2003.
79. The governing body operates satisfactorily and fulfils statutory requirements. Sound systems are in place to hold the school to account. The Chair and Vice-Chair of Governors have a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development within the school. The governing body has responded positively to the latest LEA financial audit and acted quickly to address the recommendations. The degree to which the full governing body holds the school to account is not evident in the minutes of their meetings. Decisions reached by the governors are not always recorded, for example in the adoption of various policy statements. The governing body receives reports from subject co-ordinators in rotation. This is effective in ensuring that the governors are kept up to date on developments within the school.
80. There is a sound committee structure in place. Committees meet regularly and have clear terms of reference. The governing body has identified governors to be named officers, for example for literacy, numeracy, special educational needs, and health and safety. However, the allocation of the responsibilities of literacy governor to the deputy head, who is also the literacy co-ordinator; and the responsibilities for Special Education Needs to a governor who is employed at the school as a teaching assistant, line managed by the SENCO, supporting special education needs are inappropriate. The special needs governor is familiar with the details of support provided by the school but is unsure of her role and does not act as a critical friend. It is difficult for these

governors to challenge and hold the school to account because of their respective positions in the school.

81. Financial resources are used well, and the allocation of money to the different budgets is appropriate. The governing body is involved in strategic financial planning. The Resources Committee monitor financial expenditure carefully. Prudent financial control over the last few years has enabled the governing body to allocate sufficient funding for the much needed building development. Good use is made of opportunities to find additional funding to support this initiative, for example the request for a grant from the diocese and from the PTA. Day-to-day administration and control of the school's spending are good. There are clearly defined levels of delegation of authority and accountability for expenditure. Funds including those allocated for pupils with special educational needs are appropriately used. All aspects of best value are considered satisfactorily.
82. Good use is made of new technology to support the management of the school. This area is being developed and given appropriate priority in the school. A member of the governing body regularly visits the school and provides valuable assistance with the maintenance of the systems.
83. The teachers are appropriately qualified and in sufficient numbers to meet the needs of the school. There are good arrangements for the induction of teachers newly appointed to the school. Overall the match of the teachers and the support staff to meet the needs of the curriculum is good. However, none of the staff has a musical background and appropriate support is provided by the local authority advisory service. ICT is being co-ordinated by a member of the administrative staff who does not have a teaching background.
84. The interior of the building and the grounds are well maintained and provide a satisfactory level of accommodation for the number of pupils. The school uses the existing space well. The classrooms and circulation spaces are clean and the learning environment is enhanced by good displays of pupils' work. There is satisfactory amount of space for storage of equipment and resources. The recent improvements to the library to include a dedicated, small computer suite enhances the accommodation and opportunities for learning well. A room for special educational needs and reading is under construction. The grounds provide a pleasing setting with shrubbery, grass and small trees and good use is made of defined areas for nature studies and gardening. There are suitable outdoor seating facilities and good resources for adventure play. However, the space in the playground is rather limited; there are no substantial grassed areas and there is little shelter for pupils from the sun.
85. Teaching resources are satisfactory. Provision in the nursery is good. Resources in the school are adequate. The number of computers is barely adequate to ensure all pupils have reasonable access. There are a good number of relatively new fiction books and there are sound plans to buy additional books and story tapes in other languages, in order to help promote the language development of EAL pupils. However, some reference and reading scheme books are rather dated and well overdue for replacement.
86. Taking into account the context of the school, pupil's attainment on entry, its overall effectiveness and the good quality of education it offers, the school provides good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to raise standards further the headteacher and the governing body should:

Key issues

- (1) Plan a better balance to the curriculum by:
 - reducing the time allocated to literacy and literacy associated activities to the national averages and redirecting this time to teaching the foundation subjects;
 - increasing opportunities for developing literacy and numeracy skills through the foundation subjects;
 - ensuring the timetabling of subjects presents pupils with a different sequence and duration of lessons, particularly in the morning sessions.

(Paragraph numbers: 4, 8, 35, 42, 43, 134, 141, 144, 145, 146, 151, 154 and 155)

- (2) Improve procedures for assessing, recording and tracking pupils' academic progress and personal development by:
 - ensuring consistent recording of progress amongst all staff in the Foundation Stage;
 - strengthening links between the Foundation Stage and Key stage 1 in the transfer of information;
 - ensuring a more consistent approach amongst all Key Stage 1 staff to foundation subjects, art and design, DT, ICT, history, geography, music, PE, and RE;
 - improving the quality of teachers' marking of pupils' work.

(Paragraph numbers: 22, 30, 31, 56, 58, 59, 72, 91, 138, 145, 150, 154, 170, 179 and 184)

Minor issues

1. Improve the quality of the written annual reports to parents on their child's attainment and progress.
(Paragraph numbers 64 and 91)
2. Review and monitor the quality of the governing body minutes to ensure they reflect the rigor of the meetings and record the decisions made.
(Paragraph number 79)
3. Reconsider the responsibilities allocated to some governors to avoid a conflict of interest.
(Paragraph number 79)
4. Improve the effectiveness of curriculum co-ordinators, particularly in art and design, design and technology, physical education and music.
(Paragraph numbers: 18, 38, 74, 86, 117, 132 and 138)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	48
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	0	7	31	10	0	0	0
Percentage	0	15	64	21	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y 2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	25	174
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	12

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y 2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	3	8

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	24
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	15

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.3
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

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

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	24	24	24
	Girls	25	25	25
	Total	49	49	49
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (98)	100 (98)	100 (97)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	24	24	24
	Girls	25	25	25
	Total	49	49	49
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (98)	100 (98)	100 (98)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

Ethnic background of pupils***Exclusions in the last school year***

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	52	0	0
White – Irish	2	0	0
White – any other White background	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	4	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	5	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	1	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	2	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	49	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)	7.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24
Average class size	30

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	122

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	37
Number of pupils per FTE adult	25

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001-2002
----------------	-----------

	£
Total income	471,525
Total expenditure	454,969
Expenditure per pupil	2,514
Balance brought forward from previous year	34,108
Balance carried forward to next year	50,664

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	224
Number of questionnaires returned	128

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongl y agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagre e	Strongl y disagre e	Don't know
My child likes school.	71	27	1	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	64	30	5	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	67	31	1	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	39	43	5	2	12
The teaching is good.	77	19	4	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	40	38	17	5	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	58	33	5	4	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	73	23	3	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	45	37	11	6	2
The school is well led and managed.	64	32	2	1	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	63	32	2	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	40	44	4	2	10

