

INSPECTION REPORT

TANNERY DRIFT FIRST SCHOOL

Royston

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117134

Headteacher: A J Nicholls

Reporting inspector: Carol Worthington
20609

Dates of inspection: 28th – 31st October 2002

Inspection number: 252186

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Chairman of governors:	A Hunter
Date of previous inspection:	13 th February 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
20609	Carol Worthington	Registered inspector	Science Design and technology Information and communication technology Music	How good are standards How well pupils are taught How well the school is led and managed
19558	Michael Hammond	Lay inspector		Attitudes, values and personal development How well the school cares for its pupils How well the school works in partnership with parents
28200	Paul Stevens	Team inspector	English Art and design Geography History Special educational needs	How good curricular and other opportunities are
15011	Marion Wallace	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage Mathematics Physical education Religious education	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This average sized primary school, situated in the town of Royston, provides education for pupils aged 3 to 9. There are 204 on roll with slightly more boys than girls. Twenty-nine children attend the Nursery part-time. Almost every pupil is white and all speak English as their first language. About ten per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is below average. About seven per cent of pupils have special educational needs, either because of learning difficulties or emotional and behavioural problems, and none has a statement. This is well below average. On entry to full-time education, attainment is usually average, but at the beginning of the current Reception year, it was above average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a school which offers a satisfactory standard of education to its pupils. It is well led by the headteacher who receives good support from his deputy. Standards shown by National Curriculum tests are well above average in reading and average in writing and mathematics. Teaching is satisfactory overall with significant strengths in English and music in particular. Pupils make satisfactory progress and the school provides sound value for money.

What the school does well

- The standard of music is above average throughout the school.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning and behave well.
- There is good teaching and learning in Reception.
- Provision for children with special educational needs is good.
- Moral and social development are good and reflected in pupils' attitudes.
- The school works well in partnership with parents.
- Assessment procedures are good in English and mathematics and pupils' progress is effectively tracked.
- Pastoral care is good.

What could be improved

- Standards in mathematics, writing and art.
- Teachers' expectations of higher ability children in particular.
- Cultural education, to include more awareness of multicultural Britain.
- The overall standard of teaching in the nursery.
- The role of the curriculum subject leaders.

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 February 1998, since when it has effected satisfactory improvement overall. All key issues have been addressed at least in part. There has been good progress in the issue on improving pupils' rate of progress in English. The school development plan has improved but could still do with more focus on the main priorities. Assessment procedures are now good in English and mathematics, but the information they give is not used precisely enough to plan work for children of differing capabilities, especially the more able. Not enough has been done to meet the requirements of this key issue. The headteacher now monitors teaching in the school, but subject co-ordinators do not do so yet. There are still a few statutory requirements not met in the governors' annual report to parents. High standards have been maintained in reading and writing has improved to be in line with the national average in 2002. Standards in music have remained above average. Although progress has improved in art, standards are still below average. The leadership of the school has improved and so has teaching, with a greater percentage of good and very good lessons taught and fewer that are unsatisfactory. Capacity for further improvement is good.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
Reading	B	A	A	A
Writing	C	D	C	C
Mathematics	C	C	C	D

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

In the National Curriculum tests for seven year-olds in 2002, the school's performance in reading was well above the national average; in writing and in mathematics it was average. When compared with schools with similar children, reading was well above average, writing average and mathematics below. The standard of writing improved in 2002 from below the national average to be in line with it. The most striking improvement in both reading and writing, however, was seen in the similar schools' comparison, where standards of reading rose from average in 2001 to well above average in 2002 and writing from well below average in 2001 to average in 2002. This is attributable to the school's major efforts to improve literacy – particularly writing – last year. The standard of mathematics has remained at a constant level, however.

The school sets and achieves challenging targets for children to meet the expected level 2, but there is still work to be done for them to achieve higher levels in writing and mathematics to match their achievement in reading. The Year 2 pupils entered the school with an average spread of attainment and, despite the difficulties of staffing, achieved well in reading, though not so well in mathematics and writing. In the teacher assessment of science at the end of Key Stage 1, attainment was in line with the national average in 2002, which is an improvement over 2001 when it was below. Over the last three years, girls did better than boys in all core subjects, in line with the national trend.

Standards observed during the inspection were above average in reading in Year 2 and average in Year 4. In writing and mathematics, they were average at the end of Year 2 and Year 4. Standards in science are average in Years 2 and 4. They are also average in religious education, information and communication technology (ICT) and all other subjects, except for music, which is above average and art, which is below. Most children in Reception will achieve the early learning goals by the age of five, and many will exceed them at the current rate of progress.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils' attitudes to school are a positive aid to their learning and a strong feature of the school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils are polite and well-mannered. They behave well in class and around the school at break-times.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Relationships are strong in all aspects. Pupils respond well to all opportunities to take responsibility.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Current attendance just slipped below the standard of last

	year, mainly due to parents taking children on holiday during term time.
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TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The overall quality of teaching in the school is satisfactory, but half that seen during the inspection was good. There were a few unsatisfactory lessons and some very good lessons; one was excellent. Although all teachers were observed at least for literacy and numeracy, a significant proportion of lessons were taught by students on their final teaching practice. The teaching in Reception was consistently good. English teaching is good; music teaching is very good. In mathematics it is satisfactory. The skills of literacy and numeracy, nevertheless, need developing across the curriculum, as do those for information and communication technology. The teaching of all other subjects is satisfactory, except art, which is unsatisfactory because of inadequate expertise. Pupils' learning is commensurate with the quality of teaching in all subjects. Particular strengths in all teachers' work are in their management of pupils and in the teaching of pupils with special educational needs. The good assessment procedures for English and mathematics are not utilised well enough to plan for the full range of capability in their classes and not enough use is made of homework to develop literacy and numeracy.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a satisfactory range of learning opportunities. The National Curriculum is fully in place and enriched by a sound range of extra-curricular activities at lunchtime.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The relatively few children with learning difficulties are enabled to make good progress. Provision does not extend to gifted and talented pupils.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	There is satisfactory provision for spiritual development, mainly through assemblies and religious education, though it is not planned in other areas of the curriculum. Provision for moral and social education is good, making a positive contribution to personal development, but the school does not make enough effort to enable children to be aware of cultures other than European.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Pastoral care is good, reflecting the school's aims. Assessment and tracking of pupils' progress is carried out very well but could be better used to guide planning.

The school works well in partnership with parents. Although the school does not enlist parents' help enough by sending home regular small amounts of homework, the general impact of their involvement is good. There is an active and enthusiastic parent/teacher association.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The headteacher gives good leadership with clear educational direction and is well supported by the deputy head and staff. Subject leaders are not given enough time or opportunity to monitor provision for their subject in the curriculum.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors are committed to the school. They undergo training and self-review, but do not play a sufficient part in challenging the standards of the school and shaping its future educational direction.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good, but carried out mostly by the headteacher and senior staff. The school development plan is a good working document but needs to be clearer in its priorities.
The strategic use of resources	Good. All grants are used well for their specific purpose. The school applies the principles of best value well.

The school's staffing is adequate; its accommodation and learning resources are good.

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. • Their children make good progress. • The good teaching. • Leadership and management of the school. • The positive work ethic promoted by the school. • Music provision. • Improvements made over the last three years. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children are not adequately supervised in their choice of reading material. • The amount of homework their children are given. • The information provided by the school about their children's progress and curriculum topics. • The quality and range of extra-curricular activities.

The inspection team agrees with parents in their positive views and in the question of homework, which is not consistently set. There was no evidence of children's choice of reading material being supervised or not during the inspection, but they do not take reading books home frequently enough to widen their experience of the works of children's authors. The school's information on children's progress is good. It provides regular information on curriculum matters, available in hard copy and on the school website. The quality and range of extra-curricular activities are satisfactory for a school with children this age.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Pupils in the current reception year entered the school with above average attainment, but this has not always been the case. Attainment on entry, shown by the baseline assessment data, has improved over the last two years from being roughly average. Pupils generally meet the early learning goals at the end of Reception, but many will exceed them this year. In the National Curriculum tests for seven year-olds in 2002, the school's performance in reading was well above the national average; the standard of writing was in line with the national average. This was an improvement in writing from 2001; the high standards of reading were maintained. The most striking improvement in both reading and writing, however, was seen in the similar schools' comparison, where standards of reading rose from average to well above average and writing from well below average to average. The standard of mathematics has not shown similar improvement, however.
2. Standards in English shown by the National Curriculum tests over the last three years indicate that the school has consistently achieved better in reading than writing and mathematics, being above or well above the national average. The writing standards fell from average to below average in 2001, so the school put in extensive measures to remedy the situation, setting challenging targets for all pupils and keeping a tighter track of progress. As a result, standards in writing rose to meet the national average in 2002 though there is room for further improvement as they remain below the standard of reading.
3. Average standards in mathematics were maintained in 2002, but they were below the average of similar schools. This is because teaching in that particular Year 2 was unsatisfactory due to prolonged teacher absences and eventual resignation. The school did its best to remedy this situation by in-class support, training and the use of regular, experienced supply teachers, but this had a better effect in literacy than numeracy and was not enough to enable pupils' mathematics performance to meet the average of similar schools. These pupils are now making satisfactory progress in Year 3 in mathematics though there is still some room for improvement, particularly in the provision for average children.
4. In the teacher assessment of science at the end of Key Stage 1, attainment was in line with the national average in 2002, which is an improvement over 2001 when it was below. Over the last three years, girls did better than boys in all core subjects, in line with the national trend. This was not particularly obvious during the inspection. Pupils with special educational needs achieve satisfactorily, with guidance and many achieve levels in tests which are close to average. Above average pupils have not gained as many of the higher level 3 grades in writing and mathematics, attributable to the staffing problems; the drive was to get all pupils to the required standard.
5. The standards in Years 2 and 4 in English seen during the inspection were average for speaking and listening and writing. In reading, they were average in Year 4 and above average in Year 2, reflecting the difference in ability between the two year groups. Pupils in both Year 2 and Year 4 entered the school with average attainment, but there are more pupils with special educational needs and boys in Year 4.
6. Pupils in Year 2 have made particularly good progress in reading; the more able pupils read fluently and show full understanding of the text; average pupils are not yet skilled at reading ahead for meaning and less able pupils are still developing their fluency. Pupils listen carefully to their teachers' instructions and make satisfactory contributions to class discussions. They write with awareness of sentences, use speech marks appropriately and keep to the same tense throughout their stories. Handwriting however varies in its accuracy and is not yet joined.

