

INSPECTION REPORT

CHERRY TREE HILL INFANT SCHOOL

Chaddesden

LEA area: Derby

Unique reference number: 112751

Headteacher: Kathy Mayer

Reporting inspector: Joyce Taylor
4275

Dates of inspection: 23rd – 26th September 2002

Inspection number: 250922

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 – 7 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Jane Thomas
Date of previous inspection:	March 1998

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4275	Joyce Taylor	Registered inspector	Science Art and design Physical education The Foundation Stage	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school The school's results and pupils' achievements Teaching and learning Leadership and management Key issues for action
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27337	Sylvia Oultram	Team inspector	English History Music Religious education Special educational needs English as an additional language	
30954	Brian Ashcroft	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and technology Geography Educational Inclusion	Quality and range of opportunities for learning

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Cherry Tree Hill Infant School is situated in the suburbs of Derby in the centre of an area of privately owned and rented, mostly semi-detached, housing. The pupils are aged between 3 and 7 years. Currently there are 228 children who attend the school, including 52 who attend the nursery part-time. A further 30 children are expected in the nursery in January when the oldest children move into reception. Just under 10 per cent of the children are eligible for free school meals, which is below average. An average proportion of children are identified as having special educational needs, mostly for learning and speech difficulties. Three children have a statement. This is an average proportion. Some children have not taken their national tests due to their learning difficulties. Most children enter reception with standards that are average or below. Three children speak English as an additional language; at home they speak Punjabi and Serbo-Croat. Most other children are of white English heritage with roughly an equal number of boys and girls. The school has recently experienced considerable changes to the staffing and still has two teachers on maternity leave. The school is in an Education Action Zone.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school with many strong features. The teaching is good and the children's progress has been faster than average during their time in the school. The standards have improved, particularly for the higher attaining children. The school is led and managed well and provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Most of the teaching is good or better. The classroom support staff are very effective;
- The standards, by Year 2, are above average in mathematics, history, geography and music. The children also make good progress in English and science;
- The staff, governors and parents work very hard on behalf of the school to try and make the children's learning more effective;
- The children's personal development is especially good. They work very hard and behave very well;
- The support for children with special educational needs is very good.

What could be improved

- The roles of the curriculum coordinators need strengthening in order to ensure all subjects receive the same good level of support, especially in art and design and physical education;
- Opportunities for learning outside need to be extended for the nursery and reception children.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good improvements since the last inspection in March 1998. Standards in mathematics, history, geography and music have improved and are now above average. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT), which were below average, are now average. The teaching is better and, as a result, the children are making faster progress than before. Across the school the children are given very good personal support and their behaviour and attitudes to learning have improved and are very good. Pupils with special educational needs now receive very good support. The way the school is led and managed has improved, particularly in ensuring that everyone is well informed and strongly committed to the work of the school. The governors now play a strong role in the life of the school and provide very good support. Weaknesses in the quality of the school development plan have been resolved and this document is now good.

STANDARDS

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

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

Overall the test results for 2002 show an improvement on the standards in the table, especially for the higher attaining children. This shows good work on the part of the school, as there was a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in this group. Some of these pupils were not able to take the tests at all. In Year 2 now, standards in mathematics are above average. Standards are average in reading and writing overall, with about a third of Year 2 children reaching above average levels. Again, there is a high proportion (20 per cent) of pupils with learning difficulties and three pupils are unlikely to take the tests in 2003. The standards have risen for the average and higher attaining children since last year, and are better than at the time of the last inspection. Their standards in writing show a good improvement over time because a focus on improving pupils' writing skills has been extremely successful. When the current Year 2 children started in reception, their standards were average or below. The children have made good progress. Lower ability pupils are supported very well to do as much as they can. Children who speak English as an additional language are given particular support and are making good progress. The school sets appropriately high targets for the Year 2 children to reach in their national tests and the children came extremely close to, and even exceeded, some of these targets in the 2002 tests.

Standards in science are average overall but for about two thirds of the children the standards are above average, particularly when they investigate for themselves and decide what their findings mean. Standards in history, music and geography are also above average. In the other subjects standards are average.

Children make good progress through the early stages of their learning in the nursery and reception classes. Most are on course, as in earlier years, to reach or exceed the expected standards by the time they move into Year 1.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. The children work very hard and thoroughly enjoy school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. The children understand why they need to behave well and conscientiously follow the school rules.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. The children act responsibly and take the initiative to organise things or correct problems. Racial equality is promoted effectively and this supports the very good relationships throughout the school.
Attendance	Very good. Much better than in most primary schools.

This leads to good relationships

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching and learning are good and as a result the children progress well in most lessons. The school has an effective system of analysing the quality of learning and introducing improvements. There are four new teachers and the school has worked hard to help them settle in quickly and focus on the children's learning needs. During the inspection, four fifths of the lessons were good or better with a quarter of the lessons being very good and one lesson excellent. There were no unsatisfactory lessons. Good teaching in the nursery and reception classes gets the children off to a secure start and the staff provide a good mix of structured play and direct teaching sessions. There is a mixture of satisfactory and good teaching in Year 1. It is consistently very good in Year 2. Across the school the children carry out challenging work that moves them forward. The teachers involve pupils well through practical learning. They use questioning effectively to help explain what they mean and to check on pupils' understanding. Staff work very hard to link lessons to what the children have done before, so they can make sense of their work. The higher attaining children are taught very well and are reaching high standards. Lower attaining children are also taught very well and make very good progress. The few children who do not speak English at home receive effective attention to ensure they understand what they are being asked to do.

Teachers make good use of the National Strategies for literacy and numeracy. The good assessment systems for these areas guide teachers and ensure they plan lessons accurately that match the children's needs and takes them forward. As a result, most of the children are gaining ground quickly. Speaking and listening are taught well. Earlier weaknesses in writing have been remedied through good quality training for the whole staff, resulting in very good teaching across the school. The teaching of reading is good. The children can read confidently and they understand and can talk about what the text means. Mathematics lessons include lively opportunities to develop calculating strategies and children are taught to use these skills in many different situations. Classroom assistants provide very good support. They have an extremely caring and supportive approach but also ensure that the children work hard.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The curriculum has been adapted well to match the children's interest and experience. Activities outside lessons are particularly good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. The children cover carefully planned work and their achievements are reviewed regularly. This enables them to make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. The few children concerned are supported well by the school and make good progress. They are fully included in lessons as a result.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Good. With very good provision for social and moral development. The children's confidence and behaviour are very good as a result. There are good opportunities for the pupils to reflect on their own lives but too few opportunities to learn about cultural diversity.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The staff know the children very well and take very good care of them. There are good assessment strategies overall, especially for literacy and

	numeracy, that help to speed the children's progress.
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The school works very well with parents and provides a good level of information. Parents strongly support their children's learning and there are plenty of opportunities for them to be involved in the life of the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The school is moving forward well. The headteacher has a very clear picture of how she wants the school to be and has made thoughtful changes to reach these aims. She is supported well by the deputy and other staff. Further support is needed for some subject co-ordinators.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governors check how well the school is doing and provide helpful support. They are very involved in the work of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school identifies and improves most weak areas effectively. All teachers are involved in supporting and improving teaching and learning. Overall this works very well although aspects of art and design and physical development have been overlooked.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The budget is used carefully and effectively to improve opportunities for the children. Funds provided by the Education Action Zone initiative have been used well to improve standards in teaching.

The school has a good match of teachers and support staff to meet its needs. The accommodation is satisfactory and is maintained well by the caretaker. Learning resources are satisfactory.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents feel comfortable about approaching school; The school expects the children to work hard; The school is well led and managed; The teaching is good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The ranges of activities outside lessons; The amount of homework.

