

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **BUNTINGSDALE INFANT SCHOOL**

Market Drayton

LEA area: Shropshire

Unique reference number: 123397

Headteacher: Mrs Hilary Alcock

Reporting inspector: Mr C Parker  
11897

Dates of inspection: 23<sup>rd</sup> to 25<sup>th</sup> September 2002

Inspection number: 248449

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

© Crown copyright 2002

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

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

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

|                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| Type of school:              | Infant  |
| School category:             | Community   |
| Age range of pupils:         | 4 to 7 years                                      |
| Gender of pupils:            | Mixed   |
| School address:              | Buntingsdale Park<br>Market Drayton<br>Shropshire |
| Postcode:                    | TF9 2HB   |
| Telephone number:            | 01630 638370                                      |
| Fax number:                  | 01630 638370                                      |
| Appropriate authority:       | Governing body                                    |
| Name of chair of governors:  | Mrs Kirsten Mould                                 |
| Date of previous inspection: | 17 <sup>th</sup> November 1997                    |

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members |                      | Subject responsibilities   | Aspect responsibilities   |
|--------------|----------------------|--|---|
| C Parker     | Registered inspector | Mathematics<br>Science<br>Information and Communication Technology<br>History<br>Geography<br>Physical education<br>Equal opportunities<br>Special educational needs | The school's results and achievements<br>How well are pupils taught?<br>How well is the school led and managed?   |
| A B Anderson | Lay inspector        |  | The pupils' attitudes, values and personal development<br>How well does the school care for its pupils?<br>How well does the school work in partnership with parents? |
| J Elsley     | Team inspector       | Foundation Stage<br>English<br>Art and design<br>Design and Technology<br>Music<br>Religious education<br>English as an additional language                          | How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?  |

The inspection contractor was:

Hugh Protherough Inspections Limited  
PO Box 396  
Banbury  
Oxfordshire  
OX15 5XJ

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

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

## REPORT CONTENTS

|   | Page      |
|---|-----------|
| <b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>  | <b>6</b>  |
| 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  |           |
| <br>  |           |
| <b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>   |           |
| <br>  |           |
| <b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>  | <b>11</b> |
| The school's results and pupils' achievements   |           |
| Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development  |           |
| <br>  |           |
| <b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>  | <b>12</b> |
| <br>  |           |
| <b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>                         | <b>13</b> |
| <br>  |           |
| <b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>  | <b>15</b> |
| <br>  |           |
| <b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?</b>                                     | <b>16</b> |
| <br>  |           |
| <b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>  | <b>16</b> |
| <br>  |           |
| <b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>  | <b>18</b> |
| <br>  |           |
| <b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>   | <b>19</b> |
| <br>  |           |
| <b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b> | <b>23</b> |

## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Buntingsdale is an infant school for pupils from 3 to 7 years of age. Currently, 19 children are attending the nursery and there are 30 children of school age who are taught in two classes, though this number fluctuates because there is considerable pupil mobility throughout the year. Qualified nursery staff teach the youngest children each morning. Most of the children are from families where one parent is a member of the armed forces. A change of regiment over the summer means that almost all of the children are new to the school this term. There are no children receiving free school meals. Four children of Fijian and Chinese backgrounds, who have just joined the nursery, are at the early stages of learning English, but all those of school age are of UK heritage and speak English as their first language. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs changes with the school population, but it is generally much higher than many schools. Although the children enter the school at various ages and stages, their attainment is generally well below average.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

The school makes very good provision for such a mobile population. The very strong leadership of the headteacher motivates the teachers and assistants who respond very well to the demands placed upon them by the constantly changing cohorts, a high proportion of whom have special educational needs. The teaching is consistently good, and as a result the pupils achieve well and make good progress. The school provides good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- The children in the nursery are very well taught, make very good progress and are well prepared for school life.
- The teaching in Years 1 and 2 is consistently good. Consequently, the pupils achieve well and make good progress.
- The teaching assistants are very effective in the support they give to the pupils, particularly those with special educational needs or are at an early stage in learning English.
- The curriculum is very well planned. The use of structured play to support learning across the curriculum is very effective. All pupils are fully included in a wide range of activities.
- The personal development of the pupils is given a high priority. The organisation of lunchtimes and playtimes fosters social development particularly well.
- The headteacher provides very strong leadership and has established an ethos which enables the school to respond flexibly and sensitively to the needs of a transient population.

#### **What could be improved**

- ICT is not used as widely as it should be.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

Although the standards in English and mathematics are not as high as those reported at the time of the last inspection, the pupils continue to achieve well and make good progress because the school has maintained the many strong elements of its provision. Although there were no key issues in the last report, the school has sought to improve the teaching of spelling and numeracy through its well-

established school improvement activities. Significant steps forward have also been made in developing curriculum continuity from the nursery through the school by the introduction of a comprehensive curriculum at the foundation stage. The headteacher's strong commitment to the professional development of all members of the staff and the well managed school improvement plans show that the school is continually seeking to meet the diverse, and sometimes very challenging needs of a continuously changing school population.

## 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 |      |      |                 |
|-----------------|---------------|------|------|-----------------|
|                 | all schools   |      |      | similar schools |
|                 | 1999          | 2000 | 2001 | 2001            |
| reading         | D             | C    | E    | B               |
| writing         | C             | D    | E    | C               |
| mathematics     | E             | E    | E*   | E               |

| <i>Key</i>         |    |
|--------------------|----|
| well above average | A  |
| above average      | B  |
| average            | C  |
| below average      | D  |
| well below average | E  |
| very low           | E* |

The children in the foundation stage are achieving well and most are making very good progress through the wide range of stimulating activities provided for them. In Years 1 and 2, the pupils are well taught and as a result are making good progress in lessons. The pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are well supported and consequently they also are doing well.

Nevertheless, standards in English and mathematics are below average and are reflected in the results of the national tests that were very low last year. The very high degree of mobility and the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs within the small cohorts have a significant effect on these results. There was an improvement in the mathematics results in 2002, but in reading and writing they remained low. However, the number of pupils taking the tests was very small and two thirds were on the special educational needs register.

The movement of pupils in and out of the school makes it difficult to set targets for groups that differ in composition from year to year. The school, therefore, sensibly sets targets for individuals rather than cohorts, and many pupils achieve the targets that identified for them. Many attain the expected level, but the number of pupils exceeding it is very small.

The pupils are given a wide range of interesting tasks. In some subjects, their attainment is restricted by the limitations of their literacy and numeracy skills, but in music, physical education and religious education the quality of their work is in line with that expected for their age. In art and design technology their work is often better than that.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect                                 | Comment   |
|--|---|
| Attitudes to the school                | Most pupils enjoy coming to school and the wide variety of tasks that they are set.   |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms    | The pupils generally behave well and listen to their teachers. Those who find it difficult to settle down and concentrate are well managed by their teachers and the teaching assistants. |
| Personal development and relationships | The school is very successful in fostering good relationships, and as a result most pupils work and play together harmoniously.   |
| Attendance                             | Attendance is much improved and is now broadly in line with the national average.   |

The children willingly accept responsibility for specific tasks and enjoy the status of being chosen as pupil 'helpers'.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

| Teaching of pupils in: | Nursery and Reception | Years 1 – 2 | Years 3 – 6 |
|------------------------|-----------------------|-------------|-------------|
| Quality of teaching    | Very good             | Good        | n/a         |

*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 teaching in the nursery is very good. The nursery staff meets the needs of the youngest children very effectively and use structured play to support learning across all areas of the foundation stage curriculum. The children respond well to the adults and are acquiring a good range of personal and social skills. In Years 1 and 2, the teaching of English and mathematics is consistently good and the teachers encourage the pupils to develop their basic literacy and numeracy skills across a wide range of activities. The teachers plan their lessons thoroughly; most lessons are well focussed and move along briskly in order to maintain the pupils' concentration and interest.