7. Pupils in Year 4 have extended their speaking and listening skills to enable more sustained discussion in small groups and whole class discussions. The more able writers use punctuation accurately and develop ideas well when doing a piece of work, but the majority do not often write at length. The more able pupils read fluently and with good expression and are able to explain the plot well and empathise with the characters. Others of average capability are still finding it difficult to deal with harder words.
8. The standard in English has remained similar since the last inspection overall, though writing dipped and then improved as a result of a focus for development. Teachers have worked hard, but there is room for further improvement. Teachers' expectations of handwriting are not consistent and some do not lead by the example of joining up their own writing on the board.
9. The standards in mathematics in Years 2 and 4 are in line with expectations at this time at the beginning of the academic year but could and should be higher; a couple of pupils have been identified as having special educational needs in Year 2 and there are only a few in Year 4. Most pupils in the current year 2 are, however, on course to achieve their targets. They have a secure grasp of place value and most average and above-average pupils know their two, five and ten times tables and count in twos from odd and even numbers. They know the characteristics of triangles, squares and rectangles; they are able to tell the time by the hour. In Year 4, higher ability pupils know their tables and use them successfully in multiplication and division. The less able group is achieving broadly average standards, but average pupils make unsatisfactory progress, which reflects the lack of differentiation for age and prior attainment in the middle set.
10. In science standards seen during the inspection were similar to those expected in years 2 and 4. Standards shown by teacher assessment at the end of Year 2 have been below average in the past few years. In 2002, however, 20 per cent achieved level 3, which was a considerable improvement, since none achieved this in 2001. In the current Year 2 also, it was obvious that a significant number should achieve level 3 this year, both in knowledge and understanding of science and in the recording of their work in writing. Some examples of their work on electricity were above average. At the current rate of progress, these pupils could achieve above average standards in science this year. In Year 4, many pupils seen were working towards the higher grades of level 3 and some early level 4. This is average and represents good progress since their National Curriculum assessments in 2001.
11. In ICT, standards seen were similar to those expected in Years 2 and 4; pupils are acquiring satisfactory skills in all aspects of the ICT curriculum through following a course based on the QCA guidance. They do not use their computer skills regularly enough in the rest of the curriculum, however.
12. In other subjects, standards in Year 2 and Year 4 are as expected in most, including religious education, which meets the requirements of the local agreed syllabus. In music, they are above average because of the good teaching pupils receive from the music specialist. In art, standards are below average because teachers' subject expertise is not good enough to recognise the standard of work of which their pupils are capable. Training in the new scheme of work has not been sufficient for teachers to understand its full implications.
13. There are aspects of good achievement in design and technology in knowledge of materials in Year 4 and designing for a purpose in Year 2. In geography, standards in Year 4 have risen considerably since the last inspection and are now above average, but in history, physical education and religious education, planning does not sufficiently take into account the needs of the more able children in any one year. Consequently, they do not achieve as well as they might. Furthermore, in physical education, there are several areas of teachers' expertise to be addressed to ensure pupils are able to achieve higher standards in the higher than average time allocated to this subject.
14. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in the same way as the other pupils. This is partly the result of the school's overall provision, which includes special work with a

teacher on literacy and numeracy. There is scope for the school paying attention to these pupils' progress in the use of oral and written language.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

15. Pupils' good attitudes, values and personal development are a strength of the school, exercising a positive influence on the progress they make. They enjoy school and have good attitudes to learning. Good behaviour and helpful attitudes are both the expectation and characteristic of the school. Attendance has deteriorated since the last inspection and is now below the national average.
16. Pupils show great respect to each other; they form good relationships with fellow pupils and adults. They show good levels of respect for others' views and good understanding of right and wrong. They move about the school in a sensible and orderly manner and at all times are very polite and helpful. All pupils are more than happy to accept responsibility whenever opportunities arise. Behaviour throughout the school is good both in and out of the classroom, though some pupils occasionally misbehave during lessons. Pupils pay good attention to the school and class rules, which they have helped devise. Pupils with special educational needs enjoy lessons and work well with other pupils. They are not dependent and socialise easily.
17. Relationships in the school continue to be good. The school functions as an orderly and caring community with all adults providing effective role models for pupils. Relationships and mutual respect between pupils and staff, as well as with the many adult visitors to the school, are a strength.
18. Pupils are keen to come to school and clearly take an interest in their work as is visibly shown in the many displays throughout the school. They co-operate or work independently, taking responsibility for their own and other pupils' learning as much as they are able. Many are actively involved in the school clubs, particularly the choir.
19. Opportunities for pupils to use their initiative and to accept responsibility continue to be limited, as indicated in the last inspection report. These include becoming table leaders in the dining room, tidying up at the end of lessons and becoming team captains when in Year 4. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about their role as such and how much they enjoyed encouraging other pupils to gain points for their teams. Older pupils also care for younger pupils, particularly during break times. Pupils are eager to help and would clearly respond well if more opportunities were made available for them.
20. Attendance, which has deteriorated since the last inspection, is now below the national average with unauthorised absence being above the national average. The figures do not reflect a true picture of the school where most pupils are very keen to attend. Parents taking children on holiday during the school term is the main reason for the change. Punctuality, both at the start of the day and in the lessons is good. There have been no exclusions in the last year.

HOW WELL PUPILS ARE TAUGHT

21. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and good in Reception. Although every class teacher was seen for at least literacy and numeracy, in two classes the majority of teaching was done by students on their final teaching practice. Nevertheless, out of a total of 51 lessons seen, half the teaching seen was good; seven lessons were very good and one excellent. Three were unsatisfactory. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection.
22. The teaching of English is good in both key stages; an excellent lesson was seen in Key Stage 1. There are, however, some inconsistencies. In the most successful lessons, planning is good and resources are well prepared and interesting for group work. Teachers and assistants work well together for pupils with special educational needs, using assessment of progress to plan for individual needs. The teaching of writing is still a relative weakness in English, however, because

teachers have different expectations and do not all consistently encourage children to apply themselves to writing across the curriculum. Teachers do not all demonstrate a consistent style on the board for children to copy. Literacy is well used in some subjects, such as mathematics, science, religious education and design and technology, where vocabulary is extended to include technical language, but could be better used in history and geography.

23. In mathematics, teaching is satisfactory; instances of both good and unsatisfactory were seen. Teachers have sound subject knowledge but do not always communicate learning objectives effectively to the class. In planning, the higher ability pupils are not always appropriately challenged by their work. In Years 3 and 4, pupils are set according to ability but not all teachers plan for different sub-groups within the set, despite having two different age groups and a large number of children. This led to time being wasted, for example, in a lesson where pupils were trying to devise number patterns using calculators, with consequent unsatisfactory learning. Numeracy is used satisfactorily in design and technology when considering measurement.
24. Teachers' planning is satisfactory overall but does not always apparently meet the needs of all pupils. The lack of provision for work to stretch the more able was noticeable in several other subjects, notably geography and history, where teachers have low expectations of what pupils can achieve. Planning does not always make clear what pupils of very high or low ability are expected to achieve. Although teachers do use their good assessment information to help pupils meet their learning targets, their lower expectations of writing, for example, do not help all pupils to reach their potential and the practice of targeted questioning to ensure the inclusion of all pupils in lessons is not widespread enough. There is no provision for children who are gifted and talented.
25. Teachers generally have satisfactory expertise in the primary curriculum for all subjects and this enables children to learn at a satisfactory pace. There are variations in different subjects, however. In art and design, teachers' lack of subject expertise results in lower than expected standards. Teachers' low expectations come from a lack of knowledge of what children can achieve. They have not had training in this area; work is too often stereotyped and skills develop too slowly. In music, however, the specialist teacher's very good expertise enables children to succeed well so that they achieve standards – particularly in singing – that are above those found in most schools. In design and technology, too, teachers' subject expertise and particularly good attention to literacy, numeracy and the design process, enable pupils to do well in this subject, producing artefacts which match their design well. In physical education, some teachers lack the expertise to give suitable guidance to pupils to improve their physical skills and some teachers' inability to manage a practical lesson leads to time wastage in some instances as pupils queue to use apparatus. The use of ICT reflects the varying expertise of teachers and is used well in some subjects, such as science and religious education, but not in others, such as mathematics and design and technology. This reflects the varying expertise and logistics of using the computer room, which is also used for music.
26. The generally good organisation and management of pupils by teachers and classroom assistants ensures that all are able to participate in lessons. Teaching assistants are generally used well; they are involved in planning and, in Years 1 and 2 in particular, carry out assessments of pupils during lessons. They give good guidance to pupils with special educational needs through having knowledge of the individual education plans, which are always to hand to guide lesson preparation, but not consistently used because lesson plans are not always clear about the objectives for pupils' with special educational needs. Teachers' expectations are high for these pupils. They try to boost pupils' self-esteem so that they willingly make increasing effort. This includes marking, where teachers ensure they make helpful comments for all pupils; they also acknowledge good effort through oral praise.
27. The quality of teachers' assessment is good in English and mathematics and in science in Years 3 and 4, but its use is not. Targets are set for improvement in English and mathematics and science in Years 3 and 4 and pupils' progress is followed well, but the results of assessment have not been used as well as they could be to plan work for different capabilities within a class and it is usually the more able pupils who are not sufficiently challenged. Not enough use is made of homework in Key Stages 1 and 2, particularly to improve reading, writing and mathematics.

