

INSPECTION REPORT

CRANFIELD VC LOWER SCHOOL

Cranfield

LEA area: Bedfordshire

Unique reference number: 109598

Headteacher: Mrs B Stubbings

Reporting inspector: Mr Tony Maslin
3669

Dates of inspection: 3rd – 6th March 2003

Inspection number: 251219

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Lower

School category: Voluntary controlled

Age range of pupils: 4 - 9

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Court Road
Cranfield
Bedford
Bedfordshire

Postcode: MK43 0DR

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Kevin Gedny

Date of previous inspection: 15th June 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
3669	Tony Maslin	Registered inspector	Mathematics Geography	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? a) The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9569	Janet Leaning	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
17343	Sandra Morris	Team inspector	English Art and design Design and technology History Educational inclusion	
31819	Shirley Duggins	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Physical education Religious education English as an additional language	
30713	Stephen Crumpler	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Music Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	4 - 7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	8 - 9
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	10
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	11 - 12
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	12 - 13
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	14
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	14 - 16
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	16 - 17
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	18 - 22
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	23 - 35

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Cranfield Church of England VC Lower School serves the local community and families from other countries, whose parents are attending postgraduate study at the local university. There are 281 pupils on roll, which is large for a school of this type. This number varies and there is very high pupil mobility, which is associated with the university families. The full range of socio-economic backgrounds is represented, but most pupils are from relatively advantaged backgrounds. 26 per cent of pupils have an ethnic minority heritage background, which is above average. Fifteen per cent of pupils have English as an additional language and half of these are at an early stage of English language acquisition. This is above average and represents a wide range of ethnic backgrounds, with ten different languages spoken at home. 21 per cent of pupils are identified as having a special educational need, including those with a statement, which is average. Three per cent of pupils are entitled to a free school meal, which is low. Pupils enter the school with attainment, which is, overall, just above average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a satisfactory school with many good features. It provides a caring, secure and inclusive learning environment for its pupils. Pupils' attitudes to learning and their personal relationships and development are very good. There is strong teaching in all year groups, except for Year 3. Pupils make good progress overall, so that, at the end of Key Stage 1 and at the end of Year 4 standards of attainment are above average or, occasionally, well above average in almost all subjects. The school is well managed, with high expectations in many areas, but the lack of significant impact of the school's leadership and procedures in improving the teaching in Year 3 and in identifying the small, but significant, curriculum improvement needs prevent the school from being judged good overall. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The pupils' attitudes, behaviour, personal development and relationships are very good.
- Equality of access and opportunity within the curriculum is good - this is a highly inclusive school.
- There is very good provision for the pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development.
- Very good teaching in English and mathematics in Year 4 ensures that attainment in these two subjects is well above average when the pupils leave the school.
- Good teaching in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2 ensures attainment in most subjects is above average.
- Standards of reading are very good throughout the school.

What could be improved

- The effectiveness of actions taken to ensure a satisfactory overall standard of teaching in each of the Year 3 classes.
- The use of assessment and other data to identify more effectively those areas of the curriculum where the school needs to make small but important improvements.
- The use of assessment data on a year-by-year basis to identify and provide effectively for those groups of pupils who are not making the progress they should.
- The monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in June 1998, just after the present headteacher was appointed. The school has made good progress since then and almost all the areas for improvement, identified in the last report, have been effectively addressed. There is a broad and balanced curriculum supported by effective schemes of work, with generally good standards throughout and the pupils have many opportunities to take and accept responsibility. Very good teaching in the school has risen from one in five lessons to nearly one in three. The school has developed a number of procedures by which to monitor its progress and effectiveness, but the weakness is that these, particularly the use of assessment procedures of pupils' progress, have yet to influence its work fully.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools		similar schools	
	2000	2001	2002	2002
reading	A	A	A	A
writing	A*	B	B	C
mathematics	A	B	B	C

Key

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

Standards at the end of Reception are above average in all aspects of the early learning goals.

At the end of Year 2 standards in all subjects are above the national expectation, with the exception of reading, where standards are well above average and information and communication technology, where standards are average. The National Curriculum test results reflect these judgements. Overall, this is better than at the time of the last inspection. There has been a slight drop in the test attainments over time in mathematics and writing, but the school does not have sufficient data to be able to say whether, or not, this is linked to the high pupil mobility. The inspectors' judgements are that, while there may be a link to pupil mobility, the quality of provision in these two areas is not of the same very high standard as that for reading and this, too, has affected the standards achieved.

Overall, standards at the end of Year 4 are better than at the time of the last inspection with standards in English and mathematics well above the national expectation. The other subjects are above national expectations, except for art, geography and information and communication technology, where standards are in line.

All pupils, boys, girls, those with special educational needs, those from a minority ethnic heritage and those with English as an additional language, achieve well and make good progress. The slow progress made in Year 3 does not hinder the pupils' overall capacity and enthusiasm for learning, as is demonstrated by the above average standards achieved at the end of Year 4. The school sets appropriate, non-statutory targets for the pupils' attainments for the end of each year in mathematics and English, which it mostly meets.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very good attitudes and respond exceptionally well to their schooling.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	The pupils understand that very high standards of behaviour are expected and they meet these high expectations.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is very good. They relate very well to each other and to the adults in the school.
Attendance	Attendance is below average.

The pupils' very good attitudes, very good behaviour, very good relationships and the very good initiative and personal responsibility, which they show in their daily experiences, are a significant strength of the school.

The below average attendance is linked to the high pupil mobility and the school has satisfactory procedures in place for ensuring good attendance.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 4
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	Satisfactory

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.

Across the school teaching is satisfactory. More than two lessons in every three were judged to be good or very good, but also one lesson in fourteen was unsatisfactory. The amount of very good teaching has improved since the last inspection and teaching is generally good, except in Year 3, where all the unsatisfactory lessons were observed. The skills of literacy and numeracy are generally well taught. The good teaching in the school is characterised by well-planned lessons, good subject knowledge, which catches the pupils' interest and good expectations of the pupils' work and application. The pace is good in these lessons, which adds a sense of urgency to the pupils' learning and acquisition of new skills. Relationships are good and the pupils work well together. The needs of different pupils are well met, with good links between new work and what the pupils already know. The aims of the lesson are shared with the pupils enabling them to have a clear understanding of the lesson content and to be able to recognise what they have learned. Some Year 3 lessons also demonstrate these successful features, but too often time is not well used, the pupils' learning suffers and they do not make the gains they could.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The planned curriculum is broad, well balanced and meets the needs of all pupils, making this a highly inclusive school.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good, with good support from the teaching assistants. They make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good; these pupils make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Very good; spiritual development is good, while moral, social and cultural development are all very good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Pupils are well cared for and good provision is made for their general welfare.

The inspectors talked with parents, looked at the other contributions parents make and judge that parents play a positive role in the life of the school and are made welcome. The school cares for its pupils well in all aspects of general welfare, curriculum provision and specific need. It actively seeks opportunities to develop the pupils' sense of independence and personal responsibility. The curriculum fully meets all statutory requirements.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership of the headteacher and other key staff is satisfactory. The school is well managed, but the evaluation of its performance and the ensuing action plans need strengthening. This is particularly necessary to bring about needed improvements in teaching in Year 3.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors have satisfactory procedures for fulfilling their responsibilities. They have plans to become more proactive in seeking data for their school and using it to challenge performance.
The school's evaluation of its performance	With its high mobility of pupils with English as an additional language the school is somewhat unique. In seeking other, similar, schools against which to compare its achievements it has not always provided itself with the most rigorous challenge.
The strategic use of resources	The school plans its use of resources carefully.

The school has sufficient teachers with appropriate qualifications. This expertise is supplemented by a strong group of learning support assistants. Accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory and good displays of pupils' work throughout the school celebrate their achievements. Facilities for information and communication technology will improve significantly once the already built suite is fully fitted out. The school is well managed, but the school's leaders have not developed a sufficiently effective program of monitoring and evaluating teaching or pupils' progress through the school. The school makes appropriate use of the principles of best value.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school and are making good progress. • Behaviour in the school is good. • Teaching is good. • Their children are becoming mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework. • Better information about their child's progress. • The closeness with which the school works with parents. • The range of activities outside lessons.