The inspection team agrees with the parents' positive views about the school. The amount of homework is typical for schools of this kind. The range of activities outside lessons is very good for this kind of school. Much more is offered than usual.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. When pupils begin in the nursery, their overall attainment is just average in all areas of learning. The children make good progress in the nursery because of the good teaching by the two staff. When they start in the reception class, standards are average overall with above average standards in several aspects of learning. For example, in naming and identifying shapes in mathematics, in recognising and naming letters and sounds, in handling tools such as pencils and in aspects of their personal development. The good teaching in the reception classes enables the children to progress well. By the time the present Year 1 left reception, their standards were above average in aspects of communication, language and literacy, mathematics, personal development and physical development. Standards in knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development are average.
2. In the 2001 national tests for the Year 2 children, the school's results fell in all the tested subjects. This was because, although only a few children failed to reach average standards, too few reached higher than average standards. As a result, the previous very high standards overall in writing and mathematics fell to above average and average respectively, while earlier good standards in reading fell to below average. Standards in science were also below average. Generally, the boys did not achieve as well as the girls. In the 2002 national tests, the results were much stronger, particularly for the higher attaining children. The school provided these children with a more challenging and successful curriculum. The boys still reached lower standards than the girls in all areas. The school has now tackled this concern well by providing additional support to the lower attaining groups of boys. The children with special educational needs are almost all boys and the provision for them is very good. Many of the children who have just moved into Year 2 entered the reception class with average standards although about twenty per cent of them had below average standards. They have made good progress. Their standards are above average in mathematics and average overall in science, reading and writing because the twenty per cent lower attainers are still below average. Almost a third of the other children are now reaching above average standards in these subjects.
3. Teacher assessments in science in 2001 showed that the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level was broadly average, but too few reached the higher level. This situation continued in 2002 but has now improved and the curriculum has been strengthened, to ensure the children work at more challenging tasks. In all subjects more children are reaching higher levels than at the time of the last inspection. The school reached its targets in the 2002 tests, particularly for the above average children. Almost thirty per cent of the children reached the above average Level 3 in reading, sixteen per cent in writing and almost twenty-six per cent in mathematics. The standards are higher for the current Year 2.
4. The school teaches literacy skills very effectively and the children are now making good progress. A method of improving their writing skills has been particularly effective for children of all ability groups. The children have been taught to write with confidence and independence. Mathematics presents a strong picture. The school teaches numeracy skills systematically and very effectively. There is regular practise of mental calculations and direct teaching across the range of skills. The children manage numbers quickly and accurately. Other aspects of mathematics are taught

very well through practical and formal lessons. The school links subjects creatively; for example, the children learn some mathematical skills, such as organising information and measuring, as part of their science work.

5. In science, standards have improved from below average at the time of the last inspection and are now average overall. More pupils are reaching above average levels this year as they are improving the skills of questioning why things happen and offering opinions based on earlier learning. This was the weakest aspect of science last year and is now above average.
6. Standards in history, music and geography are above average in Year 2. These subjects have received good attention that has improved teaching and learning and raised the standards since the last inspection. Standards in art and design, physical education, religious education, design and technology and information and communication technology are average. This is an improvement for ICT, which was below average at the time of the last inspection.
7. Many of the pupils with special educational needs attain standards that are well below the national averages for English and mathematics because the rate at which they acquire literacy and numeracy skills is slow. Overall, the children make good progress from a low starting point because the work in these subjects is adapted at the correct level. The work is carefully structured and is based on regular, accurate assessment of what they need to learn next. Teachers and support staff take good account of individual learning plans, particularly in literacy. Tasks and resources are identified that offer the right amount of challenge to the children. As a result, children with special educational needs work very hard in their lessons.
8. Those children who speak English as an additional language usually reach average standards. One or two pupils in the earlier stages of learning English also have learning difficulties. They receive effective support from the school that helps them improve their English and understand their lessons. They are making good progress but receive no support in their own language.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Since the last inspection, the school has considerably strengthened this aspect of its work. Very good relationships, attitudes and behaviour combine to make a very strong contribution to the positive school ethos. This is a school that children want to come to, and where they enjoy lessons and a wide range of clubs and activities.
10. Behaviour is very good. Boys and girls mix together happily, helped by the school's practice of pairing them when walking around the school and in from the playground. The children concentrate in lessons and work hard for their teachers. As a result, they make best use of the learning opportunities and generally make good progress.
11. Pupils have very good relationships with each other, and they show a very high level of personal development. They care for each other well. For example, when one child fell over in the playground, another voluntarily went with them to the first aider. They have learned to be polite, and to be aware of unexpected consequences of their actions. For example, when a beanbag missed the target and hit an inspector, the children apologised immediately. They work well together in lessons. They are proud when they get stickers for good work, and they appreciate the assemblies when 'good news' is celebrated or when children display their out of school hobbies and interests. Relationships between pupils, teachers and support staff are very good and the

school retains a caring, supportive feel, which helps the children to make good progress.

12. Attendance has improved since the last inspection, and the school is among the highest quarter of primary schools for attendance. The school's very good work with parents has directly contributed to these good standards of attendance.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

13. The quality of teaching is good. During the inspection about three quarters of the teaching was good or better, with just over a quarter being very good. One lesson was excellent. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen. This is better than at the time of the last inspection. There are many strengths in the teaching throughout the school. These are linked to the support that teachers receive in planning meetings and following classroom demonstrations or shared lessons by senior staff or subject specialists. Lessons are lively and interesting. In English and mathematics, they are planned to build on earlier learning very effectively. This is because of detailed assessments by the teachers, who check what the children need to learn next in order to meet their targets. The school is part of a local initiative to improve teaching and learning. This relates to the Education Action Zone and schools work together identifying ways to improve teaching. Over time new and effective ways of supporting teachers, such as the stronger support given in planning meetings, have been developed and shared among the local schools.
14. The very best and highest quality teaching is in Year 2, where in English, mathematics, science and history the children are taught in ability groups. The teachers rotate coverage of the subjects and history will be changed to geography in due course. This system works extremely well and contributes strongly to the high standards reached by many of the children, because it is possible to challenge the whole class at a similar level.
15. Teaching in the nursery is good. There are many opportunities for the children to explore a wide range of activities. For example, they find out what different substances, such as thickly mixed soap flakes or very bubbly water, feel like and what these materials do when handled. The children settle well and make good progress, particularly in their personal development. In reception, the teaching is good and builds well on the work of the nursery. This good quality teaching enables the children to reach above average standards in speaking and listening, aspects of mathematics and some early writing skills. The teachers work well together to ensure that those reception children based with Year 1 pupils receive good opportunities in all the areas of learning.
16. As the children move through the school, expectations for their learning remain high. Teachers know the curriculum well in most of the subjects although there are some minor weaknesses in physical education and aspects of art and design. In almost all circumstances, teachers can step in to correct misunderstandings and move the children forward by, for example, offering different explanations and asking difficult questions. In a reception mathematics lesson the teacher said 'Which number did I miss out?' and children were eager to say 'You should have said seven.' When children begin tasks during lessons they are given extremely clear instructions. As a result they work without fuss and with independence leaving the teacher free to concentrate on specific groups.