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS

28. The quality and range of learning opportunities provided are satisfactory as it was at the last inspection. It has improved in that personal, health and social education is now included. There is full implementation of the National Curriculum and the Hertfordshire syllabus for religious education. Nevertheless the adopted schemes of work are not often changed to meet the needs of pupils in the school and, therefore, they do not provide a very rich variety of experiences to stimulate more interest and learning.
29. The school attaches satisfactory importance to literacy and numeracy. This is achieved through regular daily hours for each and setting in the Year 3 and 4 classes. Teachers plan for progression in skills, knowledge and understanding in all subjects. However, they do not always enable pupils to apply them, for example in writing across the curriculum and the little application of computer skills restricts pupils from benefiting from their lessons on information and communication technology. Class teachers make very good use of the expertise of the music specialist, but there is no back-up programme of in-service training to secure continuity should she leave the school. School planning satisfactorily increases independence in learning and creativity.
30. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, but does not extend to the gifted and talented. The co-ordinator ensures that the school knows which pupils need extra support as soon as they enter the school; the majority is currently in Years 3 and 4. Pupils receive good support, both within the classroom from learning assistants, who have been or are being well trained and from a specialist teacher who withdraws them in small groups. No pupil misses his or her entitlement to the full National Curriculum. Each teacher has copies of the very thorough individual education plans made for these pupils. The co-ordinator keeps parents fully informed of their children's progress and maintains close liaison when reviews take place, especially if they involve outside agencies.
31. Provision for extra-curricular activities is satisfactory. Opportunities vary according to the season. There is good provision for music, including a wide range of instrumental tuition, taken up by a large number of children. Currently there are flourishing clubs for music, art, French, dance and 'Young Investigators'. Appropriately for young children, these take place at lunchtimes.
32. Overall, the school is inclusive in its approach to education. Setting pupils in Years 3 and 4 for literacy and numeracy is one example of school organisation aimed at meeting pupils' needs. However, while this solves one of the major problems of mixed age classes in those years, the same arrangement is not in place for younger pupils. The curriculum is organised so that there are equal opportunities for all pupils, but the needs of those who are gifted and talented are not adequately recognised. The exception to this is the opportunity to undertake instrumental lessons. Policies reflect a wish to be inclusive. The curriculum is broad and includes opportunity for role-play where pupils with special educational needs can develop their confidence through oral language. These pupils also have the opportunity to use other than academic abilities in the extra-curricular activities. Generally, support is good where pupils experience difficulty in learning, but brighter pupils are not given the same opportunity.
33. Provision for personal, social and health education is satisfactory. Class timetables include a time set aside for it and cover the expected curriculum, with some aspects of citizenship. Opportunities are satisfactory for pupils to develop themselves within and outside the classroom with a number of duties, such as delivering messages and registers and older pupils looking after younger ones. Teachers maintain records of pupils' personal and social development in order to support them where necessary. There is satisfactory and appropriate provision for sex education and drugs education for these young children.
34. The school has established good links with the community and is outward looking. Pupils sing to local senior citizens in homes and clubs and distribute hampers to them at harvest-time. The

school participates in outside events such as Anglia in Bloom. Pupils perform at musical events such as 'Schools Make Music' run by Rotary International and participate in a number of sporting activities. In turn, Royston Golf Club and 'Kicks for Kids' train some of the pupils in sport. Pupils participate in activities organised to support various charities. Opportunities to enable pupils to understand different cultures have not been fully explored. Although pupils visit the local church, they do not go to other places of worship, for example.

35. The school has good links with local educational institutions. It participates in the Hertfordshire Co-ordinated Work Experience Programme and regularly welcomes student teachers for observation and training. It joins with local schools to consider the curriculum and pupils in Year 4 are helped in making the transition to middle school through good liaison.
36. There have been some important improvements since the last inspection. Opportunities for collaborative work have increased, lesson planning refers more to assessment of pupils' needs and long-term planning pays better attention to developing pupils' skills.
37. Provision for spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is satisfactory overall. However, there are variations in quality because there is insufficient conscious monitoring of its extent and impact on pupils' learning.
38. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory, as it was in the last inspection. Assemblies and religious education provide the main contexts for exploring values and beliefs, such as kindness and faith. Assemblies are appropriately quiet and give time for reflection, but pupils are not given much chance across the curriculum to develop a sense of what is beautiful and what is worthwhile. Older pupils show that they can empathise with characters in books and pupils generally understand one another's feelings. The curriculum provides some opportunities to explore feelings through role-play.
39. Provision for moral education is good and has improved; there is now a concise policy for this aspect. Although they are not always displayed, there are classroom codes of conduct and teachers are thorough in putting across the difference between right and wrong. They also treat pupils equally and give them time to consider such issues as rights and responsibilities. Teachers provide good role models and always pay attention to the few situations where pupils do not behave well, thereby reinforcing the school's values. Pupils are firm in their belief that it is better to avoid giving back like for like when someone is unpleasant and appreciate the moral message lying in stories such as 'The Good Samaritan'.
40. Provision for social education is good, as it was at the last inspection. There are many opportunities for pupils to collaborate in lesson time in all subjects and pupils respond well to them, thereby extending their understanding. Assemblies and clubs promote a sense of community through their corporate experiences. The work carried out by house captains is invaluable in promoting a sense of working together for the good of their teams. The school's work in the community makes a good contribution to pupils' social development and they are aware of ways Royston could be improved if people were less selfish.
41. Provision for cultural education is unsatisfactory and there has been no improvement since the last inspection. Pupils are almost all from one cultural background and have not developed their awareness of other cultures or the implications of living in a modern multicultural society. There are not enough resources to raise pupils' awareness of these, and to develop their sensitivity to other people's values and beliefs. Teachers refer pupils to artists, composers and authors to develop this aspect of culture, but these are mostly European, limiting pupils' appreciation of the rich variety of imagery and language in the world.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL CARES FOR ITS PUPILS

42. The school is a caring community that reflects well its stated aims. There is good provision for the welfare and protection of pupils. The school has an effective child protection policy, which follows

the local education authority guidelines and staff are aware of their responsibilities in this area. Good arrangements are in place to deal with sick children.

43. The school provides a caring and secure environment for the pupils to work in. The friendliness and courtesy of the staff and pupils characterise the school. The staff consistently apply the good range of policies which very effectively promote pupils' welfare. These include effective procedures for monitoring and dealing with oppressive behaviour.
44. Teachers and support staff have a very caring attitude towards the pupils. Pastoral care and procedures for monitoring academic work have improved since the last inspection and are now good. Pupils are generally confident and feel positive about their achievements.
45. The school is committed to a positive discipline and behaviour policy and functions as an orderly community. Pupils are well disciplined and good behaviour is an expectation of the school with the vast majority of pupils responding well. Supervision of the children during lunchtime and other breaks is good. Procedures for monitoring behaviour are good.
46. Procedures for monitoring and promoting children's' attendance are good and the school does everything it can to discourage parents from taking their children on holiday during term time but they still do it. The school works closely with the Education Welfare Officer to improve attendance and punctuality where necessary.
47. The governors monitor the health and safety policy by organising an audit of the school premises each term. The very poor and, in some areas, dangerous condition of the playground surface, gives cause for concern and needs dealing with urgently. A small number of minor health and safety concerns, which also need attention as soon as possible have also been raised with the school.
48. Procedures for assessing pupils' progress are satisfactory overall and good in English and mathematics. The recording of these assessments is also good; the school has built up a sizeable spreadsheet showing individual assessments, able to be used to identify the needs of pupils with special educational needs, though not always the needs of the more able. Teachers are often satisfied, for example, when higher ability pupils reach level 2A in Year 2 and do not push them to gain level 3. As pupils start Key Stage 2 in Years 3 and 4, the setting in English and mathematics is considered enough planning for different abilities by some teachers and further differentiation does not occur, particularly with the average pupils in mathematics. Those in the lower sets have more support and guidance from classroom assistants, which enables the few special needs children to achieve average levels of attainment. However, the work of the more able – particularly in mathematics – does not show constant challenge, indicating that assessment is not used well enough to do this.
49. Assessment is satisfactory in ICT and design and technology, but unsatisfactory in art, geography, physical education and religious education, because regular assessment of progress against the National Curriculum levels or those of the agreed syllabus is not made.
50. The school's tracking of assessment of English, mathematics and science through the school is good and progress in achieving National Curriculum levels is effectively monitored in these subjects, enabling, for example, writing standards to rise significantly last year. The weaker standard of mathematics was also picked up but intervention came too late to improve the National Curriculum test results, because of the emphasis on writing. These pupils are making satisfactory progress in Year 3, but assessment is still not being used well enough to enable average and above average pupils to do as well as they could.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL WORKS IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