Inspectors' judgements generally support the parents' positive views of the school with the exception of teaching which is good in all year groups, but not in Year 3, where it is unsatisfactory. The inspectors' findings do not confirm the need for other improvements. Homework is set regularly, although the school has not communicated this well to parents. There are satisfactory routes for parents to become informed about their child's progress and the school responds quickly to specific requests. The program of extra-curricular activities is appropriate for a school of this size and age range of pupils.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. All children make good progress during their time in Reception and exceed the national expectations defined by the early learning goals in all six areas of learning; personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; physical development; and creative development. This maintains the high standards from the last inspection. The staff take particular care to establish high expectations of good behaviour and social development, enriching the pupils' acquisition of skills in the other curriculum areas and laying the foundation for the generally good progress they make in the later key stages.
2. At the end of year 2, the average National Curriculum points scores for 2002 show well above average standards of reading and above average standards in writing and mathematics. Comparison with similar schools shows well above average performance in reading, but average in writing and mathematics. It also shows the percentage of pupils attaining Level 3 is well above similar schools for reading and writing, but below for mathematics. The school has already identified that some small improvements need to be made in writing and the inspectors' further analysis shows that improvements need to be made at the higher levels in mathematics. The inspection evidence and judgements confirm these findings. Teacher assessments for 2002 at the end of Year 2 in science show above average standards, being the same overall, as for similar schools. The percentage at Level 3 is well above similar schools. There is no significant difference between the attainments of boys, girls and those with an ethnic minority heritage. Pupils with English as an additional language, who are not sufficiently fluent, are not entered for the tests. Those who are entered attain similarly to their peers.
3. Because of good teaching, the pupils generally make good progress through Years 1 and 2 and standards in most of the subjects are above average. The only variance is in information and communication technology (ICT) and geography, where standards in both subjects are in line with national expectations. Standards in ICT are limited by the availability of resources and in geography by the nature of the photocopied worksheets, which constrain the pupils' work.
4. Overall, while there is a small drop in standards of writing and mathematics since the time of the last inspection, these generally consistently above average standards across the curriculum by the end of Year 2 represent an improvement.
5. By the end of Year 4 attainment is well above average for English and mathematics. This is confirmed by the high scores attained by the pupils in the 2002 optional national tests, which can be taken at the end of the year. In both subjects, nearly half the pupils attained a Level 4, which is the expected level for a pupil in Year 6. Attainment in science is above average. Progress in Year 3 is generally slow, but standards improve significantly in Year 4. Standards are above average in the other areas of the curriculum, except ICT, geography and art where they are in line.
6. In all subjects at both key stages there are no significant differences between boys and girls or those pupils with a minority ethnic heritage. However the most able pupils in information and communication technology and in mathematics in Year 2 could attain more highly. Pupils with English as an additional language and pupils with special educational needs are also well provided for and make good progress towards their targets. This is a good improvement since the last inspection.
7. Most teachers make good links between curriculum subjects and, in both key stages, pupils show that they are able to use literacy and numeracy skills widely. This is extended to ICT, where pupils make best use of the available provision, including the Internet, to enhance their learning.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. Pupil's attitudes, values and relationships are very good throughout the school; from Reception to the end of Year 4. They match the school's positive aims, which are clear and appropriate and they are a strength of the school. These very good standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. The school is a very happy place where children's individual progress and development are recognised and valued. Pupils are encouraged to have thoughtful and positive attitudes and to think about others. The school emphasises the importance of self-esteem and positive relationships and has high expectations. There is a celebration assembly, when good work and other efforts are recognised and this gives good encouragement for pupils to do their best. Pupils enjoy school, work hard, take a pride in their achievements and concentrate well. They are keen to learn and to answer questions in lessons and assemblies. They are open, friendly, courteous, kind and respectful to each other and to the adults. They understand the need for rules and know right from wrong. This makes a very significant contribution to their good progress.
9. At break and lunchtime pupils play together very well and no one is left out. Lunchtime is a very sociable occasion with good all round supervision by adults. Pupils chat calmly and ask permission when they want to go outside. On this large open site, there is good provision for games and other activities, providing good opportunities for lively play. There is a range of equipment available and pupils co-operate and organise themselves well. Pupils from different cultures were seamlessly integrated and told me that the school is very welcoming.
10. Behaviour is very good, expectations are high and pupils respond very well. The behaviour policy is used effectively. Any bullying incidents are dealt with promptly and it is not an issue in the school. Rewards and sanctions are fairly and consistently applied with a very light hand, parents are involved at an early stage and this supports the good behaviour. No bullying, racism or sexism was seen during the inspection and pupils know that it is unacceptable, what to do if it occurs and they do not think that it is a problem. They simply say 'It is not allowed!' There have been no exclusions.
11. Pupils' personal development is very good and this links to the very good provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Relationships in the school are excellent; adults are very good role models and know the children and their families well. Mutual respect between children and adults is encouraged and pupils are very mature. They have well-developed social skills, think carefully about their own learning, are encouraged to become independent learners and are very keen to take on responsibilities. They are given and enjoy, a lot of responsibility, which includes taking registers, putting out equipment in the hall and helping in the playground. They are encouraged to work together, which they do very well. Pupils have raised substantial funds for those less fortunate, often related to their own experiences; for example a child had been in Great Ormond Street Hospital and part of the collection taken at the Christmas production was donated to this cause.
12. Personal, social and health education and citizenship are taught across the school, in lessons and in assemblies. Pupils in a Year 2 'circle time' were discussing how important it is to listen to others and take turns. The teacher was very kind to a boy who had recently joined the class and had very little English; he was finding it difficult to follow what was happening. Pupils understand the importance of working hard, working together, helping and being kind to others and this makes a very positive contribution to their progress.
13. Each pupil's personal and academic progress is monitored, they have a personal profile with information and targets set and parents are involved. Some pupils agree their own targets, which are tracked regularly and these ensure that in most cases, work is challenging and appropriate. This good practice ensures positive opportunities for pupils to achieve their best.
14. The rate of attendance is just below the national average and the unauthorised absence just above the national average. Almost all pupils attend school regularly and arrive punctually to lessons, which start very promptly. However, there are a significant number of pupils from other countries, whose parents study at the nearby university and pupils often come and go at different times from school terms. Because of the university terms some pupils are away for longer than the two weeks, which is usually allowed. In addition, the school was wrongly directed in the past and pupils studying in this country in preparation for their return home were mistakenly being recorded as absent, thus giving rise to the low absence rate. This has now been corrected.

15. Parents at the meeting, in questionnaires and in discussion were very positive about the standards of behaviour the school fosters. They think that behaviour is good. They are confident that the school will deal with any issues appropriately. Their children enjoy coming to school. The team endorses these positive comments.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. Across the school the quality of teaching is satisfactory. It is good in Reception, good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. No overall judgement about teaching was made at the time of the last inspection. Since that time the proportion of good and very good teaching has improved, but the proportion of unsatisfactory teaching has stayed the same. The unsatisfactory teaching only occurred in the two Year 3 classes and was in more than one subject. As a result pupils' progress slows, but it rapidly increases in Year 4 because of the good and, at times, very good teaching in the two classes. Improving teaching in Year 3 is a key issue for the school to resolve as a matter of urgency. The overall quality of teaching of skills in literacy and numeracy is good.
17. Teaching in Reception is good overall. This is because the teachers have a clear understanding of how children learn and use this knowledge to provide a rich range of learning opportunities. They keep close touch with the pupils' learning and know what they need to do next. They ensure good progress by sensitively engaging the pupils in discussion about their work, developing both their knowledge and their vocabulary. This was evident in the development of the children's use of the scientific terms for parts of a daffodil - stalk, petals, trumpet - and the attention to detail in their creative, observational paintings of daffodils. The classrooms are well managed, with high expectations of behaviour and application. This takes place in a caring environment and the pupils respond positively and with enthusiasm. The learning support assistants and nursery nurse are well integrated into the teaching programme and make a good contribution to the pupils' progress.
18. This good teaching continues in Years 1 and 2, and again in Year 4. Teachers have good command of the wide range of subjects, which comprise the primary curriculum. Lesson plans specify the content to be taught, to the whole class and to specific pupils. Classrooms are well managed, with high expectations of behaviour and application. As a result the teaching is in tune with the pupils' needs and they respond with interest and commitment. The lesson aims are shared in advance and checked at the end, so that the pupils have a clear idea of what they have learned in that session, so that, for example, children in Year 1 are able to draw and label a block graph accurately to show the range of fastenings on their shoes. They can then use their graphs to answer questions such as 'How many more pupils have Velcro's than slip-ons?'. Clear targets for learning, combined with appropriate marking of the pupils' work, enable the teachers to make satisfactory assessments of pupils' progress on a day-to-day basis in order to plan what they should do next. In the very good teaching the explanations and discussion are sharp and challenging, the pace is quick and the learning moves with a sense of urgency. There are good schemes of work setting out what is to be learned in each year. These assist planning and play an important part in contributing to the consistency of teaching. Numeracy and literacy are well taught across the curriculum and contribute to effective standards in many subjects. This is an improvement from the last inspection. Homework is given for English and often for mathematics, contributing to the pupils' progress. A wider range of homework is given in Year 4.
19. Occasionally, good teaching is not achieved. This is the case for mathematics at Key Stage 1, where teaching is satisfactory overall because the Year 2 lessons and the scrutiny of pupils' work show that an over reliance on the text book is limiting the progress of some pupils. In geography, although teaching is satisfactory, too frequent use of photocopied worksheets limits the knowledge the pupils can demonstrate. In ICT teaching is satisfactory overall and ICT makes a satisfactory contribution to the other subjects, being limited by the lack of the full range of ICT resources. Important slippage from good teaching occurs in Year 3, where, overall, teaching is unsatisfactory. Many of the key attributes of the good teaching are still present. Important aspects of the unsatisfactory lessons, which the school needs to address, are a lack of subject knowledge and unsatisfactory planning and use of time, so that explanations and work are not well matched to the pupils' needs and progress slows because of this. Normally, good relationships and good courtesy are maintained and the pupils apply themselves well to their work, still showing their usual good behaviour and concentration. But, now and then, this good atmosphere and behaviour also falters.

20. There are good links with support staff for pupils with special educational needs and for those who are at an early stage of English language acquisition. As a result, both these sets of pupils make good progress towards the targets set for them, with many of the pupils with English as an additional language making rapid gains in their knowledge of English and quickly settling to making good progress with the rest of the curriculum.

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

21. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum. All subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education are taught and all statutory requirements are met. There have been a number of improvements since the last inspection. The time allocated to information and communication technology has increased; the provision for pupils with special educational needs has improved and is now good; curriculum planning is more consistent and there have been some improvements in assessment through the introduction of standardised tests in Years 3 and 4.
22. The quality and range of the curriculum are good overall. Curriculum policies are up to date and frequently reviewed. A weakness lies in the curriculum for the Foundation Stage, in that access to the outdoor environment, with a wide range of large wheeled toys for children to share, is limited. The remainder of the curriculum in this part of the school is good, relating closely to the recommended early learning goals and linking well to the work in Year 1.
23. Teachers in Years 1 and 2 and in Years 3 and 4 plan together to ensure children of the same age in different classes cover the same curriculum content and to confirm that learning builds systematically from year group to year group. Whole school planning ensures that all the required elements are taught and they are appropriate for the learning needs of pupils. However, plans do not always include sufficient opportunities to challenge the higher attaining pupils and encourage them to use their own initiative.
24. The school promotes literacy and numeracy well, making good use of the national strategies. Pupils use skills gained in both literacy and numeracy across the curriculum, for example, drawing graphs and charts to illustrate the results of experiments and researching and recording information from textbooks in science. ICT provision has improved since the last inspection and is used to support work in many curriculum areas.
25. The school, through its policies and practices, offers a fully inclusive curriculum, providing equality of opportunity to all of its pupils. The school prospectus states "The ethos of our school promotes the equality of opportunity in every part of school life in preparation for life in the wider community"; the inspection findings fully endorse this. It does this through celebrating the ethnic diversity of the pupils and providing good support to those pupils with special educational needs and for those whose first language is not English. Co-operation and collaboration are actively encouraged in lessons and whole school assemblies.
26. Pupils with special educational needs are included very well in all that the school has to offer. Their needs are assessed at an early stage and provision is made for them through planning and through well written individual education plans, which are put into effect well by teachers and support staff, resulting in these pupils making similar progress to their peers.
27. The school offers a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities. Many pupils take advantage of these clubs, which include recorder groups, netball and a gardening club. Clubs run by outside agencies such as Le Club Francais' and 'Premier Soccer' are also on offer. The school further supports its curriculum with a range of visits and visitors, which enrich the work. Theatre groups have been booked to visit the school to support 'Science Days' and visitors often lead the daily act of collective worship.
28. There are other links with the local community, which contribute to the pupils' education. Students from the local university and a local scout group planted spring bulbs donated by a local garden

centre. The parent teacher association has raised money for the new ICT suite and has been involved in a 'walk to work week'.