The teaching assistants provide very good support for the pupils with special educational needs and for those children in the nursery who are at an early stage of learning English.



## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect  | Comment  |
|---|--|
| The quality and range of the curriculum   | The curriculum is very well planned to ensure a smooth transition from the foundation stage to the National Curriculum. The school provides many interesting and motivating activities that enable many of the pupils to make good progress.             |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs   | The individual needs of the pupils are catered for very well. The school identifies the pupils' needs and supports them effectively.   |
| Provision for pupils with English as an additional language                                 | In the very short time that these pupils have been attending the nursery, the school has taken very positive steps to support their learning.  |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | The school is strongly committed to the personal development of the pupils. The teachers give them a wide range of opportunities and experiences that encourage their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.                                 |
| How well the school cares for its pupils  | The teachers take all possible steps to ensure that the pupils entering the school, at whatever age or stage, settle in quickly. They use the information they receive from the pupils' previous schools to plan effectively for their individual needs. |

The school works closely with parents and the army families' officer. The headteacher encourages the parents to take a full and active part in the life of the school. They are kept well informed through regular newsletters.

The school sends its comprehensive prospectus to parents of all pupils before they move to the school.

Information and communication technology is not used effectively to promote learning in all subjects.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect   | Comment  |
|--|--|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | The headteacher provides the school with very strong and effective leadership. Her commitment to the professional development of the teachers is effective in moving the school forward.                                     |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities             | The governors are kept very well informed and are heavily involved in a range of initiatives and developments. They show a commitment well beyond their expected responsibilities.   |
| The school's evaluation of its performance                       | The school evaluates its own performance effectively through reviews of the co-ordinators' and the teachers' work. The headteacher thoroughly analyses the standards attained by each pupil during their time at the school. |
| The strategic use of resources                                   | The school uses its resources well. The teaching assistants, for example, are carefully deployed to give very effective support to pupils  |

|  |                     |
|--|---------------------|
|  | and their teachers. |
|--|---------------------|

Additional funding allows the school to keep a reasonably stable staffing situation to cope with the fluctuations in the number of pupils on roll. The school has a good range of high quality resources, although the provision for information and communication technology is only satisfactory. The building is kept very clean and the classrooms are attractive and well organised. However, the hall is inadequate for physical education lessons.

The governors consult outside agencies and parents, and through recent initiatives are building links with similar schools that will allow them to make comparisons about the quality of education being provided. Through competition, they seek to get value for money in their acquisitions of services, equipment and materials.

**PARENTS’ AND CARERS’ VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

| <b>What pleases parents most</b>   | <b>What parents would like to see improved</b> |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The good progress made by the pupils.</li> <li>• The good teaching.</li> <li>• The information for parents and the good working relationship they have with the school.</li> <li>• The good leadership and management.</li> </ul> |  |

The parents of the children who left the school during the summer completed the questionnaire. There was a very high response rate and a very high degree of satisfaction with the work of the school. These parents were particularly pleased with the progress their children were making; the school’s close working relationship with them and the good leadership and management.

The pre-inspection meeting was attended by one parent who was very pleased with the work of the school and particularly the support given to pupils’ with special educational needs.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

1. Standards are not as high as those reported at the last inspection, but such comparisons should be seen in the context of significant mobility, which results in wholesale changes in the pupil population. It needs also be borne in mind that most of the pupils had then completed at least one year in the school. Whereas, at the time of the present inspection, most of the pupils had been attending the school for only three weeks. Nevertheless, the good progress being made by the pupils at the last inspection has been maintained with the present group. The children in the foundation stage are achieving well and most are making very good progress through a wide range of stimulating activities. In Years 1 and 2, the pupils are well taught and as a result are making good progress in their lessons. The pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are well supported and consequently they also are doing well.
2. Standards in English and mathematics are below average, and this is reflected in last year 's national test results, which were very low. However, the very high degree of pupil mobility and the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs within small cohorts had a significant restrictive effect on these results. In 2002, there was an improvement in the results in mathematics, but not in reading and writing. However, the number of pupils taking the tests was very small and two thirds of them were on the special educational needs register.
3. When compared to schools in similar circumstances, the results in 2001 were slightly above average in reading, average in writing, but well below average in mathematics. Using a similar comparative approach, the results show a slight fall in the reading and writing results in 2002, but a considerable improvement in mathematics.
4. The results in previous years are for different school populations as a consequence of the movement of pupils in and out of the school. The small cohorts and the significant mobility make target setting difficult. The school, therefore, sets targets for individuals rather than cohorts, and many pupils achieve the targets that are set for them. Many attain the expected level, but the number of pupils exceeding it is very small.
5. The pupils are given a wide range of interesting tasks. In history and geography their attainment is restricted by the limitations of their literacy skills, but in music, physical education and religious education the quality of their work is in line with that expected for their age. In art and design technology their work is often better than that. Standards in information and communication technology are not as high as they should be because the pupils are not making enough use of it across the curriculum

#### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

6. The vast majority of parents agree that their children like school, and the pupils themselves attend willingly. Most of them demonstrate positive attitudes to their work, are interested in their lessons and are eager to learn. They quickly settle down for registrations, assemblies and in class. The majority of pupils are attentive to their teachers, willingly ask and answer questions, and freely offer their own ideas and opinions. The older pupils are capable of sustained concentration and working quietly. However, a few have difficulty in persevering

with their work and can be distracted. The teachers and teaching assistants consistently work hard to motivate these pupils.

7. The overall standards of behaviour are good. The teaching and non-teaching staff have high expectations of the pupils and make clear the conduct that is acceptable in the school. Consequently, most pupils behave well and act in a responsible manner throughout the school day. Their behaviour in the classrooms, at breaks and at lunchtime is consistently good, and they move around the school in a quiet and orderly manner. A small number of children have some emotional and behavioural difficulties, but their behaviour is very well managed and this prevents any disruption to the teaching and learning. There were no signs of either bullying or isolation of individual pupils. As a result, the children work and play in an environment that is free from oppressive behaviour. There have been no exclusions in recent years. Almost all of parents agree that behaviour in the school is good.
8. The relationships in the school are very good. The pupils relate very well to their teachers, to other adults and also to one another. They are polite, courteous and welcoming to visitors. Boys and girls of different ability levels work well together in the classrooms. Most pupils collaborate well, share resources, take turns and listen to each other. In the assemblies, they are respectful of the occasion, willingly join in hymn singing and bow their heads reverently during prayers. During the outdoor breaks, boys and girls of all ages play well together and happily share the available resources.
9. The pupils' personal development is good. Most parents agree that the school is helping their children to become mature and responsible. In the classrooms, the majority of pupils take responsibility for their own work, and in lessons they were observed working independently in a manner appropriate to their ages. The children willingly accept responsibility for specific tasks and enjoy the status of being chosen as pupil 'helpers'. The school raises funds for national and international charities, and the pupils are becoming aware of others less fortunate than themselves. The children are taken on a good range of visits and encounter an appropriate variety of visitors.
10. Attendance has improved from the low levels that were recorded in 2001, and is now broadly in line with the national average. The rate of unauthorised absence is below the national average. Punctuality in the mornings is good and there is a low level of recorded lateness.