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

87. Currently, the nursery has 49 part-time children on roll, of these 24 younger children attend the morning session and the other 25 older children attend the afternoon session. Children join the two reception classes on a full-time basis in September at the beginning of the school year in which they are five. Most of the children from the nursery transfer to one of the two reception classes depending on their age, whether rising fives or just turned four. Admissions are staggered in both the nursery and in reception classes, which helps with the settling in process. The transition arrangements are good. Useful guidance is available to the parents about the admission arrangements and the early years' curriculum.
88. There is good improvement in the provision for children in the Foundation Stage since the last inspection. A written policy has been achieved which is useful for providing information for parents and guidance for new staff. All children now have the benefit of attending the nursery on a part-time basis before starting their full-time education in reception classes. This is a new development, which did not exist at the time of last inspection. The provision overall is good for children both in the nursery and in the two reception classes and provides a good foundation for children for their future work. Activities are well organised in all areas of learning and are linked to the Early Learning Goals. Children remain focused and work and play within a purposeful learning atmosphere. Both the nursery and the reception classes have easy access to their separate outdoor areas and equipment for regular work and play. The full potential of outdoor play is not yet realised. To develop the outside environment as learning resource for all children is an identified priority for the school.
89. Co-ordination of the provision is satisfactory overall. There is an action plan, highlighting training needs for staff in the early years, to ensure appropriate provision is made for the younger children. New and temporary teachers are given appropriate support.
90. Attainment on entry to the reception classes is generally above that expected nationally for children of this age. This is particularly noticeable in the children's literacy skills and in their personal and social skills. By the end of the Reception Year, most children achieve the Early Learning Goals in all six areas of learning, and many achieve the early levels of the National Curriculum. Progress is good for all children in all of the areas of learning, including those learning English as an additional language. The early identification of needs for children with special educational needs and the very good care arrangements lead to these children making very good progress from their starting points.
91. Teaching and learning overall are at least good and often better, both in the nursery and in the two reception classes. The planning is very good and shared well between all adults involved in working with children, and based on the recognised principles of good practice in early years. While planning, teachers take into account the children's ages,

abilities and individual needs. There is a good balance between directed activities and child-initiated activities. There are good opportunities for learning from outdoor play, particularly for children in the nursery. Activities are suitably adjusted for children in the reception classes, where literacy and numeracy lessons are well organised and in line with rest of the school. Children are fully attentive and respond very well to the full length of the literacy and numeracy sessions in the reception classes. Ongoing assessment is good, so the teachers know how well the children are learning through the planned activities, and what they need to learn next. Teachers ensure that all children take a full part in all the activities. However, due to the recent changes in staffing, the existing procedures for recording children's progress are not in use. The school is in a transition stage and in the process of reviewing these. At present, there is a lack of consistency between teachers' methods of tracking pupil progress in all the six areas of learning and in linking these to the Stepping-Stones, Early Learning Goals and the National Curriculum. Children's annual reports to the parents lack sufficient detail in the areas of learning, particularly reports for children in the reception classes. Support for children with English as an additional language is good. Individual children are discussed in detail. Appropriate strategies and resources are identified to help them to increase their use of language and gain confidence in accessing activities. Support for children with special educational needs is very effective in meeting their needs. The strong partnership with parents, particularly in the nursery, benefits the development of children's language and learning.

Personal, social and emotional development

92. Teaching and learning to promote personal, social and emotional development are good. Children make very good progress in the nursery because of the very good teaching in this area. Adults provide very good role models. Morals and manners are reinforced throughout the day. Children are motivated to learn and are encouraged to develop their social skills through the established daily routines in the nursery. Through group activities, such as the snack times and registration times, they learn to share and wait for their turns, or listen to others and speak in turns. They learn to make choices and remain engaged in their chosen activities for some time. By the time they enter the reception classes, children are comfortable in the school environment and well involved in activities. In reception classes, they build up good levels of concentration and self-esteem and they co-operate very well during whole class activities. Children learn their 'golden rules' in class and learn to play games fairly. They are polite and display good manners. Through 'circle time' games, they are encouraged to develop listening and speaking skills, and to be aware of their surroundings and of other people.
93. Good opportunities are provided so that children become aware of other cultures, languages, food and traditions, particularly in the nursery. Festivals are celebrated from different cultures and food and clothes from other cultures are tried on special days. Parents are involved in the celebration of festivals and make valuable contributions as a teaching resource. The school's multicultural ethos helps to promote children's understanding that people have different needs, views and beliefs, and that these must be respected.

Communication, language and literacy

94. Teaching and learning are consistently good in developing language and literacy. Teachers place a high emphasis on developing children's vocabulary and their levels of fluency through carefully planned work. Teaching is well organised with a good variety of tasks and resources, to challenge the children. Activities are appropriate for their ages and abilities. Teachers use support staff well to help with the group work and to

support individuals. Time and resources are used effectively, and there are opportunities for independent work. During the day, teachers use every opportunity that is available to promote children's language and literacy. The good team approach ensures that good language use is constantly modelled and children's vocabulary extended. Support and encouragement are good for children learning English as an additional language. Progress is good overall.

95. Story times are carefully planned and children develop good interest in listening to stories. There is regular practice of taking books home to read and share with their parents. Children use a variety of cues to read their books. There is a good dialogue between the parents and teachers with regard to children's progress in reading, and considering strategies for improvement. Children experience elements of the National Literacy Strategy. Shared reading time is used well to read stories from the big book and to consolidate children's knowledge of linking letters and sounds. Children are fully involved and offer words with similar sound patterns. Many are aware of word beginnings and word endings. Imaginative approaches are used for learning letter names, sounds and corresponding words.
96. Writing areas are useful in inviting children to write their names, make marks in their own books and for teachers to scribe. In one reception class, the writing area is more successful as a result of linking writing with geography. For example, the area invites children to write letters or postcards to their friends using real stamps and children's real addresses. Children use a capital letter at the start of their name. Some are beginning to use a capital letter and a full stop accurately in a simple sentence, using spelling phonetically. Children's handwriting is generally neat and the letters and words are formed correctly. Children practise writing letters on a regular basis.
97. Children have opportunities to use a tape recorder and headphones for independent or group work. However, in one reception class, the tape recorder is currently out of use needing replacement. The computers are used well to support children's learning. Children learn to use key words to label and to classify objects. They learn to use word banks to assemble sentences. A high proportion of the children are likely to reach and exceed the expected levels in communication, language and literacy.

Mathematical development

98. Teaching and learning in this area are particularly good and most children exceed the expected goals for mathematics. In the nursery, children learn to count to ten in a variety of contexts and many count beyond this, and have the knowledge of numbers to ten. Routine activities support children well in their counting and number recognition. They learn about colours and shapes and make repeating patterns on their pegboards. Some are able to use two or three colours accurately while threading beads to make their necklace. Using cards, they sort Compare bears into size and colours. 'Smarties Day Maths' was particularly useful in sorting and pattern making, and for the children to understand the idea of sorting by colour or by size.
99. In the reception classes, children use number lines well to count to 20 or beyond as part of their daily activities, and learn to order numerals to 20. The sequencing of numbers is taught very well and children learn their correct order. They use appropriate vocabulary to describe the position of numbers on a number line, for example, 'before', 'after', 'next to' and 'between'. They learn to sequence the events of the day. They understand mathematical ideas, such as 'one less than' and 'one more than'. Practical addition and subtraction are taught well using oral methods and concrete apparatus. Children use three-dimensional shapes in their play, match these

to real objects and make models using re-cycled materials. They label shapes and learn to describe their properties. They learn to form numbers accurately, one to five, and draw matching pictures. They are able to compare two lengths and weights and use terms, such as 'shorter than', 'longer than' or 'heavier' and 'lighter'. Through comparing their heights and weights teachers help to develop mathematical language.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