29. The school has good links with associated institutions, particularly Holywell Middle School. Representatives from the middle school and local lower schools meet to ensure progression between Years 4 and 5 when the children transfer schools. Students from De Montfort University do some part of their teaching practice here and pupils from the school have visited Cranfield University. The school supports the local community by hosting an after school club providing childcare every weekday.
30. The school makes good provision for the pupils' personal, social and health education (PHSE). This has a positive impact on the whole school, particularly on behaviour and the attitudes of the pupils to each other in the classroom. There are timetabled sessions for PHSE and policies for Citizenship and drugs education. Pupils are made aware that they are in charge of their own actions and the need to stay healthy. At harvest time pupils visit the church and their gifts are shared between the bishop's appeal and a local Christian women's refuge. A number of visits and visitors support the work in the curriculum. They include visits to the local church and a museum in Bedford, storytellers in assembly, a theatre group, which enacts historical events, for example, the Romans and people from other faiths and cultures who talk about their practices and beliefs. This is enhanced by the work of the Life Education Centre that visits each year.
31. The overall provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. This is a strength of the school and is much improved since the last inspection when it was judged to be satisfactory. The provision for spiritual development is good. Spirituality is promoted through assemblies and acts of collective worship. The themes for assembly provide opportunities for children to reflect on the love Jesus has for all and the love of parents and grandparents. In religious education, Year 2 children learn about the creation and think about the ways humans have damaged the environment. At the end of the lesson there is a moving moment as the teacher lights a candle and the children quietly reflect on the issues they have discussed. Some opportunities for pupils to share in the wonder of things around them arise in other curriculum areas. In science, children plant bulbs and a child describes how it "lifts my spirits" as it grows. Children explore the school environment and such is the teacher's enthusiasm, they experience a sense of awe and excitement when they find some moss! Children in Reception show a sense of wonder as the teacher carefully reads a pop-up book with moving pictures. Pupils are helped to develop a sense of appreciation as they study the work of artists or become involved in music. However, spiritual moments such as these are not specifically planned for in all areas of the curriculum.
32. Provision for moral development is very good. The school has created an ethos in which all pupils are valued. Those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are particularly well included. Daily acts of collective worship clarify and confirm the school's values through themes such as caring for others and the story of Solomon - with the message that wisdom is more important than wealth. Class teachers agree class rules with the children who know what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. The high standard of behaviour in the school reflects this understanding. In a Year 1 lesson the children listen to a story about a boy who tells the truth and respond very positively, confidently talking about the need for rules.
33. Pupils are given very good opportunities for social development. There is a whole school ethos of inclusion and co-operation. Pupils are given positive experiences by attending assemblies led by the youngest children and in lessons there is a sense of respect and appreciation of each other's work. Children understand the need to make allowances for the few children with emotional or behavioural difficulties and respond appropriately. The school welcomes a number of visitors to talk to the children and at Christmas the local pensioners and playgroup children are invited to the school productions. Opportunities to take part in extra-curricular activities and links with local institutions all aid pupils' social development.
34. The provision for cultural development is very good. In art lessons, children learn to appreciate the work of famous artists such as Kandinsky and Mondrian. Framed works of art are displayed around the school, together with captions and questions, which make the children think carefully about the picture. Children listen to, evaluate and perform many kinds of music. African music, as

experienced during assembly, provides contemplative moments of insight into other cultures. In science, pupils find out about traditional foods from a variety of different cultures. Signs around the school are written in several different languages and a display celebrating all the different languages spoken by pupils in the school welcomes visitors. Years 1 and 2 classrooms and the school hall have displays celebrating the Chinese New Year, alongside a cross and the Lord's Prayer written in calligraphy. Religious education includes appreciation of other people's beliefs and religious practices.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

35. As at the time of the previous inspection, the school provides a safe secure and very caring environment, where all children are valued and respected. Members of staff know the children and their families very well. Pupils are supervised and supported by a sufficient number of caring adults at play and at lunchtimes. The quality of information available to staff about pupils and about their personal development is detailed and comprehensive. Outside agencies, for example, the education welfare officer, give valuable support to the school. This good care enhances pupils' learning opportunities very well.
36. The child protection policy is good, with clear guidelines and good examples of what to look out for. The headteacher is the named person and she and the deputy headteacher have had recent training. The school liaises with the area child protection committee when necessary. All staff are fully aware of the procedures.
37. The policy for health and safety is good with comprehensive information clearly laid out. The head teacher is the named person, there is a health and safety governor and a risk assessment is carried out and recorded. The school identifies and deals effectively with any hazards found on site and there is a strong sense of the importance of the health and safety of the whole school community. Substances are stored safely. This is a large well-kept open site with no evidence of litter or graffiti and very good attention is given to pupils' security.
38. The school promotes very good behaviour through a shared and successfully implemented behaviour policy, which contains a clear set of aims. Pupils are praised and receive stickers including a 'headteacher's sticker' and pupils are proud of these. There is a celebration assembly each week, at which good behaviour and outside achievements are recognised. Sanctions are appropriate and parents are involved at an early stage if necessary. There are very good procedures to prevent bullying, but there is no written policy. Bullying is not an issue in this school, where respect and tolerance to others, their beliefs and cultures are very strongly promoted. The pupils play and work well together and do not leave anyone out.
39. Four members of staff are qualified in first aid and there is first aid equipment around the school. There is no welfare room and children are cared for in the school office. Comprehensive records of contacts are kept and pupils are sent home at an early stage if they are unwell. An accident book is kept and parents notified in case of head injury. Fire drills take place each half term and fire, physical education and electrical equipment is checked regularly to ensure pupils' safety. Good emphasis on health and safety was seen in a Year 2 science class and in physical education in Year 1.
40. Pupils' attainment and progress throughout the year is monitored and recorded at regular intervals by class teachers. Summary details are passed to the next teacher to enable her to plan her teaching to meet the pupils' needs. However, the school does not use this data sufficiently to identify areas of the curriculum which need improving or to identify groups and individuals, who are not making the overall progress they should. This is further compounded by class changes, which arise from the high pupil mobility, so that the school has no procedures in place for monitoring a pupil's overall progress from Reception to the end of Year 4. There is an assessment policy, but it needs to be revised to ensure that practice is improved. Overall, assessment procedures are unsatisfactory.
41. The policy for monitoring and improving attendance is satisfactory and parents understand their responsibilities, which are also outlined in the school prospectus. The educational welfare officer visits regularly and analyses attendance. Registers are monitored regularly and are kept according to

statutory requirements. However, in the past pupils being educated off-site have mistakenly been recorded as absent, but this has now been resolved. The school makes good efforts to follow up absences and is aware of the reasons for the decline in attendance, which it is trying to improve.

42. Procedures for introducing children to the Reception class are good. They involve home visits and visits to the school by parents and their children. This ensures that children settle in very quickly. Links with the middle school, which most pupils attend, are good; pupils visit their Year 5 class and records are passed on. In October, the Year 4 teachers visit their pupils who are now in Year 5 and meet with the teachers to discuss progress and any concerns.
43. Parents are very positive about the good care the school takes of their children. They say that pupils are well cared for and happy at school. The inspectors agree with these positive comments.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

44. The school has good links with parents and carers, maintaining the good links noted at the time of the previous inspection. The school works hard to ensure that parents feel welcome and are actively involved in their children's learning. This has a significant effect on the good standards they achieve. Parents appreciate the dedication and accessibility of the staff and praise the very good relationships within the school. Many pupils have parents who study at the nearby university and the school has established good links with the university staff to ensure that any problems can be sorted out very quickly.
45. By helping in school on a regular basis, parents are a valuable asset to teachers and pupils in lessons because they understand what is expected of them and provide good support where it is needed. They help with reading, design and technology, art and craft and on visits. Many parents give good support to the very successful parents' teachers' and friends' association. The group raises substantial funds, which make a valuable contribution to the school's activities. It has provided playground equipment, funds the 'health bus' and has raised money for the new information and communication technology suite.
46. The prospectus gives parents a clear idea of the school's expectations and the governors' annual report brings parents up to date on the school's activities. They both meet statutory requirements. Parents who are governors are well informed and have a good understanding of their role. They support the work of the school well.
47. Parents see teachers formally at two consultation evenings each year. In the summer term there is an open afternoon when pupils can show their parents around the school. In addition, the school operates an open door policy and parents are confident that they will always be welcome. There is no formalised homework policy and, although sufficient homework is usually set, parents do not always know when it is coming or due. Where possible, they support their children well at home to ensure that the tasks are completed on time. They value the reading records, which provide an opportunity for them to engage in dialogue with the class teacher. The home school agreement is a useful means of ensuring that parents understand the school's expectations, but insufficient detail is given concerning homework and there is no homework policy.
48. Annual reports on pupils' progress are detailed and evaluative, with enough information on how pupils can improve. They include appropriate short-term targets and helpful comments on their child's development. They meet statutory requirements. There is an opportunity for parents to respond at a meeting. Each term parents are told what their children will be studying. There are regular newsletters and good displays of information on the notice board. These good links support and encourage pupils in their learning.
49. A few parents at the meeting and in questionnaires were concerned that they were not well informed about their children's progress, that the school does not work closely with parents and that the range of activities outside lessons was inadequate. Many more parents, in discussion in the playground and elsewhere, were overwhelmingly pleased with what the school offers; their children love school, they are happy and one parent summed this up by saying 'This is a really excellent school and I can't

speak too highly of it'. The inspectors are satisfied that parents are kept informed about their children's progress, that the school works closely with them and that the range of activities outside lessons is similar to that in most lower schools.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