#### **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?**

11. As reported at the last inspection, much of the teaching is either good or very good, but there is less excellent teaching in evidence. Of the lessons seen during the inspection over half were good and a further third were very good; very few were excellent. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed.
12. The teaching of the youngest children is very good. The work of the nursery staff is very effective in meeting the needs of the children because a high level of co-operation and teamwork. They plan many interesting and purposeful activities that use structured play across all areas of the foundation stage curriculum. The children respond well to the adults and are learning a good range of personal and social skills. The adults are particularly effective in managing the behaviour of the children by providing clear guidance about what is right and what is wrong, and by encouraging and praising sharing and co-operation. They ensure that all pupils are fully included in activities and provide good support for those children who are at a very early stage of learning to speak English. As a result, these children have made good progress in

a very short time. The adults question the children to cultivate their interest and for many they model answers, often repeating words to help the children to speak clearly. The children in the nursery are learning very effectively. Even at this early stage in the year, many are displaying positive attitudes and with adult guidance are almost constantly engaged in activities. They are also showing the early signs of independence. This is because the nursery staff expect them to make choices, hang up their own coats, put on their own aprons and tidy up at the end of a session.

13. The teaching of the children in the reception and Year 1 classes is good. The lessons are securely planned and purposeful, involving the children in a range of tasks that are helping them to develop their early skills. Relationships are strong and the pupils respond well to their teachers' questions that encourage them to contribute verbally to the lesson. This was evident in the follow up to a visit to a baker's shop. The work of the reception children generally builds well on their experiences in the nursery. The children are well supported and given some opportunities to make choices, but in some lessons they could be more actively involved in a range of tasks.
14. In Years 1 and 2 class, the teaching is good. The teacher has a lively and engaging style that motivates the pupils. She is very clear about what she wants the pupils to learn and plans the lessons thoroughly. The teaching of English and mathematics is consistently good and the teacher encourages the pupils to develop their basic literacy and numeracy skills through a wide range of activities. For example, in mathematics the pupils were beginning to develop strategies for simple mental calculations; the teacher was very clear in her explanations and as a result many of the children made good steps forward. The lessons are well focussed and move along at a good pace to maintain the pupils' concentration and interest. Generally, the pupils respond well and most are positive about their learning, but a few boys have immature attitudes and occasionally interrupt the lessons. However, they are very well managed, encouraged and supported by both the class teacher and the teaching assistants.
15. Homework is used well to support learning at school. The pupils' reading records show that they read regularly at home, and they are given spellings to learn and mathematical activities. The teachers provide clear instructions for the tasks and parents and children evaluate the tasks after completing them.
16. The marking and annotation of the pupils' work is very good. It provides the teachers with very useful information about how the pupils are progressing and helps them to plan the next step forward. The teachers also set targets for each child to help them to improve both socially and academically.
17. The high proportion of pupils with special educational needs are well supported once their needs are clearly established. They are given a good deal of individual attention and fully included in all aspects of school life. The teachers modify tasks and tailor activities to the needs of individuals with special educational needs. Nevertheless, the almost continuous arrival and departure of pupils does on occasions hamper this process, though the teachers do all they can minimise the disruption.

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

18. The curriculum is thoroughly planned and ensures that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, have access to a full

range of lessons. The overall provision for all pupils is good. The breadth, balance and relevance of the whole curriculum are good and have been maintained at this level since the previous inspection. There is a very strong and appropriate emphasis not only on the pupils' personal development, but also their academic achievement. The curriculum is enriched for many pupils through the very good extra-curricular activities, visits to places of interest and visitors to the school. In this way, the school extends the wide range of interesting activities and approaches that are used across the curriculum. For instance there have been recent visits to Shugborough Hall, to the local bakers and a chocolate factory.

19. Very good use has been made of the national guidance to create a curriculum framework and the locally agreed syllabus for Religious Education is successfully integrated into the curriculum. The teachers give very high priority to the development of the pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. The use of a two-year planned programme of cross-curricular themes in subjects such as, history, geography, science and music ensures that pupils make good links in their learning. However, information and communication technology is not used widely enough to support learning in all subjects. **This is a key issue for action.**
20. Structured play as a medium for learning is used very effectively across the whole school. This contributes positively to the very good personal, social and health education of the children as well as, promoting spoken English, independent decision making, exploration, enquiry and discovery skills. The 'Plan, Do and Review' sessions help the pupils to direct and evaluate their own learning.
21. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is good and includes opportunities for a wide range of self-initiated learning, both within the classroom and outdoors. This helps to promote and accelerate the children's spoken English, literacy skills, knowledge and understanding of the world, and their creative, physical and personal development. The planning is securely based on the early learning goals.
22. The school caters well for a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. The curriculum for these pupils is well planned and based appropriately on the targets in their individual education plans. The special needs co-ordinator has a very secure grasp of her role. There are regular reviews of their progress and the resulting programmes for their education are appropriate and well defined.
23. The school enjoys good links with other schools that serve the children of armed forces personnel. For example, a recent conference explored the many issues associated with pupil mobility, such as the transfer of information, in order to minimise the disruption to the children's learning.
24. The very good provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has been maintained since the previous inspection.
25. The provision for the pupils' spiritual development is very good. There is a strong feeling of family and community in the school that is particularly evident, for example, in assemblies. Music, story and song help to promote a sense of awe and wonder at the everyday world around us. For instance, the lighting of the candle created a very calm atmosphere and a focal point for prayer. In religious education and through discussion, the pupils are encouraged to reflect on the deeper issues of life that are often close to their own experiences. For example, they are encouraged to reflect on their feelings when recently having moved house, and the wonder of nature as they let Brian, a giant African land snail, crawl over their hands. The

school has a strong commitment to fostering the pupils' personal pride and to raising their self-esteem. All members of the staff work hard to encourage and support their pupils and set a good example through their very good teamwork and enthusiasm.

26. The provision for the pupils' social and moral development is very good. There are agreed rules that are consistently and sensitively applied. The reception children and most of the Year 1 and 2 pupils, who have only been at the school for three weeks, already know and have accepted the expectations embodied in the school rules and clearly value and respect their importance. The pupils are encouraged to be honest and trustworthy as they carry out various responsibilities. Their work shows that they are given valuable opportunities to meet a range of visitors, such as the local green grocers and the farmer.
27. The provision for pupils' cultural development is equally strong. Evidence of work from last year demonstrates that through a range of visits to historical sites, art and music festivals, the pupils have good opportunities to develop a knowledge of their own culture and heritage. The work in religious education, art and music lessons extends the pupils' awareness of the richness of other cultures, their values, customs, beliefs and festivals, such as Holi and Divali. Book displays around the school and in the library also provide valuable information about lifestyles and religious practices in other cultures. This is an area that the school fosters effectively through parental involvement, displays of images, artefacts and experiences that enhance the pupils' awareness of the rich diversity of cultures in Britain.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

