

INSPECTION REPORT

BRANSTON CE INFANT SCHOOL

Branston, Lincoln

LEA area: Lincolnshire

Unique reference number: 120516

Headteacher: Mrs V A Smith

Reporting inspector: Mr G D Timms
21038

Dates of inspection: 2-5 June 2003

Inspection number: 248140

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 - 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Beech Road Valley Estate Branston Lincoln
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs H Hawkyard
Date of previous inspection:	8 December 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21038	Mr G D Timms	Registered inspector	Mathematics Science Information and communication technology Religious education Art and design Physical education Educational inclusion	What sort of school is it? What should the school do to improve? The school's results and pupils' standards. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
19320	Mrs B Attaway	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
30745	Mrs P Thorpe	Team inspector	English Design and technology Geography History Music Foundation Stage Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
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?	10
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	12
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	12
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	14
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	15
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	15
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	17
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	18
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	23

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

With 126 pupils (60 girls and 66 boys) on the roll, including 22 who are part time, the school is smaller than average for primary schools nationally. There is a pre-reception class for children who are four and they move to the reception class in the September of the year they are five. The school serves the village of Branston but also takes pupils from other surrounding villages and a local Royal Air Force base. The school has a very small percentage of pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and none with English as an additional language. Attainment on entry to the school is broadly in line with that expected although each cohort has a wide range of abilities. Seven pupils have special educational needs, which is below the national average. Two pupils have a statement of special need. The main needs are specific learning difficulties and autism. A below average proportion of pupils are entitled to free school meals. A significant number of pupils join or leave the school at times other than are usual.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Branston CE Infant School is a very successful school and it is providing the pupils with a very effective education, preparing them well for the junior school. The standards in reading, writing, and mathematics are consistently above or well above average and the achievement of the pupils' is very good. The quality of teaching is very good throughout the school and never less than good. The leadership and management are very good and provide an excellent educational direction for the work of the school. When all factors are taken into account the school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics are well above average. Standards in science, information and communication technology, art and design, music and physical education are above average.
- Standards by the end of the reception year are above those expected for children of that age in most of the areas of learning.
- The quality of the teaching is very good throughout the school.
- The leadership and management are very good and there is an excellent focus on high educational standards. Financial control and monitoring are excellent.
- Pupils' attitudes towards their learning are excellent; they are enthusiastic, interested and keen learners. Their behaviour and relationships with others are very good.
- The school provides a very good and well-planned curriculum for the pupils; the links with the local community and other schools are excellent.
- The provision for the pupils' personal development, especially their social and moral development, is very good.
- The school has very good links with the parents, and their involvement provides excellent support for their children.

What could be improved

- There are no significant areas of the school's work requiring improvement and other aspects are fully covered by the school's own self evaluation and development planning.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in December 1997. This was a successful inspection. The school has worked hard to address the two issues raised by that inspection and to maintain or improve the other aspects of its work. Taking into account the improvements in relation to the key issues and the improvements in other aspects of school life, the overall improvement since then has been very good. Standards and resources in information and communication technology have improved greatly. Lesson planning has improved. In addition to these issues, standards have risen in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology, art and design, music and physical education.

STANDARDS

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

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

Since the last inspection in 1997, standards have improved at a rate at least in line with that found nationally. The standards in reading, writing and mathematics have remained very consistently well above average, although there was a slight dip in the mathematics test in 2002 due to fewer pupils reaching the higher levels. Even so, when compared to their attainment on entry to the school, the 2002 results represent- a very good level of achievement.

Standards by the end of the reception year are above those expected in most areas of learning and broadly in line with those expected in physical development. The test results for 2002 show that attainment was well above average in reading and writing when the results are compared to those of pupils from similar backgrounds. In mathematics, the results were in line with those of pupils from similar backgrounds. The early indications from the 2003 test results are that these good results have been maintained, and possibly improved in mathematics.

The current standards in English and mathematics are well above average. In science, information and communication technology, art and design, music and physical education standards are above those expected. This represents a particular improvement since the last inspection in information and communication technology and is due to improved resources, staff training, and improved teaching. In design and technology, geography, history and religious education standards are broadly in line with those expected.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Excellent. The pupils have a very positive attitude towards their learning and are keen and enthusiastic when trying new activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. There is an absence of serious poor behaviour. There is no evidence of bullying.
Personal development and relationships	Excellent. Pupils relate very well to each other and to adults. They are growing in maturity and work and play well together.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Attendance figures are in line with the national average.

Pupils are clearly happy at school, and they enjoy their work and the activities offered them. The initiative shown by pupils is higher than that normally found in pupils of this age. They show clear thought for others and older pupils play happily with younger ones. They also mix well with older pupils when the school has joint projects with the junior school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception and pre-Reception	Years 1 – 2
Quality of teaching	Very good	Very good

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

The quality of teaching throughout the school is very good overall, with all of the lessons observed at least good. The teaching in English and mathematics is very good and the basic skills in literacy and numeracy are very well taught. The best teaching results from the very good relationships teachers have developed with the pupils. This gives children the confidence to take a full part in lessons, to suggest answers to the teachers' questions and to try hard at the tasks they are given. The lessons are well planned and prepared and make good use of the resources available.

Pupils' learning in most lessons is very good, and results in them making very good progress. They acquire a very good level of basic skills, which prepares them well for their future learning. They work well together and support each other in a range of activities. The very good teaching results in a good pace to the lessons and to pupils' learning. On a small number of occasions, the support staff are not deployed as usefully as they might be during the whole class teaching, but overall they provide a very good level of support for the teachers and pupils, especially those with special educational needs.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. The curriculum is well planned, meets all statutory requirements and contains a very good level of enrichment through activities such as swimming and educational visits.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress because of the very good curriculum, teaching and adult support. Individual education plans are written with challenging but achievable targets and pupils' attainment is monitored regularly. The special educational needs co-ordinator is well organised and efficient. Available support services are used effectively and parents are kept well informed.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. The provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is good while that for their social and moral development, and for their personal development is very good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. The procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development, and to ensure there is no bullying or antisocial behaviour, are very good.

The school's partnership with the parents is very good, and the impact of the parents' involvement in the school is excellent. The school keeps parents very well informed about events and how well their children are doing. The procedures for child protection are very good. The provision of extra-curricular and other enrichment activities is very good. The partnership the school has with the local community, and with its local junior and secondary schools is excellent.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher provides excellent leadership and the staff have a clear educational direction to their work.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. The governors provide the school with a very good level of support and have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The headteacher has a very clear grasp of the available data regarding pupils' progress and the school development plan is based on very good self-evaluation.
The strategic use of resources	Excellent. The control and monitoring of the budget are very effective in ensuring the best use of available funds.

Resources are satisfactory for most subjects and good in the Foundation Stage, music, and physical education. The staffing level is appropriate for the size of the school and the accommodation and site are of very good quality and adequacy. The school administrative assistant provides the school with an excellent level of financial control and information assisting governors with their decision making, and making excellent use of information and communication technology to provide parents with information.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<p>The parents who responded to the questionnaire, or who attended the meeting with the inspection team are pleased with all aspects of the school's work. In particular they are pleased that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• their children like school;• they feel comfortable approaching the school with questions or problems;• the school is helping the children become more mature and responsible, and their behaviour is good;• the teaching is good and the school has high expectations of their children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• There are no areas of the school's work that a significant number of parents feel need improvement.