50. Overall, the leadership of the school is satisfactory. Because no judgement was made at the time of the last inspection, no conclusions about improvement can be drawn. The headteacher and key members of staff provide effective direction for the school in ensuring high expectations of pupils' behaviour and personal relationships, as expressed in the aims of the school. They work carefully to explore issues and to help pupils understand the results of their actions so that they can develop self-discipline. This results in a calm and purposeful learning environment, which makes a positive contribution to the pupils' progress.
51. The monitoring systems, which the school has developed to evaluate and improve its own performance, are less effective. There is a regular programme of classroom observations in addition to those required by performance management. These use a sensible and robust set of criteria to draw conclusions about the teaching observed and to set targets for self-improvement. There is, however, no mechanism for checking that the judgements and conclusions the senior managers and subject co-ordinators are making would be supported by an independent, professional view from outside the school. In practice, also, the targets that are set are not always monitored to see that they are met. This aspect is unsatisfactory. One outcome from the programme has been identification of some of the weaknesses in the Year 3 teaching, but recommendations have not been sufficiently well focused and followed up to ensure the required improvements take place.
52. The school follows the good practice of regularly benchmarking its performance, particularly in English and mathematics, against other schools. In years 1 and 2 there is a high degree of mobility, with pupils from other heritages joining and leaving the school according to the teaching terms of the local university. This means that a small number of pupils are disappplied from the national curriculum tests and others, who take the test, have not had a full Key Stage 1 learning programme. In attempting to find a method for accommodating this, the school's senior mangers have chosen to compare performance against the national results, rather than schools with a similar low free school meal indicator. The chosen comparator lacks sufficient challenge and shows the school's performance in too positive a light. Although it did enable the school to identify the need for action to improve writing, this lack of challenge has prevented, for instance, the identification of the small, but important improvements for mathematics.
53. Because of a lack of information technology software and capability the school makes unsatisfactory use of information technology to analyse performance on a pupil by pupil basis. It has chosen to do this manually, but has not developed a mechanism for analysing the performance of different groups of pupils over time, for example, those who have attended the school for the whole of Key Stage 1, to see if and where, improvements might be needed. As a result the school has focused on reviewing and maintaining good standards in its improvement plan. Thus, while the priorities in the plan are appropriate and the plan's progress and implementation are regularly monitored and evaluated, the plan lacks the actions and detail the school needs to take to improve further. Once the issues described in this and the previous paragraph have been addressed the school has the capacity and capability to improve further.
54. Expenditure is well linked to support the implementation of the improvement plan and the school is following the principles of best value. The recommendations of the recent auditor's report have been implemented. Specific grants are used appropriately and effectively. The administrative staff, site supervisor and midday supervisors are efficient and make an effective contribution to the school.
55. The senior managers and the co-ordinators are committed to high standards in many areas. This is evident in the good provision and effective co-ordination of the work for pupils with special educational needs. It is also evident in the good provision made for pupils with English as an additional language and the effective way in which they are welcomed into the life of the school. Specific funding to support these pupils ceased a few years ago, which put a significant additional load on the school. For this academic year, the school has received a donation from the university, which it has used to

provide much needed additional support for those pupils who are at an early stage of English language acquisition. In addition, subject co-ordinators monitor the planning, teaching, provision and standards within their subject.

56. The governors' have satisfactory procedures for fulfilling their statutory duties and shaping the strategic direction of the school. They work together with the teachers to draw up the improvement plan and have appropriate mechanisms through their sub-committees for tracking its progress. There have been a number of recent changes of governor and, when interviewed, the chair of the governing body and the chair of the curriculum committee were able to express their plans for using the outcome of this inspection report to improve the ways in which the governors could help the school set itself more challenging targets.
57. There is a good match of teachers to the needs of the curriculum and this expertise is ably supported by the learning support assistants. New staff to the school receive a careful and well-planned induction programme, enabling them to continue their professional development. Accommodation is satisfactory and enables all pupils to experience the full requirements of the National Curriculum. Playground space is sufficient and well used. Resources for information and communication technology are limited, but this will improve significantly when the purpose built suite, which is already completed, has its hardware installed. Resources for other areas of the curriculum are satisfactory.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

58. To raise standards, governors and the headteacher, when planning for school improvement, should:
 - i. Ensure the quality of teaching in each of the Year 3 classes is always satisfactory, or better, by:
 - setting clear objectives for improvement and regularly monitoring to see that they have been met.

(Paragraphs 16, 19)
 - ii. Ensure the analysis of benchmarking data is sufficiently challenging to:
 - identify the significant key curriculum priorities for the school;

(Paragraphs 52, 79)

 - enable the school improvement plan to detail the key actions to ensure success for each of its priorities.

(Paragraphs 52, 53)
 - iii. Establish the effective use of assessment data on a year by year basis by:
 - developing a method, based on information technology capability, of recording and analysing the progress and attainment of all pupils as they move through the school;

(Paragraphs 40, 53)

 - using the knowledge so gained about the pupils' progress to plan targeted work for all pupils and specifically for those identified as underachieving over the longer time scales.

(Paragraphs 40, 53)
 - iv. Establish fully effective procedures for the monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching by:

- sharing and building on the very good practice that exists within the school;
(Paragraph 18)
- ensuring that the school's own judgements about teaching concur with an outside professional judgement;
(Paragraph 51)
- ensuring that the monitoring programme includes a robust mechanism for following up targets set for improvement to ensure implementation.
(Paragraph 51)

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

- v. Ensure that standards in ICT and geography match the above average standards attained in other subjects.
(Paragraphs 3, 98, 107)
- vi. Improve standards in mathematics for the higher attaining pupils at Key Stage 1.
(Paragraphs 2, 79)
- vii. Formalise policies for homework and for responding to bullying.
(Paragraphs 38, 47)
- viii. Improve the outdoor play equipment and provide more opportunities for outdoor activities for the reception pupils.
(Paragraphs 22, 66)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	70
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	26

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	0	21	31	13	5	0	0
Percentage	0	30	44	19	7	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll		YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		281
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		8

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs		YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		55

English as an additional language		No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language		38

Pupil mobility in the last school year		No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission		25
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving		33

Attendance

Authorised absence

School data	%
	5.7

Unauthorised absence

School data	%
	0.4

National comparative data	5.4
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	35	32	67

National Curriculum Test/Task Results	Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	30	26
	Girls	29	27
	Total	59	53
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (90)	79 (89)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)

Teachers' Assessments	English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	30	28
	Girls	29	30
	Total	59	58
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (87)	87 (90)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	241	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	4	0	0
Black or Black British – African	8	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	1	0	0
Chinese	7	0	0
Any other ethnic group	29	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y4

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.4
Average class size	27.2

Education support staff: YR – Y4

Total number of education support staff	13
Total aggregate hours worked per week	248

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
Total income	£ 608,044
Total expenditure	£ 608,044
Expenditure per pupil	£ 2,003
Balance brought forward from previous year	£ 0
Balance carried forward to next year	£ 0

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	6
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	299
Number of questionnaires returned	86

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	57	36	6	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	44	44	9	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	43	49	2	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	24	55	16	3	0
The teaching is good.	47	43	6	1	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	38	33	22	5	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	51	33	12	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	49	36	13	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	33	45	15	6	1
The school is well led and managed.	42	38	6	2	12
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	36	53	6	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	21	48	17	7	6

Other issues raised by parents

A number of parents amplified their responses, but no significant additional issues were raised.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

59. The school has successfully maintained the standards of provision and attainment found in the last inspection report. Children in the Reception classes, including those with special educational needs, those from ethnic minority heritages and those with English as an additional language, make good progress in learning as a result of the good provision made. There is no significant difference in attainment between boys and girls. Children enter the Reception class at the beginning of the school year in which they are five. They attend part time until the term in which they are five. Due to the number of children there are two Reception classes that are arranged according to age.
60. The quality of teaching is very nearly always good, or better, in all areas of learning and is good overall. There is a clear link between the activities the teachers plan and what they want the children to learn. Explanations are careful and well paced and teachers ensure that time is shared equally with all children. The rooms are well organised for young children to make choices and work independently. Teachers and children receive very good support from the nursery nurse and general classroom assistant. Support from parents and other voluntary adults is much valued and appreciated. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and plan a wide range of interesting, interrelated activities that reflect the six areas of learning. They maintain a good balance between class, group and individual activities, together with opportunities for children to make choices about activities. All staff demonstrate an understanding of the expectations of activities and through continual interaction with children are successful in reinforcing teaching points and taking learning forward. Specific strengths and weaknesses of individual children are regularly identified and used to help plan the next step in learning. Records show children's progress over time in the six areas of learning. The teachers know their children very well and are very sensitive to their needs and abilities. There is a lack of suitable large equipment to provide opportunities for climbing, peddling and pushing and full advantage is not made of the secure outdoor area to encourage independence, confidence and physical skills.

Personal, social and emotional development

61. The well-organised induction procedures ensure that almost all children enter the Reception classes with some measure of confidence. Children exceed expectations in their personal, social and emotional development by the end of the Foundation Stage; they are well behaved and polite and have a good awareness of simple class rules, which they obey readily. All staff work well together and provide good role models for the children, treating each other and the children with courtesy and respect. Perceptive use of praise and encouragement gives children a positive feeling of self-worth and pride in their achievements.
62. Children have positive attitudes to learning and settle promptly to self-chosen and teacher directed tasks. They show increasing confidence and a developing independence in the wide range of activities on offer. Children are eager to work and are very much at ease with the routines of school life, as when choosing an activity or working with the teacher on a particular task. Children, including those with English as an additional language, happily work and play with each other, eager to offer support when needed. Staff are patient and take the time and trouble to establish good relationships with children who respond with good behaviour and willingness to co-operate.