28. The school provides very effective care for its pupils. The headteacher places a very high priority and provides very good leadership in this aspect of the school's work. All members of staff are very caring and totally committed to the welfare of the children in their charge. The procedures for child protection are securely in place, well disseminated, and fully understood by all staff. The governing body and the headteacher take their health and safety responsibilities seriously and all the required health and safety inspections, including risk assessment, are systematically carried out and formally recorded. Experienced, well-deployed teaching assistants are used effectively to support the children's learning, particularly those pupils who have additional educational needs. This has a positive impact on the progress these children are making. Conscientious members of staff, who are alert and vigilant, supervise the pupils very well at breaks. The lunchtime supervision is also undertaken in a similar manner, and the standard of care is very high.
29. The school has very good procedures for promoting and monitoring discipline and good behaviour. For example, the behaviour policy is supplemented by a code of conduct and classroom rules that have been discussed and agreed with the pupils. All members of staff have very high expectations of what constitutes acceptable behaviour, and discipline is administered conscientiously and consistently throughout the school. This results in high standards of behaviour. The procedures for recording and monitoring absence are very good. The registers are completed correctly; the reasons for non-attendance are recorded consistently and rigorously followed up. This has led to a significant improvement in attendance.
30. The class teachers and teaching assistants know their pupils extremely well and have a very good understanding of their individual personal needs.
31. The teachers take all possible steps to ensure that the pupils entering the school at any point settle in quickly. They use the information they receive from the pupils' previous schools to plan

effectively for their individual needs. Following the current change of regiments, the school received a good deal of useful information, but reports that this has not always been the case in the past. This information has allowed the teachers to get to know the pupils quickly, and has been of considerable use in the planning of work for them. The school also has its own entry assessment procedure that supplements the information it receives. During their time at the school, a comprehensive record of achievements is compiled, most notably relating to the pupils' progress in English and mathematics. A record of the work the pupils undertake, right across the curriculum, is also produced. These records are kept up to date and transferred when the pupils leave the school. Overall, the assessment and recording arrangements are very good.

32. The headteacher and her staff have a very good knowledge and understanding of the needs of, and the difficulties faced by, a transient military population. This enables them consistently to provide a very caring and stable environment for the children during their stay in the school.

### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

33. Relationships between the school and parents are very good. Most parents consistently expressed a high level of satisfaction with all aspects of the school and many lend active support. Some help in the classrooms, by hearing reading for example, and there are always plenty willing volunteers to accompany the children on out of school trips. A group of parents helped prepare the ground for the school's attractive environmental studies area. Most parents are involved in their children's homework and home reading, and consistently enter appropriate comments in the home-school reading books. Due to the transient nature of the military population, it has been difficult to start and maintain a parents association, but the school fund raising activities are well supported.
34. Communication between the school and home is very good, and most parents agree that they are kept well informed about how their children are getting on. Prior to the changeover of military units, the school sends out comprehensive and timely information to prospective parents. It also issues regular, informative newsletters and notification about specific events and activities. It publishes a very comprehensive, informative prospectus. The governors hold an annual meeting with parents and publish an annual report. The parents receive informative annual reports that clearly indicate what their children can do and the progress they are making. They are offered the opportunity to attend appropriate consultation meetings to discuss their children's work and progress with their teachers.
35. The headteacher maintains regular and close contact with the resident unit's families' officer and fully supports the battalion's community ethos. She and her staff are very welcoming and approachable. They make themselves readily available to parents at the start and end of each day and there are plenty of opportunities for parents to speak informally to their child's class teacher.

### **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

36. The headteacher provides the school with very strong and effective leadership. Her clear vision is shared by all members of staff and the governing body and is central to the school's success in welcoming and supporting a very mobile pupil population. She is influential in raising awareness of the challenges presented by the movement of pupils in and out of the school and is working closely with similar schools to share practices and successes. The headteacher also works very closely with parents, welfare agencies and the army families' organisation to continually improve the provision made for the pupils.



37. The school is well managed and runs very smoothly. The headteacher is very well supported by a highly efficient school administrator. There is a clear commitment to the professional development of all members of staff and the school is accredited with the "Investor in people" award. It utilises effectively the school development planning, performance management and reviews by the co-ordinators to maintain and extend the provision it makes for its pupils.
38. The school's aims and values are explicit and central to all that happens in the school. For example, the shared commitment to the personal and social development of the pupils is evident on the playground, in assemblies and in the relationships between the teachers, teaching assistants and the pupils. At the time of the inspection, most of the pupils had been at the school for less than three weeks, and much time and effort was given to establishing expectations, promoting co-operation and engendering an ethos in which the pupils' basic skills can be developed through interesting and enjoyable tasks.
39. The governors are kept very well informed and are heavily involved in a range of initiatives and developments that show a commitment well beyond their expected responsibilities. All governors are members of committees, which undertake a good deal of the necessary work. They also have responsibilities for particular areas of the curriculum and meet with the subject co-ordinators to assess for themselves the effectiveness of the school's provision.
40. The governors are instrumental in setting the priorities for the school's development, then monitoring progress and evaluating the impact of the improvement activities. The headteacher keeps them very well informed. Her regular reports give them the information they need; and in addition they receive all newsletters and financial data to keep them abreast of the school's current position.
41. The headteacher analyses the standards attained by all pupils during their time at the school. This is very important since the cohort data often refers to small numbers of pupils, many of whom have special needs. The headteacher and teachers are able to evaluate the extent of each pupil's progress from comprehensive records and profiles kept on each one. They are under no illusions that the level of attainment is often below average and constantly seek to ensure that pupils are achieving well and making good progress whilst they are at the school.
42. The governors are conscious of the need to check that the school is doing the best for its pupils. They consult outside agencies and parents and through recent initiatives are building links with similar schools that will allow them to make comparisons about the quality of education being provided. Through competition they seek to get value for money when purchasing services, equipment and materials.
43. Additional funding allows the school to keep a reasonably stable staffing situation to cope with the fluctuations in the number of pupils. In the last school year, 32 pupils joined and 20 others left. During the summer almost all of the pupils left and were replaced by a new group of children as a result of a battalion change. The current staffing level is necessary to deal with such changes. The headteacher carefully deploys the teaching assistants to give support to pupils with specific needs. For instance, last term two assistants were supporting pupils with behavioural difficulties, and when these children left they were redeployed to the nursery to work with a small number of children who are at the early stages in learning English. It is clearly evident that they are used with a good degree of flexibility to meet the needs of the pupils.

44. The school has a good range of high quality resources although the provision for information and communication technology is only satisfactory. The building is kept very clean and classrooms are attractive and well organised, but the hall is inadequate. It is occupied by the nursery class each morning, then cleared and used for assemblies and physical education in the afternoons. It is too small to provide a wide range of physical education activities, but the teachers make good use of the playground in fair weather. The area immediately surrounding the school is very attractive, and developments such as 'caterpillar corner' and the fenced pond provide the pupils with a stimulating environment for both work and play. The nursery has a well-equipped outdoor area that provides a good extension to the classroom.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

45. The school should maintain its constant drive to raise standards of attainment through its comprehensive school development plan. In addition the governors, headteacher and teachers should:
- (1) make more extensive and effective use of information and communication technology right across the curriculum.