The inspection findings support the very positive views of the parents. Children do enjoy coming to school. The school makes parents welcome and it is helping children grow more mature and responsible. Behaviour is very good, as is the quality of the teaching, and teachers do have very high expectations.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The pupils' attainment on entry to the school is broadly in line with that expected for their ages. There is a range of ability, however, and in some year groups there are more higher or lower attaining pupils than in others. The attainment on entry of those pupils who took the national tests in 2002 was average and their test results reflect their very good achievement. The standards achieved in the Foundation Stage have been maintained since the last inspection and many of the children attain above the expected levels in most areas of learning.
2. The national test results for Year 2 pupils in 2002 maintained the consistent picture of well above average standards in reading and writing in recent years. This is true when the results are compared with all schools nationally, or with schools that take pupils from similar backgrounds.
3. The national test results in mathematics in 2002 were above average when compared with all infant schools nationally. This represented a slight fall from the previous years, when results were well above average. Even so, all pupils reached the expected level in the tests and this is very high. The reason for the fall in the overall picture was because too few pupils attained a sufficiently high level, when compared to other schools, although the proportion attaining above the level expected was above average. When compared with schools that take pupils from similar backgrounds results were broadly average. Given the pupils' attainment on entry to the school, this represents good achievement.
4. In science, where there are no tests but teachers do their own assessment at the end of Year 2, in 2002 the results showed that standards were very high and all pupils reached the expected level. An above average proportion of these then achieved above the expected level, resulting in an overall picture that is above average. The strengths in 2002 were in the pupils' knowledge and understanding about life and living processes, which was well above average. However, their knowledge and understanding about materials and their properties was average. In all other aspects of the subject, standards were above average.
5. Boys and girls have achieved well over time, and there is no evidence to suggest that one group is achieving at a better level than the other. In particular, the boys achieve well in writing where they do significantly better than other boys nationally. Higher attaining pupils also achieve well and in reading a well above average proportion of the pupils reach a level above that expected, while in writing and mathematics an above average proportion achieves a level above that expected.
6. The current position in Year 2 shows that standards in reading, writing and mathematics are well above average and have, given the changes to the curriculum over that time, improved significantly since the last inspection. The early indications from the 2003 tests, although these have yet to be moderated or compared to the present year's national comparisons, are that the high standards in 2002 have been at least maintained. Standards in science have also improved since the last inspection and are now above average.
7. The school has a lower than average number of pupils with special educational needs. They make very good progress overall in relation to their prior attainment. This is because work is closely matched to their abilities and they are often taught in small groups where they receive more individual attention.
8. Standards in information and communication technology have risen sharply since the last inspection, when weaknesses in the subject were a key issue for the school to address. A lot of hard work, training, planning and resourcing has helped raise standards at a level where they are now above those expected in many aspects. Pupils' confidence and level of skill with the software used during the inspection was impressive. They can discuss other information and communication technology experiences they have had and their learning is very good, ensuring they make very good progress from their attainment on entry to the school.
9. In art and design, music and physical education standards are also above those expected. This is due to the very good teaching and well-planned activities. In religious education, design and technology, geography and history, standards are broadly in line with those expected for seven-year-old pupils. There are no subjects where standards are lower than those expected for pupils of this age.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Pupils have an excellent attitude to school, and this is reflected in their very good behaviour and very good personal development and relationships; this shows further improvement since the last inspection when overall this aspect was very good.
11. Pupils are highly attentive, interested in what they are taught and have very good attitudes to learning. In all years, pupils enjoy their lessons. For example, in a mixed reception and Year 1 religious education lesson, pupils maintained concentration well, raising their hands to contribute and offer relevant comments during the reading of a story. Lessons are paced well to suit each age range and this makes pupils motivated. They are encouraged to use their imagination, for example during the reading and sharing of a story about secret places, and this gives good preparation prior to pupils writing their own stories. Children in reception show high levels of perseverance, illustrated, for example, during cooking, through ensuring cereals are fully incorporated into the basic mixture. When playing picture dominoes the youngest pupils maintained high levels of concentration in comparing similar pictures.
12. Extra-curricular activities provided by the school are popular, well attended and sometimes over-subscribed. Boys and girls take part in football and, although it is all girls at present, in the past boys have joined the dance club. The girls enjoy the cross-stitch club and the high standard of work being produced by the second week of this activity helps raise pupils' self-esteem.
13. Behaviour throughout the school is very good and enables teaching time to be used to the greatest effect, making a significant contribution to the standards pupils achieve. Teaching and non-teaching staff set high expectations of behaviour and pupils of all ages respond very well. The use of adult play leaders at lunchtime is making a very good contribution to pupil behaviour and the quality of activities in the playground. Staff training in positive behaviour management, and the way teachers talk with pupils, have enabled very good relationships to be established between pupils and between pupils and staff. Pupils are very welcoming to visitors and enjoy sharing their experiences of school. In the playground, pupils play well in groups and boys, for example, showed care for others during a game of football. When one pupil was hurt, another pupil immediately took care of her and reported the problem. There is no evidence of any recent bullying and there have been no exclusions.
14. Personal development is very good. Teachers use lessons well to promote pupils' personal development. For example, in a personal, social and health education lesson, pupils felt "worry" made the character in the story "frightened" or "scared", but as the lesson progressed they showed a wider understanding by using words such as "anxious" and they showed sympathy for a missing kitten. In the same lesson, their belief that they should not criticise someone else's clothes and that they do not have the right to tell other people what to wear, showed thought for other people's feelings. An understanding of adult worries is also beginning to emerge, for example "money" and "bills".
15. The level of initiative was higher than is normally found in pupils of this age, and there were instances in all year groups. A Year 2 pupil offered to get a chair for a visitor. A pupil in the pre-reception class, on completing their task, collected a book to read, returned it to the same place afterwards and then joined another activity, demonstrating that even the youngest pupils use some initiative to develop their learning. Child-directed activities also encourage initiative and teachers use such opportunities as they occur. For example, when young pupils were asked to read a pretend story to a teddy bear, the pupils pretended he was a robotic bear, delivering messages to children; the teacher responded by developing the activity in this way. Pupils' views are also taken into account and they have contributed ideas for playground development and suggested places for outside visits.
16. The reward systems are used effectively to raise pupils' self-esteem and praise is given readily for achievement in any area of school life; this encourages pupils. Some awards, such as smiley faces, are celebrated in class. Once a week, in the whole school assembly, the head teacher's awards celebrate not only academic achievements, but also kindness, for being polite and helpful. This too raises self-esteem.
17. All pupils arrive on time and this makes a very good contribution to the standards pupils achieve. Attendance is satisfactory and in line with that normally found in primary schools nationally. For the past five years, there has been no unauthorised absence. Currently, there is a very small amount of unauthorised absence.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

18. The overall quality of the teaching is very good. All of the teaching observed was of at least good quality and in 43 per cent of the lessons it was very good. This is a picture of teaching that is well above that normally found in other schools. This has improved a lot since the last inspection when only 45 per cent was good and only 13 per cent very good. The improvements are due to a range of measures, including the successful introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, improved planning and better resources.
19. The teachers make a very strong team, working and planning well together. They ensure that where an age group is split into two classes, the work is planned to ensure that all pupils have the same access to work at an appropriate level. They support each other well with ideas, suggestions and resources. The classroom management is very good. Rooms are bright, exciting learning environments where pupils' work is displayed very effectively. Other displays provide pupils with key vocabulary, reminders about work covered such as mathematical shapes, and interactive displays where pupils can try out things. For example, in a reception and Year 1 class, pupils have the opportunity to test the way some small toys work using different forces.
20. Teachers are well-supported by the good quality teaching assistants. Teachers brief other staff and volunteers well, and the feedback at the end of lessons from them helps with the teachers' overall evaluation of the success of their teaching. The teaching assistants have good relationships with the pupils and their support has a positive impact on learning, especially for the pupils with special educational needs and those who are lower attaining pupils. Although the assistants are usually deployed very effectively, there are times when they could be more productively involved during whole class teaching times. Teachers plan carefully to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs. This ensures they are given tasks that match their abilities well. The targets set in individual education plans are clear and achievable. Teachers involve skilled teaching assistants and community volunteers effectively in individual and small group work and pupils make more progress when supported in this way.
21. Teachers know their pupils well and have very good relationships with them. This leads to a calm, well-disciplined atmosphere in lessons that results in the creation of a positive learning environment. Pupils learn well because they listen attentively and respect their teachers' knowledge. The lessons are pacy and interesting, and teachers are very good at questioning pupils both to extend their learning and to assess how well they have understood. Most lessons have very clear learning objectives, but these are not always shared with the pupils, which would enhance their understanding of what they are expected to learn and how it fits into their previous work.
22. The teaching of the basic skills is very good. The implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies has been very successful. The basic reading, writing and number skills are well taught through other subjects. For example, pupils produce written work in religious education, history and geography. They research facts using their well-developed reading skills in other subjects, and their number and measuring skills are used in science and design and technology lessons. The teaching of the Foundation Stage is mostly very good, and is good in the area of physical development.
23. The teachers' marking of pupils' work is good. When they discuss the work with pupils during the lesson they offer very good advice as to how work could be improved in the future, and make very good use of praise to encourage pupils to further efforts. The positive use of good examples, such as happens in physical education lessons, gives pupils good role models for their work without creating a divisive atmosphere.

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

24. The quality of the curriculum has improved since the last inspection and is now very good. The school has developed a well-structured curriculum which meets statutory requirements to teach all subjects of the National Curriculum and provides a daily act of collective worship. Religious education meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Although the school rightly places an emphasis on the key areas of literacy, numeracy, science and information and communication technology, sufficient time is given to all subjects. The provision for information and communication technology has improved since the last inspection and these skills are now used effectively to support other areas of the curriculum.
25. Children in the Foundation Stage are provided with stimulating activities and experiences that cover all of the recommended areas of learning, enabling them to move on easily to work in the National Curriculum. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum and there is no difference in the provision for boys and girls. The range of

learning opportunities meets the interests and aptitudes of all the pupils and provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.