Communication, language and literacy

63. By the end of the Foundation Stage, children attain above the expectations in communication, language and literacy. Staff in both classes take every opportunity to engage children in conversation. They also provide opportunities for imaginative role-play and sharing of activities such as games to develop oral and listening skills. This was evident when a child very clearly explained the rules of a number card game that was then successfully played with all taking turns and sharing the delight of the winner. Spoken language is well developed and children's vocabulary is ever increasing. Children listen attentively and willingly participate in class oral sessions. There is well-

planned focus on the development of the significance of letter sounds. Children are confident and attempt to write independently. They demonstrate good letter formation and use their knowledge of letter sounds to spell words. Children recognise the written representation of their own name and, on arrival in the morning, select their name tab and fix it on the list of children in school today. If there are names left, children either recognise the name or use letter sounds to identify them. They write their name or copy it. The higher attaining children independently write sentences to match the picture they have drawn. Children enjoy books and handle them with care. Most children demonstrate good pre-reading skills and many have begun reading.

Mathematical development

64. Children make good progress in mathematics and, by the end of Reception, their attainment is above the expectations of the early learning goals. The majority of children can count to twenty. All are familiar with numbers to ten; can count objects accurately, recognise numbers and use their knowledge to play number games successfully. Teachers use a variety of strategies to motivate and interest children and mathematics is well integrated within the school day. Sharing a pop-up book with the teacher, children were spell bound as each page was turned. They eagerly counted items on each page, could tell which number came next and how many objects there were altogether. The most able children can count in twos to eight. Throughout the day teachers use opportunities to reinforce learning by counting and using specific mathematical vocabulary in conversations. Children are familiar with using money to buy fruit from the class shop. Most can identify circles, squares, triangles and rectangles and use their knowledge to create shape pictures and patterns. Children are beginning to write number sentences, using symbols for 'addition' and 'equals'. They are familiar with positional terms such as over, under, in front and behind and use them accurately when describing their pictures. Well-planned play in their wet area encourages children to develop practical methods of learning about volume and measurements. Children use mathematical vocabulary increasingly accurately.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

65. Children learn well and, by the end of the Foundation Stage, have good standards of knowledge and understanding of the world around them. They bring their knowledge of their own families and backgrounds to their imaginative play. Children have a growing awareness of the needs and growth of living things through observations of beans growing and their study of trees. Teachers plan opportunities for children to examine objects to understand change over time and materials around them. One child used a magnifying glass to check the growth of beans in a jar, identified the root and its need for water to grow. Others use clipboards and record objects around them that are wood. Children can identify a range of animals and insects that live in a tree. Celebrations of Harvest, Christmas and the Chinese New Year successfully introduce children to the wider world of their own and other traditions. Children know about their immediate surroundings and show a good sense of location and direction. They take it in turns to take the registers to the office in the main school building under the supervision of an adult. Children confidently use the computer to support their learning. They make good progress in recognising letters on the keyboard and use the computer mouse accurately to move the cursor and click to facilitate the program. Teachers use knowledge and understanding of the world as the basis of their topic work. This introduces a wide range of vocabulary that is successfully reinforced across the wide range of activities and extends children's understanding. There are no facilities within the Reception unit for teachers and children to be regularly involved in cooking activities.

Physical development

66. Progress in physical development is good in most aspects and children are on line to achieve standards above the early learning goals by the end of Reception. In the hall, children show good awareness of space for themselves and others and move with confidence, imagination and safety. They demonstrate good individual interpretations and body control when moving to music. Although the hall is used on a regular basis the secure outdoor area is not used enough as an integral part of the school day. Relevant physical activities are planned to encourage children to share, play together and develop skills associated with using small equipment such as balls and skipping ropes. Due to the lack of sufficient large equipment for outdoor activities, the physical challenges of climbing,

swinging and peddling are not possible. In their final term in Reception children are introduced to the fixed climbing apparatus in the hall. Through daily opportunities to use pencils, paints, scissors and glue and to play with small construction equipment, children's fine motor skills develop well.

Creative development

67. By the end of Reception, children attain above the expected levels of the early learning goals in creative development. Painting is a regular activity and children show confidence to explore and use paints freely. They demonstrate convincing use of paintbrushes to paint pictures or create a pattern. Children make good representations of a range of animals, taking care with shape and features. Teachers provide a broad curriculum supported by a range of interesting resources well directed to extending children's creative development. Children successfully learn to respond, explore, express and communicate their ideas and use their imagination, working with a range of materials including clay. They use a range of materials to create colourful individual collages and are proud of their achievements. Imaginative role-play opportunities appropriately increase children's creativity. Staff intervene sensitively to support and increase children's ideas so that they make appropriate progress. All children join enthusiastically in a suitable range of songs and rhymes. Children made very individual shakers and used them effectively to accompany themselves in singing a 'Shaker Song'. They demonstrate a sense of pitch, confidence, enjoyment and pride when singing and performing.

ENGLISH

68. At the end of Year 2 standards in reading are well above the national average and higher than standards attained by pupils in similar schools. While the percentage of pupils attaining Level 2 or better in the end of key stage tests is in line with similar schools, the percentage attaining the higher level 3 is well above. At the end of Year 2, overall standards in writing are above the national average and in line with standards attained by pupils in similar schools. The percentage attaining the higher Level 3 is well above similar schools, but the percentage attaining Level 2 or better is well below similar schools. Overall standards in English are similar to the last inspection.
69. Despite a dip in standards of writing in Year 3, by the end of Year 4 standards in both reading and writing are well above the nationally expected level. The end of Year 4 optional national tests for 2002 show that almost half the pupils attain well above average standards in reading and almost a third reach this standard in writing. By the end of Year 4 standards in reading and writing are higher than at the time of the last inspection.
70. In both key stages, pupils with special educational needs attain well for their capabilities, as do pupils with ethnic minority heritages and those with English as an additional language. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls and high attaining pupils make good progress in all aspects of the subject.
71. In speaking and listening standards are above average throughout the school. Pupils speak confidently and express themselves clearly. They take turns to speak and listen attentively to their teachers and each other. By Year 4 pupils can explain a wide variety of ideas in a lively way using a good range of vocabulary. Pupils with EAL make very good progress with speaking and many are fluent in English. Because of the very good support they receive, those who enter the school with limited vocabulary quickly learn to contribute to lessons.
72. In reading pupils make good progress. In Year 1 the majority of pupils know their letter sounds and can build simple words phonetically. Many can read stories and instructions with expression and attention to punctuation. By Year 4 the majority of pupils can read a range of texts fluently and independently for a range of purposes. They read with expression and comprehension and can give an opinion about the quality of stories and their preference for authors. They know the difference between fiction and non-fiction and can use a simple library classification system. The higher attaining pupils in Year 4 have read an impressive number of demanding texts including modern and older classics, for example, The Railway Children, Little Women, Harry Potter and the Narnia stories.
73. In writing pupils in Year 1 make very good progress. They can form letters neatly and correctly. They can spell some key words and are confident about trying to write words they cannot yet spell. In a

Year 1 class pupils were able to suggest where full stops should be placed using plastic counters on a shared text. They are becoming aware of sentences and can read their own stories with expression. Although most pupils continue to make good progress in writing, in Year 2 a small minority of pupils with average abilities make less progress. Some of these pupils need more guidance and focused support to ensure that the quantity and quality of their work is of the expected standard. In Year 3 pupils make insufficient progress in writing. The emphasis on grammar and comprehension exercises does not enable them to use their skills in their own writing. However, the rapid and very good progress made in year 4 outweighs the weaknesses in Year 3. In Year 4 pupils use lively and imaginative language to create well-organised stories and reports. They can edit their own work to improve it and can rewrite text using more or less words as required.

74. Overall the quality of teaching is similar to that at the time of the last inspection. It is good in Years 1 - 2, satisfactory in Years 3 - 4 and satisfactory overall. However there are variations between year groups. All teachers plan effectively and the objectives for the lessons are shared with pupils. The work planned links well with the National Literacy Strategy. Teaching assistants are used well to support individuals and groups of pupils, especially those with EAL. In Year 1 the teaching in all the lessons seen was very good. Phonics are taught imaginatively and systematically. The work set meets the needs of pupils of all capabilities. In one very good lesson the teacher played the role of Goldilocks' mother and asked the pupils to write letters of apology to the three bears. She carefully guided the pupils in their writing, enabling them to develop their understanding of sentence structure in easy stages. As a result of very good teaching pupils wrote confidently and at a high standard. The teaching in Year 4 is also very good. Teachers have high expectations of the pupils and set challenging work, ensuring that pupils attain the highest standards of which they are capable. In some lessons the use of published schemes of work and worksheets is inappropriate for some of the pupils and does not meet the needs of all ability groups. In many lessons, in both key stages, where the good and very good teaching stimulates their interest the pupils respond very well, working with commitment and enthusiasm. In Year 2 there is too much emphasis on news writing, limiting the opportunity to write for different purposes. In Year 3 both lessons observed were unsatisfactory. The teachers have insufficient understanding of the subject matter and do not use methods that engage and interest the pupils. The expectations of the higher attaining pupils in Year 3 are too low and the work set does not enable them to work at an above average level. The pupils do not respond with the same degree of enthusiasm as in the good and very good lessons. Overall, the pupils show a good response to the subject.
75. All pupils have been set targets, which identify the next steps in their learning in writing and most teachers mark work supportively giving good tips for improvement. However, the marking in Year 3 is unsatisfactory as it lacks focus and is often too complex. Teachers in Year 1 use a very good range of assessments to track the progress pupils make in reading and writing. Progress in writing is regularly assessed as the pupils move into Years 2 and 3, but the levels attributed by teachers are, occasionally, inaccurate. The information the teachers gather enables them to plan appropriate work on a day-to day basis. However, it is not used effectively to identify groups of pupils who are making insufficient progress over longer time-scales, for example a year and, thus, plan the curriculum to help them make better overall long-term progress.
76. The management of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has a good knowledge and understanding of teaching and learning in the subject and is supportive to colleagues. She has provided useful feedback from observations of lessons and analysis of pupils' work. However, insufficient time is allocated to the monitoring and evaluation of teaching in the subject and this aspect of the co-ordinator's role is unsatisfactory. There are inconsistencies within year groups in the way aspects of the subject are taught, which result in different amounts of time being spent on guided reading within year groups and differing standards in writing. In Year 3 it is inappropriate to spend more than one hour on literacy lessons without a break. The National Literacy Strategy has been introduced and planning has improved since the last inspection. There are adequate resources for the subject and some good quality books. Information and communication technology is satisfactorily used to support the subject. Literacy is well taught across the curriculum and plays a substantial, positive role in subjects such as history, religious education, geography and physical education. The action plan for future development does not clearly identify areas of weakness or key actions, which will bring about improvement. The information on the progress pupils are making is not used

effectively to identify long-term under-performance. The co-ordinator has established good links with other schools in the area and the local community.