Paragraph 19

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### *Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection*

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Number of lessons observed   | 23 |
| Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils | 6  |

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

|            | Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|------------|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| Number     | 1         | 6         | 13   | 3            | 0              | 0    | 0         |
| Percentage | 4         | 26        | 57   | 13           | 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 three percentage points.*

### *Information about the school's pupils*

| <b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>                                    | Nursery | YR – Y2 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)      | 9       | 31      |
| Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals | 0       | 0       |

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

| <b>Special educational needs</b>                                    | Nursery | YR – Y2 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs       | 1       | 1       |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | 3       | 10      |

| <b>English as an additional language</b>                | No of pupils |
|---|--------------|
| Number of pupils with English as an additional language | 4            |

| <b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>                                | No of pupils |
|--|--------------|
| Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission | 32           |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving           | 20           |

### *Attendance 2000/1*

#### **Authorised absence**

|                           | %   |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data               | 8.3 |
| National comparative data | 5.6 |

#### **Unauthorised absence**

|                           | %   |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data               | 0.5 |
| National comparative data | 0.5 |

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

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

|  |      |      |       |       |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|  | 2001 | 5    | 6     | 11    |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results       |          | Reading | Writing | Mathematics |
|---|----------|---------|---------|-------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above   | Boys     | 3       | 4       | 4           |
|   | Girls    | 4       | 4       | 5           |
|   | Total    | 7       | 8       | 9           |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School   | 64 (92) | 73 (92) | 82 (92)     |
|   | National | 84 (83) | 86 (84) | 91 (90)     |

| Teachers' Assessments                       |          | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above   | Boys     | 4       | 4           | 4       |
|   | Girls    | 4       | 5           | 5       |
|   | Total    | 8       | 9           | 9       |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School   | 73 (77) | 82 (77)     | 82 (77) |
|   | National | 85 (84) | 89 (88)     | 89 (88) |

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

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

|                                 | No of pupils |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Black – Caribbean heritage      | 0            |
| Black – African heritage        | 0            |
| Black – other                   | 0            |
| Indian                          | 0            |
| Pakistani                       | 0            |
| Bangladeshi                     | 0            |
| Chinese                         | 0            |
| White                           | 0            |
| Any other minority ethnic group | 0            |

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### ***Teachers and classes***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2**

|  |      |
|--|------|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 3    |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher   | 10   |
| Average class size                       | 15.5 |

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y2**

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Total number of education support staff | 6   |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week   | 121 |

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 0.2 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher   | 9   |
| Total number of education support staff  | 2   |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week    | 45  |
| Number of pupils per FTE adult           | 4.5 |

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Recruitment of teachers***

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years   | 3 |
| Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years   | 3 |
| 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 |

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

|                              | Fixed period | Permanent |
|------------------------------|--------------|-----------|
| Black – Caribbean heritage   | 0            | 0         |
| Black – African heritage     | 0            | 0         |
| Black – other                | 0            | 0         |
| Indian                       | 0            | 0         |
| Pakistani                    | 0            | 0         |
| Bangladeshi                  | 0            | 0         |
| Chinese                      | 0            | 0         |
| White                        | 0            | 0         |
| Other minority ethnic groups | 0            | 0         |

*This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

### ***Financial information***

|  |         |
|--|---------|
| Financial year                             | 2001    |
|  | £       |
| Total income                               | 197 384 |
| Total expenditure                          | 211 993 |
| Expenditure per pupil                      | 3364    |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 18 198  |
| Balance carried forward to next year       | 3 589   |

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*



***Results of the survey of parents and carers***

**Questionnaire return rate**

|                                   |    |
|-----------------------------------|----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 50 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 37 |

**Percentage of responses in each category**

|  | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school.   | 68             | 27            | 5                | 0                 | 0          |
| My child is making good progress in school.  | 68             | 30            | 0                | 3                 | 0          |
| Behaviour in the school is good.   | 51             | 41            | 5                | 0                 | 3          |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.                              | 46             | 38            | 8                | 3                 | 5          |
| The teaching is good.  | 76             | 16            | 0                | 3                 | 5          |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.                          | 70             | 22            | 3                | 5                 | 0          |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 76             | 22            | 0                | 3                 | 0          |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.              | 76             | 22            | 0                | 3                 | 0          |
| The school works closely with parents.   | 57             | 38            | 5                | 0                 | 0          |
| The school is well led and managed.  | 84             | 14            | 0                | 3                 | 0          |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.                      | 76             | 16            | 5                | 3                 | 0          |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.            | 70             | 19            | 5                | 0                 | 5          |

## **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**

46. Since the last inspection, the school has maintained and enhanced the good provision for children in the nursery and reception classes. The children attend mornings only in the nursery and full-time in the reception class. Almost all of the children have only just joined the school and the time of the inspection had been in school for less than three weeks. Very few children have had pre-school playgroup experience and their overall attainment on entry was well below expectations for children of this age.
47. Since the last inspection the staff have ensured that there is a greater consistency and continuity from the nursery to the reception class. The assessment of the children's personal, social and emotional development and their academic achievement is very good. A significant feature of the school's work is the early identification of the individual needs of the children and the support they receive.
48. There is a strong inclusive ethos, consequently any subsequent reference to 'all children' includes those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. There are no significant differences in the achievements of various groups in any aspect of the curriculum.

### **Personal, social and emotional development**

49. At this point of the academic year, the personal, social and emotional development of the children is the major focus of the curriculum provision. The children have settled in well and are secure, happy and confident in coming to school. They participate fully in all the activities around them, both in the indoor and outdoor learning environments. Although their attainment is well below expectation for their age, a few have begun to make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. This is because the members of staff work well together and provide good quality teaching. As a result, the children have made a very positive start to their school life.
50. The well-established routines provide a structure within which the children can begin to exercise independence. They have already become familiar with self-registration and are learning to choose and plan their own activities from those provided, and attend to their own personal hygiene. A significant number have difficulty in putting on their coats without help, but they follow instructions given to them by adults and when they succeed they are clearly proud of their achievement. They are beginning to learn to socialise well, especially when involved in purposeful play activities. In this way, they are beginning to respect the views of others.
51. Most of the children are establishing good relationships with the adults and other children, and are beginning to develop an awareness of and sensitivity to their needs and feelings. The adults place a great emphasis on reinforcing socially acceptable behaviour and already the children are beginning to learn and understand the differences between right and wrong. For example, when one child snatched the tools from another, the adult dealt with it immediately in a kind but firm manner. This attentiveness to the individual children's needs is a notable feature of the adults' work. Similarly, when the children were given the opportunity to touch the Giant African Snail, the nearby adults were talking all the time to the individual child about being gentle and caring so

as not to frighten the snail. The children responded appropriately, demonstrating very clearly the sense of trust and the rapport that is being built between adult and child.

### **Communication, language and literacy**

52. The children's spoken language skills in both the nursery and the reception classes are well below average. However, as a result of good teaching and the wide range of the curriculum provision the children are already making good progress with their speaking and listening skills. The adults constantly encourage the pupils to listen carefully to stories and promote their curiosity by asking them what they think will happen next. They also give very good attention to the development of spoken English, both in the 'literacy sessions' and during the children's role-play activities. Many children either do not speak clearly or make single word observations, for example, when they are announcing their choice of activity. Moreover, some do not yet talk with other children who may be working near them, and initially they usually respond to the adults by either gesture or facial expression. However, the staff are very good at getting them to develop their one or two word responses into simple sentences, and as a result the children are gaining confidence. Nevertheless, it is likely that only a few will achieve the targets set for the end of the Foundation Stage, despite the very good teaching they receive.
53. It was evident from conversations with the children that they want to share books and learn to read. They are beginning to find stories a source of pleasure, and have a growing understanding that print conveys meaning. Very few children in the reception class know their initial sounds or have begun to read some words. However, they do know that we read from left to right. Their ability to memorise repetitive parts of stories is still very low, but a few have learned by heart the key lines of some nursery rhymes. The adults are adept at reinforcing language by gestures and the use of visual materials, such as tropical fruit in the story of 'Handa's Surprise'. The children who are at an early stage of learning English and others whose language ability is very limited benefit greatly from the methods used by all adults to ensure that they understand what is being said.
54. The children have suitable opportunities to understand that marks, words and letters convey meaning. In both the nursery and the reception class their early attempts at writing are encouraged. Some are simply making marks on paper to represent writing. A few are beginning to write random letters of the alphabet, to form letter shapes and to write their own names with a mixture of capital and lower case letters. A very small minority can copy simple words and are learning to form the upper and lower case letters correctly. The children make good efforts to control their pencils and crayons as they apply colour. Their progress is good because of the high quality teaching they receive. The adults are skilful at fostering their hand-eye co-ordination through a variety of activities with construction kits, jigsaws and paints. Despite this, most children find it difficult to develop the skills required in the early learning goals of the Foundation Stage curriculum by the end of the reception year.
55. The staff have a very good knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and collaborate well in planning work to meet the diverse needs of the children. Consequently, the activities are usually very well matched to the children's particular levels of ability.