26. Every subject has an appropriate policy. Guidance for teachers in all areas of the curriculum has been improved since the last inspection enabling teachers to focus in their planning on what pupils should learn. Very effective links are made between subjects and often pupils' new learning in one subject reinforces what they have recently learnt in another. The school's provision for literacy and numeracy is very good. Teachers make sure that pupils acquire basic skills in an efficient and progressive way. Planning at all levels is of good quality and thorough, breaking new learning into small steps.
27. The provision for pupils with special educational needs has improved and because of the high quality of teaching and support given to these pupils is now very good. The inclusive and supportive ethos in the school has a major impact upon the progress these pupils make and they are fully included in all aspects of school life. There are also appropriate and challenging activities for higher attaining pupils in most lessons.
28. The school works hard to enrich the curriculum in many areas and provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities. It supports physical education with after-school football and short tennis. Swimming for all pupils is available during the school day. Pupils have an opportunity to enhance their musical education by joining one of the recorder or creative dance groups. Cross stitch, art and French clubs are also available. There is a good programme of school visits to museums and other places of interest.
29. The school fosters excellent links with members of the local community and the community volunteers' contribution to pupils' learning is exceptional. Visits and visitors are used effectively to broaden pupils' experiences and parents and friends raise funds to enable the school to buy extra items to enhance the curriculum for all pupils. Relationships with the local preschool and community college are very positive. Links between the school and the junior school are particularly good. The school has close links with the local church where Harvest, Christmas and Easter celebrations take place and the vicar leads assembly in school on a regular basis.
30. The school reflects its aims extremely well in its provision for pupils' personal development. This very good provision contributes to the positive ethos of the school, values all members of the school community and provides equal opportunities for all pupils. Through its strong emphasis on teaching children to live and work together, the school is helping them to become responsible thoughtful members of society. Good policies for sex and drugs awareness are in place. Drugs awareness is taught as part of the health curriculum.
31. The overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has improved since the last inspection and is now very good. The school's provision for spiritual development is good. The calm, reflective atmosphere present in whole school assemblies is carried into other areas of school life. Pupils also have opportunities to reflect through prayer at various times during the day. Most pupils show respect and courtesy to teachers and other adults by their demeanour and willingness to listen. The school fosters an atmosphere of tolerance and understanding and all pupils are fully included in every aspect of school life. Religious education lessons in particular, provide opportunities for pupils to think about people they admire and why. Pupils show care and concern for people who need our help and support, and raise money for a wide range of charities. Pupils are encouraged to recognise and celebrate effort and achievement both by themselves and others.
32. There is very good provision for pupils' moral development. This is closely linked to the school's caring ethos and the emphasis the school puts on preparing pupils to be good citizens of the future. Teachers and other adults expect high standards of behaviour and consideration for others. School rules are displayed in school and in the playground and are most effective where they emphasise what pupils should do to create a well ordered disciplined school. The various merit and award systems in use in the school are valued by the pupils and consistently reinforce the school's values and beliefs.
33. The school develops pupils' social awareness in a variety of ways and this provision is very good. Pupils are treated in a warm and friendly manner by all staff and this has a positive effect on their relationships with others. Pupils take on small jobs round the classroom and older pupils have responsibilities around the school. Pupils are expected to co-operate and learn together at appropriate times and to help and support each other. Teachers encourage pupils to recognise their own achievements and the achievements of others. During playtimes and the lunch period pupils have ample time to talk and play together. After-school clubs and visits provide a more relaxing learning and social climate. Regular contact with the local community contributes greatly to the personal and social development of pupils.

34. The school's provision for cultural development is good. Visits to the immediate area help pupils to be aware of their surroundings and the groups of people who live in the community. Pupils have the opportunity to visit museums where they can see objects from the past and from different cultures. In their art and design lessons, pupils study the work of famous artists such as Lowry. Music plays a part in the cultural development of all pupils as they sing traditional songs and hymns alongside more modern ones, play a musical instrument or listen to the music of famous composers such as Mozart. Pupils study different cultures and faiths in other curriculum areas such as geography and religious education, and they listen to music from around the world. The school has a collection of books and artefacts relating to other cultures and visitors from different ethnic groups are welcomed into school. Links with schools in Germany, the United States of America, and New Zealand have also been established.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

35. The school's care of pupils is very good and this has been maintained since the last inspection. The pupils work in a secure and happy environment where every child is valued. Children of parents in the armed forces have been supported well during recent conflicts. The very good displays throughout the school, together with the high standard to which the caretaker maintains the school, provide an appropriate and very effective working environment for everyone. The school is joining the healthy schools project to provide more opportunities for pupils to understand the effect that eating, drinking and exercise has on the whole body.
36. Child protection procedures are very good and members of staff are regularly kept up-to-date on child protection issues. The school maintains clear records on medicines administered in school and any problems are recorded; they work closely with parents. All health and safety requirements are met fully. Every member of staff has received basic first aid training and one has had more advanced instruction. Members of staff make very good use of opportunities to reinforce the importance of pupils' personal safety, both inside and outside school. Good practice is followed through procedures for greeting pupils safely each morning and ensuring that they are collected by their parents or carers at the end of the school day.
37. The good induction procedures enable the youngest pupils to settle into school comfortably. The two booklets for pre-reception and reception parents give good ideas on how children can be supported at home through activities in everyday life such as talking of sizes, colours and shapes whilst shopping; and recipes, such as for peppermint creams, help pupils to become familiar with the sort of activities they will do in school. The close liaison with the junior school, such as joint topics and the weekly use of the information and communication technology suite at the junior school, make the older pupils feel more secure when they transfer.
38. Good behaviour is promoted through staff acting as very good role models and, together with high expectations and the reward systems, pupils have a very good understanding of what constitutes good behaviour. By ensuring that every pupil receives at least one headteacher's award each year, the school is contributing well to all pupil's very good personal development.
39. The importance of regular attendance is promoted frequently and good records are maintained of the analysis of attendance by class. Parents are reminded regularly that children's education is adversely affected by holidays being taken in term time, but instances are increasing.
40. Pupils who have special educational needs are often identified before they enter the school or early in the pre-reception class when initial assessments are made. Staff have sufficient clear advice and guidance to ensure early identification. The liaison between the school and external support agencies is good. Appropriate expert advice is sought when necessary and the school uses its entitlement to the full. The comprehensive support given to pupils from parents, teachers, support staff and outside agencies plays a major role in the overall very good progress made by those with special educational needs.
41. At the time of the last inspection, the school's assessment arrangements were judged to be good, and this has been maintained. The school places a high priority on this and the systems have developed and improved since then and are now used effectively to track individual progress and set appropriate targets for pupils' further improvement. There is an effective system for assessing the skills and knowledge possessed by children when they enter the reception class. This information is used well when planning specific activities, especially early in the year. The school is well prepared for the introduction of the new system for assessing children towards the

end of the reception year, which teachers plan to use alongside their own systems for recording and tracking progress.

42. In Years 1 and 2, teachers keep effective records of pupils' progress, especially in the core subjects. These systems are continually under review as teachers try to improve them and make them practical. Good pupil portfolios contain samples of work from most subjects and, although these are not levelled against National Curriculum criteria, they are often well annotated by teachers to show how much support pupils had and what targets they should address in future. The targets are not always shared with pupils and this would, where appropriate, support their knowledge and understanding of their learning. A good system for tracking the pupils who have not achieved the objectives set for a particular topic is being trialled in some non-core subjects, again indicating the continuous striving for practical improvement in all aspects of assessment. The national tests taken by Year 2 pupils are organised very efficiently and successfully, enabling pupils to demonstrate their high standards. End-of-year assessments in all subjects are shared with parents through the reports and these include good targets for future work, which keeps parents informed of areas in which they can help their children improve.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