MATHEMATICS

77. Standards in mathematics are above the national expectation at the end of Year 2 and well above the national expectation by the end of Year 4. There is no significant difference in attainment between boys and girls and those from minority ethnic heritages. The high attainment at the end of Year 4 is an improvement from the last inspection.
78. By the end of Year 2 most pupils are secure in their number bonds to ten and many can add and subtract within 20. The higher attaining pupils can add numbers with two digits mentally, but many others have still to master this. They can classify two-dimensional shapes, knowing their names and properties. They are able to extract and interpret information presented in block graphs and tables. Good support is given to the pupils with special educational needs and they make good progress over the key stage. In the 2002 end of key stage tests all of them attained the nationally expected Level 2 by the end of Year 2.
79. In Years 1 and 2 the pupils with English as an additional language also make good progress. Some of these pupils have not been in the school for long enough to have a sufficient grasp of English to be able to take the end of key stage tests and they are disappplied and, thus, not entered. An analysis of the school's end of key stage test results for mathematics shows that they are above the national average and, overall, that the school's performance is in line with schools with a similar free school meals indicator. However, a more in-depth comparison of the performance of the pupils who have been in the school for the full two years of key stage 1 indicates that the percentage of pupils attaining Level 3 is below similar schools and a few more pupils could and should, be targeted to attain the higher levels in the end of key stage tests than at present. The inspection evidence supports this conclusion. The school and co-ordinator have not previously used this benchmark comparison and have overlooked this important possibility for improvement.
80. By the end of Year 4 many pupils are able to calculate compound areas, plot points on a graph accurately in the first quadrant and deal with probability as a frequency, with the higher attaining pupils working with fractional probabilities. Many can add two numbers with three digits mentally. The lower attaining pupils understand place value, can explain how they are solving problems and can measure accurately. These high standards are confirmed by the school's results in the 2002 end of Year 4 optional tests, where nearly half the pupils attained a Level 4, the expected level for the end of Year 6. A close analysis of performance shows that most of this good learning and progress takes place in Year 4 and progress is much slower in Year 3. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language also make good progress from the end of Year 2 to the end of Year 4.
81. Teaching in Years 1 - 2 ranges from satisfactory to very good, but is satisfactory overall. In Years 3 - 4 it ranges from unsatisfactory to very good, but is satisfactory overall. The good and very good teaching is characterised by careful and well targeted planning based on a good assessment of the pupils' learning needs combined with good subject knowledge, which keeps the pupils' interest and attention as the lesson unfolds. The aims are shared so that the pupils know what the lesson is about and can reflect on their learning at the end. The pace of the lesson is fast, work is well matched to the pupils' needs and the pupils work with concentration and application as they acquire and consolidate the new skills and knowledge. Homework is appropriately used to reinforce this knowledge. Many of these features are present in the satisfactory teaching, which was observed in Year 2. The difference was that the work set for the pupils in Year 2 was overly constrained by the commercial workbook being used and not enough pupils practised and learned the key point of the lesson, in this case work at Level 3. In the unsatisfactory lesson in Year 3, the use of time was poorly planned and the work was not well targeted to the pupils' needs. As in Year 2, it was overly constrained by the commercial workbook being used, so that little new learning took place. Other aspects of the teaching were satisfactory, relationships were good and the pupils worked with a will, even though the work lacked interest and challenge. Generally, as a result of the good and very good teaching, the pupils show very good attitudes to their work.

82. The subject is given an appropriate amount of curriculum time. Resources are satisfactory, including the use made of the limited amount of information and communication technology provision, available. There is a good scheme of work. The co-ordinator carefully monitors planning and the pupils' specific performance in aspects of mathematics to identify possible weaknesses in curriculum provision. There is no effective system for analysing the mathematics test results of various groups of pupils in order to ensure that all pupils have made good progress through Years 1 and 2. As a result, small, but important, weaknesses, such as the low percentage of pupils attaining Level 3 at the end of Year 2, are missed and the school improvement plan for developments in the subject lacks detail and is unsatisfactory. As a leading mathematics teacher for the National Numeracy Strategy, the co-ordinator demonstrates good subject knowledge and gives good support to her colleagues when they are planning their lessons. She observes lessons, but there is insufficient time for follow up, consequently the required improvement does not always happen making this aspect of her role unsatisfactory. Numeracy is well used across the curriculum in support of the other subjects, for example, science, geography and design and technology. Overall, co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has established good links with other schools in the area and the local community.

SCIENCE

83. By the end of Year 2 pupils achieve standards that are above expectations. The proportion of pupils gaining the expected Level 2 in the 2002 teacher assessments was close to the national average. However, nearly half the children achieved the higher Level 3, which is well above the national average. This represents an improvement since the last inspection, when the proportion of pupils reaching the higher level of attainment was low. More opportunities are now provided for the pupils to develop their scientific knowledge, skills and understanding. Inspection evidence indicates that attainment is currently above average in both Years 2 and 4. In both key stages, pupils with special educational needs attain well for their capabilities, as do pupils with ethnic minority heritages and those with English as an additional language. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls and high attaining pupils make good progress in all aspects of the subject.
84. At the time of the last inspection, attainment in Year 4 was judged to be well above average. These high standards have not been fully maintained because pupils only make satisfactory progress in Year 3, where teachers' expectations of work and behaviour need to be raised. In all other years progress made by pupils of all capabilities, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their first language, is good. The inclusive nature of the teaching of science ensures that all pupils are challenged and that teachers have the highest expectations of their pupils in both work and behaviour.
85. In Year 1 pupils know about a range of common materials and understand some of their properties. They are able to sort materials that are magnetic and non-magnetic and predict which materials will stick to a magnet. The children understand the terms attract and repel and are able to carry out a simple experiment to see which magnet is the strongest. Pupils' understanding of materials and their ability to ask questions, make simple predictions and explain what they find out is above average, due to the correct emphasis the teachers place on practical work. Year 1 pupils also know different ways to make sounds with different instruments and how to make the sounds louder and softer. In Year 2 pupils demonstrate a simple understanding of forces; they describe the movement of a toy car and recognise that push and pull are both forces. They understand the terms transparent, rigid and flexible and explain how bending, twisting, squashing and stretching can change materials. In a Year 2 lesson children demonstrated a good understanding of living things and a respect for the environment. The higher attaining pupils understand that particular species need a special environment. They know the different parts of a plant, use simple keys to identify minibeasts and use the computer to record their findings.
86. In Year 3 children learn about food, teeth and healthy eating. They are able to devise their own experiment testing their sense of smell and with help, carry out a fair test recognising and explaining why it is fair. In Year 4 children are able to give accurate definitions of solids and liquids and understand how solids in powder form have some liquid properties. They use Newtons to measure forces and understand the need to carry out a fair test and repeat experiments. They know that the

- skull protects the brain and that the spine is segmented to allow movement. When trying to find out if 'the tallest children have the largest skulls', pupils made sensible predictions based on observations and measured accurately. They take a pride in presenting their work well and articulate their ideas in a confident manner.
87. Pupils throughout the school demonstrate very good and often excellent attitudes to their work. The emphasis on practical work encourages the children's natural curiosity. In the best lessons they are very attentive; hands shoot up when asked a question and they work with diligence and co-operation.
88. Teaching has improved since the last inspection, when it was judged to be satisfactory; overall it is now good in both key stages and across the school. It was never less than satisfactory and was very good in two thirds of the lessons seen. In these lessons the teachers demonstrate very good subject knowledge, very good questioning skills and have high expectations. The teachers are enthusiastic and relationships between the teachers and pupils are good, so the pupils are keen, work at a brisk pace and learn well. Where teaching was judged to be satisfactory the pace was slower and in one Year 3 lesson the teacher's subject knowledge was less secure, a few children lost concentration and the noise level rose above the working buzz characteristic of the other classes. In all observed lessons, teachers were clear about what they wanted the pupils to learn and the equipment needed was well prepared. Children with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language learn well as they have appropriate work and good support from high quality classroom assistants. Computers are used to support children's learning; for example, in a Year 2 lesson, children used the computer to generate a block graph showing the number of different creatures they found in the school grounds.
89. The subject is well managed and the science co-ordinator has raised the profile of the subject by organising science days for children throughout the school. Assessment systems have recently been reviewed so that an individual pupil's progress can be tracked from year to year, but these have not yet had an impact on standards. The co-ordinator makes a detailed analysis of the teacher assessments made when the pupils are seven, but no system is in place to judge the progress these pupils have made in science by the time they leave school. Visits and visitors enhance the curriculum and the environmental science co-ordinator runs an out of school club. Both co-ordinators have established good links with other schools in the area and the local community.

ART AND DESIGN

90. Standards of work are above the national expectation by the end of Year 2 and, by the end of Year 4, in line with the national expectation. This is similar to at the time of the last inspection. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 can use a variety of tools and materials very well. In Year 1 pupils created some very good three-dimensional clay tiles of fish. They are able to use scissors with increasing dexterity and paint with care. There is some work of a very good standard on display in Years 1 and 2. Pupils have used printing, painting and cutting to good effect to represent work in the style of modern artists such as Mondrian, Kandinsky and Lowry.
91. Pupils in Years 1 - 2 make good progress in art and, in Years 3 - 4, progress is at least satisfactory. They make good choices about which materials to use. Pupils in Year 4 work very well together to discuss, evaluate and create shared pictures with aboriginal paintings as a stimulus. Pupils enjoy their art lessons and concentrate very well on achieving good results. They take advice from their teachers and other pupils. There is no significant difference in the progress made by boys, girls and pupils from ethnic minority heritages.
92. Three art lessons were observed, two in Years 1 - 2 and one in Years 3 - 4, and the teaching was good in all three. The teaching of art is good in Years 1 - 2, but there is not enough evidence to reach a judgement about teaching in Years 3 - 4. Teachers' planning indicates that the full requirements of the National Curriculum are covered and that a wide range of materials and techniques are taught. Lessons are well managed and pupils are given clear explanations and advice about their work. The tasks set are appropriate. Teachers are careful to ensure that EAL pupils and those with special educational needs understand how to use the materials. In some year groups sketchbooks are used to good effect for practice and improvement of skills. In Year 2, pupils used charcoal well to create some good pictures of the Fire of London.