### **Mathematical development**

56. Imaginative teaching is helping the children to make a good start in learning about number by counting, matching and sorting in a range of contexts. As a result, the children are making a positive start to their mathematical understanding from a low attainment on entry. Nevertheless,

despite the good progress being made it is unlikely that the children will attain the age-related expectation by the time that they leave the reception class.

57. In the nursery, the children are beginning to count numbers in sequence to ten, for example, by using oranges from a basket to make a number line. As yet, however, few can confidently count beyond five or recognise any number shapes. Many activities linked to other areas of the curriculum support the children's mathematical learning and the adults are skilled in extending the children's vocabulary and understanding through practical experiences, such as the use of water play and various outdoor activities. They do so, for instance by asking what shape is the wheel, and checking if a child knows a right turn from a left when they come to the 'traffic light'.
58. A particularly strong feature is the way in which adults help the children to view the world around them in mathematical terms. The use of structured play to support mathematical learning is good. The good breadth of activities both indoors and outdoors enables the children to make good progress in their understanding of number. This can be seen during their role-play activities, for example, when they are handling money to buy and sell their vegetables at the shop, or weighing, measuring and estimating when making bread. The children have already started to develop positive attitudes to mathematics because all members of staff make the learning fun.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

59. The staff make good provision to develop the children's knowledge and understanding of the world. Suitable foundations are being laid in science and information and communication technology. The adults in both the nursery and reception classes are developing the children's early keyboard skills and their control of the mouse effectively. The children are beginning to follow the instructions on the screen, but as yet do not understand how the computer programs will support their learning.
60. In other areas, the staff use questioning very sensitively to promote enquiry and discovery in the children's learning. On one occasion, for example, the teacher took the reception class children to look at the pond after they had looked at photographs of its construction. The teacher's good questioning skills ensured that the children noticed the changes.
61. The children have good opportunities to use construction toys, playdough, clay and a wide range of materials to develop their cutting and sticking skills. There are very good opportunities for the children to extend and acquire a greater understanding of the world. For example, they were very excited about their project on bread following a visit to the local bakery.

### **Physical development**

62. The physical skills of the children in the nursery and the reception classes are being developed appropriately and the children are on course to achieve the early learning goals described in the Foundation Curriculum. They are using a suitable range of large apparatus and equipment confidently and competently. The children enjoy the challenge and show pleasure in their achievements as they 'push' and 'steer' the little cars and bicycles around the garden. Their finer physical movement skills are less well co-ordinated but they do have, for example, regular opportunities to use a range of brushes when painting. In both the nursery and the reception classes, the children's cutting skills are poor. Nevertheless, with perseverance and good adult

support, the children are making positive strides forward in the use of scissors to cut paper, though they have some way to go before they master this skill.

63. The teaching to improve the children's physical development is very good. The staff ensure an appropriate balance between vigilance about safety and encouraging independence. This was very evident as the children dressed for outdoor play and when they were climbing on the apparatus. The children are given clear instructions about how to use the different outdoor areas so that no one is put at risk. They greatly enjoy physical activities and are learning how to take turns, for example on the bicycles, and how to co-operate with each other.

### **Creative development**

64. At present, the children's attainment in their creative development is below expectations, but good provision and high quality teaching are enabling them to make either good or very good progress in this aspect of the curriculum. The planning has clear aims and objectives stating very clearly what the adults want the children to learn. Nevertheless, it is likely that only a minority will have reached the expected level by the end of their time in the reception year.
65. All of the children have already begun to produce a wide range of artwork. They are learning to select materials and to express themselves freely in paint and collage. Adults are on hand to guide them in the development of skills and techniques in the handling of brushes and the mixing of paint. All work is highly valued so that every child feels very comfortable with what they have accomplished. This motivates them to want to experiment and discover. Much of the children's previous artwork shows a strong link with mathematics. For example, some activities purposefully develop the children's awareness of repeated patterns.
66. The majority of the children's musical experiences were very limited on entry to school. The staff ensure that the children have free access to musical instruments in the nursery so that they can explore musical sound and listen quietly to tape recordings of music. In the short singing sessions observed during the inspection, most of the children loved either to listen or to join with the adult in singing the song. This was an enjoyable time and a positive reinforcement and enrichment of the children's vocabulary and mathematical learning.
67. At this early stage of their schooling, the children are still exploring equipment and the exciting opportunities available for role-play. They are making good progress because the planned activities stimulate their imagination and are fostering their understanding of the world in which we live. As the children become more settled, this well-planned provision will enhance their learning through different activities and in a natural context.

### **ENGLISH**

68. The standards in English are below the expected levels, and are lower than those reported at the previous inspection when they were average overall and many pupils were exceeding the nationally expected levels.
69. Attainment on entry is well below average, but the good, and sometimes very good, teaching in the nursery enables the pupils to make good progress in spoken English, listening, reading and writing skills. Nevertheless, the work from the previous cohort of children shows that they do not reach the expected level by the end of the reception year. The evidence from the literacy lessons indicates that standards in speaking are also lower than would be found in many schools.