43. Parents have a very good opinion of the school and the inspection findings justify this view, which is in line with the findings of the previous inspection. Every three years the school uses questionnaires to ascertain parents' views on various aspects of the school. More parents than is normal responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire producing almost no negative responses. All parents have signed the home-school agreement. The open door policy is very effective and parents feel welcome to visit the school if problems arise. The school welcomes suggestions and the extra-curricular cross-stitch club was formed following a suggestion from a parent. Parent governors' views are sought when major spending decisions are made, for example the new library.
44. There is a very good two-way partnership between home and school. This partnership is strengthened and supplemented further by the large number of people who help in school. On a regular basis, fifty-four parents, grandparents and members of the local community voluntarily help in school. This exceptional support, developed over ten years, makes a significant impact on pupils' learning and creates strong links with the local community. Volunteers receive guidance on activities, for example how to listen to children's reading. The booklet gives added support to regular requests from the school for help in school. The comments from helpers on why they started, and what they have gained and enjoyed and the staff response to their presence, illustrates that these volunteers gain much enjoyment from their support for the school.
45. The quality of the monthly newsletters is outstanding and a tribute to the school administrative assistant. The use of colour photographs makes them very attractive, readable and informative, keeping parents well up-to-date on school life and forthcoming events. The newly developed school website contains a wealth of information for present and prospective parents. There are also images of life in school and the opportunity to share examples of children's work, such as their reflections on the 50th anniversary of the Queen's coronation. Topics are shared in advance with parents and specific aspects highlighted weekly; for example, for "show and tell" a grandparent produced photographs of the village in the past.
46. Pupils' annual reports are good and have improved since the last inspection. Each report is very specific to the individual pupil, clearly indicating achievements; targets are shared in the core subjects. The quality of homework is seen as important. It is combined with good planning and co-ordination to ensure it is balanced and manageable for pupils.
47. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are contacted immediately the school identifies an initial concern and they are kept fully informed about progress and proposed developments. If external support and advice is felt to be necessary parents are invited to discuss their child's difficulties with the support service concerned. Parents are informed about any particular provision made for their child and are invited to any review meetings arranged.
48. Parents have benefited from various curriculum events such as literacy, numeracy and an information and communication technology evening. Most parents attend the termly opportunities to meet the teacher or discuss their children's progress and other parents are seen as they collect their children. An active group of parents, through the Fund Raising Committee, organise a variety of social and fun events. Their support is very effective

and funds raised have provided physical education apparatus in the hall, safety surface in the outdoor play area for Reception children, and furniture and curtains for the new library.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

49. The leadership and management demonstrated by the headteacher and her key staff are very good. This represents a good level of improvement since the last inspection. The headteacher provides the school with an excellent educational direction and very clear focus on raising standards and achieving the best possible for the pupils. The improvement is due to the developing expertise of the headteacher in motivating staff and changes to the staff resulting in improved subject leadership in most subjects.
50. The management structure is appropriate for the size of the school and the senior management team, and the arrangements for meetings, are flexible. This means that unnecessary meetings are avoided and that all can have an input to the agenda if they wish. The work of the senior management is further strengthened by the inclusion of the administrative assistant, especially when discussions involve financial considerations. There is a very good structure to the staff meetings, and the themes for the meetings are planned well in advance, while remaining flexible with regard to emerging issues. The notes of meetings show a good level of discussion about appropriate issues with a good focus on educational matters and standards. Non-teaching staff attend weekly staff meetings and have opportunities to meet regularly on their own.
51. The headteacher maintains very good records of data and other evidence about how well the school is doing. This is assisted by the evidence base maintained for the Basic Skills Award the school recently achieved, which provides further evidence of the high level of leadership and management, with a focus on standards that exists in the school. The data collected is used effectively to set appropriately challenging but achievable targets in reading, writing and mathematics, although these are not statutory for this age. The data analysis also enables staff to track any pattern of underachievement very quickly, and devise strategies for addressing this.
52. The school has also achieved an Investors in People Award, and this reflects the importance given to the professional development of all staff, teaching and non-teaching. All staff have regular opportunities for training intended to develop their professional knowledge and skills. They are expected to share their learning with other staff through meetings or written reports. Recently all subject co-ordinators have had training in the management aspects of that role. The headteacher has had annual professional interviews with teachers for many years, and this has now developed into part of an excellent performance management policy.
53. The headteacher has very good systems for monitoring the teaching and learning. The small size of the school means that she is able to spend plenty of informal time with teachers and children, while maintaining her own teaching commitment. In addition, planning is collected and scrutinised, teaching is observed more formally, both by the headteacher and the subject co-ordinators. These observations focus on learning and feedback has resulted in improvements to the quality of teaching. This is sometimes specific to a teacher and sometimes a whole school issue, as was the case with discussion recently held over the progression of the pupils' use of creative language when writing.
54. The school development planning is very effective in providing a firm educational direction for the work of the school. The targets and objectives are appropriate and reflect local, national and school issues. The action plans are detailed, well costed and with clear success criteria. The development planning process involves all staff and governors well and starts from a detailed self-evaluation of how well the school is performing.
55. The governing body has a very good structure and this enables them to work efficiently and effectively. They carry out their duties conscientiously and offer a very good level of support for the school. They have a very good understanding of the strengths of the school, and areas for improvement, and are aware that there needs to be continuous striving for improvement to maintain the present high standards. They gather this information in a variety of ways. For example, some governors are linked to subjects such as literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. The headteacher and chair are in regular contact, often on a weekly basis. Each month a named governor is expected to try to be available for some contact with the school during the working day, although this is difficult due to their work commitments. Governors have a full input into the annual report for parents. Governors are more involved in the work of the school than was the case at the time as the last inspection.

56. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very well led and managed by the co-ordinator. She is involved from the initial concern identified by the teacher and offers advice and support to them. She is very familiar with the correct procedures in order that the needs of the child are fully met. She liaises with parents and external support services at the earliest appropriate time.
57. The budgeting process, on-going financial control and monitoring of the budget during the year are excellent. The headteacher, governors and the school administrative assistant work closely together to ensure that the school gets best value in all of its work. The school has an excellent best value statement and this underpins the resourcing of the school to ensure that the available funds are used most effectively for the benefit of the pupils. The governors are aware of the need to plan carefully as numbers are falling and they are firmly fixed on ensuring that the available funds are used for the benefit of the pupils.
58. The administrative assistant has worked very hard to overcome difficulties during changes to the software used by the local authority and she has provided more budget monitoring detail for the governors through regular reports using her own format. This information ensures that the governors can make informed decisions about the school's needs. In addition, she uses the available technology very well to produce presentations for new parents' evenings, and to produce an excellent newsletter that is informative, colourful and well illustrated.
59. The school is largely well-resourced. Resources are particularly good in the Foundation Stage, music and physical education. The accommodation is very good and the school makes good use of its extensive outdoor areas, through very good adventure play areas, sports field, gardens and a pond and environmental area. The staffing level is broadly appropriate for the numbers of pupils, but the school makes excellent use of a high number of volunteers helpers from among the parents and the local community.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

60. The school has no significant areas for development that are not already recognised in its development plans. The headteacher, staff and governing body should ensure that these plans are followed and that the present very good level of self evaluation is maintained.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	35
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	22

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	15	20	0	0	0	0
Percentage	0	43	57	0	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	115
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	2

Special educational needs	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	7

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	11
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.6
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	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	23	14	37

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	22	22	23
	Girls	14	14	14
	Total	36	36	37
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (93)	97 (98)	100 (98)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	22	23	23
	Girls	14	14	14
	Total	36	37	37
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (95)	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	112	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	1	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	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	1	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	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Average class size	23

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	120

Financial information

Financial year	2002/2003
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	£
Total income	298,190
Total expenditure	280,644
Expenditure per pupil	2,440
Balance brought forward from previous year	56,421*
Balance carried forward to next year	17,000

* Above normal due to secondment of Headteacher and delayed salary payments

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1

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	127
Number of questionnaires returned	59

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	90	10	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	76	22	0	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	76	20	0	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	68	19	0	0	13
The teaching is good.	83	17	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	59	37	3	0	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	80	18	2	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	71	29	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	66	29	2	0	3
The school is well led and managed.	73	24	0	0	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	73	27	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	66	22	2	0	10

Other issues raised by parents

The parents are very positive about all aspects of the school's work.

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

61. Standards and the quality of teaching have been maintained since the last inspection. The teaching overall is very good and children, including those with special educational needs, achieve well during their time in the reception and pre-reception classes. When children enter the pre-reception class, their attainment is broadly typical for children of this age, though this varies from year to year. By the end of their time in reception, children make good progress and many attain above the expected levels in most areas of learning.
62. The school admits children on a part-time basis to its pre-reception class at the beginning of the term they have their fourth birthday. They go on to join the reception classes at the beginning of the year in which they become five. The provision for the Foundation Stage is very good. The teachers are confident in their planning in all six nationally agreed areas of learning and nursery nurses, teaching assistants and volunteer helpers support the teachers well. This enables children to make important gains in their learning and prepares them well for Year 1. Teachers' planning, which includes valuable daily opportunities for imaginative play, takes good account of children's needs and identifies clear links with the National Curriculum. Assessment is used effectively to identify children's needs and for tracking their progress from the time they enter school. The co-ordinator provides very good leadership.

Personal, social and emotional development

63. Children achieve well because of the very good teaching and by the end of the reception year are likely to progress beyond the early skills and attitudes expected for their age. Teachers promote children's personal development well. They do this by establishing routines and encouraging children to be independent in their day-to-day activities by, for example, finding the equipment they need to complete a task. Children are encouraged to make friends with one another and to share and play together. A good example of this was when children in the pre-reception class became members of a 'pirate crew' and were searching for treasure on their pirate ship. As they mature, children are able to make sensible choices and organise themselves in games and activities. Some higher attaining children work or play together independently, completing their tasks competently, needing little or no adult help.
64. Teachers and other staff are very good role models for the children. The clear rules and routines help children to settle and follow instructions and they are taught the difference between right and wrong. Teachers frequently praise children and this raises their self-esteem and motivates them to learn. As a result, children behave well, understand what is expected of them and everyone benefits from working in a calm and settled environment.