100. Teaching and learning are very good overall in promoting knowledge and understanding of the world. Progress in this area is very good for all age groups. Children are introduced to a wide range of things from the natural and made world. Natural materials, such as sand and water are constantly in use. Children use pliable materials to manipulate, feel and mould it into shapes. They learn to use simple tools safely and appropriately. Through role-play, children in the nursery learn about how the Doctor's surgery operates. Children are encouraged to bring their photographs and look at the changes in growth from when they were babies. They have special walks in the garden to look for the early signs of spring. Children make full use of their senses through planned activities and experiences. For example, they use bark rubbings to make the tree trunk and scrunched tissue papers to make the blossom on the tree. They talk about Christian traditions during Easter and learn about what some Spanish people eat on Fridays during Easter. They taste special food like 'torrijas' cooked by a parent and give their responses about how it tastes. They are developing a sound awareness of the variety of foods other people eat.
101. In the reception classes, children have organised walks in the school garden to see how the change in the nature is ongoing. Through taking photographs and comparing these, they become more aware of the subtle changes in the nature. They label parts of a plant and observe fruits and seeds. Learning about the life cycles of a butterfly and of a frog helps to develop a good understanding of the idea of growth in animals. Through focused geography lessons, they become aware of different places - hot and cold countries - and of animals that are more suited to a specific climate. They have discussions and they listen to teachers reading information books about countries and climates, and share their experiences from travelling abroad. Through carefully asked questions, teachers help to extend their thinking. An invited parent came to talk about Australia, its climate and animals, and this was particularly useful in making the children's learning more relevant.
102. Children use information technology to support their learning. They learn to move the mouse accurately to drag and click on icons. In the nursery children use 'paint' program to draw pictures using, for example, shades of green, and in the process become familiar with the different tools. With the help of an adult, they move the mouse to draw, change or erase their pictures. Children in reception classes confidently 'dress the teddy bear' or Goldilocks by following simple instructions, and learn to move the ladybirds with a number of spots in a desired direction by controlling the mouse. Many children are likely to reach the expected levels by the end of the Reception Year.

Physical development

103. Teaching and learning of physical development are good and there is good progress made. Children in the nursery move confidently and imaginatively, matching their movements to the taped music they listen to, showing a good awareness of space and of others. They are good at imitating the teacher's movements, for example, of a growing plant in season of spring. They respond appropriately to slow and fast music,

and higher attaining children do controlled skipping., There is a good level of independence in dressing and changing, and children observe the familiar 'traffic light rules'. Activities, such as manipulating the play dough, cutting, sewing and threading are helping to develop fine motor skills.

104. Children in the reception classes have access to outdoor climbing and balancing activities, especially when the weather conditions are good. They use a range of equipment, including bikes and scooters. They have access to planned physical education lessons in the hall, where they use small and large apparatus. Children are learning to use equipment with confidence and they learn to balance objects, for example, beanbags on their heads or a ball on a racket. They are learning to throw and catch with increasing skill, for example, using beanbags and sponge balls. The teachers' planning and evaluations indicate that children are encouraged to listen carefully to their instructions and they respond appropriately to the tapes that are used. In classroom, they build and construct with a variety of construction toys, malleable materials and use tools safely, with good control. While making their clay eggs, children describe what they think about the clay and learn how to look after wet clay. Most children are likely to reach the expected standards in their physical development and some exceed these.

Creative development

105. Teaching and learning are good, leading to children achieving well. Children in the nursery access a variety of creative activities, which are well organised and enjoy a good range of media. to use. Children select what they want to make and enjoy the process. They draw, paint, colour and stick to make pictures and cards for different occasions using a variety of textured papers and materials. They listen carefully to instructions for decorating Easter eggs and try making their patterns. Children have made their self-portraits, using coloured chalks and paints. They have access to role-play areas, such as the 'St. John Medical Centre', which helps them to use their imagination well and become aware of the different roles of people involved in a medical surgery.
106. In the reception classes, children are given good opportunities to use a variety of materials and tools to make two- and three-dimensional pictures and models, and they enjoy these experiences. They make observational drawings and learn new techniques of making models, such as papiermache pots. During the inspection, children made clay eggs and designed patterns, which were transferred later on their clay eggs. Children made attractive collages of Africa and Iceland for their classroom displays, linking work to their topic of animals from cold or hot countries. There are good opportunities to use imagination in dance. Children listen to the recorded music and use their imagination in imitating animal sounds and movements. They match movements to music, using a small range of percussion instruments available, and enjoy singing songs and clapping with rhythm. They learn to control the pitch of their voice and begin to recognise the difference in notation. Children use the role-play areas, such as the 'veterinary surgery' well to dress up and rehearse different roles. In a reception class they used the 'garden centre' to plant seeds and to sell the plants, flowers, fruit and vegetables, using a till. This provided them with very good opportunities to express themselves using the appropriate language.

ENGLISH

107. The Year 2, 2002 national test results show that the proportion of pupils reaching and exceeding national expectations was:

- *well above* the national average for **reading** and
- *well above* that of similar schools nationally;
- *very high* in comparison with the national average for **writing** and
- *very high* in comparison with that of similar schools across the country.

108. The high standards in reading have been maintained and standards in writing have improved and been maintained since the last inspection in 1998, representing good improvements in writing and satisfactory improvements in reading. Overall pupils are in line to achieve similar results this year.

109. Inspection evidence shows:

- attainment in English is very high;
- speaking and listening skills are very high; many pupils use a very good range of vocabulary, including subject specific language;
- very high standards in reading;
- writing standards are high and helps to raise standards in some other subjects, for example, history, geography and religious education;
- handwriting skills are satisfactory;
- pupils with special educational needs make very good progress;
- pupils who learn in English as an additional language make very good progress.

There are no significant differences in learning between boys and girls, between pupils from different ethnic backgrounds, between pupils with special educational needs or between those who need support to learn in English.

110. Teaching is good overall. The quality of teaching is never less than satisfactory, often good and sometimes very good. This is a similar finding to the last inspection. The good balance between listening, speaking, reading and writing activities promotes good progress in each strand of the curriculum. Teachers use their good subject knowledge to plan very well as a team. From Reception, well-planned lessons interest and sometimes inspire pupils so that by Year 2, pupils achieve well, especially when learning objectives are shared with the pupils. The good teaching of small pupil groups throughout the school extends pupils' literacy and social skills. Additional good support promotes progress, especially for lower attaining pupils. Literacy skills are reinforced in some other lessons. In Years 1 and 2, there is an inconsistency in the teachers' expectation of neat handwriting and careful presentation. Consequently, some pupils do not take enough pride in their work; as a result it is not as neat and well organised as it could be. Marking of pupils' work is up to date but does not consistently give clear advice on how to improve.

111. Teachers have good behaviour management skills that encourage pupils to sustain concentration and work hard all the time. Pupils respond well to praise and are taught why good behaviour is important. Effective use is made of texts to discuss how the actions of characters affect the feelings and influence the behaviour of other characters. This very effective feature of literacy teaching throughout the school contributes greatly to pupils' very good moral and sound spiritual development.