17. The support staff take full responsibility for a group. They provide encouragement and help that enables the children to work quickly and well. This very good practice ensures the children achieve at a fast rate in most lessons. The school's thorough systems to check on the pace of learning and provide targets, helps the children keep up in literacy and numeracy. Any individuals or groups of pupils who begin to slip are noted and given extra support.
18. The basic skills of literacy are taught very well across the school. The teachers have high expectations of the children and provide challenging lessons. This was seen in Year 1 when the children were challenged to write personal captions for photographs of themselves at the park. The children are encouraged to have a go at new spellings and this enables them to write quickly and at length. In Year 2, for example, the higher attaining pupils wrote about a 'spooky' castle using a wide range of descriptive words. This is a high standard for these young children and the teaching was very good. Across all classes there is consistency in the way teachers use the children's targets in both literacy and numeracy by making sure the children are told what they have to learn next.
19. Basic number skills, such as calculating and remembering the total of certain numbers when added together, are taught very well. Pupils are developing a good understanding of number across the school. Teachers have very good knowledge of how to improve the children's skills when calculating. They provide unusual learning opportunities that stimulate the children, such as wearing a 'magic hat' to help you think. They use effective assessment strategies and are moving the children along rapidly by noting what is needed to reach the next level and then making this the target. Mathematics is linked effectively to other subjects. In science, for example, the children used a range of measuring strategies to record the distance travelled by toy vehicles. Children are also given good opportunities to develop their literacy skills in other subjects and they write clear reports about their cooking, for example. In this way they improve their standards in these subjects and also understand how to use their literacy and numeracy skills in everyday life.
20. Teaching provision for pupils with special needs is very good. All staff are strongly committed to moving the children's learning forward in a steady and systematic way. Experienced classroom assistants working with small groups of pupils or with individuals, make a very valuable contribution and the pupils benefit from this help. The overall quality of learning plans is very good. Targets are very specific and are reviewed regularly. However, in order to speed progress further it is necessary for the outcomes of these targets to be formally noted. This would give staff a clearer picture of how rapidly pupils are making progress.
21. The teaching of children for whom English is an additional language is good. Currently there are three such children in the school. They are not at a very early stage of English acquisition, but still need considerable support. They are receiving this, especially in literacy and in those subjects which require a high level of writing, such as history, geography and religious education. The very experienced classroom assistants who work with them help these children to understand the lessons by providing additional explanations. They show them how to form grammatically correct spoken and written responses. As a result, the children make good progress.

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

22. The school meets the statutory requirements and teaches all the subjects of the national curriculum and religious education. The curriculum is good in both the Foundation Stage and in the infant classes. The good curriculum for the youngest children is improved by the many opportunities for children to learn through play and through first hand experiences. The curriculum is presented in an interesting way. Good resources are used. Many are quite simple, like party hats in the nursery and a range of sand and gravel in the reception classes, but they provide children with opportunities to explore familiar and new situations and guide their play well. The curriculum is well thought out apart from aspects of learning outside, which is underdeveloped. The teachers provide good play opportunities outside that extend the children's physical development but these opportunities are not sufficiently directed to support all the areas of learning. As a result, situations that would extend the children's learning in, for example, knowledge and understanding of the world are missed.
23. Teachers plan together in teams and subjects are linked together well to help the children understand the purpose of their learning. The school uses several of the nationally recommended schemes of work to check that subjects are covered properly. The school has developed its own, effective scheme of work for ICT that ensures the appropriate skills are learned. In physical education, a purchased scheme of work has been adopted. This is not always adapted properly to meet the needs of the pupils. In art and design some aspects, such as three-dimensional work, do not receive enough attention and the children have too little opportunity to plan and design their own work. A very strong aspect of the curriculum is the 'Carousel' days in Year 2. Children work in ability groups and good focused teaching helps to raise standards in English, mathematics, science, history and geography. The curriculum is strengthened by the many visits the children make and the use that the school makes of the local environment. For example, visits to the park are made to support science and mathematics lessons.
24. The school makes very good provision for pupils with special educational needs. This represents a good improvement since the last inspection. There is a policy to identify those pupils who are gifted and talented. Higher attaining pupils are receiving extra support in developing their writing and are withdrawn in small groups to work at more advanced tasks. In the other subjects, they are provided with appropriately challenging work. The provision for children with English as an additional language is good.
25. The school has effectively implemented the National Strategy for teaching both literacy and numeracy. In literacy there are rich opportunities for children to improve their reading and writing skills. The numeracy strategy has been instrumental in the raising of standards in mathematics.
26. The school offers a very good range of additional learning opportunities for pupils outside lessons through its interesting range of extra-curricular activities. Many pupils from reception to Year 2 attend a variety of clubs, including sports, dance and art and craft. Both boys and girls join in all the activities. Theatre visits are also organised. A particular strength is the residential visit for Year 2, which takes place in Sherwood Forest. Many pupils attend this and they are able to experience a wide range of new activities. This visit particularly helps the children take greater responsibility for themselves as, for most, this is their first stay away from their family.

27. Provision for personal, social and health education is very good, and the curriculum has been improved since the last inspection. Circle time and weekly class meetings provide pupils with opportunities to discuss and reflect on feelings and emotions. Healthy eating is reinforced by the school meals menus, and by insisting that sweets are not brought to school. An annual Health Week enables the whole school to explore many aspects of personal, social and health education with the help of outside agencies and special activities. The school has worked very effectively towards the 'Healthy School' award.
28. The local community makes a good contribution to what pupils learn. Visits to the park and local shops help make subjects such as geography and science come alive. Several local groups provide support to the school, including the local allotment society which shows children how plants grow and can be used as food. A car dealership partnership extends the design and technology curriculum by providing resources, and the local church contributes to assemblies and the religious education syllabus.
29. The school has good relationships with its partner junior school on the same site. Both schools are finding extra ways of working together, for example in teachers' in-service training and analysing national test results. Membership of the Education Action Zone has provided benefits in developing the wider provision of learning opportunities. These include the development of teaching reading, sharing ideas on good ways of teaching ICT and funding to families by providing discussion groups and after school care.
30. The school's provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Considerable effort and imagination are used on behalf of the pupils. The staff have worked hard to make the school a happy and welcoming place. The pupils' own culture is celebrated and respected, but less attention is given to the wider cultures that make up living in Britain today. The school has rightly identified this aspect as being in need of further development. They have made a start with this by ensuring that different religions are included as part of the religious education provision, but more needs to be done to broaden the children's experience of this aspect. The children's own cultures are respected and used well. Within school there are dance and art clubs. Theatre groups visit and children are taken to the theatre. This aspect is satisfactory overall.
31. Spiritual awareness is supported well during daily assemblies and worship. For example, each week the children have a 'Good News' assembly where individual children are praised for being polite, kind and caring, as well as for good work. Opportunities are planned as part of weekly class meetings and lessons for children to consider how they feel about experiences and issues. For example, what makes them happy or sad? In a history lesson about the great fire of London, children were encouraged to express their feelings of fear and concern that many people lost their lives and others their homes.
32. The school places a very high priority on children's good behaviour. Children devise their own classroom rules. The school's policies on behaviour and anti-bullying are applied consistently and sensitively within school. This provision is continued at playtimes and lunchtimes. All the adults insist on correct behaviour at all times.
33. The school provides many very good social experiences. Children meet people from other walks of life, such as the ambulance service and road safety officers. Recent visits to a supermarket introduced the children to the world of work. They have an

opportunity to stay away from home on a residential visit; this is a most valuable experience for them. They help to raise money for worthy causes. In their class meetings they have an opportunity to make decisions about what the class target should be for that week. The school provides many opportunities for children to work together. They help each other, take turns, treat each other fairly and share equipment well. Each class has helpers for routine tasks and this develops pupils' sense of responsibility.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

34. Procedures for child protection are good. There are two teachers with particular responsibility and all staff have had basic training in child protection. Further training is planned. Procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare are good. Routines for first aid and the administration of medicines are properly followed. The Site Manager, who is gaining additional qualifications, has been involved in ensuring that the school's procedures have been reviewed and drafting a new policy. His knowledge has provided the school with practical support.
35. Monitoring of pupils' personal development is very good, and the close attention paid to each child means that those not doing as well as they could are identified promptly and helped. For example, a little boy in the reception class, who still misses his mother, was comforted and sat on his class teacher's lap during assembly. In the dining hall, very young children are given special help with their meals, and lonely children in the playground are helped to find others to play with.
36. Attendance procedures are good. Parents are given a clear explanation of the school's requirements, and the school follows up children with long periods of illness or holidays. As a result, attendance is high. Although the school does not follow up unexplained absences on the first day, almost all parents telephone when a child is absent. The school monitors children's behaviour very well and by having high expectations from the nursery onwards, succeeds in ensuring that there is very little aggressive behaviour.
37. The procedures and systems for assessing the pupils' attainment and progress have improved since the last inspection. The systems for monitoring progress in English and mathematics are particularly effective. The pupils are assessed regularly and the data is used to chart their progress from year-to-year. Using this data, the school is able to set extremely accurate targets for each year group. Group targets are set, for example, to improve aspects of writing skills. These targets are written into the children's books. Progress towards them is regularly monitored by the staff. The staff also discuss the children's progress towards their targets with their parents to extend parental involvement and support.
38. There are satisfactory assessment systems in place to establish the children's standards in the areas of learning when they enter the nursery. Their progress is not yet monitored against the nationally recommended learning steps but never the less clearly identifies their development as learners. This system is developed in reception and begins to take account of the early stages of the national curriculum. The school is able to assess how much progress children have made during their time in the nursery or during the whole of the Foundation Stage. The current reception children will be assessed using a nationally recommended scheme before they move into Year 1, to begin a picture of their progress through their time in Years 1 and 2.