Communication, language and literacy

65. Very good teaching ensures that children make good progress in this area of learning. They learn at a fast pace and achieve well during their time in the Foundation Stage. As a result, most children reach the goals expected for their age and many are already working within the National Curriculum in reading and writing well before they leave the reception classes. One strength of the teaching lies in the way staff constantly talk to the children and expect them to listen carefully. Every activity involves asking questions and emphasizing words and names. For instance, children name the musical instrument they choose and explain how they play them.
66. Teachers put great emphasis on children recognising the names and sounds of letters to enable them to write independently. Some play activities involve writing tasks. A good example of this is when playing in the 'Garden Centre', children in one reception class write orders for seeds and they record the plants they have sold. Children have many opportunities to practise their writing skills and because of this, many children can write short sentences without help. Teachers tell and read stories to children every day. Consequently, children learn to enjoy books and to handle them with care. They are interested and keen to know what happens next. They talk about the characters in a book and children in the reception classes can retell a simple story such as 'The Enormous Turnip' in sequence. Most children behave as readers, pointing to the words and telling the story. Many children read simple books independently.

Mathematical development

67. Children make very good progress in their mathematical development because of the very good teaching. Most children achieve the expected early learning goals for their age and many are working within the National Curriculum by the time they move to Year 1. Teachers develop children's understanding of the relationships between numbers through carefully planned practical activities. This prepares the children well for future work in mathematics and supports their good progress. In the pre-reception class, activities such as weighing the shells from their seaside display, and measuring the length of model sea creatures with cubes, help children to develop their mathematical language and counting skills. Children in one class count the spots they place on both halves of a ladybird and record their answers in the form of an addition sum.
68. Teachers use every available opportunity to use mathematics and mathematical language. They do this through stories, songs, games and imaginative play. Mathematical language such as 'how many' 'how long' or 'can you put them in the right order' encourages children to practise their mathematical skills. Enjoyable activities such as singing and performing the actions to number rhymes give children an understanding of adding and taking away.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

69. Very good teaching in this area ensures that children achieve well and are on course to exceed the expected levels by the time they leave the reception year. The frequent first-hand experiences that teachers and other adults provide help widen children's knowledge and understanding of the world. For example, children in the pre-reception class begin to understand that things change as they watch chocolate melt and then carefully mix their rice cakes. Following a walk in the school grounds, children in the reception classes carefully record the permanent features they see and compare them to the natural features such as the trees and flowers which constantly change.
70. Teachers arrange visits to museums and other places of interest that both extend children's knowledge and provide an opportunity for children to practise their social skills. Visitors to the school, such as the police and the nurse, widen children's knowledge of the community and following the journeys of the school bear introduces the children to the wider world. Through regular opportunities to use the computer, children know how to use the computer mouse to move objects around the screen and to make choices. Teachers encourage children to talk about their families and use stories to help them to understand the significance of special festivals such as Christmas.

Physical development

71. Teaching is good in this area of development and children are on course to attain the standards expected by the end of the reception year. Children in the pre-reception class have plenty of opportunities to engage in physical activities both indoors and outside. They enjoy physical exercise tremendously and put a lot of effort into climbing and running and develop increasing balance and control when playing with the wheeled toys. Children in the reception classes have access to a small outside area which has been improved recently with an attractive, safe surface. A variety of activities take place here but it is unsuitable for large climbing apparatus or wheeled toys. To compensate for this teachers plan to make full use of the hall for physical activities. Children use tools appropriately when they write, paint, join objects together, and cut shapes from paper and other materials. Adults do not intervene too quickly when the children are trying to manipulate materials but guide them to practise their skills and enhance their learning.

Creative development

72. Very good teaching in this area of learning ensures that by the time children leave the reception classes they are likely to exceed many of the goals expected for their age. Children take part in a suitable range of art and design activities, such as painting, collage and pattern making and engage in imaginative play in which they take on different roles. They enjoy experimenting with colours and shapes. For instance, children in the reception classes check details carefully on digital photographs and then use chalks, crayons and oil pastels to record their walk round the school. Children have good opportunities to act out roles and create imaginary situations in 'The Pirate Ship' or 'The Garden Centre'. These activities are planned well so that adults are sometimes involved and the children's vocabulary extended. Teachers put a great deal of emphasis on children learning traditional rhymes and songs and singing or joining in with action songs takes place almost every day. Children enjoy listening to music and can clap a simple rhythm or accompany singing with a percussion instrument.

ENGLISH

73. The attainment by the end of Year 2 is well above average and shows an improvement since the last inspection. Much of this improvement is due to the very good teaching and the well planned curriculum, coupled with the careful use of assessment to track pupils' progress and the very good leadership of the subject. The effective implementation of the National Literacy Strategy has also had a positive impact on standards.
74. Most children learn at a very good rate. Pupils with special educational needs and low attaining pupils also make very good progress. Many of these pupils benefit particularly from the opportunity to work in small groups, either with their teacher or the skilled teaching assistants.
75. The quality of pupils' speaking and listening skills is good throughout the school and pupils reach very good standards by the end of Year 2. Teachers expect pupils to listen and concentrate at every stage of the lesson in order that they focus on the task in hand and understand what is required of them to achieve well. Teachers encourage pupils when working in pairs or small groups, to discuss their work and ideas with each other. This way they share and add to each other's learning. For example, pupils, as part of their work on story writing, look at a sequence of pictures and discuss how the story could develop. Teachers speak clearly and precisely and expect pupils to do the same. Pupils speak in sentences and express their views and opinions well.
76. Reading skills develop well in Years 1 and 2 and standards are on course to be well above average by the end of the present Year 2. Pupils have a good start in the reception classes and in Year 1 build effectively on what they already know. Even the youngest pupils know about authors and illustrators. Pupils in Year 2 read fluently and accurately with considerable expression. In well-planned literacy lessons, they are becoming increasingly aware of how authors create characters, scenes, and drama that results in interesting and exciting stories. Pupils know the difference between fiction and non-fiction books and use the contents page and index pages with increasing confidence. Pupils throughout the school are familiar with libraries and many of them are members of the local library. Lack of space in the past for adequate library facilities has made it difficult for children to acquire independent library skills. However, the school has recently built a new library and resources room and this should greatly enhance provision for all pupils.
77. By the age of seven, pupils make very good progress in their writing and achieve very good standards in their written work. They experience a variety of writing styles such as writing a story or reporting an event. Most pupils use full stops and capital letters correctly and spell common words accurately. Pupils' use of tenses is not always consistent. Many pupils attempt to use more adventurous vocabulary, particularly when writing stories or poems. For example, one pupil in a poem about the spring wrote 'I can smell dancing flowers; I can feel the sunshine sweating me'. Handwriting and presentation of written work are variable but generally good overall. Literacy is used effectively to enhance learning in other subjects. Specialist vocabulary is used consistently and pupils use their writing skills for recording their work in history, religious education and other subjects.
78. The overall quality of teaching is very good throughout the school. Teachers have a good grasp of the requirements of the literacy strategy and lessons are planned well, with appropriate work for pupils of differing attainment. Teachers' effective organisational skills ensure that the needs of all pupils are met. They have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and expect them to concentrate and work hard. The enthusiasm teachers show for literacy has a positive effect on pupils' desire to learn and there is a purposeful working atmosphere in all classrooms. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly but they do not always include written comments to help pupils improve their work or set individual targets. Teaching assistants and other helpers, under the guidance of the class teacher, contribute significantly to pupils' learning. They engage well with pupils, listen attentively to them and consistently reinforce what is being learned.
79. Leadership and management of the subject are very good. The co-ordinator has a thorough understanding of the subject and how pupils acquire the skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing. She monitors teachers' planning and pupils' work, and observes teaching. The co-ordinator has identified, as a priority, the need to develop children's independent library skills as soon as the new library is up and running.

MATHEMATICS

80. Since the last inspection, national test results show that standards have risen from above average to be consistently well above average. This reflects the good standard of the teaching, the effective planning using the

National Numeracy Strategy and the enthusiasm of the pupils who clearly enjoy the subject. The progress made by pupils is good and builds well on their attainment on entry to the school. In addition, the good work in the reception year builds a solid foundation for the National Curriculum in Years 1 and 2. This is supported by the analysis of how well pupils have progressed towards the predictions set for them after the early assessment of their skills on entry to the reception year.