51. The effectiveness of the school's links with parents is generally good. All the parents spoken to said how much they appreciated the accessibility and approachability of the staff if they have any concerns.
52. The impact of parent's involvement in the school is good. Parents all said that they are encouraged to play an active part in the life of the school and a number act as volunteers working closely with the teachers and helping, for example, in the school library. There is an active and enthusiastic Parent Teacher Association, which organises very successful social and fund raising events for the benefit of the school.
53. They consider this to be a good school where the staff care deeply for their children. They see it as a happy friendly place where pupils are expected to work and achieve their best. They said that they always feel welcome and appreciate the many opportunities open to them to become involved. A number of parents said how they chose to send their children to this school because of its good reputation. The partnership between parents and the school is a real strength.
54. The School Brochure meets statutory requirements in the information it provides. The school takes care to involve parents of children with special educational needs in following their progress, but this is not always a two-way process. Some parents apparently do not hear their children read regularly and fail to keep in contact with the school over children's progress.
55. The quality of information given to parents is good. They are kept informed of their children's progress through parents' evenings and a well-written annual report, which includes targets for each child in spite of a minority who have concerns. Parents are kept well informed about other aspects of the school through regular newsletters. Information is also available on a well-kept notice board inside the main entrance. Each term parents receive outline details of what is being taught to their children. The school also has an up-to-date website where all details are available. The Annual Governors Report to Parents still fails to meet statutory requirements because it does not include details of the purpose of the meeting, of staff training and action on any resolution taken at the last annual general meeting, the address of the chairman nor arrangements for the appointment of the next parent governor.
56. There is a home school-agreement and overall, the contribution of parents to children's learning at school and at home is satisfactory. Reading books and a reading diary are sent home with younger children and a number of parents said that they would prefer this practice to continue across the school. A number of parents also complained that the setting of homework was still inconsistent and inspectors agree; some parents felt unable to help their children as much as they would like to. Although the school has held meetings with parents about curriculum initiatives, it has not specifically addressed the issue of how parents may work with their children at home.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

57. Leadership and management of the school are satisfactory overall. The headteacher gives good leadership with a focused vision on the further development of the school and improved standards all round. In this, he is well supported by the deputy head and governors who are all keen to see the school prosper and maintain its good standing in the community. Management roles are not always clear. All co-ordinators, whatever their experience, are enthusiastic about their subjects and want to raise standards, fulfilling the school aim to do well by all its pupils, but they do not yet undertake the full monitoring and evaluating role for their subjects.
58. The governing body is committed to the school. There is good parental representation and several new governors this year. They have undertaken a voluntary self-review to examine their practice and responsibility. They are satisfactorily involved in the running of the school in that they meet to discuss its development and monitor the finances. They do not have a designated committee structure, but form ad hoc committees when needed. This prevents them from getting to know any

one aspect of the school's management well, which makes it difficult for them to have a satisfactory knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.

59. The school development plan, drawn up by the headteacher, is a sound working document and fully costed. It has clear targets and success criteria, but it is not always easy to see how the costings relate to the particular action, nor what the absolute priorities are.
60. The school has a satisfactory policy for performance management and new staff are served well by their mentors. It also takes on several students each year to do their final teaching practice and they are supervised well by the teachers to whose classes they are attached. The headteacher monitors teaching termly as part of the performance management requirement, but not at other times to check quality. Co-ordinators do not monitor the teaching of their subjects. The school sets challenging voluntary targets for English and mathematics and usually meets them.
61. Although the school checks pupils' attainment on entry to see who needs extra support, there are few pupils who are identified as having special educational needs. The school needs to review its approach to its criteria for special educational needs to ensure that all pupils are receiving their entitlement to appropriate provision. The headteacher is the special educational needs co-ordinator. The governing body considers the school's provision at its meetings and adequately liaises with the school through a governor with responsibility for monitoring provision.
62. The school uses new technology effectively in the office, though registers are still completed by hand. Good use is made of appropriate software to keep track of pupils' attainment and follow their progress throughout the school. Teachers also do their planning on the computer. Information and communication technology skills are developed satisfactorily in the curriculum through lessons in the computer room, but still need to be developed further in most subjects.
63. All grants for special educational needs, new opportunities fund (NOF) and national grid for learning have been spent to good effect. The NOF training has improved some teachers' expertise in ICT, though most were already competent. Funding for special educational needs is used satisfactorily to provide resources for these children. The school seeks best value from goods and service and has been commended by the local education authority for its commitment to achieving it through its development planning.
64. Staffing is now satisfactory, but there have been problems over the last two years, when there was much supply cover necessary for a teacher on long-term sick leave. There was a resultant fall in standards in Year 2 mathematics last year. All teaching and non-teaching staff are committed to the school and work hard as a team in the office, dining hall as well as in the classrooms. The caretaker works tirelessly to keep the school immaculately clean.
65. Accommodation is good, albeit rather drab. The building is spacious and the outside facilities in the adventure playground, large playing fields and wild area, which enable pupils to release their energy at playtimes, are good. Resources are generally good and support the curriculum well. The library is well stocked and used satisfactorily with adult supervision.

WHAT THE SCHOOL SHOULD DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER

66. In order to improve further, the headteacher, senior management team and governors should:
 - (i) improve standards in mathematics by:
 - ensuring that all teachers know the criteria for National Curriculum levels and sub-levels in the subject and assess regularly against them;
 - considering setting arrangements in Years 3 and 4, ensuring that the full range of pupils' ability and age is carefully taken into account and that work is planned to meet the needs of all pupils; and

- ensuring that teachers plan challenging work to stimulate the more able, including those identified as gifted and talented;

(paragraphs 3, 27, 29, 95, 98)

(ii) improve the standard of writing by:

- increasing opportunities for pupils to write throughout the curriculum;
- setting and using targets for pupils' writing throughout the curriculum;
- establishing a consistent style of handwriting which teachers model so that pupils may copy;

(paragraphs 2, 8, 22, 27, 91, 94)

(iii) improve the standard of art by ensuring that teachers receive training to increase their expertise;

(paragraphs 105, 106, 107, 108)

- (iv) improve teachers' expectations of pupils' achievement in all subjects by:
- ensuring that schemes of work in all subjects refer to the National Curriculum levels of attainment and that pupils are assessed against these regularly; and
 - using the detailed data obtained from assessment to plan for children of different abilities in classes and sets and to identify and plan for the gifted and talented;
- (paragraphs 24, 24, 27, 30, 36, 61, 97, 102, 107, 108, 112, 115)*
- (v) widen provision for cultural education to give children greater awareness of the multicultural nature of British society;
- (paragraph 41)*
- (vi) improve the quality of teaching in the nursery by providing more imaginative and challenging activities for learning;
- (paragraphs 69, 77, 78)*
- (vii) improve the role of the subject leaders by giving training, time and opportunity for them to monitor and evaluate the provision for their subject in the curriculum.
- (paragraphs 12, 49, 57, 60, 92, 96, 104, 115, 122, 133, 138)*

In drawing up their action plan, the governors should include the following minor issues:

- eliminate the safety risk caused by the uneven surface of the playground (paragraph 47);
- improve the use of ICT in all subjects (paragraph 25, 62);
- improve the expertise of teachers in physical education (paragraph 13); and
- extend the use of homework (paragraph 27, 56).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	51
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	24

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	7	17	22	3	0	0
Percentage	2	14	34	44	6	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	10.5	204
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	12

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	14

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	30
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	13

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.9

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.6

National comparative data	5.6
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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	21	19	40

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	16	20
	Girls	18	16	18
	Total	36	32	38
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (82)	80 (79)	95 (87)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	18	19
	Girls	18	18	18
	Total	37	36	37
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (79)	90 (87)	93 (89)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

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

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
188	0	0
0	0	0
5	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
9	0	0

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y4

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Average class size	29

Education support staff: YR – Y4

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	42

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	13
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32.5
Number of pupils per FTE adult	6.5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2
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	£
Total income	491182
Total expenditure	488902
Expenditure per pupil	2420
Balance brought forward from previous year	26223
Balance carried forward to next year	28503

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5.0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	5.4
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	204
Number of questionnaires returned	103

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	65	32	2	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	59	31	6	1	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	45	50	3	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	29	48	13	3	6
The teaching is good.	56	40	4	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	32	48	16	2	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	67	32	1	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	65	34	0	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	39	48	1	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	50	48	1	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	48	49	2	1	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	31	49	12	1	8

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

67. At the time of the inspection there were 18 children in the Reception class and 29 children attending part-time in the nursery. Children are admitted to the Nursery twice a year in September and January following their third birthday. Another Reception class will be created in January. Both classes have a qualified teacher; there is a nursery nurse in the nursery and a learning support assistant in Reception. Most children have attended local playgroups before they come to school and all the children remain at the school after the Foundation Stage.
68. Children make a smooth transition from home to the Nursery and to Reception. There are good links with the local playgroups. Parents and children are well prepared by home visits and communication before they commence school. Attainment on entry varies but is broadly average. However the attainment of the current children in both the Nursery and Reception is above average. None has been identified with special educational needs. Baseline assessment information in both classes is very thorough and contributes to the ongoing assessment procedures carried out during the year. Assessment procedures are very good and teachers update records regularly. They use assessment to guide planning, though this does not fully challenge higher ability children.
69. The Foundation Stage provides a satisfactory learning environment for young children. Since the last inspection the school has created an outdoor play area, but this is not yet completely exciting and stimulating. There is access to a tarmac and grass area with suitable climbing apparatus. Both the Nursery and Reception classes use the hall for activity sessions. The Nursery is well organised and teaching is satisfactory, but activities are not always as inspiring and thrilling as they could be for young children because of the lack of imagination and challenge in the activities provided. Children make satisfactory progress in their learning and are achieving standards above average for their age. The quality of teaching in the Reception class is good overall. All children in Reception are on course to achieve the early learning goals in all areas of learning and many are already working on National Curriculum levels. Day to day planning is good but longer term planning is not in touch with current national guidelines. Resources are good overall; the Nursery has its own library and children are encouraged to change their books regularly.
70. The school follows the nationally recommended Foundation Stage curriculum, which consists of six areas of learning: personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development and creative development. Each area of learning is made up of four stages or stepping-stones, from which progress and standards can be measured.