93. The management of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has a good understanding of the subject and has monitored standards attained from Reception to Year 4. She has ensured that the curriculum is covered and has taught art to all year groups within the school. The quality of display in the school is good. Recently she has supported staff in developing techniques of observation drawing. The result of this work is evident in the very good standards of observation drawing in Reception and Year 1 displays. The co-ordinator has a satisfactory plan for ensuring that standards in the subject are maintained. The resources for the subject are adequate and appropriate use is made of ICT as a medium for artwork. As yet there have been no visiting artists, visits or special arts events to enrich the provision for art.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

94. Photographic evidence and the available work samples indicate that standards are above the national expectation by the end of Year 2 and at least in line with the national expectation by the end of Year 4. Pupils in a Year 2 lesson completed some very good, wheeled vehicles. The vehicles reflected the original designs very well, which showed that pupils could make realistic choices according to their skills and the materials available. Pupils controlled scissors well and used glue with care and precision. Their skills were above average and, with adult support, the final outcomes were well above average. There is no significant difference in the progress made by boys, girls and pupils from ethnic minority heritages. Pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs make the same progress as their peers.
95. In Year 4 pupils were working with above average skill in card to produce pop-up books using a variety of methods of paper cutting and folding. The improvement in standards in the subject since the last inspection has been good.
96. In the one lesson observed, because of the very good teaching, the pupils made very good progress in taking their designs to successful conclusions. The lesson was very well managed and the three adults available made important contributions to the skills pupils developed and the quality of the final outcomes. There was an opportunity for pupils to make choices, select materials and to evaluate their work when designing and making a wheeled vehicle. Over several lessons, the pupils successfully took their work in stages from the design, through practice with materials to the finished product. They were thrilled with the outcomes of their efforts and showed them with pride. They worked very hard and with concentration throughout the lesson. In general, pupils' work and photographs of work indicate that the teaching often demonstrates the qualities outlined here and is at least good and sometimes very good. A scrutiny of teachers' planning confirms that their knowledge and understanding of the subject has improved since the last inspection.
97. The management of the subject is satisfactory. There has been a good improvement since the last inspection when provision was judged unsatisfactory. There is now an appropriate curriculum in place and a good range of opportunity provided for the development and acquisition of pupils' skills and knowledge. ICT is appropriately used to support the subject, for example designing the logo for the side of a wheeled vehicle. The co-ordinator has attended appropriate training and provided informal advice to colleagues. She is beginning to collect samples of work to illustrate the range of skills and work undertaken. Although there is a plan for maintaining standards in the subject the co-ordinator has not yet carried out an audit to identify future needs. Resources are adequate, although there is a need for more tools so that pupils can work independently.

GEOGRAPHY

98. The pupils make satisfactory progress with their learning across both key stages and by the end of Year 2 and Year 4, the standards they attain are in line with those expected nationally. There is no difference in the attainment of boys and girls and pupils with English as an additional language make the same progress as their peers. Pupils with special educational needs receive an appropriate

curriculum and support and make good progress. This is the same as at the time of the last inspection.

99. By the end of Year 2 pupils appreciate that many people live in environments that are different from their own. They can talk with confidence about these differences, drawing on their first hand knowledge of their own locality and the knowledge about life on a remote Scottish Island, which they have gathered from study. They understand the difference between human and physical geography, but are unable to talk, for example, about the way heavy rain or rivers might affect the landscape through flooding. By the end of Year 4 they have a good range of skills and a good knowledge and understanding of places. For example, they understand the impact of climate and how it affects the features of a locality and they can use atlases and globes to retrieve information, drawing on this to make observations about a locality. Their knowledge and understanding of how physical and human processes can cause changes in places and environments is less advanced.
100. Geography and history are taught on a half-termly cycle, geography one half term and history the next. At the time of the inspection no geography was being taught in Years 1 and 2 and no judgement about teaching can be made. However, some conclusions may be drawn. The programme is well organised and the teaching had clearly enthused the pupils spoken to; they were very keen to discuss the subject and tell what they knew. There were good displays of work on the classroom walls, reflecting the previous half term's teaching programme. The tasks, based on photocopied worksheets, often anticipate and limit the scope and detail of the answers the pupils will give and do not allow them to demonstrate their knowledge to the full. One lesson was seen in each of Years 3 and 4. The planning, content, organisation and management of the lesson in Year 4 was satisfactory and enabled the pupils to extend and consolidate their learning appropriately. In the Year 3 lesson the content was not well chosen, time was not well used and the pupils' progress in this particular lesson was unsatisfactory, as was the teaching. However, the pupils worked hard, classroom management was satisfactory, relationships were good and the pupils' work showed that they had made satisfactory gains since the end of Year 2. Thus, the teaching in Years 3 - 4 is judged to be satisfactory overall. As in Years 1 - 2, the nature and use of the photocopied worksheets does not allow the pupils to demonstrate the full scope of their knowledge and capability.
101. The curriculum is broad, the subject is allocated an appropriate time and alternating with history allows for substantial and well-focused bursts of activity. The subject co-ordinator actively supports her colleagues in their planning. She has observed a small number of lessons, but this has not helped identify the occasional issue in Year 3. There is limited involvement of information and communication technology (ICT) in the subject and the co-ordinator is developing links in readiness for the opening of the new ICT suite. Overall co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory.

HISTORY

102. Overall, standards in history are above the national expectation by the end of Year 2 and well above by the end of Year 4. They have improved since the last inspection. In Year 2 pupils can remember key facts about the great plague and the Fire of London and are able to say that these events took place more than 300 years ago. By the time they enter Year 4 they can correctly place Romans, Anglo Saxons and Vikings in chronological order and can talk confidently about each era. They have a very good knowledge of the ways of life and the beliefs of people from the past. There is no significant difference between the attainment of girls, boys and pupils from ethnic minority heritages.
103. Pupils, including those with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs make good progress throughout the school; very good in Years 3 - 4. Each year they successfully build on the knowledge and understanding learned previously. A sense of the past develops in Year 1 and by Year 2 pupils can understand timelines. In Year 4 pupils show a good level of empathy with the people of the past and recognise the importance of significant events such as the invasion of the Vikings.
104. Pupils clearly enjoy history and talk with interest and some animation about the work they have covered. Pupils in Year 1 handled artefacts from Victorian schools and homes with great care.

105. During the inspection it was only possible to observe lessons in Years 1 - 2, however time was spent talking to pupils in Year 4 and looking at their work. The teaching in Years 1 - 2 is good. Pupils in year 1 drew artefacts from Victorian times with accuracy and understood what they were used for. In Year 2, higher attaining pupils wrote some good diaries after the style of Samuel Pepys about the Fire of London. Teachers plan work carefully and present it in interesting ways. The curriculum is enriched by a good variety of experiences for example, a visit to a Victorian museum and a Roman battle re-enactment with visiting teachers. The pupils have undertaken a wide range of writing, drawing, work on historical maps and reports. Teachers' files show that they make good use of assessments of the pupils' work in history.
106. The co-ordinator for history has recently been appointed to the role and the management of the subject is currently unsatisfactory. Resources to support the subject are adequate and include costumes for dressing up. Satisfactory use is made of ICT for research and presenting work. The co-ordinator has ensured the policy covers the curriculum but has not yet monitored the standards or teaching. Therefore she is unable to identify clear aims for further development.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

107. Standards in ICT at the last inspection were below the national average at the end of Year 2 and when pupils left the school. Since that time standards have risen and pupils are now meeting national expectations at the end of both Years 2 and 4. ICT is generally used effectively across the curriculum to support children's learning in other subjects. For example, in Years 3 and 4 children use an ICT package to compose music; in Year 2 children use the computer to draw pictures in the style of the artist Mondrian. Children's work in ICT is also evident in displays around the school. Girls, boys and pupils from ethnic minority heritages demonstrate similar levels of attainment. Those with English as an additional language quickly make progress. Those with special educational needs are well provided for.
108. By the end of Year 2 pupils are able to use a mouse to move through menus and find their way round a computer program. They are able to save, retrieve and print their work. They are able to plot instructions on the computer to draw a square and rectangle on screen and to make a car follow a set path. They use ICT to word process work, to which they are able to add clip art and to draw graphs in mathematics and science.
109. The pupils in Year 4 are very confident in their use of ICT. When using a music program they are able to drag notes on screen, change instruments and find complementary instruments to compose their own tunes. They are familiar with a variety of other programs and use the Internet and CD-ROMs to support their learning across the curriculum. They are able to produce pie charts and graphs in maths and use the spelling programs. An interactive website called 'Roman Sandy' was used in history. Year 4 pupils are also able to retrieve word-processed posters they have designed using a variety of different fonts and clip art. The higher attaining pupils are not fully challenged to achieve the higher levels by, for example, using e-mail and sensors.
110. Teaching is satisfactory. Although only three complete lessons of taught computer activities were observed, several parts of lessons, a range of work in books and on display and discussion with pupils all indicate satisfactory teaching. Those pupils with special education needs and those for whom English is an additional language are well supported in lessons and make satisfactory progress. Generally pupils are keen to use ICT and work with high enthusiasm and application. In a good Year 2 lesson the teacher showed good subject knowledge, confidence and good questioning, skills and humour - making deliberate mistakes, when demonstrating an art package to the class. However, where teachers demonstrate new skills to large groups of pupils it may be some time before all children have the opportunity to practise these skills. In a Year 3 lesson, where teaching was satisfactory, some pupils found it difficult to see the screen as the teacher demonstrated an art program and consequently had difficulty finding their way round the program when it was their turn to use the computer.