39. Each year there is an analysis of the national test results in reading, writing and mathematics. Changes to the curriculum and teaching are made as a result, for example with approaches to reading and writing. The teachers' assessments in science have not been analysed so rigorously but the identified shortcomings, in challenging the higher attaining children, have been remedied. On-going assessments in other subjects enable the teachers to monitor progress and plan work that challenges the children at the right level.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

40. Parents' views of the school are very positive. The views expressed at the pre-inspection meeting and in the questionnaires were very supportive of the school, with only six or seven wanting more homework and activities outside lessons. Inspectors found that the range of activities provided is much more than expected in infant schools, and that the quantity of homework is what would be expected. The inspectors agree with all the positive points made by parents.
41. The school has very effective links with parents. They are encouraged to come with their children before and after school, and teachers use these times to have conversations with them. The school's expectations about uniform, attendance, behaviour and relationships are carefully explained to parents at induction meetings. Three parents' evenings are held each year, as well as sessions to explain aspects of the curriculum, such as a workshop on helping children with reading. Parents contribute very well to homework and to children's learning in school. Volunteer parents listen to children read, help with the nursery lending library and accompany pupils on trips, for example to the park. They enjoy the social occasions which the school runs, such as the fiftieth anniversary family events. Very good information is provided for parents. Reports are full and the teachers' notes made for the parents' meetings help to give a regular picture of their children's progress. Regular newsletters are informative and keep parents in touch with events.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

42. This school is led and managed well. Some aspects of the headteacher's leadership are very good; in particular the sense of commitment developed in staff and governors who show a high level of support for the school. The headteacher discusses many decisions about the work of the school with staff and governors and invites their comments. She values their opinions and this helps all personnel feel as though they contribute to the developments in the school. Improvements the school has made since the last inspection are good. Although there are still areas appropriately identified for development, all the earlier weaknesses have been removed and many additional aspects have received strong and successful attention.
43. The very clear leadership from the headteacher and deputy ensures all staff are clear about what the school needs to do. The school has identified aspects of provision that influence the standards and has linked them together clearly in the school development plan. For example, the good teaching is focused on what the children need to learn next in literacy and numeracy because of clear assessment strategies. Lessons are evaluated and weaker provision for aspects of the basic skills, of writing for example, has been identified. In reading and writing, the fall in standards in the 2001 test results led to a review of how the higher attaining children were learning and how good the teaching was. As a result, the ability grouping was introduced. In reading, lower standards for boys in 2001 resulted in additional support and new resources. Thorough staff training has improved the teachers' knowledge and raised

standards. Art and design and physical education, where the children reach average standards, reveal some weaknesses in teachers' subject knowledge and need further support from the coordinators in order to enable the children to reach the above average levels of which they are capable.

44. The headteacher and senior staff have introduced an effective system for moving the school forward. This includes observing the teaching, working alongside and demonstrating good methods and high standards to the teachers. The identification of necessary developments takes place during planning sessions when teams of staff discuss how to implement the curriculum. This has provided a very secure footing for improving teaching and raising standards. Each team includes senior staff who support their colleagues. This system is less secure on the few occasions when the team leader is unsure of the best practice and improvements depend on classroom observations alone. This has resulted in the lack of overall balance in the art and design curriculum and, occasionally, an over-dependence on commercially published lesson plans in physical education. However, the strengths of the school's system, which includes most teachers developing good subject knowledge in almost all subjects, substantially out-weigh the weaknesses.
45. Those teachers with responsibilities for developing subjects or aspects of provision work hard to put the school system for improvement into place. The coordinator for English and the deputy headteacher have worked very effectively to improve standards in writing after accurately identifying the weaknesses. The deputy has ensured that the provision for those children with special educational needs has remained at a high level. The teaching of mathematics has been monitored regularly and evaluative assessments of this work identify its impact on children's learning. The subject leaders for design and technology, science, mathematics, ICT and physical education are very new to their subjects. Some are new teachers to the school and they are just beginning to develop and implement the necessary leadership skills. The headteacher has sensibly assumed coordination of some subjects and aspects, for example the development of ICT, during the reallocation of subjects to newly appointed staff.
46. The governors' involvement in supporting the school is very good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. They keep up-to-date with its new developments and provide good support to the headteacher and staff. There is, for example, an effective link governor for special needs. Governors' personal and professional strengths are used well to support areas such as budget management. The governors are knowledgeable about the provision made by the school. Some governors work in the school and the chair of governors visits often to show support and find out about its work. The governors work very well together and with the staff to formulate the school improvement plan. They are very well informed about this planning process and are able to identify the strengths and development points in the school.
47. Management and control of the school's budget are good. The governors' finance committee monitors spending closely and has sought additional funding, for example through the Education Action Zone, whenever possible. As a result, the initiative to improve teaching and learning has become a strong focus for the school and a senior teacher has been appointed to lead developments. The school has ear-marked annual savings each year in order to maintain the high numbers of good quality and effective support staff and to help maintain the fabric of the building. Parts of the Year 1 classrooms are leaky and need repair. This has been given considerable attention by the governors who have applied for funding from the Local Authority. There are

ample resources to teach all subjects and there is a particularly good range of books to support the literacy strategy.

48. The school's resources are managed well. The school applies the principles of best value appropriately ensuring money is spent carefully. It is beginning to seek the opinion of parents and pupils about how well they think the school is moving forward and what their priorities for development are. The school compares its performance with others and works hard to perform better each year.
49. The school has had considerable disturbances to the teaching staff over the past two years. Recently this situation has become resolved with the appointment of four new teachers. The new teachers receive exceedingly clear guidance when they are introduced into the procedures of the school and have quickly formed strong loyalties to the senior staff and the school as a whole. Support staff make a very good contribution to the pupils' learning. The accommodation is satisfactory overall. The premises are very clean and tidy throughout and are very well maintained by the caretaker and cleaning staff.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

50. In order to further improve the existing good work of the school, the headteacher, staff and governors should:
 - a) Strengthen the role of the curriculum coordinators to ensure all subjects receive the same level of support by:
 - ensuring all new coordinators have clear guidance on leading their subject in order to raise standards further;
 - ensuring coordinators look at the teachers' planning and check the quality of what is to be taught;
 - ensuring teaching strategies for all subjects are discussed and reviewed in the planning groups as a means of improving provision.(paragraphs 16, 23, 43, 44, 88)
 - b) Provide more opportunities for young children to learn outside by:
 - planning outside activities for all areas of learning.(paragraphs 22, 52)

In addition to the aspects above, the following minor development point should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- extend the children's cultural development to take further account of cultural diversity.
- (paragraph 30)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	35
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	46

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	8	19	7	0	0	0
Percentage	3	23	54	20	0	0	0

Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than two percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	27	221
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	17

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	4	28

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	2.0
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	34	35	69

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	23	25	29
	Girls	31	31	31
	Total	54	56	60
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	78 (84)	81 (90)	87 (93)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	23	25	25
	Girls	30	30	30
	Total	53	55	55
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	77 (85)	80 (95)	80 (92)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British - Indian
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded

No of pupils on roll
124
0
1
2
0
0
0
0
0
6
0
0
0
0
0
1
0
0

Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.3
Average class size	28.7

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	111

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	52
Number of pupils per FTE adult	9

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	6.4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	7.2

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001
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	£
Total income	500440
Total expenditure	475344
Expenditure per pupil	1865
Balance brought forward from previous year	7388
Balance carried forward to next year	32484

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	255
Number of questionnaires returned	60

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	70	28	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	67	30	2	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	77	20	0	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	32	50	10	2	7
The teaching is good.	77	20	0	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	72	25	0	0	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	87	13	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	85	15	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	68	32	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	88	12	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	68	25	3	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	50	32	10	2	7

Percentages are rounded to the nearest integer and may not total 100.