Personal, social and emotional development

71. Children's personal, social and emotional development is good in both classes and reflects the good teaching in this area of learning. Children achieve well in the nursery and by the end of the Reception year, all will achieve the expected learning goals. Staff create a secure environment where expected behaviour is clearly identified. The 'golden rules' are clearly visible. Children enjoy coming to school; they soon learn the school procedure and settle into school routine well. Children co-operate well with each other and have a clear understanding of right and wrong. They play alongside each other and share equipment. Ability to work independently is encouraged in both classes. Children are expected to change independently for activity lessons in the hall, for instance. Those in the nursery show initiative and independently sweep up the sand and place the chairs under the table, for example. In the Nursery, they develop a sense of responsibility because the procedures are well established. They take responsibility for placing their own name on the board when they come to school. They behave sensibly and are polite, remembering to say 'thank you' during the drink and snack session. In Reception, children show developing levels of co-operation, playing in the card shop and interacting well as they negotiate selling different cards to each other. In the Nursery, children showed well-developed co-operative skills

when lifting boxes. They have all learned etiquette by taking it in turns to give out the drinks and pay for them with real coins.

72. Teaching is good in both classes and effectively contributes to standards achieved because consistent messages are clearly given and reinforced in a friendly but firm way. The Nursery nurse could take more initiative to stimulate children's learning.

Communication, language and literacy

73. All children in both classes listen well, focus on their teacher and other adults and follow instructions. The Reception teacher is very good at providing opportunities for children to speak and listen to others; children achieve well because she makes them feel special. Average and above average children use a very good range of vocabulary, using descriptive and expressive terms. They talk about emotional states such as being happy when they see their grandparents. Lower ability children have a good range of vocabulary and can describe the events of the story 'Queen on a quilt.' All in Reception place the events of the story in the correct sequence and average children give reasons why the events occurred and why the characters acted as they did. In the nursery children were encouraged to talk about bonfire night. They listened to the story of Guy Fawkes although it was over-challenging for some children. Both classes have a reading area.
74. The Nursery has its own library and children in both classes are encouraged to take books home. All children have a positive attitude to books and know they communicate meaning and that print goes from left to right. They all handle books carefully. Higher ability children in Reception use a wide range of vocabulary to describe the characters and events in their favourite book. All are well launched in reading and read simple words and phrases. Older children in the Nursery were beginning to recognise letters of the alphabet in the alphabet game. Some work is rather dull and lacks imagination: worksheets are regularly used for Nursery children to join dots and colour in pictures. The Nursery nurse writes children's names but does not encourage children to write them themselves. Older children in the Nursery know the weekly letter such as a 'z', and they suggest things starting with that letter, such as a zebra. Children in Reception are well grounded in writing and write simple shopping lists.
75. Teaching is very good in this area of learning in Reception and satisfactory in the Nursery. In Reception, the teacher uses questions skilfully to extend pupils' thinking and speaking skills. The teacher makes learning fun by creating a drama situation, for example, so that children can act out the events of the story. 'That was fun!' exclaimed one child, reflecting the joy all the children experienced. Skilled teaching in Reception encourages children to look at the text carefully and they observe and identify the difference between the words 'quack' and 'quiet'. Teaching in the Nursery tends to be rather formal and lacks imagination for younger children who spend time colouring and joining dots of an alphabet letter. Support staff in the Nursery do not interact to extend vocabulary and initiate play activities as much as they could. All children meet and some exceed the early learning goals.

Mathematical development

76. Children in Reception recognise numbers from nought to ten and arrange them in the correct order. They can identify a missing number and count the number of objects. Most children identified that there were only three objects on the number four that day. They are beginning to identify the value and know the largest and smallest numbers; higher ability children recognise a middle number, too. Children are beginning to use comparative language, such as 'least' and 'more than' and understand its significance. All children in Reception make a repeating pattern. Singing rhymes are used to develop counting on and subtraction. In the Nursery, children draw and recognise a square. Higher ability children know a square has four corners and four sides. Older children in the Nursery make a square with four straws. Activities tend to be teacher-led. Nursery children have a good understanding of number for their age. They know that if they have four straws and two straws are used, they will have two left. Higher ability children know three straws make a triangle; one child suggested making a diamond shape. The teacher takes the older children and

- the Nursery nurse takes the younger ones; their activities are dull and unimaginative. They sit at a table and join dots on worksheets to make and colour squares, for example.
77. Teaching is good in Reception and satisfactory in the Nursery. In the good lessons, the teacher provides an appropriate range of activities to promote mathematical understanding and develop a quick mental oral response. Language is identified clearly in planning. In the Nursery, young children spend too much time on worksheets and there is not enough guided learning through play. All children meet and some exceed the early learning goals.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

78. There are appropriate opportunities in both the Nursery and Reception to build and construct a range of objects. In Reception, children select their own resources to make model cars and lorries. Both Nursery and Reception children are guided to make a rocket, covering a toilet roll with shiny paper. Computer skills are developing very well in Reception because children have a weekly session in the computer suite. Children have good mouse control for their age; all children select icons to show colour, shape and line. Average and above average children identify which icon to use to create a picture using paint box. They know and explain how to select the shapes and colours to make a car. They have very good opportunities to use their imagination and create their own picture and they show joy in their learning. Children in Reception understand that different ingredients are used to make food, such as bread. They record the ingredients. Nursery children showed good understanding about safety aspects for bonfire night. Most children know primary colours. Higher ability children observe and identify the colours, such as purple and blue, in the candle flame. All are beginning to know the days of the week and they have a good awareness of different weather conditions because they help their teacher complete the weather chart every day. They suggest the sun could be hiding behind the clouds because it is a cloudy day.
79. Teaching is good in Reception and satisfactory in the Nursery. In Reception, the teacher is enthusiastic and challenges children to develop their curiosity and imagination. When teaching is less effective, children experience too many adult-directed activities and they do not always have the opportunity to investigate and find out about objects and features of living things. All meet and some exceed the early learning goals.

Physical development

80. Children make satisfactory progress in improving their skills of co-ordination, control, movement and manipulation but these are not as good as they could be. Nursery children make good progress learning how to dress and undress for their activity session in the hall. The outdoor activities offer a narrow range of opportunities for children to develop their physical skills; for example, they ride the bikes once a week and play with bats and balls, but children do not have the chance to manoeuvre the bikes backwards and around. They pedal the small cars up and down the hill and are encouraged to stop at the small petrol station.
81. The range of movement opportunities is limited and there are no opportunities to develop balancing skills. In the hall, children are encouraged to throw and catch balls, but the range of physical skills they experience is small. They learn to throw the ball high, a long way and a short distance. Nursery children develop their hand-eye co-ordination placing features to make funny faces and completing jigsaw puzzles. Reception children use the gymnastic apparatus and show confidence climbing over, under and through the apparatus. They have learned to carry mats and simple gymnastic apparatus safely. They enjoyed the taped broadcast dance lesson and responded excitedly to the firework stimulus, running around the room shaking their hands in different directions in response to the music. Their ability to use space and their vocabulary of movement is average. Reception children develop hand-eye co-ordination through matching and positioning shapes, decorating and sticking. They use pencils, crayons and scissors and paint brushes effectively and with confidence.
82. Teaching is satisfactory in both the Nursery and Reception class. Lessons are well planned but the movement content is limited, with little opportunity for children to extend their range of

movement. Both teachers give appropriate attention to safety aspects. All children meet and some exceed the early learning goals.

Creative development

83. Children in Reception confidently mix paints and use pencils, crayons and complete simple collages. They paint firework pictures and use their fingers to achieve the swirling effect of the Catherine wheel. All children have experienced mixing colours and some can make brown. They paint their own portraits identifying main features such as the mouth, nose and hair colour. Their camouflage pictures show imaginative use of colour, the zebra, for example, being hidden by the black and white patterns and shapes. Children are encouraged to use their imaginations and develop their own ideas when they make simple collage pictures. They all experience working with clay and make autumn leaves in different shapes and sizes. The role-play home area extends imagination and gives children the opportunity to think of others, for example selling different cards in the card shop. Singing is well developed. The teacher takes every opportunity to encourage the children to learn and sing a range of songs such as 'Two little leaves so bright and gay.' They benefit from a lesson with a specialist music teacher once a week. Children in the nursery paint pictures of themselves showing good awareness of different body parts such as necks and hands. All artwork is appreciated and displayed in the picture gallery. Nursery children use a range of colours in their Japanese garden paintings. They manage to show a white bridge reflecting the painting by Monet. The quality of teaching is good in both classes. Teachers are enthusiastic and plan an interesting range of activities, which children enjoy and extend their educational experience. All children meet and some exceed the early learning goals.