112. By the end of Year 2, writing standards are above the national average. Generous time allocation, ability setting and effective teaching contribute significantly to pupils' eagerness to learn and their good achievements. Spelling is taught well. Pupils learn spellings for homework and this contributes to their good progress. By Year 2 high and average attaining pupils spell common two-and three-syllable words well with low attaining pupils making good progress. Punctuation is also taught well, and reinforced in other lessons, for example when pupils write good descriptions about China in a Year 2 geography lesson. Good teaching of language means that by Year 2 pupils know and use adjectives and adverbs and write extended sentences, for example, a pupil of average ability wrote of the wolf in Red Riding Hood, 'I think the wolf looks terrifying because he's got sharp teeth'. In Year 1, high attaining pupils easily write to communicate with the reader and in Year 2 they all enjoy writing their own 'Just So' stories. High attaining pupils write colourful descriptions: for example, 'The little one was shy, polite, kind and loyal'. A regular time is set aside for pupils to improve their handwriting and pupils make satisfactory progress. However, teachers do not consistently make sure that pupils apply their skills when writing in other lessons.
113. By Year 2, reading standards are well above the national average and many pupils enjoy reading books on their own. From the Reception class very good foundations for reading are laid. In Year 2 many are proficient readers, explaining what they have read and offering opinions about plot and character with reference to the text. Teachers and other staff read with and to pupils, talking about and explaining text to the whole class and also in small groups. Pupils frequently take books home to read and teachers and parents comment on learning through a reading record book. Teachers' enthusiasm for reading, and their skilful reading aloud, bring characters, events and feelings alive when using 'Big Books' in Year 1 and studying challenging texts in Years 2. The importance the school places on reading, and the teachers' planning systematically improves reading skills as pupils grow older, and contribute to very good maintained standards by the end of Year 2.
114. Whilst standards of reading are very high, many books used for reading are unsuitable and out of date. The remaining books are sufficient in number and range to meet the needs of pupils of all abilities. The school library makes a valuable contribution to the curriculum. The library is timetabled for use so that pupils develop research and study skills and Year 2 pupils have a good weekly lunch-time club that is well attended, enjoyed and valued by pupils. The satisfactory range of books in the library interests and challenges pupils of different abilities. Some of the books are rather worn and will soon need to be replaced. Satisfactory use is made of the computers, housed in the library, and class computers as word processors to support literacy, as pupils redraft their work and add computer generated graphics.
115. Pupils enter Year 1 with good speaking and listening skills. These skills are systematically developed so that by the end of Year 2 many pupils have very high levels of communication. One of the reasons why pupils' social development is so good is because pupils learn the importance of listening to value what is said, no matter who is speaking. Many high attaining and average attaining pupils respond to questions in sentences and are good at using words and phrases to build upon the ideas of others and to explain their learning. Other pupils make good progress. Where the teaching is at its best, teachers allow time for pupils to think quietly and spend time ensuring pupils extend their use of vocabulary in spoken sentences. This was seen in a Year 2 lesson when pupils of lower ability studied similarities and differences between two texts. With encouragement they searched for evidence in the text, organised their thoughts and shared the information, before writing it down.

116. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs make very good progress. This is because the highly effective support these pupils receive is based upon teachers' very full knowledge of their individual learning needs and teaching assistants are well briefed and well deployed when working directly with pupils. A strong feature of teaching is planning that ensures all pupils are fully included in lessons. Pupils with EAL make very good progress in Years 1 and 2. The school makes good use of stories and text from different cultures to help all pupils learn about the multicultural and multi-faith nature of society.
117. Subject leadership and management are sound. Midterm plans and teaching are monitored but are not evaluated sufficiently rigorously in order to improve teaching. Pupils' progress and attainment are assessed well and the information is used appropriately to inform future planning. Teaching assistants contribute appropriately to the assessment of pupils' learning and share the information with class teachers. Resources are adequate and well managed but not consistently evaluated for their effectiveness.

MATHEMATICS

118. Standards in mathematics are consistently well above the national average by the end of Year 2, and also in relation to similar schools. The results in the national tests at the end of Year 2 are well above average, and this has been the picture throughout the last four years. Most pupils meet the required National Curriculum levels for their age and a high percentage exceeds them. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection, indicating that the school has kept pace with national developments in the subject. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make very good progress over time, including the few pupils who speak English as an additional language. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well in the long term, because of the quality additional support they get from teachers and support assistants. In the lessons seen, progress for all pupils was generally very good. There is no significant difference between the achievement of girls and boys and pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds. Pupils achieve very well in all aspects of mathematics, except in problem-solving situations, where there is some scope for improvement, and where pupils need to apply higher order thinking and decision-making skills. There are insufficient opportunities for independent investigations. This hinders higher attaining pupils in achieving even better results.
119. Most pupils in Year 2 add and subtract numbers to 100 accurately, often using a number line to make their calculations. Higher-attaining pupils explore quick ways of adding and subtracting, such as by rounding numbers to the nearest 10, and by doubling or halving numbers. They have a secure understanding of the place value of numbers to 1000. Most pupils are able to apply their knowledge of numbers in solving 'money-problems', using £1 to £3 or more, and ordering different amounts. More able pupils are able to select the minimum number of coins to make a given amount for their shopping. They have a good understanding of two-three-four-and five-times tables, and use table facts to multiply and divide. Most have a good knowledge of the patterns within the number systems. Pupils recognise, label and describe accurately the common two- and three-dimensional shapes. They weigh and measure classroom objects and many use grams and centimetres accurately. Pupils in Year 1 are developing a good understanding of place value of digits to 100 and use partitioning methods to show this. They understand how the numbers increase by ten on a 100 grid. More able pupils add two amounts to 99 pence in shopping context, and exchange coins that add up to 10 pence. Pupils use the computer well to play simple games, involving instructions for movement. More able pupils devise own instructions to make a computer image reach a desired place.

120. Pupils enjoy the challenge that is provided through mathematics lessons. Attitudes and behaviour remain very good throughout the lesson. Pupils make effective use of the time and resources and work well on their own and with others in a group. This helps promote and develop pupils' social and moral development. Pupils are prepared to use different approaches to solving problems, and recording results. They are willing to explain methods they have used.
121. Teaching and learning are good in mathematics, often very good. There is much improvement in the quality of teaching and learning since the last inspection, and this has affected the level of progress pupils of all abilities make.
122. The main strengths in teaching and learning are:
- clear instructions and demonstrations, using a variety of methods and a good range of resources, which ensure that pupils understand what is being taught and take a keen interest in their learning;
 - the planning and preparation are very good; the work is very well differentiated to match the different needs of the pupils; the extension work for the more able pupils and the modified work for the lower attaining pupils ensure that pupils' needs are fully met - showing also the very good knowledge teachers have of their pupils through ongoing assessment;
 - the high levels of challenge and expectations by teachers - demonstrated through a good use of questions - resulting in pupils trying their best to rise to the challenge, a good pace of work and a high level of productivity;
 - the consistent use of homework to consolidate classroom work;
 - the ability grouping in the school is effective and successful in ensuring pupils reach their full potential.
123. Minor weaknesses in teaching are:
- unfavourable seating arrangements in a class with a large group of pupils, set by ability, which makes it difficult at times for the teacher to circulate and provide help where it is most needed;
 - resources not chosen sufficiently carefully at times to aid the learning of lower-attaining pupils or pupils with special educational needs.
124. The National Numeracy Strategy is well embedded in the lessons; shared planning in Year groups ensures consistency in practice across the school. The three-part lesson structure is managed very well and there is effective use of time. The introductory sessions include good demonstrations by the teachers and a high level of involvement of pupils in mental and oral calculations. Teachers and pupils make good use of resources to re-enforce learning. Lessons are concluded well, with good opportunities for pupils to show what they have learnt through the lesson and for teachers to evaluate how successful their teaching methods are.
125. Standards in numeracy are good throughout. Pupils use number skills well in other subjects. Examples of this were available in subjects such as history, geography and science. Mathematics supports well the development of literacy skills, including subject-specific vocabulary such as words describing positions or directions. There is sound use of information and communication technology to support learning. This is particularly useful in consolidating pupils' knowledge of the number systems, discovering shapes and space, and in looking at different ways of presenting data. The computer is beginning to be used increasingly as daily part of lessons.