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

51. When the children start in the nursery their standards are generally average or just below in all areas of learning. They make good progress. In reception there are three classes and in one of these two teachers job-share and the children are mixed with Year 1 pupils. The current reception children had pre-school experience in the nursery or a range of other pre-school settings. They started in September with average standards overall, although their standards in some aspects of mathematics, such as naming and identifying common shapes, and their use of letter sounds in reading and writing are now above average. They show above average standards in some aspects of personal development. They are making good progress. This is an improvement since the time of the last inspection.
52. The provision in the nursery and reception classes is good, the children feel secure and happy and have settled well into the daily routines and challenging learning activities. Some children start nursery with very immature behaviour. The school helps these children gain confidence. They settle down well and are supported to cope with the bustle of everyday school life.
53. The assessments made when the children start in both the nursery and reception classes are satisfactory. They record the progress the children make through their first years in school and identify those areas where they need further support. The procedures provide useful information for the staff and are used properly. The teacher who coordinates the Foundation Stage provides satisfactory leadership. She identified the need to improve the children's mathematical standards in shape and this work has been done well. The provision for learning outdoors is unsatisfactory. The reception and nursery staff only use the outdoor equipment in the nursery garden for physical development and play activities, rather than planning appropriately challenging tasks linked to all areas of learning.
54. The children in the nursery and reception classes with special educational needs are given very good support. They are making good progress. There are careful assessments of what they can do and what they need to learn next. The special educational needs coordinator sometimes works with these children to keep a check on their progress.

Personal, social and emotional development

55. Children quickly gain confidence in their classes and learn to make friendly approaches, both to one another and to adults. There are opportunities for nursery and reception children to socialise informally with one another or with adults in small groups. In all the classes the behaviour of the children is very good. The warm, friendly and supportive approach of the adults creates a positive response from the children who try very hard to please. This teaching is good in both the nursery and reception and helps the children make good progress. Staff strongly support the children whose social skills are particularly low. The children's independence and social skills are developed through a range of useful activities, such as taking snacks together.
56. In both nursery and reception classes most of the children are reaching or exceeding the standard expected for their age in many areas of personal development. They

concentrate on their work and complete short tasks without support. In the nursery, a few still show immaturity in their social development. They do not always know how to respond in social situations. They play alongside each other and watch what other children are doing. In the water area, for example, one boy successfully created large quantities of foam and was copied by several others attempting the same activity. Although none of the children spoke to each other during this time, they all listened when adults initiated conversations and several responded. In reception the children work happily and talk about what they are doing. Two reception children working side by side on a shape collage, for example, spoke confidently to adults about the vehicles they were making. Higher attainers showed and explained things to each other, although average attainers still need adult help to join in conversations linked to their tasks. When using the role-play area, however, they quickly helped themselves to favourite resources and were able to join in a group play activity about 'The Three Bears.'

Communication, language and literacy

57. By the end of their time in reception, the children exceed the standards expected for their age in writing, speaking and listening and are average in reading. They achieve at a good rate. The teaching in this area is good. The staff provide an appropriate range of play opportunities where most children talk together and chat with the adults in a relaxed situation. New nursery children were still arriving during the inspection week. They were gently drawn into conversation and helped to use the basic vocabulary needed to cope in school. The children are encouraged to engage each other in conversations during their play activities, especially when having their snacks. They use language to point things out to each other, 'See that picture over there?' or to make sure they have what they want, 'Can I have those crisps?' The nursery staff have ensured the children listen well and take note of instructions. In the reception classes, the children receive very clear and careful instructions that enable them to complete tasks without further support.
58. The nursery children are introduced to books through story times and they have good opportunities to explore books for themselves, sometimes with an adult alongside. The children understand that the books contain enjoyable information and most pretend to read while handling books sensibly in the library area. One girl took her new friend into the book area and showed her a favourite story, turning the pages and talking about the pictures. Spoken language was used well as she led her friend through the book. The children have made very good progress with writing their names. Almost all of the older nursery children can form some letters of their name and some can write their name legibly with the help of their name cards. Most can recognise their name card and find it when they need to. In the reception classes the staff teach reading effectively. The children recognise letter sounds and remember new sounds very well. The staff show children how to handle books and, as a result, the children manage books confidently and are familiar with their layout. Early writing skills are taught effectively through an appropriate range of play and direct teaching activities. The teachers are skilled at linking reading with writing as they show the children how to form their letters correctly when related to the sounds they make.

Mathematical development

59. The children make good progress. They start from an average level and by the end of the Foundation Stage their standards are above average. Teaching of mathematics in the nursery and reception classes is good and staff provide a range of practical and more directed opportunities to develop children's skills and understanding. In the

nursery, a good range of equipment and activities are available to enable the children to explore ideas. For example, when playing with bricks they can match different sizes of blocks to make ramps and track ways. They talk about the quantity, of small toys in a set for example, and the higher attainers match the quantity to number cards. They refer to a range of shapes such as rectangle and circle. Some of these activities involve staff working with children, helping them count. Children also work independently experimenting with capacity when playing with water but few are yet able to talk about what they are doing.

60. By the end of the reception year, the children are beginning to learn to add and subtract to ten in practical ways. They are able to understand about number positions and can write the sequences of numbers, sometimes to 20. The majority of the current reception children can identify missing numbers to ten. Few children find this easy but all try very hard and during the lesson some lower ability children were able to identify that a number was missing but not name it. The higher attaining children realise they need to separate objects as they count them or they would get muddled and count some twice. The tasks offered to different groups of children are well matched to their different levels of understanding.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

61. Children make satisfactory progress in this area and are reaching the expected standard at the end of reception. Teaching is satisfactory in both the nursery and reception. Staff plan a wide range of interesting activities to help extend children's learning and work hard to provide an interesting and practical range of experiences. In the nursery, children explore natural materials such as sand and water and they can practise and play out ideas introduced by the staff. The children use the computer with an appropriate level of skill to draw pictures and some show considerable expertise in controlling their work using the mouse. The children in the reception classes have a good range of play activities to learn practically about physical processes such as magnetism. Sometimes, however, there is not enough support from adults to ensure this play is moving the children forward. They use the sand and water to explore materials at a level more advanced than the nursery pupils. Reception children mould and sift the sand in order to make landscapes for their dinosaurs but often the tasks are not directed by the teachers and the children repeat earlier learning. They are adept at using glue and scissors to create collage pictures and know that some vehicles need roadways and some move through the air. The reception children reach average standards in using the computers. They can control the mouse appropriately and complete tasks. In their curriculum planning, the teachers do not include activities for the outside area that could help the children understand more about how things work or move.

Physical development

62. When children start in the nursery, their attainment in this area is average. They show they can coordinate their movements appropriately when carrying large objects and in finer movements, for example when they manipulate small objects such as scissors and pencils. Through good teaching, they achieve well and reach above average standards in fine manipulation in reception. Some children show a high level of precision when cutting and drawing. They refine their skills through work and play in the classroom and through physical education lessons in the hall. The staff provide plenty of opportunities for the children to practise their manipulative skills through using a good range of tools, equipment and materials. They cut out in art lessons and manipulate small toys. They show good pencil control and this builds up their

confidence and skill. Children in all the classes use the outside areas for regular physical development activities, such as climbing, jumping and riding bikes. This provision should be further improved, for example by providing large objects, such as cardboard boxes, to play with. Tasks that need more space, for example designing and following track ways, could be introduced.