70. In Years 1 and 2, the pupils' speaking skills are below average. Many pupils speak rather inaudibly and require support to develop clear diction. In most cases, the children speak in two or three word phrases rather than in full sentences. The teachers' provide very good opportunities for the pupils to talk and to develop the ability to express themselves. The 'chatting chums', for instance, allows the children to talk to the person sitting next to them about what they did at the weekend, or their feelings about moving house. Their listening skills, however, are better because of good teaching that challenges, motivates and stimulates interest in their learning. The pupils are beginning to listen courteously to each other and to stories; they then respond appropriately to questions, showing that they have listened carefully. The development of spoken English and listening skills is a key priority for the school.
71. The development of reading is also a priority. A significant strength is the early reading assessments carried out with each child so that they can be given appropriate books to read. There is a wide range of reading abilities in the present current cohort, but very few pupils are reaching the higher levels. The higher attaining pupils who are reading at an average level are confident in their recognition of a range of letters and their related sounds, and can apply this knowledge when reading unfamiliar words in simple texts. They make good progress in their understanding of the text and this is enhanced in the shared reading activities during the course of the literacy session. A good example was seen when they were reading 'My Diary'. The lower attaining pupils make good progress because the staff make the learning interesting. The additional help given to small groups by the class teacher or teaching assistant is a strong feature of the school's approach to reading. The library is used well by pupils, staff and parents to support reading. It is well laid out and the added displays of books promote the children's cultural awareness as they cover a wide variety of interests and information. Reading is also promoted by the attractive displays of notices, labels, captions and children's work around the school.
72. Overall, the pupils' attainment in writing is below the expected level. The teachers have a good understanding of the national literacy strategy, and they plan and prepare resources to meet the individual needs of the children. They ensure that the pupils have regular to write for a range of purposes. In most cases, however, the pupils' use of language is limited so the school ensures that they have a wide range of resources to stimulate the children's imagination and enrich their vocabulary. The evidence from last year shows that children progress from mark making to letter-strings, simple words, to the use of punctuation and a richer subject specific vocabulary at a good rate. They write, for example, simple accounts of news and sets of instructions about how to make a chocolate bar. The pupils had learnt to write short stories with a beginning and an ending, a description of a visit or walks around the pond, poetry and accounts of their work in science and history. The school's approach to spelling has improved since the last inspection because there is a clear, well-implemented policy on the methods to be employed. As a result, the pupils are making good progress in the use of their early phonic knowledge and key word banks. Handwriting skills are generally carefully developed and particular attention given to pencil grip. The majority of pupils are forming letters correctly, but they are often inconsistent in shape and size, and words not kept in a straight line when they write more than one sentence. This is an area for improvement. As yet, there are too few children capable of developing joined up writing.
73. Taken overall, the teaching of English is good. The teachers plan their work carefully and the lessons are thoroughly prepared in order that the objectives are clear to the pupils. Effective questioning that encourages discussion and paired discussions are improving the children's speaking and listening skills, and the teaching of reading and writing, including handwriting and spelling is good. The teachers' marking is consistent, and the comments are helpful in moving

the individual child's learning forward. There is a strong commitment on the part of all staff to ensure that the literacy strategy focuses on the basic skills of reading and writing and that these skills are employed and developed in all subjects. Literacy is systematically taught in order to move each child's attainment to a higher level.

74. The subject is well managed. The co-ordinator has taken a strong lead in response to the national initiatives in order to support literacy. There are clear and comprehensive policy documents.

## **MATHEMATICS**

75. Standards in mathematics are below average overall but the results of the 2002 national tests show an improvement on the previous year when they were very low. It is difficult to draw any conclusions about the longer term trend in test results because of the considerable pupil mobility. Very few pupils entering the nursery remain to complete key stage 1; many arrive and leave along the way. The following judgements are, therefore, based on the pupils' completed work from last year and the lessons observed.
76. The attainment and achievement observed in the current Year 1 and 2 class illustrates the extent of the variation in cohorts. At the moment, for example, many of the pupils doing the better work in mathematics are in Year 1. Most of the Year 2 pupils are developing methods for adding quickly two numbers up to ten, but they do not recall these quickly and simply arrive at a correct answer by counting on. This is some way short what is expected, even at this early stage in Year 2. An inspection of last year's completed work shows that during the course of Year 2 the pupils made good progress in their understanding and use of numbers. They achieved well, with only one pupil not attaining the expected level and one pupil exceeding it by the time they left the school. All of the other pupils attained the expected level.
77. A comparison of the work being done by the pupils who have just entered the school and those who have just left indicates clearly why good progress is made. The pupils complete a good range and quantity of work that is carefully assessed and annotated. Various approaches, including the use of many practical activities, interest and motivate the pupils. There is a stark contrast between the way pupils who have just entered the school in Year 2 form their numbers and set out their work and the much more organized and well presented work of those who have just left. This illustrates well the school's high expectations and the good progress that the children make.
78. In the pupils' work from last year, there is no discernable difference in the achievement of boys and girls, but in lessons there is a noticeable variation in attitude and confidence amongst some boys. In one of the lessons observed, the teacher actively and repeatedly encouraged boys to have a go and praised their efforts. The school is aware of this and works hard to motivate them. The pupils with special educational needs are supported very well, and as a result they make good progress in their learning.
79. The quality of the teaching and learning is good. The teachers have good classroom management skills and create a calm and purposeful working atmosphere in which the pupils can concentrate and learn effectively. As a result, they generally behave well and are interested and involved in the activities. Achievement is good. The teachers use the national numeracy framework to plan a good range of activities that meet the needs of the pupils.

80. A particularly good feature of the pupils' work is the range of practical activities provided for them. This makes mathematics fun and has a positive impact on the pupils' attitudes to learning. The teachers have good knowledge of the numeracy strategy that enables them to explain things clearly to their pupils. In one good lesson, the teacher successfully explained, demonstrated and then supported the pupils in using mental calculation. This approach has a positive effect on the pupils' learning. The teachers target questions well to support individual pupils and enable them to succeed. They set homework regularly, including tasks that are practical and intended to involve the parents. This makes learning fun, and both the children and their parents evaluate each activity.
81. The school is beginning to use information and communication technology to support the pupils' mathematical development. For example, it is used to record information on simple pictogram and bar graphs. However, there is considerable scope to widen the use of information and communication technology in the pupils' mathematics lessons.
82. Good procedures for assessing the pupils' attainment and progress as they move through the school are used effectively to guide the teachers' planning. The targets set for individual pupils are relevant and achievable. Good records show individual pupil's progress through the key objectives of the national numeracy strategy.
83. The management of mathematics is good. Some lesson observations have been made, the children's work monitored and the teachers' planning checked. The results of these activities were discussed by the staff and governors. The resources are good and support the pupils' learning well.

## SCIENCE

84. Standards in science are below average overall. There is much evidence of many pupils attaining the expected level in their work, but very few are exceeding it. This picture contrasts markedly with the judgements made at the last inspection when the pupils were said to exceed the 'national norms'. Such a contrast illustrates the impact of the significant level of pupil mobility, the length of time the pupils remain at the school and the marked variation in the ability profiles of the cohorts. The quality of the curriculum and the teaching remain much the same.
85. The completed work of last year's pupils shows that they are making good progress and achieving well in their understanding of scientific enquiry. They are able to follow a sequenced approach to simple experiments, make some predictions about what might happen and are able to record some of their findings on simple tables that they have constructed. They can sort objects, for example, into those that use mains electricity, batteries or neither. There is a strong emphasis on developing the pupils' personal and health education through the science curriculum. As a result, they know what helps to keep them healthy, which foods are best for them and the importance of exercise.
86. There are also strong links with environmental education. In one lesson seen, the pupils in reception and Year 1 used a visit to the school pond to look at the changes that had occurred. They had seen a number of photographs taken at different times and were able to respond to the teacher's very careful questioning. The pupils were captivated by the damselflies hovering over the pond and showed considerable interest in the wildlife pointed out to them by their teacher. In another lesson that was observed in Year 1 and Year 2, the pupils were beginning to explore forces. The pupils with special educational needs were well supported by the teaching assistants in this lesson. The children used wheeled toys to talk about pushing and



pulling and recorded their findings in simple drawings. Although the pupils achieved well in the lesson it is clear that one of the limiting factors to higher attainment is their ability to speak in anything other than very short phrases. Very few children can give the kind of explanation that would usually be expected of pupils of this age. Nevertheless, the teacher encouraged the pupils to make spoken contributions in order to ascertain the extent of their understanding. This was considerably enhanced because the lesson was thoroughly planned, well organised and purposeful. The teaching is good overall.

87. The science curriculum is well planned and managed. The co-ordinator monitors the quality of the teachers' planning, all of whom have been involved in checking and agreeing the standards of the pupils' work.