126. Mathematics is well led and managed by an experienced co-ordinator. The monitoring of teaching and learning through direct classroom observation is effective in identifying areas where more support is needed for staff. Results are analysed on a regular basis and pupil progress carefully monitored. Strengths and weaknesses are noted in pupils' responses, with a view to informing whole-school planning. There is a clear view of how the subject should develop further. The curriculum is comprehensive and well balanced. Teachers make a judicious use of commercial schemes to support their own plans. Procedures for assessment are good and suited to the school - leading to the high standards pupils generally achieve. The practice of homework and regular testing are proving useful in informing pupils, parents and teachers, of how well the pupils are doing. This is also useful in identifying which pupils need additional support so that targets for improvement can be set. The whole-school project - 'The Smarties Investigations' - is highly successful in involving pupils of all ages, including the youngest pupils in the Nursery; thus, stimulating pupils' interests and creating a good learning ethos through colourful displays of the pupils' work throughout the school.

SCIENCE

127. In 2002, teachers assessed the standards at the end of Year 2 to be well above the National average and those achieved in similar schools. The standards the school achieves by the end of Year 2 have improved steadily since the last inspection.
128. During this inspection, the standards in the current Year 2, were found to be above average with most pupils achieving Level 2, the nationally expected level, and about a third of the pupils were working at the higher Level 3. All pupils, including pupils with special educational needs, those with English as an additional language and the more able, make good and sometimes very good progress in developing their knowledge and understanding in science. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls and the standards they achieve.
129. In Year 1, pupils are able to identify the names of different parts of a plant. They know that the root grows underground and provides nourishment for the plant. They can name the stem, leaves and petals. They know that a plant needs light, water, air and food to sustain its growth. They observe broad bean seeds growing in different mediums and are able to compare and contrast the results. They can identify which plant has grown the most and offer suggestions as to why this is the case. Pupils are developing a good understanding of the concept of fair testing. They are curious to find out what will happen when a plant is deprived of light and understand the importance of having a similar plant growing in the light to enable comparisons to be made. Pupils are able to sort and group different materials, for example metals, wood, plastics and fabrics, and suggest the most appropriate materials for different purposes.
130. In Year 2, pupils are consolidating their understanding of the concept of fair testing and use this knowledge when carrying out experiments on forces. In one lesson, pupils working in groups of three, predicted which items could be moved by blowing. They understood that the number of pupils blowing must be the same for each test and that the strength of the blow must be similar. They worked collaboratively to undertake experiments and to record their observations and the results. In their work, they use tables and diagrams effectively; for example, the method of recording their work on healthy eating was good. Many pupils use subject specific language well and can talk knowledgeably about the different foods. They have a basic knowledge of the human skeleton and know the names of different parts of the body and they can identify them on the diagrams.

131. Much of the teaching is good and occasionally very good. Teachers have high expectations. They use questioning strategies effectively to challenge, develop and consolidate the pupils' thinking and knowledge. They encourage the pupils to think and record their work in a scientific manner and place a strong emphasis on developing pupils' scientific language. The lessons are well planned and structured. Good use is made of different approaches to the practical work. Tasks are generally set for different ability groups, but on the occasions when all pupils are given the same task, mixed ability groups are created and frequently the most able pupil in the group is given the task of acting as group scribe. These strategies ensure that the pupils sustain their interest in the work, and make good progress. As a result, pupils behave well, are attentive, work with sustained concentration and treat the equipment with respect. Many of the activities promote pupils' social development.
132. The co-ordinator provides sound leadership and management for the subject. The co-ordination role has only recently been undertaken and is being developed satisfactorily. The co-ordinator has a good understanding of the responsibilities of the role and has begun monitoring planning, undertaking the scrutiny of pupils' work and lesson observations. However, the findings have not been analysed and shared with colleagues in a way which challenges the way teachers teach and the progress pupils make. The science policy is sound and has been presented to the governing body. It is not clear from the documentation what is the status of the policy. The co-ordinator does not hold a budget. Any requests for additional resources are made to the headteacher and are usually agreed. The quality and amount of resources are adequate to meet the needs of the curriculum.

ART AND DESIGN

133. A limited amount of teaching and learning of art and design was observed during this inspection. The judgements are based mainly on the evidence gathered from the scrutiny of pupils' work, teachers' planning and discussions with staff and pupils.
134. By the age of seven, attainment in art and design is broadly in line with national expectations. Standards are lower than at the time of the last inspection. This can be attributed, in part, to an insufficient allocation of time and the half term "blocking" of the subject which alternates with design and technology. As a result, pupils are denied continuity and the systematic acquisition of skills. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make reasonable progress. Progress is sometimes hampered because there is no consistent provision of teaching assistant support in the afternoon, when art is taught. There are no differences in performance between boys and girls or between pupils from different ethnic backgrounds. Pupils in Year 1 tend to make better progress than in Year 2, as in Year 1 more emphasis is placed on teaching the basic skills and pupils in Year 2 do not have sufficient opportunity to develop their own independence and creativity. Higher standards could reasonably be expected of most pupils.
135. The vast majority of pupils can use pencils, crayons, felt tip pens and paint to record first hand observations well. For example, pupils in Year 1 drew and painted realistic representations of different plants. In Year 2, pupils painted symbols from the Chinese New Year. However, many pupils in Years 1 and 2 are unsure of how to make secondary colours from basic primary colours, or the effect of adding more yellow to green paint.
136. Pupils behave well in class, they are keen to learn new techniques, work together sensitively and share their success with others. They show respect for each other's work and for the equipment.