Creative development

63. Children's attainment when they enter school matches the level expected for their age. The good teaching leads to good achievement in music and role play, and satisfactory achievement in art. The children enjoy singing and using musical instruments to accompany themselves. In the reception classes they are able to imagine situations and make up events. The teachers provide good situations, for example, the 'Three Bears Cottage'. The children are learning how to pretend to be someone else and repeat familiar phrases from the story. The nursery children play with the resources, such as the party hats and plates, with evident enjoyment but only show very early understanding of role play. There are good opportunities for the children to paint and draw and they are learning to explore the resources to make up stories as they play.

ENGLISH

64. Pupils' standards in Year 2 are average overall. This year group has a high proportion of boys, especially in the lower group of attainers. About 20 per cent of these children are unlikely to reach the average level, but they are progressing well because of the well matched activities and very good support. Almost half of this group are on the special needs register and it is likely that four children will not take the national tests. Three other children in this group are in the fairly early stages of learning English as an additional language. About fifty per cent of the children in the year group are reaching average standards and the rest of them, about a third, are reaching above average standards.
65. Teaching of English is good and as a result the children make good progress. Higher attaining pupils are challenged well in lessons and receive further support each week in withdrawal groups. The lower attainment of boys in the school has been identified and additional support has been given to raising boys' standards. In addition, new books which appeal to boys have been bought. These strategies are already beginning to capture the interest of the boys. The subject is led well. A whole school approach to writing has resulted in rising standards. Recently, workshops for children and training for staff have proved very successful. These were led by a visiting author. Children write well, are uninhibited and write at length. They use their knowledge of sounds of letters well and attempt unknown words for themselves. However, the school has placed insufficient emphasis on the children learning high frequency words such as 'was', 'there', 'when' and 'they'. This has slowed the improvement in the standard of spelling.
66. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented well by the school and the organisation of the English curriculum is good. For two days a week children in Year 2 are taught in ability groups. This is working well and standards are rising. Literacy skills are developed well through other subjects of the curriculum, for example in science. Children write about making objects such as scooters and roller skates move, and in religious education they write recipes for making their chapattis. The classroom assistants are involved in assessing the children's progress and work

closely with teachers. They provide an especially caring relationship with the more vulnerable children and give very good support.

67. Speaking and listening are taught very well. The children are good listeners. In a Year 1 lesson, the children concentrated hard as others tried to identify initial sounds of objects such as a 'pig', 'bag' and 'doll.' They mouthed the answers silently, developing and extending their own knowledge. They speak confidently and older children are able to explain what they are doing with a good amount of detail. They are keen, enthusiastic and very involved in their own learning. They consult each other and offer praise. For example, in a Year 2 lesson one child said to another 'Wow that's really good. You're frightening me when you read that out.' They enjoy dramatising situations. An example of this was seen when they had the opportunity to speak into a cone, which made their voice echo. They tried out different types of voices to come up with the desired effect. Some children receive regular help to improve their speech. Working with individuals, a trained member of staff uses an effective range of strategies to help these children, for example they use a mirror to see what the shape of the mouth needs to be when making the 'sh' sound in fish. She makes the lessons fun, which in turn makes the learning successful.
68. The children are enthusiastic readers. They have a very good understanding of which letters make which sounds and how two letters combine to make sounds like 'sh' and 'mp'. This helps them when reading new words. In all classes, reading skills are taught very well. The home / school reading diaries are effective and show that parents support their children well at home. Regular meetings for parents are held. One, which took place during the inspection, was very well attended and the parents found it useful. The school has used the Early Literacy Support well. The member of staff who leads this work is very skilful. As they move through school, children are taught to read with improving accuracy. As a result, when reading doesn't make sense, they stop and seek to correct themselves. The teachers provide a wide range of texts including stories and non-fiction. The children show a good understanding of how these texts work. They talk simply about characters and plot and express preferences. Evidence in the pupil's books shows that the development of their comprehension skills is given full attention. The reading skills of the lower attaining children, those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are weaker. However, these children are well supported by carefully organised programmes and knowledgeable support staff. The resources to develop reading are good. The school has improved the provision of books since the time of the previous inspection.
69. Children of all abilities make good progress in writing. The teachers are good at teaching writing and make it exciting and stimulating. In a Year 1 lesson, following a visit to the local park the day before, the children learned how to write captions to accompany the photographs of themselves using play equipment, such as a slide or climbing frame. They were keen and wrote with care, knowing that their work would be displayed in the corridor for visitors to the school to read. The teacher taught the children well so that they remembered the need for punctuation and finger spacing. The staff use a rich and wide vocabulary to prompt the children's interest in new words. They encouraged them to choose unusual descriptive words like 'crunchy' and 'spine tingling'. This made the Year 2 children's work interesting to read as they wrote stories about their 'Spooky Castle'. A strength of the teaching is that children write quickly and at length. They try to write unknown words such as 'further' (the child's version was 'frthr') for themselves. Teachers expect children to proof read their work. As a result, all children can read back their own writing. All the rooms have writing areas. These provide rich opportunities for children to write lists, letters, diaries,

posters, stories and poems. A weakness in the teaching of spelling is in the children's lack of recall of high frequency words, especially slightly unusual ones.

70. The teachers' marking is good. Work is annotated well and regularly tells the children what is needed to improve. Work is consistently well presented, showing the children's very good attitudes to their work.

MATHEMATICS

71. An early review of test results for 2002 indicates that there has been a significant increase, since the year before, in above average standards. Work seen during the inspection indicates that this improvement is set to continue this year. The school has worked hard to raise standards. The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented successfully and teaching and support staff have received effective training and are knowledgeable about the recommendations. Lessons are planned very effectively with work set for different levels of ability. The targets for each lesson are discussed with the children at the beginning. There is now good teaching throughout the school with some very good teaching, particularly in Year 2. Results of tests are analysed to see where pupils could achieve better. The children's behaviour and attitudes are very good. This makes them willing learners and is another important factor in the improvement in standards.
72. Pupils with special educational needs and those pupils with English as an additional language make good progress in developing their number skills in relation to their abilities. This is because teachers plan work at the right level for them and they receive very good support from the Educational Care Officers. For example, in a very good lesson in a Year 1/2 class, when the lower attaining group were consolidating their knowledge of addition, they were supported well with questions such as 'Which is the biggest number?' and 'What do we do next?' Their interest was maintained by the good resources provided, such as the rockets. This enabled them to take part fully in the lesson and their self-esteem was raised by the praise and encouragement they received.
73. Girls perform better than boys in mathematics. There are many more boys than girls in Year 2 and two thirds of the boys are in the middle or lower attaining groups, the majority being in the lower attaining group. The school responded to this concern by developing 'carousel' sessions. Children are arranged according to ability and there is very good teaching in each set. Work is matched well to the ability level of all of the children. Challenging tasks are set for all, including the highest attainers. For example, the children were investigating the largest and smallest numbers that could be achieved when three darts were thrown at a target board. The more able children were expected to double their numbers before they added them together. This was challenging but much enjoyed by them. Smaller numbers were given to the less able children but it ensured that they could all complete the investigation successfully.
74. Pupils' good achievement in Year 1, and very good achievement in Year 2, is directly linked to the teaching. Teachers know the children well and have formed very good relationships with them. This encourages the pupils to work hard in order to please their teachers and they feel successful. Pupils are taught a wide range of calculation strategies and are encouraged to explain how they worked out their answers. In a very good lesson in Year 2, for example, the teacher asked a child to explain the calculation to the rest of the class. The child replied, 'I put the biggest number in my head first and then added the other numbers!' By the time pupils reach the age of seven, they have a good understanding of number skills. They can add and subtract

accurately and can recognise and name, for example, common two-dimensional shapes and three-dimensional shapes such as cube, cylinder and sphere.