ENGLISH

84. Pupils' attainment in speaking and listening in Year 2 is in line with the national average. They listen carefully to teachers' instructions in preparation for activities, such as literacy and numeracy, settling down to their tasks quietly and efficiently. In discussions, pupils politely take turns with their teacher or friends and show by their comments that they have taken account of what others have said. They explain in their ICT lessons why computers are a suitable resource for recording their work. In group work, such as when they discuss sequencing sentences from a story, pupils are collaborative. Pupils in Year 1 learn quickly how to adopt a role in a story, such as Cinderella.
85. Pupils' attainment in speaking and listening in Year 4 is in line with the national average. They have made satisfactory progress in discussing with adults, either individually or in groups, such matters as the merits of books or their opinions of their environment in Royston. They develop their ability to share ideas in groups such as deciding why the Ancient Greeks needed a navy. They also progress in their ability to sustain listening, when learning from their teacher about the qualities of a Dali painting. However, pupils find it difficult to listen when watching a video.
86. Pupils' attainment in reading in Year 2 is above the national average. The more able pupils read accurately and fluently and with expression that shows their full understanding of the text. They are confident with such words as 'beautiful' and 'delicious'. These pupils relate the plot of their books, but find it hard to be as detailed about the characters. They enjoy reading and know why they like a particular book. The more able are beginning to show empathy by explaining why they would like to be a particular character. Pupils of average capability have not developed a wide range of methods to read difficult vocabulary, such as reading ahead for meaning. They are not confident in explaining the plot and why they like their book. The less able pupils are still developing their fluency and are held up by their lack of ability to decipher unfamiliar words. Most pupils understand that some books are used to find things out, but the more able have not yet learned how to find a specific book.
87. Pupils' attainment in reading in Year 4 is in line with the national average. This does not reflect a lack of progress, but the range of abilities in each year group. The more able are very fluent and

- read with good expression. They explain the plot well, but have the same difficulty as Year 2 pupils in talking about the qualities of characters. However, they empathise with them. Pupils also develop favourite authors. They understand how a non-fiction library is organised to facilitate the location of a particular book. Pupils of average ability are fairly fluent, but still have not developed the ability to deal with difficult words. Their range of reading has not promoted a love of particular authors. Less able pupils are close to the average in their skills and understanding.
88. Pupils' attainment in writing in Year 2 is in line with the national average. They write sensitive - if short - letters, such as to a local priest when he left the parish. Pupils retell the story of 'Little Red Riding Hood' with an ability to see it from her point of view. More able pupils successfully retell stories such as 'The Three Bears'. They regularly use full stops and capital letters and make clear links between their story ideas. They are confident in using speech marks and maintain the same tense throughout their stories. Their work shows the beginnings of style. Handwriting is large, though not yet consistent and spelling is advanced. Average pupils sequence their ideas logically and are working on their punctuation; their content is still a string of sentences, but these are connected. As would be expected, they have not yet developed an awareness of the reader. Handwriting varies in its accuracy and is not yet joined. Spelling is either correct or plausible. The less able are very much in the early stages of development, but their work is clear and does not need interpreting.
89. Pupils' attainment in writing in Year 4 is in line with the national average. Near the beginning of the academic year, they had not written at length, but some examples from the previous year showed that seven year-olds do this by the end of the year. The more able have developed an ability to be more adventurous with their use of punctuation and have an advanced overview of their stories so that there is good development of ideas over the whole piece of work. In connection with this, they consciously apply a plan and use vocabulary with an awareness of the reader, well exemplified by a piece that said 'Sam was more kind-hearted than the rest. You could tell by his face because he had big rosy cheeks like the whole moon.' Handwriting has individual style, but spelling is sometimes variable in its accuracy. Average and below average pupils do not apply a plan and are still working on developing a style. Handwriting is consistent but still not joined. Spelling is accurate to the expected level.
90. There has been good improvement since the last inspection, particularly in the standard of English in writing. This reflects improvement in the quality of teaching in spite of little development in its monitoring. Plans are now based clearly on the National Curriculum. Procedures for assessment and its use for planning have considerably improved and the literacy hour has ensured the progressive development of skills. There is more systematic teaching of spelling. Although there was some evidence of extended writing and research from last year, pupils currently still have not used and developed their writing skills enough in a variety of contexts, including the frequent use of computers, and in the use of non-fiction. This is unsatisfactory. Expectations of handwriting vary. This is not helped by teachers not joining their writing on the whiteboard. Literacy, particularly writing, would be improved by further development through the whole curriculum.
91. The quality of teaching is good in both classes in Key Stage 1 and those in Key Stage 2. Three quarters of lessons were good or better and there was an example of excellent teaching. Here the teacher prompted enthusiasm and learning about the qualities of story characters through her well paced questions and a close rapport. Pupils responded to the 'Big Book' by asking: 'Please can we join in?', because they wanted to act out the roles. Her technique of putting five and six-year-old pupils into role by asking them to pretend to dress up helped them begin to empathise. Many teachers aim to include all individuals, however, reluctant, in their questioning. The quality of pupils' responses is very much the product of the teacher's style in this. Some leads to word or phrase responses; some enables pupils to initiate detailed sentences. Teachers work closely with classroom assistants to ensure that pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. In the most successful lessons, they plan well and have resources ready for a variety of interesting group-learning activities. Some teachers have better expectation of writing – the length and depth – than others. This includes its use across the curriculum so that pupils learn to apply their skills.

92. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, with close attention being given both by classroom assistants and the teacher with special responsibility for them. Subject leadership is satisfactory. The co-ordinator and staff closely monitor all pupils' progress and performance in tests so that they can prepare lessons to meet individual needs. Nevertheless they have not resolved the differences between the achievements of boys and girls by the age of seven. The school has a good bank of resources for literacy. There are plans to develop monitoring of teaching, which will ensure that the improvements continue, thereby enabling more pupils to achieve their potential.

MATHEMATICS

93. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 4 are achieving the standards expected for this time in the academic year, but standards overall could and should be higher because higher ability pupils are not always given work to extend their learning. In the last inspection standards were judged to be above average, since when they have slipped to average. The school is aware of the decline, caused mainly by staffing problems over the past two years and has made raising standards a priority, introducing measures to address the problem. These initiatives are apparently having a positive effect and current Year 2 pupils are on course to achieve their targets. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are now taught for numeracy in ability groups. Booster classes have been planned to help identified pupils improve. Less able pupils and those with special educational needs receive small group support. National Curriculum test results are analysed thoroughly and appropriate group targets are identified in Years 3 and 4, against which pupils are assessed very regularly. Attainment is monitored formally and records of achievement are conscientiously recorded, so that individual progress can be tracked over time. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to others and achieve satisfactorily in Years 3 and 4.
94. Literacy is well used in mathematics and consequently pupils have a good understanding of mathematical terms. Numeracy, however, is not well used across the curriculum to reinforce learning in other subjects and the use of ICT to enrich learning is not well developed.
95. By the end of Year 2 most pupils have a secure knowledge and understanding of number and place value. Average and above average pupils know their two, five and ten times tables and count in twos from odd or even numbers. All pupils count in twos forwards and backwards from 20 and they count in tens to 100; the more able count in fives. All recognise odd and even numbers. The more able are secure in adding one and two digit numbers and they can write number sequences. Mathematical skills are secure but some higher ability pupils are still writing numerals the wrong way round. All Year 2 pupils identify a pattern in counting in a sequence of two. The more able explain patterns in numbers and use terms such as diagonal. They name parts of three-dimensional shapes and write about the properties of a square, rectangle and triangle. Pupils make satisfactory progress in the infant years. In Year 1, pupils make their own clock adding the numbers correctly and placing the hands of the clock to a specific time. They all tell the time by the hour.
96. Most higher ability pupils in Year 4 know their tables. They understand and demonstrate how multiplication and division can be used and explain methods clearly. The more able add three consecutive three-digit numbers. They work out perimeters of shapes. Pupils have learned a good range of mathematical vocabulary and recognise addition and subtraction terms. They know and explain simple ways to solve number problems. The less able group is achieving broadly average standards and these pupils are making good progress because of the quality of teaching and the adult support they receive. Lower ability pupils have a good grasp of doubling numbers and describe the properties of a prism. Average pupils make unsatisfactory progress because work is not differentiated sufficiently for the wide range of age and ability in the set. They are slow to count forwards and backwards in threes and sixes. Most pupils identify number sequences in twos, fives and tens.
97. Teaching is satisfactory overall with instances of good and unsatisfactory teaching having been seen in Years 3 and 4. Most lessons are satisfactorily planned. Teachers have sound subject knowledge but do not always communicate lesson objectives to the class. They give clear

explanations and use questions well. Where teaching is most effective, teachers set a brisk pace to the lesson and this continues throughout. In lessons where learning could be better, the more able pupils are not always challenged and in Years 3 and 4, sometimes this is more the average pupils when work is not matched to the wide range of ability in the class. This was noted in a Year 2 lesson where such pupils could have tackled more challenging work. In Year 2, however, the teacher used language well and this ensured pupils understood mathematical terms. In unsatisfactory lessons, the work was not matched to individual capability. Assessment is very frequent. Teachers keep rigorous records on progress but assessment outcomes are not made to guide planning, so planning does not always identify precisely what pupils and groups are expected to learn in a given session.