137. Teaching is satisfactory and resources are well prepared. Lessons are well organised and presented in such a way that pupils are keen to take part. However, teachers do not focus enough on developing the pupils' basic artistic skills; for example colour mixing and the correct method of holding a paint brush. Pupils do not know enough about famous artists and their styles. Little use is made of sketchbooks. Lesson planning does not include specific opportunities to consolidate and develop literacy and numeracy skills. Computers are beginning to be used in art and design and pupils make good use of the a 'Painter' program
138. The co-ordination is satisfactory overall with some emerging strengths. The co-ordinator provides good advice and support for colleagues by sharing subject knowledge and monitoring midterm planning. The art and design policy and scheme of work provide good guidance to help teachers plan their lessons. Some planning has good cross-curricular links and resources are generally used well. However, the co-ordinator does not challenge teachers sufficiently to provide pupils with greater opportunity to work independently and creatively and to ensure that art and design has its full share of curriculum time. Colleagues are not sufficiently aware of the differences between the National Curriculum teaching requirements of art and design and design and technology. Pupils' work is assessed on completion. The assessments are based on the individual teacher's subjective judgements. There are no formal systems for recording pupils' attainment and tracking their progress.
139. A governor, who has a keen interest in clay work provides good support in Year 1. Working with six pupils, they made African masks in clay. They made good progress in the acquisition of skills, in their cultural development and in consolidating their topic work on Africa. There are sound plans for pupils in Year 2 to work with an artist and to develop the use of textiles in the curriculum.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

140. A limited amount of teaching and learning of design and technology was observed during this inspection. The judgements are based mainly on the evidence gathered from the scrutiny of pupils' work, teachers' planning and discussions with staff and pupils.
141. By the age of seven, attainment in design and technology is broadly in line with national expectations. Standards are similar to those at the time of the last inspection. Most pupils including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make reasonable progress in the time available. Progress is hindered because insufficient time is allocated to the subject, the "blocking" of the subject into a six-week period and the lack of teaching assistant support. Higher standards in design and technology could reasonably be expected of most pupils. There are no differences in performance between boys and girls or between pupils from different ethnic backgrounds. Pupils in Year 1 tend to make better progress than in Year 2 because more emphasis is placed on teaching the basic skills. In addition, pupils in Year 2 do not have sufficient opportunity to develop their own independence and creativity.

142. In Year 1, pupils are designing, modifying and evaluating their work. For example, they planned and drew pictures of African masks, constructed the masks using a good range of materials including different fabrics, pipe cleaners and reclaimed card, and were able to make suggestions on how they could alter their designs to make them more frightening. In Year 2, pupils have linked their work in design and technology to forces in science and have created three-dimensional paper skeletons with moveable joints. The various limbs have been cut out, positioned carefully and joined with the use of paper fasteners to create realistic figures. Pupils are in the process of constructing models of double-decker buses. A shoe box forms the body of the bus and appropriate methods have been used for securing the axles and the wheels. All buses are painted red and when lined up against each other demonstrate little individuality or creativity. In Year 2, there is some evidence of the pupils planning their models in advance. For example, pupils were asked to create a design for their Easter Hat. The more able pupils gave careful thought to how the design could become a reality, whilst the vast majority followed the worksheet to create theirs. They could not suggest how the hat would be constructed or the techniques they would use. They were hesitant to modify or evaluate their designs.
143. Teaching is sound overall. Good teaching was observed in Year 1, the teacher challenged pupils to think hard about their design, systematically develop their skills and evaluate their work. As a result pupils work with interest and sustained concentration. Their behaviour in lessons is very good and they are keen to talk about their work. In contrast, where pupils are not given the same challenges, they are less enthusiastic at completing the work and talking about it.
144. The co-ordination of design and technology is broadly satisfactory. The co-ordinator provides good advice and support for colleagues by sharing subject knowledge and monitoring midterm planning. The policy and scheme of work provides good guidance to help teachers plan their lessons. Some planning, particularly in Year 1, has good cross-curricular links and resources are generally used well. Most planning does not place sufficient emphasis on consolidating skills and knowledge from the literacy and numeracy lessons.
145. The co-ordinator does not challenge teachers to provide pupils with sufficient opportunity to work independently and creatively. There is not enough attention paid to ensuring that design and technology has its full share of curricular time and that colleagues are sufficiently aware of the differences between design and technology and art and design. The blocking of the curriculum and the alternating of design and technology with art and design hinders the teaching and pupils' systematic acquisition of skills. Pupils' work is assessed on completion. The assessments are based on the individual teacher's subjective judgements and are not moderated with other colleagues. There are no formal systems for recording pupils' attainment and tracking their progress. Resources are satisfactory but the co-ordinator does not hold a budget for their renewal or development.

GEOGRAPHY

146. A limited number of geography lessons was taught during the inspection. Judgements are made on the basis of lessons seen together with the teachers' planning, the scrutiny of the pupils' work and displays around the school, as well as discussions with pupils and teachers. Standards in geography are above average in Year 2. Pupils express their understanding of geographical issues very well both orally and in writing. Within the constraints of the limited curricular time for geography, pupils at all levels of

ability make good progress and EAL pupils make good progress. Standards and the quality of teaching and learning have much improved since the last inspection.

147. Pupils in Year 2 learn about how their local area has changed over time. Most pupils have developed a good awareness of the local environment and of places beyond, such as Watford and London. They discuss the main physical and human features of the Radlett area and compare these with London, expressing their own views and preferences. They categorise the different facilities available for people in Radlett today and compare these with those available in distant past, considering some of the reasons for the change. The study of countries, such as China, leads to a good knowledge and understanding of places beyond the British Isles and of other people and customs, including the development of mapping skills.
148. Teaching and learning in geography are good. Teachers have appropriate expectations of what pupils can achieve. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to think and talk about geographical issues. The good use of questions by teachers helps to challenge pupils' thinking and to assess their understanding. The lessons are well planned with suitably differentiated work to match the pupils' needs and abilities. Additional in-class support for pupils with special educational needs is effective in meeting individual needs, and leads to pupils with SEN making very good progress towards their learning targets. Teaching and learning of geographical vocabulary and mapping skills are very good. Teaching is made more relevant through linking it with history, particularly how the names of places have changed in the locality since the Roman times. A good variety of recording skills is taught, including the use of tables and charts. The 'Radlett walk', for example, resulted in pupils recording and answering questions about the different landmarks they had seen and comparing these with the old photographs taken nearly a hundred years ago. As a result of the good teaching, pupils become aware of jobs people do in Radlett, and facilities available, such as services to the community, health, transport and leisure.
149. Pupils were enthusiastic about talking about what they had learnt through their 'Radlett walk' and showed positive attitudes towards geography. During lessons, they work with sustained concentration within a good learning environment. They have a good dialogue with others while making their recordings and they share their resources equitably.
150. The co-ordination of the subject is sound with strengths. There is sufficient expertise to lead and develop the subject. The curriculum is sound, meeting fully the statutory requirements, and has much improved since the last inspection. There are useful guidelines for teachers to plan their work. The nationally recognised schemes of work have been adapted adequately to meet the needs of the pupils. Teaching geography on a more regular basis could ensure an increased level of continuity in pupils' learning and in the systematic development of key geographical skills. Procedures for assessing pupils' achievement and progress and for recording and reporting, although satisfactory, are not implemented consistently. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning are satisfactory and contributes to an agreement of practice and improved standards in geography. There is satisfactory use of information and communication technology to support learning in geography. The well-established practice of three-day residential field trip provides a valuable opportunity for pupils to learn in a practical context and to help develop independent and collaborative learning skills.