81. In 2002, all pupils reached the expected level and 83 per cent reached or exceeded the targets set for them. This shows a good level of achievement. However, fewer pupils reached the higher levels than in previous years. The school recognised this through its analysis of the results and has put extra efforts into addressing weaknesses in problem solving and using and applying skills. This work has been successful in improving standards this year.
82. In most years, all pupils, boys and girls, make at least the expected progress and many make progress beyond that expected of them. Although some year groups contain a gender imbalance, there is no evidence of any real difference in their achievement. The majority of the pupils with special educational needs also make good progress although progress is less evident where the pupils' needs are more severe, even with good quality support. The evidence of the inspection is that the high standards found in other years have been maintained and the early indications from the 2003 tests are that pupils have achieved levels broadly in line with those found last year.
83. At the start of Year 1, most pupils could order numbers to 20 and they knew simple addition facts. They could use coin stamps to make given amounts to 10 p. After one term, they were able to calculate one more or less than a given number and they have a good knowledge of even numbers. They are now able to count in 10s to 100, work out amounts that are 10p more or 10p less and they know the names of common three-dimensional shapes. Higher attaining pupils have moved on to multiplication facts and can find simple fractions of numbers. Less able pupils' presentation of their work is untidy but clearly improves over the year. They show a satisfactory understanding of vocabulary linked to capacity. Work on time shows an ability to read, but not record very accurately, times on analogue clocks.
84. In lessons, the Year 1 pupils are able to count mentally in twos and subtract single digit numbers. Higher attainers are able to arrive at given answers by making up subtraction calculations from a list of digits. The less able work with good support from a teaching assistant to subtract numbers to 10. Over half of the younger Year 1 pupils are working at the top end of the level expected of them by the end of the year. Older Year 1 pupils are working with digit cards to say, make and write two digit numbers. They are well supported by the classroom support assistant and are already working within the level expected by the end of Year 2.
85. At the start of Year 2, most pupils can add to 20 and give 10 more or less than a number to 60. They are able to partition numbers into tens and units and measure accurately up to 20 centimetres. After a term, they are more familiar with measures and can find simple fractions of numbers. They can tally objects and complete pre-prepared bar charts. They are able to draw objects with reflective symmetry accurately and are achieving standards ahead of those expected. Higher attaining pupils know multiples of 5 and 2, and complete work at a level higher than that expected. Less able pupils are also achieving well and have a good understanding of division facts by the end of March. Most pupils have investigated rules for odd and even numbers and are able to round numbers to the nearest 10.
86. In lessons, Year 2 pupils demonstrate a very good understanding of place value with two- and three- digit numbers. Over half of them know that 1000 follows 900 when counting in 100s. Pupils work well together to give each other a three-digit number to make using digit cards and then to write accurately in their books. They work very confidently with the large numbers. In one very good lesson, pupils described properties of two- and three-digit numbers such as odd, even, multiples of 2, 5 or 10, and as coming between two given numbers. The higher attaining pupils are comfortable when describing two properties, such as even and a multiple of 5. This work shows a mature level of understanding about numbers and reflects the above average standards evident throughout the school.
87. The good learning is supported by the pupils' very positive attitudes towards the subject. They are very keen in all classes to join in with question and answer sessions, willing to suggest answers to problems and work well in pairs or larger groups. They behave well and when given tasks stay focused for lengthy periods.
88. The quality of the teaching is at least good and sometimes very good, and is very good overall. The planning in different classes of the same year group is sufficiently well done to ensure that the work provided for pupils is

appropriately matched to their prior attainment as well as their age. Very good practice exists where able Year 1 pupils are taught with Year 2 pupils to provide them with sufficiently challenging work. Less able pupils are well supported through extra adult help or with commercial workbooks at an appropriate level for them. When photocopied worksheets are used, they are kept tidily, dated, marked and often annotated by the teachers, and stored carefully, in order, in folders. The marking of pupils' work, for example in a mixed reception and Year 1 class, also often involves annotation to record levels of understanding so that future work can be planned appropriately. Teachers question pupils well to get them to explain how they arrive at answers, thus consolidating their learning effectively. The majority of the lessons have very effective plenary sessions when the learning achieved is shared and pupils are made aware of how well they have done. In a few lessons, these sessions are used well to extend the learning through more challenging questioning. For example, in a Year 2 lesson about three digit numbers the use of a zero in numbers such as 105 and 150 was very effectively introduced during the plenary time.

89. The subject leadership is very good. The 2002 test results have been analysed to see where pupils made errors and this has been successful in addressing those weaknesses this year through better targeted teaching. More lessons have been planned to include paired discussion between pupils, giving them the opportunity to discuss and consolidate their learning. The pupils were better prepared for this year's tests through the use of past questions and the school experimented with some basic setting of Year 2 pupils by their prior attainment to enable teachers to focus their teaching more at specific needs.

SCIENCE

90. Since the last inspection, when standards were average, the school has worked hard and successfully to raise pupils' levels of attainment higher. Standards are now consistently above average and the teacher assessments for 2002 showed that standards were sometimes well above average. There was no difference between the attainment of boys or girls, and pupils with special educational needs made progress in line with their peers especially where they received adult support with their written work.
91. The standard of the current work of the seven-year-old pupils is above average. All are on line to attain the expected level by the end of the school year and this is better than is found in most schools. In addition, a significant proportion is likely to attain above the expected level. One of the reasons for the improvement since the last inspection is the good scheme of work that is in place. This is based on a nationally accepted set of plans but has been adapted appropriately to the needs of the school, ensuring that topics are revisited as needed and that pupils' learning builds on what has been previously learned. The timetabling of the subject has ensured that it is taught more regularly than was the case and this has enabled pupils to consolidate their earlier learning more effectively.
92. In Year 1, pupils are able to list common household items that require electricity to run. They can name a range of natural and man-made light sources. Illustrations show they have a good understanding of loud and quiet and can describe sounds, and how distance affects volume. They can classify a range of living and non-living things, and show a satisfactory understanding of how animals move and which babies belong to which adult animals. They can draw and label the parts of a flower and have investigated and recorded how different growing conditions affect cress seeds. As part of a topic on transport, pupils investigated different movements, forces and types of vehicles. They describe various everyday items and whether they need a push, pull or twist to make them work. It is clear that the less able succeed because they often receive more direct support, and that the higher attaining pupils are achieving good standards. Lesson observations show that teachers often plan extension activities for those who complete their work quickly and correctly.
93. In Year 2, the scrutiny of the pupils' work over the year shows a good coverage of the curriculum and well developed recording of work in written or pictorial form. Pupils know about the changes that are brought about by heat through cooking, and how they can change the shape of different materials. They can draw simple circuits to light a bulb. When studying life and living processes they show a satisfactory understanding of the life cycle of a range of creatures including humans, and of plants such as oak trees. First hand, observational studies of life in the school grounds helps make their learning meaningful. All abilities are able to devise fair tests to find out how far a car runs down a ramp, and how to investigate the growth of cress seeds through four separate predictions and tests. In one very good lesson, pupils studied a range of materials, predicting and then testing them for their magnetic properties. The discussion at the end of the lesson showed how well they had understood and completed the task, and the responses of some higher attaining pupils showed a good grasp of how magnets work. For example, one misconception about whether a can of food is magnetic was solved by

one pupil pointing out that the magnet did not lift it because it was too heavy, not because it was not attracted to the magnet. In another lesson, pupils sorted materials by a range of properties such as soft, hard, rough or smooth, and their understanding was good.

94. The quality of the teaching observed was very good. In a Year 1 class, a very good interactive display encouraged pupils to think about and try out a range of small toys to see whether they worked by pushing, pulling or twisting. In Year 2, the teacher provided a very good range of resources for testing magnetism, including some made of more than one material, and others from different types of metal. In most lessons, teachers use very good questioning techniques to get pupils to discuss their ideas and to think carefully about predictions before acting on them. Teachers evaluate each topic, and assess each pupil's progress, at the end of each half term. They discuss the results of their teaching as a team and this information is used when planning further lessons. The assessment sheets used to test pupils' progress against each key objective are being reviewed and a new system is being trialled. The pupils' portfolios provide a good guide to their progress but do not contain accurate assessment using National Curriculum levels. Targets are set for pupils based on their prior learning, although these are not shared with pupils as fully as they could be.
95. Computers are used effectively to support the teaching. For example, in Year 2 the learning in the topic on properties of materials is being improved through the use of an activity requiring pupils to sort materials into natural or man-made sets, or to divide materials into magnetic and non-magnetic sets. The pupils do this confidently and accurately, using their good mouse control skills to click and drag objects. Better cross-curricular links are now identified in the planning. For example, pupils who made booklets describing how they planted broad beans, and how they grew these successfully, used literacy and computer skills. Very good links with the junior school are maintained through theme weeks when pupils from both schools work together on topics such as changing materials through cooking pancakes, or investigating suitable materials for the three little pigs' houses.
96. The school is reviewing the provision for higher attaining pupils and hoping to develop it further for giving them more investigative and experimental work. The staff have shared the scrutiny of pupils' work, enabling them to spread good practice and support each other with ideas and suggestions. The headteacher has observed teaching and learning in lessons and plans are in place for the co-ordinator to do this during the next school year.