75. A strong feature of the teaching is the mental arithmetic part at the beginning of the lesson. Teachers use resources, such as number lines, very well to make the sessions fun. In one lesson the children put on the 'magic hat' to help them work out answers. Children are keen to tell their answers to the rest of the class. Teachers have good subject knowledge and ask challenging, open-ended questions to consolidate the children's previous learning. Lessons have good pace and the children remain on task and sustain concentration throughout because interesting activities are planned for them. A good example was seen in a Year 1 lesson when the children were reinforcing their knowledge of two-dimensional shapes by designing pictures. There was obvious disappointment when they had to finish at the end of the lesson. Very good use is made of the Educational Care Officers in all the lessons. They support the groups well and assess what the children have understood.
76. The coordinator has only very recently been appointed and has not yet had the opportunity to have an impact on standards. However, she has some good ideas about what she aims to do to take the subject forward; for example, monitoring the teaching and undertaking more analysis of test results.
77. Good opportunities are given for the pupils to extend their mathematical knowledge in different situations. ICT is being used appropriately to support learning in some lessons. Pupils use carefully selected programs to help them develop mathematical skills such as counting and computation. They use their skills of measuring in design and technology and science.

SCIENCE

78. A review of the national assessments for 2001 and 2002 shows that while an average proportion of children reached the expected standards too few reached above average levels. Recent developments in the curriculum have begun to correct this situation and the current Year 2 pupils are tackling more challenging work. About two thirds of them are already reaching above average standards in scientific investigation. This is a good improvement. About a third of the children have difficulty grasping the principles of investigation and enquiry and many of them (20 per cent) have special educational needs. Consequently, while the children in Year 2 now reach standards that are average overall as a year group, they are unlikely to reach above average standards.
79. Science is taught well. Lessons are planned with clear objectives. Good use is now made of investigation and practical activities to help the children develop first hand understanding in all the aspects of science. Pupils in Year 2 are learning to make thoughtful predictions and are expected to work independently when carrying out investigations. As a result, they are learning to draw their own conclusion from the evidence. For example, the children investigating the effects of lowering or raising a ramp while releasing wheeled toys already knew that the higher ramp would produce a faster descent. They were challenged by being asked why, and offered answers such as, 'It presses harder because it is higher up' and 'The ramp bends and throws it down faster.' Their observations are received well by the teacher who encourages them to explain. The children voice their ideas and suggestions confidently and listen courteously to the ideas of others. Their work is presented well and they work quickly. The more able pupils need to set out their own work independently more often, rather than using worksheets.

80. The teachers skilfully question the children and build very well on earlier learning and the knowledge and understanding that the pupils bring to the lesson. For example, when a Year 1 class was preparing for a visit to the park, the teacher checked they understood how the tally charts were to be used. On completing the task the teacher noted misunderstandings where the children had, for example, ticked every skip rather than identifying that a skipping activity occurred. She planned to remedy this misunderstanding in the next lesson. The pupils like the subject and respond well to the practical activities and fieldwork. They have a very good attitude to the subject. They listen attentively, work well together, respond well to questioning and can explain why things happen, as well as what they have observed.
81. Assessment is used satisfactorily. The teachers assess tasks as they go along and alter the lessons to take account of what they note. The work is well matched to pupils' abilities. The work of children with special needs is supported well by teachers and classroom assistants, and they make good progress. Their work is planned carefully to link with the topics covered by other children but is at an earlier stage. In Year 2, for example, the higher attaining children used a variety of rulers and tape measures to accurately check the distance travelled by vehicles from the bottom of the ramp. The lower attaining pupils, whose work was much less accurate, used counting resources that linked together as a means of understanding that the distance changed, rather than measuring how much it changed. The children with English as an additional language are given good support and helped to understand their tasks. Sensitive explanations and discussions enable them to work at challenging levels and they are given good opportunities to try and explain their understanding of the activities. They are learning scientific vocabulary well and are helped to use the terms in correctly structured sentences.
82. The deputy is leading the subject this term while the coordinator is on maternity leave. She is experienced at leading the staff but has not yet had time to review and plan for developments. She is concerned to improve the quality of the teaching and learning of investigative science in particular, and advises other teachers when necessary. The school's scheme of work, based upon national advice, gives appropriate coverage of the different aspects of scientific knowledge and understanding.

ART AND DESIGN

83. Standards are average overall and the children make satisfactory progress. This is the same as at the time of the last inspection. The children cover an appropriate curriculum overall, that includes good opportunities to develop above average skills in drawing and average skills in painting. They have fewer opportunities to experience work with textiles, clay and other three-dimensional resources. As a result, their standards in these areas, while satisfactory, are lower. There is no checking procedure in place to support the work in art and design and this has contributed to the uneven balance of skills learned by the children.
84. The children draw well and achieve thoughtful and attractive pieces of work. In Year 1, work linked to the children's science shows a good attention to detail. The children's illustrations of favourite books have a liveliness and detail that shows how well they remembered parts of the stories. Year 2 children's drawings of space show a wide use of colour and design. Most of the artwork is drawn from the nationally recommended scheme and linked to topics the children are studying. It illustrates the children's on-going work and is often combined to form larger displays. The children's work is displayed very well and it helps make the school bright and cheerful. There is,

however, insufficient work devised by the children themselves and based on their own imagination or interpretation of ideas or events. There is a little art from different cultures and this could be usefully extended.

85. The coordinator has been in post for some time. She ensures that the resources are up-to-date. However, overall her support of the provision is unsatisfactory as she has insufficient knowledge of the range of work covered and the strengths and weaknesses in the curriculum. The coordinator has noted that the children's skills in drawing is developing well as they move through the school but there is no strategy to assess the children's overall progress and help them reach higher standards.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

86. Standards in design and technology are average and all groups of children, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress. These standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.
87. A satisfactory range of work is covered. Children benefit from being given choices of materials to use and acquire skills in handling them. They become competent in cutting, attaching and decorating paper and card, and stitching or gluing materials together. Year 2 pupils enjoy the practical tasks of designing and making. They have designed and made vehicles using cardboard boxes, dowel and card wheels. They were asked to observe carefully what happens when a winding mechanism works and following this they investigated ways of making a moving picture, based on the story of 'Incy Wincy Spider.' Opportunities are given for them to analyse the effectiveness of their designs and they do this with interest. Year 1 children successfully used fasteners and other joining techniques when they made 'creepy caterpillars'. An interesting range of posters was designed outlining how the school environment could be improved.
88. The coordinator for the subject has only recently been appointed. She is an Educational Care Officer and will need guidance for monitoring work and helping staff take the subject forward. The school has adopted the nationally recommended scheme for the subject and this helps teachers plan interesting activities. There is a satisfactory range of tools, equipment and materials that are used to support the learning.

GEOGRAPHY

89. The children reach standards that are above average and make good progress. These standards have improved since the previous inspection. Teachers take responsibility, within teams, for planning the curriculum and ensuring that good coverage of all the skills is provided. They use the nationally agreed guidelines effectively. The coordinator leads the subject successfully by providing support for the other teachers.
90. Pupils talk readily about their own locality and know about the changes that have taken place around the area, such as the development of a nearby industrial estate. Their studies enable them to talk knowledgeably about places they pass on their way to school. They know the names of the different types of houses they live in. The children also know of other places in this country such as London, Manchester and Cornwall. Pupils are aware that the world reaches beyond their locality. They can pick out countries and seas and talk about the weather in different countries compared

with England. One child in Year 2 was heard to say 'If you travel north to a country it becomes colder and if you travel south it becomes warmer.' When the pupils were in Year 1, their interest was stimulated by the visits 'Barnaby Bear' had made to different countries. This helped them make progress in recognising places on a map and on globes.

91. Resources to support the teaching of geography are satisfactory overall. They have been updated since the last inspection.