**ART AND DESIGN, DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY, GEOGRAPHY, HISTORY, INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY, MUSIC, PHYSICAL EDUCATION AND RELIGIOUS EDUCATION.**

88. The judgements made about the non-core subjects of the curriculum are based on the samples of the pupils' work, almost all of whom have now left the school, the teachers' plans and typically one lesson observation in each subject. The judgements that make comparisons with the last inspection should be seen in the context of significant pupil mobility, and it must be borne in mind that at the last inspection, most of the pupils had completed at least one year in the school. At the time of the present inspection, most of the pupils had been attending the school for only three weeks.

89. In art and design and design and technology, the quality of the work has been maintained at an above average level since the last inspection. The pupils' work shows that their drawing and painting skills are developing well. For example, during the 'Plan, do and review' sessions, the children were observed independently selecting different sized brushes and various paints, and mixing their colours with careful precision before applying them to the paper. They also showed consideration and respect for the next person by leaving clean water, palette and washed brushes. In the one lesson seen, the children were being taught the skill of handling pastels in preparation for close observational drawings of a range of wheels. The teacher focussed effectively on developing the techniques needed before allowing the pupils to go on to draw the wheel. As a result, the pupils made good progress in the acquisition of skills and were proud of their achievements. They obviously enjoyed the session and their concentration level was high. Their very good observation skills were clearly evident in displayed work where the pupils had produced copies of a painting by Renoir and a collage of faces based on the work of Arcimboldo. A visiting potter had made with the pupils superb sculptures of 'Brian the Giant African Land Snail' in a range of shapes and sizes. They have been professionally finished with appropriate tones and a glaze. Art is well used to support other areas of the curriculum, such as history, when the pupils were inspired by a visit to the local church. The pupils' work is highly valued by staff and very attractively displayed.

90. The pupils have good opportunities for designing and making, and much of the work is stimulated by visits out into the local community. For example, a visit to the local chocolate factory inspired the children to make their own chocolate bars. They made a list of the ingredients, wrote out the instructions, made the chocolate bars, designed the packaging and made the wrappers. They wrote up the recipes into a book and evaluated the outcomes following a tasting session. This is in stark contrast to many of the pupils who have recently joined the school who cannot use tools and equipment confidently and competently. However, with support and perseverance by the staff, they are making good progress in mastering the skill of using scissors to cut paper,

for example. It is evident that the prime concern of staff is to devise activities that will develop the pupils' design and technology skills systematically, and the quality of the completed work is clear evidence that they are successfully in this.

91. The quality of the pupils' work in history and geography is not as good as is often seen for children of this age. Nevertheless, the pupils' are given a good range of opportunities to learn about the past and life in other places. In many cases, their attainment is restricted by their literacy skills although examples of work completed some time ago show that where the pupils are able to write at a good level, then the historical content is also good. This is in contrast to similar work undertaken last year which was not of the same standard and did not show the understanding that is expected.
92. In history the pupils have good opportunities to develop a sense of chronology by creating timelines of their own lives. They make comparisons between life in Victorian times and life today and they have found out about people from the past, such as William Shakespeare and Florence Nightingale. In geography, the school promotes environmental education very effectively and this has a positive effect on the pupils' personal development. The pupils make maps and plans related to stories and journeys in the locality; many are able to identify key features of the landscape, but others have a limited range of experiences to draw on. This was evident in one geography lesson where the pupils were looking at photographs of the countryside, villages, towns and cities. In discussion, some pupils found it very difficult to locate and identify key features such as railways and factories.
93. The quality of the work heard in music is in line with that expected for pupils of this age and similar to that reported at the time of the last inspection. The main elements of the music curriculum are singing as a regular collective activity, listening to music, including that of other cultures, and some sound exploration. The pupils have a very positive attitude towards music, including those with special educational needs. The pupils are enthusiastic, behave well and clearly enjoy their musical experiences.
94. The pupils make satisfactory progress in singing, are able to maintain a steady beat, can discriminate and utilise variations in sound patterns well and suitably follow the melody contour of the tune. Their achievement is most evident when their skills, knowledge and understanding are challenged by the teacher. This was the case when the teacher was able to improve the pupils' skills by getting them to play a repeated rhythmic pattern on the untuned percussion instruments at the beginning of the lesson. There was good reinforcement of the names of the instruments and how to achieve good sound from the instrument being played. When 'live' music is being played in assemblies, most pupils listen carefully and respond by using body action to demonstrate that the sound appeals or spontaneously singing some of the words. A very positive start has been made on giving the children the opportunity to compose music. They perform their compositions confidently and competently and discussions are held on how to improve their performance. However, time needs to be planned within the lesson in order for the suggested improvements to be practised.
95. The standard of the pupils' performance in physical education is similar to that produced by pupils' of this age. In the lessons seen, the pupils made good use of the limited space available in the school hall, which is inadequate for many aspects of this subject. Through good direction and well-structured activities, the pupils gained increased control of their movements and some cases clearly improved their ability to develop a sequence of movements along a bench. Some pupils are beginning to end their sequences with a smart finish, but others have yet to appreciate the need for "rounding off" in this way. The tasks set for pupils are modified to provide those

with special educational needs good support and appropriate activities to meet their specific individual requirements.

96. The standards of the work seen in religious education are broadly average, but lower than those reported at the previous inspection when they exceeded the nationally expected levels. However, as a result of the good teaching they receive the pupils make good progress, notably through the skilfully led discussions.
97. Themes are based around, for example, special clothes, friends and people in the local community. They have learned about special symbols in church, such as the cross, the pulpit, the cassock and the font. The pupils have a developing knowledge of other religions, such as Islam, and a growing awareness of the different beliefs and customs. They know about the festivals of Divali, Holi, and the Chinese New Year and the bible stories of Jesus. Aspects of religious education form the basis of the assemblies, which are strengthened further by the contributions of the local clergy.
98. A weakness in many subjects is the relatively limited use of information and communication technology though there are examples of pupils' work displayed in classrooms that show that they are able to work at the expected level. For example, they are able to create pictures of vehicles using image-processing software and add labels using a word processor. When the pupils use pictograms and bar graphs in mathematics, for example, information and communication technology provides a valuable extension to their learning. However, there is insufficient use of information and communication technology as an everyday tool across the curriculum.
99. The teaching is good overall. There are many common features in all of the non-core subjects. The planning is very good and ensures lessons have a clear purpose. The teachers identify clearly what they want the pupils to learn in most lessons. Occasionally, this could be sharper, but the lessons are, nevertheless, always purposeful, and most have a good pace that moves the pupils' learning along in a manner that retains their concentration and interest. In art and design, for example, they effectively develop the pupils' aesthetic awareness and artistic ability by having a major focus on specific skills. In this instance, and in many others, they develop the pupils' skills in a very wide range of contexts and by good use of resources.
100. Similarly, in music the teachers' planning is well organised and resources are readily available. For example, a music trolley with a wide range of musical instruments is situated in the classroom so that at 'Plan, do and review' time the pupils can choose to make music, if they so wish. In most lessons, the teachers take every opportunity to enhance the pupils' personal development. Music, for example, is used well to support the cultural development of the pupils and religious education is utilised by the teachers to allow the pupils to talk about their feelings with each other. The discussions were guided well by the staff.
101. The management of all of the subjects is good. As is typical of many small schools, there is a strong sense of teamwork with one teacher taking the lead responsibility with the support of the other teachers. They all contribute to the school development plan, which guides their actions and they work alongside governors, by keeping them informed of developments, contributing to the monitoring of progress and evaluating each activity. The co-ordinators also maintain the resources effectively.