98. The co-ordinator is new to the school but she has prepared an appropriate action plan for development. The policy has just been brought up to date. Mathematics has a satisfactory focus around the school. The coordinator has not monitored teaching and learning in classes. Resources are good and easily accessible.

SCIENCE

99. Pupils in Year 2 distinguish between appliances that are powered by mains electricity and by battery. They recognise that some produce heat, some light and some sound, thereby gaining early awareness of the ways in which energy can be changed from one form to another. The more able pupils and several average ones record the results of their investigations clearly and neatly.
100. Pupils in Year 4 understand the differences between a conductor and insulator; those of higher ability use circuit symbols precisely to draw their own circuit diagrams. They also predict accurately whether light bulbs in circuit diagrams produced by their teacher will light up or not by observing the connections.
101. It was only possible to see lessons on electricity during the inspection since all classes were studying this aspect at different levels. All pupils have been studying light at various levels. Those in Key Stage 1 have understood that some materials are reflective and are therefore most suitable to be worn when out at night. Pupils in Key Stage 2 have measured the length of shadows as the sun moves across the sky and noted they get shorter as the sun is higher. Work from last year was only available for Year 2 and this showed that pupils have learned about pushing and pulling forces through examples such as windmills, disco dancing and physical education. They have gained good ideas about how to make a test fair, for example to start toy cars at the same point when pushing them down a ramp and to make use of prediction, checking with their observations to see if they were correct or not. Pupils in Year 2 also kept a plant diary, charting the growth of beans and identified the parts of a plant. The more able pupils labelled these, noting, for example, that roots absorb water from the soil. All this shows satisfactory progress and standards at least average.
102. The quality of teaching seen was satisfactory overall, though there were examples of good teaching in both key stages. Teachers generally have sound expertise in science, enabling pupils to make satisfactory progress. Classes seen were managed well, activities were varied between practical and written and, in most cases, planning reflected the ability range within the class, though work to challenge the more able was not always present, as, for example, in a practical lesson where pupils had to make a bulb light up, given the necessary components. Higher ability pupils had completed this very quickly and without any extension work to do, wasted time playing with the components. Teachers' assessment of science National Curriculum levels is not always secure. In Key Stage 1, there is evidence that higher ability pupils are not considered to be at level 3 as often as they should be and this leads to lower than average end of key stage attainment.
103. The science curriculum is satisfactory and follows the National Curriculum. Literacy and numeracy are both addressed satisfactorily and well in Year 4 where vocabulary and accuracy of measurement are emphasised. Information and communication technology is not used as much as it might be in data analysis and research topics, though this is beginning.

104. Leadership is good. The co-ordinator has a clear idea of future development of the subject and is keen to extend her good assessment system in Key Stage 2 by producing samples of work matched to National Curriculum levels to address the discrepancy between actual and perceived standards. Her action plan contains a target to produce a standard assessment system from Reception to Year 4 to enable accurate levels to be passed on to middle schools, with which there is good liaison relating mainly to English and mathematics. She is not given sufficient no-contact time to allow for the monitoring of the subject in classes or in discussion with pupils. The school's accommodation includes a wild area which is well used to study plants and animals in their habitats.

ART AND DESIGN

105. Standards of attainment for pupils in both Year 2 and Year 4 are below national expectations. In spite of making observations, pupils do not use them directly to make sketches; their drawings are stereotypes from memory rather than the result of careful looking. There is very little progress in the development of skills and techniques and pupils find it difficult to control what they use to create designs or pictures, for example the extension of a photograph shows very limited understanding.
106. There has been a lack of planning to address most of the issues raised at the last inspection. Consequently, standards have declined. Although a published scheme of work has been adopted, teachers have not been appropriately trained to understand its implications.
107. The quality of teaching is unsatisfactory and there is not enough knowledge and expertise. Sketchbooks, for example, are not used appropriately to experiment and try out ideas. Expectations are low, so that pupils' control of tools and application of observational skills are undeveloped. While planning is based on a sound programme of activities, there is often insufficient understanding of what pupils can achieve, so that assessment is difficult. Nevertheless, during the inspection week a lesson was observed which was good. This was particularly successful at helping pupils to understand how to paint a dream-like picture by introducing them to various examples through photographs, a video and detailed discussion. Here, especially, pupils showed their enthusiasm for art.
108. The new co-ordinator is aware of what needs developing. She plans to monitor both teaching and learning to raise standards. There is a lack of appropriate provision for pupils with special needs and those who are gifted and talented. This is the result of a lack of training for teachers. The school makes a little use of information technology and this needs developing. The work of artists such as Goya and Dali has a good impact on pupils' awareness of how to obtain effects.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

109. Standards in design and technology are similar to those expected for seven and nine year olds and similar to those reported at the previous inspection. Pupils in Year 4 showed good knowledge of materials during the introduction to their lesson and were all able to volunteer information as to how suitable these would be for the money container they had designed. Several pupils were able to say that they would find Gingham very useful because they could use the checks as guidelines for cutting. Practical skills such as stitching and cutting were also average with a noticeable difference between boys and girls – the latter were much more capable.
110. Year 2 pupils accurately cut out a stand for their drainpipe for 'Incy-Wincey Spider', and some higher ability pupils provided a counter-weight at the back to prevent the construction from toppling forwards. All practised their numeracy as they considered the relative size of the spider and the drainpipes and demonstrated their good vocabulary when coming up with ideas for making the stand look more like a garden wall.
111. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers have good expertise because they recognise that children enjoy this subject, its value in developing practical skills and knowledge of how products are designed and made in everyday life, as well as developing literacy through specific vocabulary and numeracy through measurement and consideration of shapes when using boxes and tubes. The design process is always in evidence and pupils were seen working with their designs on their tables in both the lessons seen, though they were clearly more engaged in the making of their products than checking that they matched their designs. Because of the stages at which the projects lay, it was not possible to see any evaluation of their being fit for a purpose, but seven year-olds were gaining some relevant ideas about provision for a client by comparing their 'drainpipes' with the size of the spider. No use of ICT in this subject was seen during the inspection.

112. The curriculum is satisfactory and follows the National Curriculum using QCA guidance adapted well to the school's situation. Leadership of the subject is good. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning. She guides teachers well to ensure that the curriculum is covered and liaises well with the middle schools to ensure that Key Stage 2 is completely addressed. Food technology is planned for, but was not seen during the inspection. Assessment is starting to be carried out, using national guidelines and those from the design and technology professional body, but the school currently lacks a portfolio of assessed work to enable teachers to judge current standards accurately. The co-ordinator is aiming for this to be in place this year. Although standards remain similar, the subject itself has moved on since the last inspection and the all-round improvement is good.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

113. Standards of attainment in both geography and history in Year 2 are in line with national expectations. In a geography lesson, pupils successfully used their previous knowledge to frame questions for a survey of people's opinions about parking in Royston. Pupils satisfactorily describe natural and man-made features of their local environment, but are not yet beginning to explain changes over the years. Pupils know some of the things they like and dislike about living in Royston, but cannot yet suggest ways to make improvements. They have an average knowledge of weather and its effect on people and animals as well as of the purpose of maps. Pupils' work is less developed in history, although there are some examples of satisfactory thinking about why we remember certain people such as Guy Fawkes.
114. Standards of attainment in history are in line with national expectations in Year 4. Pupils have an average knowledge of Ancient Greece and of the chronology of events in their time. They know that British history is divided into eras associated with monarchs. Although they know some famous people, they cannot give any detail about their achievements. Pupils use a variety of resources for their learning, but cannot yet interpret information. However, pupils make good progress and gain above average knowledge and understanding in geography. This is reflected in their writing, where they explain their own views about their environment. Pupils also identify how people are unhelpful in their effects on the environment, but also recognise ways used to manage it properly. Their geographical knowledge about the differences between places is good. They know which countries constitute the United Kingdom and what comprises a continent, naming many. They have opinions on what is good and bad for people in Royston, such as a by-pass and the loss of a swimming pool and cinema respectively. They have a well above average awareness of different forms of pollution and its effects. Pupils realise how man solves the problems of constructing roads in places with hills and valleys and are developing a good understanding of rivers and their place in the water cycle.
115. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection in both subjects. Pupils' knowledge and understanding have been maintained in Year 2, but have risen significantly for geography in Year 4. However, they have remained the same for other aspects of learning such as investigating and recording, in spite of better resources being available. Formal monitoring of teaching is still not in place and assessment is unsatisfactory. Both subjects do not feature strongly in classroom displays. Teachers make little use of literacy and numeracy skills or of information and communication technology and drama. Neither subject challenges the more able as much as they could do.
116. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in both subjects. Although only two lessons were observed in each, pupils' work was scrutinised and used to contribute to judgements. Teachers organise and manage their classes well, but have low expectations of what pupils can achieve. Planning frequently does not take into account pupils' varying needs, especially in mixed-age classes. This affects the learning both by pupils with special needs and those who are more able and it is thereby not inclusive. Lessons do not rise above satisfactory; they are too academic and lack excitement. Consequently, pupils produce correct answers rather than launching into adventurous investigation. Nevertheless, they collaborate and behave well.