HISTORY

92. The standards reached by children in Year 2 are above average and they have made good progress. These standards have improved since the previous inspection. The coordinator leads the subject well and the school's provision for history is better than average. The teachers plan carefully together to ensure learning builds systematically on the previous year. This takes the children's learning forward well. The children are taught well and are very enthusiastic. Members of the Museum Service visit the school, often in costumes of an historical period, for example, as a nurse at the time of the Crimean War. As part of the school's 50 year Jubilee Celebrations grandparents were invited into the school to give 'eye-witness' accounts of life in the 1950s. All this helps the children's development of their knowledge and understanding of times past, as well as enlivening the subject.
93. Children in Year 1 have gained a good understanding of how things have changed over the past 50 years through their work on toys. They have completed a questionnaire themselves and then taken it home and asked their parents and grandparents what their favourite toys were so that comparisons can be made. They learned that the material toys are made from has changed. They realised that today's children have a much wider choice of toys, especially computer programs, not available to their grandparents. They learn how people 100 years ago kept clean, that washday took an enormous amount of effort compared with that of today and that people used outside privies rather than indoor modern sanitation. The children are eager to learn and are already beginning to pose their own simple questions as to why things change over time.
94. In Year 2, the teaching was excellent, the children were considering eyewitness accounts of The Great Fire of London. Using sections of Samuel Pepys' diary, short reconstructed video clips and pictures, the teacher created an atmosphere where children were able to 'travel back in time'. They imagined what they would do if they were experiencing the event. They thought about how they would travel to make their escape and what they would take with them. They knew that travel would be on horseback, in carts or by boat. They knew that the fire spread because the buildings had thatched roofs and were made of wood and that they were crowded together.
95. History is taught well and in Year 2 it is taught in ability groups for part of the year. Through skilful teaching and good quality support the children progress well. Children with special educational needs make good progress because they are well supported in their classes. For those in the lower group in Year 2, the teacher used dramatisation to very good effect. Through discussion and through their pictures the children showed they were developing an understanding of the seventeenth century. They needed considerable help, however, when recording their ideas in words. Those children with English as an additional language are given good support that helps them speak and understand English more clearly. They are helped in discussions

about the fire of London, for example, to use words about flammable building materials in carefully structured sentences.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

96. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are average and the pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress. This is an improvement from the time of the previous inspection when standards were below average. There has been a great improvement in the provision for ICT and the attractive bays outside the classrooms support the children's needs appropriately. The school has, of necessity, spent large amounts of money to develop the provision.
97. There is no coordinator at the moment and so the subject is being managed effectively by the headteacher. The school has developed its own scheme of work that ensures the systematic teaching of specific skills in using computer programs and functions. Assessments are in place and are used to check the progress the pupils are making. The staff have received training to develop their confidence to teach and use ICT. They are ably supported by the Educational Care Officers who work with some groups of children when they are using the computers.
98. One lesson was observed during the inspection and this was satisfactory. The teacher developed the pupils' use of control technology through demonstrating how a programmable toy could perform different functions. Pupils use computers to support their classwork. For example, Year 2 children use a program to help with their addition. They are well motivated, behave sensibly and responsibly and show much enjoyment when they are working on the computers.
99. The children's work builds on earlier learning and helps to consolidate and develop their skills effectively. As a result, their attitudes are very good. They listen attentively to teacher instructions and act upon them enthusiastically. Across the school the children make good progress in learning to handle the computer mouse, the keyboard and the different functions on the screen. They value the time they have on the computers and work hard independently or in pairs. Pupils help each other very well and pupils with special educational needs benefit greatly from the support of their peers, as well as the support from teachers and Educational Care Officers
100. The application of ICT in different subjects is developing. They work, for example, on graphs within mathematics and science, paint programs in art and design and retrieve information in literacy. The school has Internet access, but the use of the Internet to find information is limited.

MUSIC

101. In Year 2, the children reach higher standards than average. All the children, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The coordinator is newly appointed but has already made a start in beginning to consider what needs to be done.
102. Children in Year 1 know that instruments can be played in different ways. In their lesson, one child played a chime bar in the usual way but another held the bar as she struck it making a duller sound. All the children were able to identify the difference in the sounds. They are beginning to think about the effect that vibration has on sound.

Another child took a tambourine and shook it, the second child beat it and the third child both shook and beat it. They learn the names of instruments such as the cymbal, tambourine and slap board. They know the words of a range of songs and can keep in tune.

103. The children in Year 2 use their voices skilfully to create sounds, of animals for example, to use as effects in their musical story. Others select and play instruments to represent the rain, the wind, thunder and lightening. Through practice they improve their work. They are keen to demonstrate their learning in a whole class performance as the teacher skilfully constructs a story. All the children came in at the correct time and performed well. Many of the sound effects required small groups of pupils to perform together. This they did with enjoyment and a certain amount of gusto! The teachers have considerable expertise.
104. In assembly all the children sing tunefully and sweetly. They know the words of the songs and are enthusiastic. They enjoy adding action to songs. In class there are good opportunities to listen to music often as a stimulus or support for other subjects. Examples were seen in Year 2 as an accompaniment to work about The Great Fire of London. The teacher chose the music carefully to ensure sections reflected a range of emotions such as fear and sadness. In a literacy lesson focusing on writing a story about a Spooky Castle, the teacher, used tracks from Star wars. This created an atmosphere that allowed the children to suggest interesting and imaginative scenarios, which enlivened their work.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

105. Standards in physical education are average and the pupils make satisfactory progress, as they did at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils take part in gymnastics, dance and games activities during the year.
106. Pupils understand the effects that exercise has on their bodies and are aware of the importance of warming up before beginning skills practices. They work hard in the lessons and their behaviour is very good when they are offered activities that are well matched to their abilities, with an appropriate level of challenge. In all the lessons, pupils with special educational needs are fully included in the activities and they receive good support from the classroom assistants.
107. In the two lessons seen, the quality of teaching ranged from good to satisfactory. Teachers present themselves well by dressing appropriately for the lessons and paying due attention to safe working practices. They have good control and pupils respond by taking part enthusiastically. Lesson planning varies in quality. Lessons always follow a clear plan to build on earlier learning. In some cases, however, learning is more effective because lessons are adapted from the purchased scheme to match the children's needs. In other cases, lessons follow the scheme too closely even though the pace does not always move the children forward steadily. By Year 2, the pupils show appropriate control of resources such as balls and quoits and have a satisfactory awareness of space as they move around the hall.
108. The coordinator has taken responsibility for the subject only this term. Previously, there has been good management of resources but leadership has not been satisfactory. Lesson planning is not always entirely appropriate and this has not been recognised. Despite this, pupils are able to build on previous learning and reach average standards.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

109. By Year 2, the pupils reach the expected standard and have made satisfactory progress, as they did at the time of the last inspection. There is a sound scheme of work, based upon both the Local Authority syllabus and the nationally recommended scheme.
110. The children experience three major world faiths alongside Christianity. They study Judaism, Hinduism and Sikhism. Visitors from the local church, St. Mary's, regularly visit school to lead assemblies, but there are no opportunities provided for the children to visit the places of worship of their own culture or those of other cultures.
111. In Year 1, the children have good opportunities to take part in simple religious ceremonies in class, such as baptism. The teacher took the part of the vicar and children were chosen to take the parts of parents and godparents. The rest of the class became the congregation. The teacher made the ceremony very real for the children. Before the ceremony she explained that people are only christened or baptised if they wish to enter the Christian faith. Many of the children had not been christened and had no experience of a christening. This was handled with great sensitivity. The lesson contributed well to the spiritual development of the children. There are opportunities for children to learn about religious festivals like Easter, Divali and Yom Kippur. Older children know the significance of prayer beads and the importance of symbols such as the five 'K' s in the Sikh religion. They consider what makes things fair and how to be a best friend. All the children know the school prayer by heart.
112. Lower attaining pupils are taught well. Experienced classroom assistants, who help the children by ensuring that their lower literacy levels do not impede their learning in this subject, support them well. Those children for whom English is an additional language are given good support. They are helped to express their opinions and talk about the subject. The coordinator leads the subject satisfactorily. Recently she has bought sets of good quality artefacts which support the teaching of other religions. There are no systems in place to assess the levels that children attain. Displays around the school enhance the children's knowledge of religious education.