111. The school has invested a considerable amount of money into a new, purpose built ICT suite, which will soon be in use. This will make teaching more efficient and effective and give pupils increased opportunities to practise ICT skills resulting in improved learning.
112. In spite of the progress made by the school in recent years there still remain some issues to resolve. The opening of the new ICT suite, already built, is a priority. Assessment procedures have recently been reviewed and improved, so that teachers and pupils know what they have to do next, but these have not yet had time to impact on standards. In particular the school needs to track pupil progress from year to year and ensure that the tasks given to the higher attaining pupils offer sufficient challenge.
113. Leadership and management in the subject are good. The co-ordinator is aware of the issues and understands the need to buy in technical support so that teachers can concentrate on teaching without dealing with technical problems. She is committed to improvement and the raising of standards. Good support is given to colleagues who have recently benefited from additional ICT training. The school has an adequate range of software to cover the National Curriculum requirements and this is used well to support children's work in other subjects. At present only Years 3 and 4 have easy access to the Internet.

MUSIC

114. Pupils throughout the school exceed the standards expected for their age and enjoy their music making activities. The last report found standards at the end of Year 2 to be above national expectations. These standards have been maintained and standards at the end of Year 4 have been improved. All pupils take part and demonstrate these above average standards.
115. Pupils in Year 1 represent sounds with symbols to create their own music, displaying a good sense of rhythm. In Year 2 children create evocative pieces of music to represent animals. They listen to each other's work intently and offer sensible constructive ideas as to how the music might be improved. In Year 3 children create music, using the pentatonic scale, which they then perform and evaluate. In Year 4 pupils listen to taped melodies, expressing their ideas and opinions and are able to work in groups, with a conductor, singer, xylophone and back beat, to create their own tunes. Using the computer, Year 4 pupils are able to compose on screen, experimenting with different instruments to create harmony.
116. Throughout the school, in lessons and during assembly, pupils sing well, showing good control of pitch, dynamics and rhythm. On occasion, for example in assembly, when the taped music also includes pre-recorded words and in a Year 3 lesson, where teachers' expectations were not high, a minority of pupils lack their normal, high levels of enthusiasm.
117. The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is good overall. Music is taught by the co-ordinator, who is a music specialist and by class teachers. Very good teaching in Year 1 challenges pupils and gives them plenty of opportunities to explore their own capabilities. The teacher has very high expectations of work and behaviour, organises resources well to provide a range of interesting and enjoyable musical activities and keeps up a good pace to the lesson. In Year 3, where teaching is satisfactory, the teacher's confidence and subject knowledge is not as strong and opportunities are missed to develop the subject. The pentatonic scale, which the children were using to create music, was not explained and they were not encouraged to listen carefully and keep in time with the music as they sang.
118. Musical composition is given a high priority in all lessons and very good use is made of tape recorders to enable pupils to listen to, assess and improve what they have done. In lessons teachers plan and prepare well. They manage time and resources skilfully. Music contributes to the multicultural experience of pupils, because of opportunities to listen to music from a range of cultures. It also makes a positive contribution to their spiritual growth.

119. All pupils are fully involved in lessons, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language and make good progress. Pupils co-operate very well and show respect and sensitivity towards each other. For example, in Year 4 a boy and a girl working together composing a tune on the computer showed excellent co-operation and when they played their tune to the rest of the class they responded with spontaneous applause!
120. The co-ordinator, a music specialist, provides good leadership. There is an up-to-date policy and scheme of work and demonstration lessons are given to colleagues. The curriculum is enhanced by two popular lunchtime recorder groups and by specialist tuition for the violin, cello and mini-double bass. The music resources are satisfactory and are well used. Good use is made of ICT to support the curriculum. The management of the subject is good and the monitoring of the teaching of the subject is satisfactory.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

121. During the week of the inspection it was not possible to observe all aspects of the physical education programme. However, observations of dance, games and gymnastics, a scrutiny of planning and discussions with staff indicate that by the end of Year 2 and at the end of Year 4, standards are above those expected nationally. This is good improvement since the last inspection where standards were in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2 but below expectations by the end of Year 4.
122. Pupils, both boys, girls and those with ethnic minority heritages, show very good attitudes to the subject and learn well because of good self-discipline, their ability to listen attentively and their willingness to improve and work with each other. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 demonstrate imaginative shapes and good balancing skills using two or three points of the body. A good mixture of teacher and pupil demonstrations, pertinent use of praise and encouragement is successful in challenging groups of pupils working co-operatively to improve. Teachers and pupils have a strong awareness of safety. Large apparatus is positioned efficiently and safely with teacher and pupils working together. Pupils show some challenging moves and good standards of balances on large apparatus. Teachers are always ready to assist those a little nervous. Pupils make good progress in building their confidence and refining their personal selection of skills. These young pupils demonstrate good bat and ball skills and use them well in team activities. By the end of Year 2, pupils can create and perform dances using simple movement patterns including those from different cultures. Pupils recall well the movements of the 'Holi Dance' from India that they performed previously. They demonstrate a satisfactory sense of rhythm and good control of movements of the body as they repeat the dance in order to warm up. Pupils successfully create happy movements and join with a partner and develop a sequence of movements. Almost all make good progress and use movement imaginatively when responding to stimuli. Pupils with English as an additional language are fully involved, as are those who have a special educational need. Teachers and their peers ensure that they understand instructions.
123. By Year 4 pupils express moods, feelings and ideas by responding imaginatively to poetry and music. Teachers read the poem with good expression successfully stimulating pupils' ideas. They lead well by example, demonstrating a good sense of rhythm and high expectations of movement. Pupils respond very positively, have varied starting positions and show some excellent ideas and examples of working together. For example, a boy used a range of dynamic movements and facial expressions to demonstrate the eruption of a volcano. Dance lessons are well planned to build on skills of movement and interpretation, to work individually, in pairs and large groups.
124. Teaching is good overall. Teachers have good knowledge of the subject and lessons are well structured and organised with a good level of challenge. Teachers portray an enthusiasm for the subject; they involve themselves in movements, give quality demonstrations and use pupil examples of good practice to reinforce teaching points and extend challenge. Where teaching was very good, for example in year 3, a demanding pace was maintained throughout the lesson and the plenary was used well to reflect on the teaching points of the lesson and the progress the pupils had made.
125. Subject co-ordination is good. The school has worked hard, through training courses, to improve teaching and learning. The co-ordinator has a clear overview of the subject and scrutinises teachers'

plans to ensure coverage and development. Lessons have been observed and meetings held to analyse coverage and the regular assessments made of pupils' progress. As a result, the pupils' standards have improved significantly and consistently good progress takes place throughout the school. The school is in the process of developing an assessment grid to improve further the existing systems for recording the pupils' progress. This will give an even clearer overview of pupils' strengths and weaknesses to inform future planning.

126. Resources are good overall. Extra-curricular sporting activities, such as country dancing, netball and football, give pupils the opportunity to use their skills and develop team spirit. Swimming does not take place until the pupils go to their next stage of education in the middle school with which the school has appropriate links.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

127. The school has made some improvement on the standards found in the last inspection. Most pupils throughout the school, and particularly at the end of Year 2 and Year 4, attain standards above those expected within the locally agreed syllabus. Across the school pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in their knowledge, understanding and skills and develop an appreciation of faiths from different cultures. A minority of pupils withdraw from the subject for religious reasons.
128. By the end of Year 2, pupils have good knowledge of the creation as told in the Bible. They show very good attitudes to learning, as they work well together in groups to identify and record how humans have and are, damaging the environment. Good interaction from the teacher and other adults successfully stimulates pupils' eagerness to share their findings. Year 1 pupils suggest meanings in some of the symbols and language used in the festivals they have studied, such as Chinese New Year or the Jewish celebration of Shabbat. Their ability to reflect upon their own experiences and those of others is developed to a good standard. Pupils are given many opportunities to learn about world faiths and are always encouraged to consider their own responses to rituals, ceremonies and beliefs they learn about. Teachers plan well to give pupils many opportunities to compare one religion to another and identify similarities and differences. This is evident in pupils' work in their books when birth-naming ceremonies of Christian, Muslim and Jewish faiths were compared.
129. By the end of Year 4, pupils have good knowledge of the rituals of baptism and its origin. They can describe how and why water is used in religious ceremony or rituals of different faiths, such as the ritual of Wudu. Pupils are familiar with the festival of Ramadan and show genuine interest through the questions they ask. They are familiar with stories from the Bible, including that of Moses and use this knowledge to understand the values, beliefs and rituals of the Jewish people. Pupils share their individual thoughts on the meaning of family and make comparisons with family life in a Jewish household bringing in the celebration of Shabbat, Bar Mitzvah and the Torah and food rules. The depth of pupil's reflections is a significant feature throughout the school and contributes very well to pupils' understanding of the beliefs they learn about.
130. Teaching is good or better overall, although one unsatisfactory lesson was observed in Year 3. Analysis of teachers' plans, the work displayed and pupils' books show that teachers provide a balanced religious programme based on good subject knowledge and a satisfactory understanding of what the pupils need to learn next. Suitable work is set for those pupils who are withdrawn from the subject. In the unsatisfactory lesson, the teacher's knowledge was not secure, suitable work was not set for the withdrawn pupils, the other pupils were not sufficiently motivated and limited learning took place.
131. The curriculum meets statutory requirements and is based on the locally agreed syllabus. As a result good progress and development of topics are evident throughout the school. In the main, lessons are planned effectively to take account of pupils' knowledge and experiences and stimulate their interest. As a consequence most pupils have good knowledge of a range of Bible stories and about other world faiths. Where teaching is very good teachers demonstrate very secure knowledge and understanding in the confident way in which they answer pupils' questions. Religious education supports pupils' spiritual development well. Pupils have many opportunities to develop an awareness and understanding of their own and others' beliefs and an appreciation of beauty, mystery, truth, love,

goodness and order. In the best practice, pupils share a quiet moment to consider the issues of the lesson.

132. Very recently the responsibilities for the subject have been allocated to a temporary teacher, due to the absence of the co-ordinator, so no judgement can be made. However, planning has been monitored to check coverage of the locally agreed syllabus, visits and visitors of different religions enhance the curriculum and the standard of pupils' work is beginning to be scrutinised for progress across the school. Appropriate use is made of ICT to research and record aspects of the subject and other resources are satisfactory. As yet, however, pupils' progress is not consistently recorded in line with the criteria of the locally agreed syllabus.