HISTORY

151. By the end of Year 2, most pupils attain standards that are generally above those expected nationally. Achievement for most pupils, including EAL learners, is good given the amount of time allocated to teaching history. Pupils who have special educational needs make very good progress towards their learning targets. There is good improvement overall since the last inspection and the standards and the quality of teaching and learning have continued to improve.
152. Pupils in Year 2 have developed a good understanding of changes over time in their local areas, and of how houses and buildings have changed in Radlett since the last 100 years, including their usage. Through well-organized walks to the local areas, and by using old and new photographs to compare changes, pupils have become aware that history can be learnt from a variety of sources, including books, television, photographs and video. Year 2 pupils learn about Florence Nightingale and answer questions confidently about her life and work, comparing similarities and differences with the life and work of Mary Seacole. They show a degree of sensitivity while discussing issues relating gender and race. Pupils were enthusiastic about sharing their knowledge and understanding of the history topics they had studied recently, such as the spreading of 'plague in London' and 'the Great Fire of London'. The comparative study of London in 2003 and in 1666 leads to a good understanding of how the roads, transport, homes, services and shops have changed. Pupils have a developing sense of the passing of time. The more able pupils have developed a good sense of chronology, and use dates and terms confidently to describe when people might have lived, when and why events might have taken place, and their effect. Some pupils have accessed the Internet at home to find out more information about history topics, although this is not widely practised in the school.
153. The subject alternates with geography on a half-termly basis. It was not possible to see any direct teaching of history during the week of the inspection. Judgements are made on the basis of analysing teachers' planning, pupils' work samples in their books and on display, as well as discussions with pupils and teachers. Teaching and learning overall are at least good, often better, showing a good degree of improvement since the last inspection. Particular strengths in teaching are the good use of the local area for gaining first-hand information, and the comparative study of different aspects of the life in the past and as it is today. Both these approaches are useful in making history relevant and interesting. There are good opportunities to develop skills of speaking, listening, reading, and for extended writing. Appropriate use is made of the reference books to encourage pupils to carry out their own study. Good links are made between history and geography, which is evident through an in-depth study of the locality. The use of information and communication technology to support work in history is satisfactory, with some scope for improvement.
154. The co-ordination of the subject is sound with strengths, and there is good capacity to improve. There are clear guidelines for teachers to ensure that the National Curriculum is taught at the appropriate levels. Statutory requirements are fully met and the judicious use of the nationally recognised schemes of work ensures that the planning of work is consistent in Year groups. Time for history teaching on a more regular basis could ensure an increased level of continuity in pupils' learning and in the development of key skills. Procedures for assessing pupils' achievement and progress, and passing information to parents and teachers, although satisfactory overall, are not implemented with sufficient rigor. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning across the school are satisfactory and lead to improving practice. Resources are adequate and

well used. Visits to museums and places of interest for all age groups are proving useful in developing a better understanding of the past.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

155. Attainment at the end of Year 2 is in line with national expectations. The vast majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs and EAL, make sound and sometimes good progress as they move through the school. There is no significant difference in performance between boys and girls. Many pupils have access to computers at home and have developed good computer skills. However, these pupils do not make sufficient progress within the school day as there are limited opportunities, in terms of available computers and the time allotted to ICT teaching, for them to apply and extend their skills and knowledge.
156. The school has placed considerable emphasis on developing pupils' knowledge of computers and most pupils use basic computer terminology confidently. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 build satisfactorily on the work they have undertaken in the Foundation Stage.
157. In Year 1, pupils know the words: screen, keyboard, mouse, click, printer and disk. They are able to explain the use of the mouse to drag items across the screen, and many have developed good hand-eye co-ordination and use the directional arrows to move objects along a track. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils and pupils are beginning to develop skills of simple programming using directional terms. Teachers reinforce the work through practical activities that capture the interest and imagination of the pupils. During these sessions teachers consolidate and extend pupils' use and knowledge of language through practical activities and the involvement of the pupils' favourite soft toys. As a result, the pupils are attentive, well behaved and work with sustained commitment. They show respect for the equipment and work collaboratively with a partner on the class-based computers. However, pupils do not make sufficient use of the tape recorders (the listening stations set up in every classroom) and have limited opportunity to develop their keyboard skills and communicate their thoughts and feelings through word-processing.
158. In Year 2 pupils continue to develop their understanding of how to use the computer well and many can save, retrieve and print their work. However, the use of the computer to support learning is limited and is not used effectively across the foundation subjects, particularly history and geography. There are some examples of the use of computer-generated block graphs in mathematics. Pupils are able to interpret the tables correctly but there is little evidence of the pupils working independently to collect and record the data. Pupils use a computer program to enhance their cultural awareness and create Chinese dragons to complement their work on the Chinese New Year. An art package, with two-dimensional shapes, for example triangles, squares, rectangles and ellipses, is used to create the dragon. This demonstrates good links between mathematics, the use of ICT, pupils' cultural development and their work in geography. There are some brief examples of word-processing, but pupils are capable of achieving higher standards given the levels they attain in their written work. There is limited evidence of the use of ICT to support the work in other subjects or of pupils using ICT to obtain information from compact discs. Pupils continue to demonstrate a very positive attitude to their work and this contributes to the satisfactory progress they make.

159. Teachers make sound use of the class-based computers to support pupils' work in some lessons. A teaching assistant withdraws groups from the different classes on a rota basis to work on the five computers in the compact computer suite. During these sessions they make satisfactory progress in developing their understanding of computer-associated skills, for example of clicking and dragging, hand/eye co-ordination and operating simple programs. Most of the teaching is through instruction. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to experiment with the equipment and consolidate their ICT skills.
160. The ICT co-ordinator is enthusiastic and has done much to develop the provision over the last two years. She has a good background in using ICT in industry and in office work but does not have a teaching qualification and cannot give an effective lead in developing ICT in the curriculum. Nevertheless, she co-ordinates the provision well. The school values the weekly visit from one of the governors who supports the school effectively with the maintenance of the equipment.
161. Currently there is a small computer suite that contains five computers and there is one computer in each classroom. Teachers and support staff make good use of the facilities. The level of provision is barely adequate to meet the needs of the curriculum and does not give pupils sufficient time to consolidate and extend their knowledge. Teachers' knowledge and expertise in developing ICT in the curriculum is satisfactory. Good progress has been made since the last inspection in setting up systems within the school. Satisfactory progress has been made in developing the use of ICT to support pupils' learning and re-enforcing their skills in literacy and numeracy.

MUSIC

162. A limited amount of music teaching and learning was observed during the inspection. The judgements are based mainly on evidence gathered from the scrutiny of teachers' planning and discussions with staff and pupils.
163. By the age of seven, attainment in music is broadly in line with national expectations and similar to those at the last inspection. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make reasonable progress. However, pupils with some musical skills already make limited progress because teachers do not have the musical expertise to challenge them sufficiently.
164. The vast majority of pupils listen carefully to music before and after morning assembly and the weekly hymn practice. They are aware that different instruments make different sounds and that certain styles and sounds of music can be attributed to different parts of the world. For example, the pupils entered and left the hall to the sounds of Chinese music. This music contributed much to the pupils' cultural development and their awareness of other nationalities. Good links were made with their work on the Chinese New Year.
165. Pupils perform confidently. During collective worship and whole-school singing practice, they sing together well, collectively and in two parts. Pupils sing songs from memory, with good pitch and expression, but teachers and pupils do not place sufficient emphasis on clear diction and word endings. Pupils are learning to control their breathing and are aware some notes are held longer than others. They are able to beat steady rhythms and respond to the different moods of the music. For example, when they sang 'The Rainbow Song', pupils smiled and communicated a sense of friendship. Their performance of developing a strong sense of community reflected the school's aims well.