ART AND DESIGN

97. Standards are above those expected throughout the school and have improved since the last inspection. This is the result of consistently good teaching in all classes. The work of the higher attaining pupils is often of a very high standard. Pupils have opportunities to use a range of media in both two- and three-dimensions and they have confidence in their abilities, which is evident in the way they approach the tasks they are given. Very good use is made of other artists' work as inspiration and to stimulate discussion, and this makes a very good contribution to pupils' cultural development.
98. Pupils have made good collage figures of characters from traditional tales, such as the three little pigs and the billy goats gruff, for large wall friezes. Regular use of computers and the available art software is evident. Younger pupils are able to draw a version of their house, using the tools accurately to create rectangular or round shapes. Although there was little evidence of three-dimensional work during the inspection, the pupils do have opportunities to use clay to make simple pots and plaques, and the co-ordinator has arranged for the secondary school to take work for firing in their kiln.
99. In Year 1, pupils looked at and discussed a range of pictures by Impressionist painters, particularly with regard to the different ways paint was applied and the effect created. To develop their skills, the teacher then provided opportunities for the pupils to experiment with a collection of different tools to create effects similar to those in the paintings. This they did with interest and concentration. In some cases, the teacher provided sawdust to add to the paint to enable pupils to experiment further with different effects. Other pupils use chalk and crayons well to draw pictures of parts of the school site following a walk. The good development of work is evident in displays showing how pupils observed and drew staff cars and then used these as the basis for good paintings.
100. In Year 2, pupils had good opportunities to study a large reproduction of a Lowry painting and discuss what is pictured, the way the figures are drawn and the colours used. The questions asked by pupils showed how involved and interested they were, and this led to them becoming very keen to try out the activities offered. A

range of activities based on Lowry's work followed this up. One group mixed colours to see how many different greys they could make. They showed a good level of skill in mixing and appreciating the different shades they could create by adding more white or more black. Eventually, they managed to produce about eight shades. Another group practised using sketching pencils, firstly experimenting with the three different types available and seeing how the marks they made differed, and then using these to draw very good figures in the style of Lowry but based on playground activities at the school. Others are able to draw buildings accurately from photographs, as part of their geography work. Earlier work includes very good observational drawings of bicycles using pencil or chalk, and very good paintings representing the four seasons.

101. Overall, the quality of the teaching is good, with a third of lessons that are very good. Teachers plan effective lessons offering opportunities for pupils to learn and practise specific skills, such as colour mixing, and provide opportunities for more imaginative work. They provide tasks enabling pupils to work on large scale pictures and joint friezes as well as smaller more detailed work. Teachers offer a good balance of praise and suggestions for ways pupils can improve their work. Good use of outside expertise has been made through a link with the local teacher-training institution which has sent art students to the school, and through having a children's book illustrator to talk to the pupils and demonstrate his technique. Displays are used very effectively to show and celebrate children's work and also to provide inspiration through a range of reproductions of well-known and lesser known art works.
102. The subject co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and has a good level of personal expertise and interest in the subject. She has devised a very good medium term plan to ensure the National Curriculum is covered sufficiently. A particular strength is the cross-curricular nature of much of the planning and the links made in lessons. The work is evaluated termly by the staff and this is used to assess and record pupil's progress. The co-ordinator has monitored teaching in the subject and she has used this to set targets for teachers and to spread good practice. There are very good links with the junior school, though events such as joint theme days when pupils from both schools work together.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

103. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection with pupils generally reaching the standards expected for their age. All pupils make satisfactory progress. No lessons were observed so no judgement can be securely made about the quality of the teaching. Scrutiny of teachers' plans show that teachers choose a variety of activities that cover the required programmes of study and that great emphasis is placed on acquiring the basic skills of cutting, sticking and joining materials in suitable ways.
104. Pupils have many opportunities to design and make models using the variety of construction kits available in school. They develop their own ideas and manipulative skills needed for further work in the subject. Pupils acquire appropriate skills in choosing and using a variety of tools and materials for specific purposes. They draw their design and identify the materials they are going to need and how they are going to make it. For example, after testing different materials pupils succeed in selecting and using one with waterproof qualities and proceed to design and make a waterproof bag.
105. Good links are made between subjects so that new learning in one reinforces learning in another. For instance, pupils design and make vehicles using recyclable materials after visiting the transport museum as part of their work in history. Literacy and numeracy skills are practised as pupils discuss their plans, list materials and tools needed, measure materials and follow instructions.
106. The co-ordinator manages the subject very well. She monitors the subject through checking teachers' plans, observations of teaching and together with the staff, scrutinises and evaluates the completed work. She has already identified the need to review the curriculum planning so that further links can be made with other subjects.

GEOGRAPHY

107. Pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress and achieve the expected levels of attainment by the age of seven. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection. Standards have been maintained because of good teaching, and good leadership and management of the subject.

108. A strength of the teaching is the effective way that teachers build on work begun in the reception classes, and use the school grounds and the local area to ensure that pupils gain first hand experience to develop their geographical skills. Pupils take walks to look at the style of houses, shops and other buildings, and develop a growing knowledge of the features and characteristics of their local area. Pupils consider the negative effects humans have on the natural environment and successfully identify ways this could be improved.
109. Teachers plan opportunities to reinforce learning in other areas of the curriculum and for pupils to practise their literacy and numeracy skills. For example, pupils in Year 2, after looking at a selection of photographs of buildings in the town, write a series of clues for their friends to follow and eventually identify the building they were describing. They succeed in 'keeping the secret' for some time. Patterns of weather in the world are studied and local weather is recorded daily. Pupils begin to develop their mapping skills by drawing a picture map or plan of the area visited and pupils in Year 2 compare some features of their town with a town in another part of the country.
110. The teachers make the subject interesting and relevant to pupils' lives and at the same time develop pupils' knowledge of the wider world. They encourage pupils throughout the school to take the school bear with them on holiday. These journeys are then mapped and photographs are displayed prominently in the school allowing other pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding of specific places on the world map.
111. The subject is well led and organised by the co-ordinator who monitors teaching and pupils' work. She has already identified the need to review procedures for assessing pupils' attainment in the near future. Good visits are arranged to consolidate and extend pupils' learning.

HISTORY

112. The school has been successful in maintaining standards at the satisfactory level found at the last inspection. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress and reach the expected standards by the end of Year 2. This is the result of good teaching, and the good leadership and management of the subject.
113. By the age of seven, pupils have an appreciation of the passing of time and how things change. They use a simple timeline successfully to record events in their own lives and draw on their experiences of older relations and friends to predict what they themselves may be doing in the future. Pupils begin to understand that history can be personal to them and is being made all the time and not just in the distant past.
114. Teachers choose activities that are interesting to pupils. For instance, pupils in Year 1 look at and handle toys from the past, and compare them with their own toys. A considerable strength of the teaching is the way teachers plan opportunities for pupils to gain first hand experience of what life was like in the past. Teachers plan visits to museums and places of interest, and collect artefacts to show to pupils. For example, pupils visit a transport museum to compare old vehicles to vehicles in use now. These experiences also play a big part in promoting pupils' cultural and social development.
115. In one lesson seen, pupils were fascinated by domestic life in Victorian times in comparison with their life at home today. Studying the work of famous artists, such as the industrial scenes of L. S. Lowry, gave a good starting point for discussion and comparisons. Pupils learn about important events in history through studying the lives of famous people such as Guy Fawkes.
116. The co-ordinator leads and manages the subject well. She monitors teaching and pupils' work, and this has a positive impact on standards. Additions to, and the reorganisation of the resources available to teachers, are planned in the near future. Visitors are invited to the school to consolidate and extend pupils' learning by taking part in lessons.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

117. At the last inspection, standards were below those expected nationally and the pupils did not make sufficient progress. This has improved as the issues raised at the last inspection have been acted upon, and improvements to the planning, teaching and resourcing have been implemented. The standards now evident throughout the school are above those expected and the teaching of skills is more systematic and is having a

clear impact on standards. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making very good progress in developing their knowledge, skills and understanding.

118. The improved resources means that the pupils now have more access to a computer and the equipment is of a sufficiently high standard. The findings of the inspection support those of a recent local authority audit. The curriculum is better planned and good cross-curricular use of computers is evident. The scheme of work ensures full coverage of National Curriculum requirements and the staff are more knowledgeable and confident than was the case at the time of the last inspection.
119. In Year 1, pupils are able to use art and design software to create pictures of their houses. They use a variety of tools well, using, for example, different shapes to fix windows and doors. They have good mouse control and are able to use the undo facility to correct errors, or aspects they want to change after evaluating their work. They can fill shapes with colour and draw lines carefully. When their work is complete, they are able to print it with minimal support. They complete sequencing activities by clicking and dragging clothing to dress a bear in the correct order. In work linked to their transport topic they use art software to design cars. They also use a word-processor to create labels for their paintings of their circus skills work. They use computer software to practise their literacy skills by, for example, playing a game that involves putting the correct vowel into a word.
120. In Year 2, pupils use headphones at a listening station to listen and follow stories. They use computer software to improve their comprehension, spelling and a range of reading skills. After a visit to a transport museum, pupils word-process a report and merge their text with pictures inserted from a clip art program. They build on the Year 1 work to design and draw complex house designs showing very good use of a range of skills with the art tools. Pictures based on the four seasons show good use of the software and imaginative ideas. In two good lessons, pupils were revising and consolidating their understanding of word-processing skills, and extending those to include the use of the 'caps lock' key and a range of text effects to create posters. They show a good ability to change fonts, font sizes and colours, and to move the text and insert pictures to create a good effect. Some higher attaining pupils demonstrate a very good understanding of the facilities available by, for example, showing the class how to use 'print preview' to review their work, and how using 'page set up' to change portrait to landscape creates a different version of their work.
121. The teaching observed was good and has improved since the last inspection. Teachers are more confident and have a good level of expertise and a clear understanding of the objectives for the task set. They have very good relationships with pupils and from this, and the suggestions pupils feel they can put forward, they use pupils' own expertise and ideas as good starting points to extend the knowledge and understanding of the less able. Teachers make use of cross-curricular planning to use computers in religious education, literacy and numeracy lessons. For example, when designing posters to address bad behaviour by trespassers on the school site, they encourage pupils to practise and develop their word-processing skills very effectively. Pupils have used data handling programs to create bar graphs and pie charts from information they have gathered, such as pupils' favourite colours. The pupils are enthusiastic and listen attentively while teachers explain new skills, even when the use of the small computer screens makes following the explanations difficult. The school has addressed this with the purchase of a large screen that will make whole class teaching easier when it is ready for use.
122. The subject is very well led by the co-ordinator who supports and motivates staff well. The scheme is appropriate and much improved since the last inspection, being based on nationally accepted planning but adapted to the needs of the school. The co-ordinator has led training for staff in, for example, the use of the digital camera and digital video camera. The school is well resourced for the subject with hardware and software of an appropriate nature for the ages of the pupils. The governors have appointed a governor to oversee improvements in the subject and who is able to monitor progress in the school through visiting lessons and working with pupils. Plans exist to extend provision further through the running of an after-school club that will enable those pupils with interest or specific expertise to develop their skills.

MUSIC

123. Standards have improved since the last inspection because of the very good teaching, new guidance for teachers and the expertise and enthusiasm of the co-ordinator. Pupils make good progress and achieve above the expected levels of attainment by the age of seven.
124. Opportunities for pupils to develop their musical skills, knowledge and appreciation occur both in lessons and in the daily life of the school. All pupils are introduced to music through planned activities and in assemblies and

other whole school occasions. In assemblies, pupils listen to music playing as they enter and leave the hall. They listen to a variety of music including some from other cultures and are becoming familiar with the work of some famous composers such as Vaughan Williams and Mozart.

125. Pupils sing a wide variety of songs with confidence. Teachers put appropriate emphasis on pronouncing the words clearly and with expression. Pupils follow instrumental and piano accompaniment effectively. They are developing an understanding that written symbols represent the beat and follow these when clapping the rhythm. Many pupils choose to play the recorder and by Year 2 know a range of notes and several simple tunes. The teacher uses specific musical vocabulary such as 'dynamics' and expects pupils to listen carefully to their meaning and remember them.
126. Teachers use the subject well to develop literacy and numeracy skills. Pupils learn the words of songs, read available books and research the lives of famous composers. Their exploration of patterns of sound and rhythm links with their work in mathematics.
127. Pupils show very good attitudes to music as is evident by their enthusiasm for taking part. The school is proud of the performances pupils have staged regularly for parents, friends and the local community. The school takes part in a music festival with other local schools. Groups of musicians, such as a Royal Air Force Band and community college orchestra, visit so that pupils have an opportunity to hear live music. The very strong links with the local church ensures that pupils have experience of singing and playing in special celebrations such as Christmas and Easter. Pupils also sing for groups of senior citizens in the area. Music plays a significant part in pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
128. The subject is very well led and managed by the co-ordinator who has considerable expertise and enthusiasm. She has written the guidance for teachers used by the school and this supports learning very effectively. Resources, which include a wide selection of multicultural instruments, are good.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

129. Standards are above those expected for pupils of this age and have improved since the last inspection. This is due to improvements to the resources, planning and teaching, the enthusiasm of the co-ordinator and the continued provision of swimming, which is very popular.
130. In Year 1 and 2, pupils use bats and balls to practise their skills of throwing, hitting and receiving a ball accurately. In gymnastic lessons they demonstrate a good level of skill in creating moves requiring turning and twisting. They climb, jump and roll skilfully and the majority are able to twist in the air while jumping. They use the apparatus confidently and safely, carrying it carefully under good supervision. In a quiet and focused atmosphere, they share the equipment, taking turns where appropriate, and have a good understanding of good ways to finish their movement.
131. Teachers ensure a good balance of teaching and activity to keep all pupils involved and active. Examples of good practice are used to show others how they can improve their skills. Teachers often have high expectations. For example, in a games lesson, the bat and ball task was extended to have a hoop as a target for pupils aiming the ball towards their partner, and also for the partner to aim at when returning the ball. Teachers ensure pupils' behaviour is very good and this helps create a safe environment to work in. For example, in one gymnastic lesson when a pupil got into difficulties on a piece of apparatus, the pupils responded immediately to the teacher's instructions, and there was no risk to anyone involved.
132. Although it is not a statutory requirement, the school ensures all pupils have the opportunity to have swimming lessons before they leave the school. The target for their achievement is to swim a width unaided and the majority are able to do this before they leave. A number of higher attaining pupils achieve much higher levels than this, partly through lessons held outside of school and their standards are often very high. One of the main reasons for this is safety because the area contains a lot of natural water. The use of a range of parent and volunteer helpers is vital to ensure that this is possible and the school receives very good support from them.
133. The school has a range of after-school activities that is greater than that normally found in infant schools. There is a dance club, and specific coaching sessions for football and short tennis. These provide good opportunities for those pupils with a particular interest or expertise to extend their skills. In the dance club, they have good opportunities to move in an imaginative way, responding to a range of music, and using ribbons. They also use a

parachute for games intended to develop their co-operative and social skills. In recent years, the school has taken part in dance festivals, enabling pupils to perform before a larger audience and to see children from other schools in action. In addition, the school has made use of a visiting circus skills teacher to enable pupils to try out and develop more unusual physical skills requiring balance and accuracy. The school holds an annual sports day and this provides opportunities for a range of team competitive activities. The subject is managed very effectively. The co-ordinator demonstrates strong leadership and a good level of personal expertise.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

134. Standards by the age of seven are in line with those expected in the locally agreed syllabus and have been maintained since the last inspection. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and is at least good and, in half of the lessons observed, very good. Pupils with special educational needs make equally good progress as their peers, especially where they receive targeted support.
135. The recording of pupils' work in books and on paper is largely pictorial but written work also gives the teachers good opportunities to develop writing and literacy skills, such as correct sentence writing. The mainly Christian nature of the work is compared with learning about the Jewish faith in line with the agreed syllabus. This results in, for example, some good comparative work about festivals such as Succoth and Harvest or Christmas and Hanukah. By focusing on just two religions, this enables teachers to ensure sufficient depth in the learning. Year 1 and Year 2 pupils learn a variety of parables and are able to compare aspects of the two religions such as holy men, buildings and scriptures. Older pupils are able to retell the parable of the lost sheep well, and make the message clear.
136. In the lessons observed, pupils were discussing and exploring their responses to acts of vandalism that had occurred on the school site after school. This led to a good level of debate about how pupils felt and how the school could try and prevent it happening again. The work involved literacy and information and communication technology, as posters were designed to appeal to older children, with a good level of discussion about the phraseology to use and the lettering appropriate for the task. One Year 2 pupil suggested the use of exclamation marks, for example. These lessons also provided very good opportunities for pupils' social and moral development.
137. The subject is well managed and planned to link to the half termly topics where appropriate. The planning includes assessment opportunities and a sound system for recording progress. Pupils are given levels at the end of each year and this assists the reporting to parents. The co-ordinator has monitored the teaching and planning throughout the school and this has had a positive impact on standards. The staff scrutinise pupils' work together, although a lot of the work in this subject is oral and can only be closely monitored through lesson observations. The co-ordinator has appropriate plans for the future including improving staff knowledge and understanding about Judaism and through developing opportunities to improve pupils' multicultural knowledge and understanding.