166. In Year 1, pupils are able to chant rhymes in unison, identify simple patterns and play different percussion instruments to maintain a steady rhythm. By Year 2, pupils are acquiring a satisfactory musical vocabulary. They know the names of a good range of musical instruments, and different styles of music, for example, classical, pop. They accompany singing with untuned percussion instruments, such as the tambourine, ocean drum and rainbow stick, and achieve different effects. They are adept at inventing ways to remember what and when to play. They nod, tap their fingers or count silently to keep a steady rhythm or sequence.
167. Pupils are keen to learn, they work together sensitively and value the contributions of their peers. Their behaviour and attitude in lessons and during whole-school sessions are good.
168. Teaching is broadly satisfactory and lessons are planned appropriately to ensure they have a clear structure and that all pupils are involved and make progress. Teachers encourage the pupils to take part and maintain good relationships with each other.
169. The school does not have a subject specialist. The co-ordination of music is broadly satisfactory. Every term the local authority provides valuable advice and guidance to enable teachers to deliver the requirements of the National Curriculum. The subject co-ordinator monitors colleagues' planning and teaching but following this monitoring, insufficient guidance is given on how to raise standards. The co-ordinator does not hold a budget for the development of the subject or the replacement of equipment.
170. There is a good range of musical resources for the effective teaching of the subject. These are easily accessible and are of good quality. The scheme of work provides sound planning guidance but cross-curricular links are not systematically embedded into the curriculum. Tape recorders and the compact disc player are used well to support pupils' learning in music, but there is no evidence of the use of computers in this subject. The school acknowledges that the music provision within the school is barely adequate. The headteacher is looking for ways to improve provision, particularly by improving teachers' confidence and subject knowledge and the way pupils' attainment and progress are measured and recorded.
171. A piano-playing, parent volunteer regularly accompanies whole-school singing sessions. This gives a much-needed boost to the provision within the school and contributes significantly to the good standards pupils achieve in singing.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

172. Attainment at the end of Year 2 is in line with National expectations. All pupils make broadly satisfactory progress. The level of attainment is lower than at the time of the last inspection and can be directly attributed to inadequate teaching of techniques and specific skills, for example how to catch a ball properly or how to develop and finish routines and sequences.
173. In Years 1 and 2, pupils are keen to take part in the PE lessons. They change quickly and efficiently and move quietly into the hall. The teachers and pupils are suitably dressed for the lesson and pupils are aware of health and safety issues and the importance of long hair being tied back. Pupils know the importance of the warm up and cool down activities and use the space well for these activities. They have a good understanding of spatial awareness and are able to move around the hall at different speeds without bumping into each other.

174. They are able to respond in a variety of ways to the good range of open-ended challenges. For example, they can stop and balance on three different points/parts of the body or to balance on one large and one small part. Pupils respond positively to the requests from the teachers to demonstrate their routines, and appreciate the praise they receive. However, the teachers do not follow up sufficiently the demonstrations with teaching points, or ask pupils to evaluate their performances, or allow pupils time and opportunities to practise the activity they have just observed. This restricts pupils' progress and the development of their skills and techniques and slows down the overall pace of the lesson.
175. Pupils use the large apparatus confidently, for example, the stools and benches, to extend their floor sequence work involving curling, stretching and balancing. Many are working more confidently on the apparatus than would be expected for pupils of this age. The good range of large equipment available for the pupils to use at break and lunch-times contributes significantly to the development of their skills and confidence when using large apparatus in lesson time.
176. Throughout the school, the vast majority of pupils work together well and with sustained concentration. They behave well and have good, and sometimes very good, attitudes to learning.
177. Teaching is satisfactory. The lessons have a sound structure and there are clear routines regarding important health and safety issues and when moving equipment. The tasks and challenges set are appropriate but insufficient attention is given to developing pupils' skills of observation and evaluation, providing pupils with the opportunity to practise taught skills and following up demonstrations.
178. All the pupils visit the junior school during the summer term to use the sports field for the annual sports day. This strengthens the links with the junior school and helps prepare the pupils for transfer. Pupils in Year 2 are given the opportunity to have swimming lessons during the summer term. This is not a statutory part of the National Curriculum, but is a valuable addition to the work the school undertakes.
179. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and relatively new to the post. A sound start has been made and the co-ordination of PE is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and an appropriate background to undertake the responsibilities. Lesson plans are reviewed and some lesson observations have been undertaken. She is developing a sound overview of the strengths and areas for development but as yet individual teachers have not been challenged to alter their teaching style. There is a sound, undated policy for PE. There are no formal systems for recording and assessing pupils' attainment in physical education. The resources to support the teaching are sufficient, accessible and of good quality.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

180. No teaching and learning of religious education was observed during the inspection. The judgements are based on evidence gathered from the scrutiny of teachers' planning and pupils' work, discussions with staff and pupils and attendance at morning assemblies.
181. Scrutiny of pupils' work and pupil interviews indicate that by the end of Year 2 pupils reach standards above those expected in the locally Agreed Syllabus. This is an improvement from the last inspection. Pupils learn about a range of world religions and this helps them to be reflective and understand about the views of others. They learn

effectively from stories about religious leaders and rituals. This helps to foster the very good relationships that exist within the school. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make good progress.

182. Teaching and learning are good overall. Teachers' good planning ensures resources and artefacts are used very well to help pupils learn. This was evident in discussions with a Year 1 pupil when the story of 'Dogger' was used to help pupils identify with different emotions. A Year 2 pupil spoke confidently about the Christian faith and other faiths. One higher achieving Year 2 pupils explained "If you believe in Jesus, you have to believe in God because God is Jesus' Father." Pupils in Year 2 demonstrate a secure knowledge and respect for religious artefacts and customs, reflecting very good moral development. They understand, for example, that a prayer mat is used five times a day by a Muslim and that the Bible is a special book for Christians. They know that the Hindu faith requires people to wash their feet before entering a temple. This gives pupils an ability to appreciate cultural diversity and to value racial equality. Written work shows good progress over time.
183. Pupils show a positive attitude towards the subject. Learning is enhanced by their good and sometimes very good literacy skills. Pupils are curious to learn more about beliefs and customs different from their own and have the skills to ask, or research for, the answers to their questions. The work undertaken in religious education does much to develop pupils' cultural, moral and social development. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to reflect during assemblies and in lessons to promote their spiritual development to the same extent.
184. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has very good subject knowledge. A good range of religious artefacts and resources are used well to support teaching and to help pupils learn. Effective use is made of local places of worship, for example, local churches and synagogues. Representatives of different faiths regularly visit the school and contribute to morning assemblies. The scheme of work is sound with good curricular links to other areas of personal development. Teaching and teachers' planning is monitored but is not evaluated sufficiently rigorously in order to challenge teachers and to raise standards further. Cross-curricular links with other subjects, including numeracy and ICT, are not identified. Whole-school procedures for assessing and recording pupils' attainment and progress are not in place.