117. The newly appointed co-ordinator for history and geography is already well acquainted with what needs improving in both subjects if pupils are to achieve the level of work of which they are capable.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

118. Standards in ICT in Years 2 and 4 are similar to those expected for children this age, which is an improvement since the last inspection. During this inspection, lessons for all classes were concentrated on the learning and improving of graphics skills. In Year 4, pupils' discussions and work produced showed that they are able to use software tools such as 'cut and paste', rotate pictures and 'undo'. Higher ability pupils use a wide variety of painting tools, including 'spray can' to enhance a picture previously scanned, having mastered filling in sections of painting with specific colours and changing the size of images. Pupils with special educational needs in Years 3 and 4 succeed because they have, like the rest, satisfactory computer skills and are given specific help where needed from the classroom assistant; teachers ensure that they usually do not share a computer.
119. In Year 2, pupils were again using graphics software, drawing pictures using shapes this time. Average and above average pupils were creating a house and garden, showing good mouse control for their age and also demonstrated satisfactory achievement in that they can complete basic tasks, such as logging on and off and saving their work.
120. The quality of teaching seen was satisfactory overall and pupils make satisfactory gains in their knowledge and skills through their lessons in the computer room. Teachers and support staff work hard in lessons, because group sizes are large and there are often two children to a computer. Occasionally, however, there is not enough liaison between them in lessons and their general overview of how children are learning is lost.
121. Teachers generally have good expertise and satisfactory expectations of their pupils, as shown by the work samples on view. Pupils have covered work in all aspects of the ICT curriculum. Juniors have combined text and graphics satisfactorily, have constructed a branching 'key' on the subject of pets, have analysed data on favourite Egyptian gods and explored the 'Crystal Rain Forest' using commands similar to those used in the 'LOGO' programming language. Other examples of work show that ICT is being used in some subjects more than others. In religious education, for example, pupils used it on a project about Florence Nightingale as a person of faith and they have plotted graphs of the height of shadows at certain times of day in science.
122. The curriculum follows the guidance of the QCA on a two year rolling programme and is satisfactory in National Curriculum coverage. The subject is well led by a knowledgeable co-ordinator. Assessment and monitoring of the curriculum are both satisfactory, though in early stages, but there is technical help every week and the subject is well resourced, except that there are no demonstration facilities, such as a large screen or whiteboard for the demonstration of software. Although skills are developing satisfactorily, there is not enough specific use of ICT in the curriculum, particularly in Key Stage 1.

MUSIC

123. Standards are above average at the end of both Year 2 and Year 4. Pupils sing in tune and with enthusiasm during lessons and in assemblies. Those in Year 2 much enjoy practising the works and movements for 'The Seven Little Penguins' and showed their good knowledge of the sounds made by musical instruments when deciding which ones would be best to create an 'icy' background for the 'Icicle Song'. Pupils who chose chime bars, tambourine and triangle confidently demonstrated the particular sound they had in mind in front of the class.
124. Pupils in Key Stage 2 listened carefully when exploring different arrangements of songs. They were able to identify the background vocal group, trumpet, guitars and other instruments in 'The Songbird' by Eve Cassidy. All junior pupils are given the opportunity to learn the recorder in timetabled sessions; they are grouped according to capability. Beginners were all able to read simple notation when practising notes A and G.

125. Teaching is very good and although lessons are very short – all classes have two separate half hour lessons a week – the specialist teacher does not lose a moment and makes very good use of the time. She has very high expectations of pupils' performance and places great emphasis on practice. The recorder group were all made to repeat their practice pieces individually, for example, and were invited to assess their own performance and to accept the assessment of their peers. This fired them with the will to do their best and all promised to find time to practise in the coming week.
126. The teacher's very good expertise and ability to manage and organise the curriculum ensures that pupils achieve well at whatever age they are. Reception children singing 'Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star' and 'Hey Diddle-Dee-Dee', for example, were expected to be accurate in diction and intonation, which enabled them successfully to learn a new song 'Five Little Candles' by accurately copying the teacher's lead. Literacy and numeracy are well emphasised during lessons. The teacher continually asks for pupils' understanding of words and how they may be made up for a song, such as 'The Nicle' for 'nice icicle'. She makes pupils listen carefully for the number of times a refrain is repeated and, as they get older, to count beats and recognise note values. Information and communication technology is developed satisfactorily in music by the use of computer software which allows pupils to write down their compositions in graphic notation.
127. The specialist music teacher teaches all classes in the school. This is supplemented by instrumental lessons for a large number of children. Provision is very good in all aspects, and teachers have good expertise. The guitar session observed, for example, was well planned for the three pupils taking part and they succeeded in learning a new piece of music, practising their acquired skill to improve performance. Individual assessment is used well by teachers to ensure that all children progress well.
128. The National Curriculum is fully in place and well planned, with motivating and exciting sessions in which pupils' obvious enjoyment and enthusiasm enable them to succeed. Music continues, from the last inspection, to have a high profile in the school. This is very much appreciated by parents, who rightly regard this as a strength. The current situation, however, whilst maintaining high standards, provides very rushed lessons, with extra-curricular clubs, including the choir squeezed into lunchtimes and breaks and little or no participation by class teachers, some of whom have musical knowledge and talent. Singing in assembly usually only happens when the specialist teacher is in school. There are many high quality performances both in the community and in school at the end of each term.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

129. Standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 4 are broadly in line with those expected of pupils this age. All pupils make satisfactory progress as they go up through the school. However, considering pupils have three sessions of physical education a week, standards should be higher. The pupils do not have the opportunity to swim. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
130. In dance, Year 2 pupils make satisfactory progress moving rhythmically to the instructions and music of taped broadcast lessons. They travel around the room shaking their hands and turning in response to the Christmas dance stimulus. Their ability to use space and co-ordination is as expected for their age. The more able pupils show some expression in their movement and turn as they move around the room. Average pupils change level but the range of dance movement is limited. Games skills are developing well in Year 1, pupils work well with a partner sensibly rolling and receiving a ball. Some classes take too long changing for the lesson and activity time is curtailed. In one lesson, pupils took 13 minutes to change and valuable learning time was lost. Pupils have a sound understanding of the effect of exercise on their body but their ability to evaluate their own and others' performance is limited.
131. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their gymnastic ability as they move through the school. Most pupils jump and land safely and combine several actions, although the movement often lacks quality and extension. The more able transfer their body weight confidently onto their hands and

- perform cartwheels and handstands. They combine simple movements such as a jump, land and a roll. Pupils in Year 4 get gymnastic apparatus out independently. No games or dance lessons were observed in Years 3 and 4. Discussion with pupils indicates average knowledge and awareness of the attack and defence tactics in small-sided competitive games. Pupils' ability to evaluate and improve their performance is developing but could be stronger.
132. Teaching is satisfactory throughout the school but there were instances of good and unsatisfactory teaching seen. In the better lessons, the teacher was well organised and gave appropriate comments to pupils on their performance. In the unsatisfactory lesson, subject knowledge was weak and pupils were congratulated for performing rolls incorrectly. The pace of learning could be better if more effective methods were used, for example pupils standing in queues waiting for a turn on the apparatus reduces the levels of activity and the amount of practice time. Instructions are not firm enough and pupils are given insufficient guidance to improve their physical skills. Many teachers are reliant on broadcast lessons for dance and teachers do not ensure that the more able are challenged.
133. The headteacher is currently co-ordinator for physical education. There has been no formal monitoring of teaching and learning in lessons. The school is using national guidelines for planning and there is an action plan to develop the subject. The pupils experience local tournaments for rugby, football and netball and extra-curricular clubs which extend provision. There is currently no assessment system. Resources are good except for a shortage of benches in the hall. All resources are easily accessible and in good condition.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

134. By the end of Years 2 and 4, standards are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. Since the last inspection, progress in teaching, learning and standards pupils achieve has been satisfactory. The school is in the process of adopting new planning and guidelines.
135. By the end of Year 2, pupils' learning through religious education is developing well. They learn about the significance of customs in other religions. Pupils have a growing understanding of the Hindu religion. They know that Diwali takes place in October or November, and talk about how and why the Hindus celebrate Diwali. Pupils make masks to act out the story of Rama and Sita. Lower ability pupils know that Hindus give cards and sweets to their friends and that fireworks are used to celebrate the festival. Average and above average pupils know the celebration is signified with lights and divas are placed in windows. Pupils in Year 2 showed interest and enthusiasm for their lesson on Diwali because they were given opportunities to research information from books and computers. Progress is evident throughout the school. Pupils in Year 1 have drawn celebration food and write simple sentences about Sita and Rama. Pupils in Year 2 have sound knowledge of Christianity. They know Christians believe in God and Jesus. They can talk about the life of Jesus and know the significance of Christmas and Easter. They know Jesus rose again after his death on the cross.
136. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are learning to apply their knowledge about religion. They complete posters advertising faith and describe it as trust and belief in God. They research facts about famous people who showed faith in their lives and work and write about the impact faith has on people around the world. They write about people, such as Florence Nightingale, Dr Barnardo and Martin Luther King. They know Florence Nightingale looked after soldiers in the Crimean War and Mother Theresa looked after the poor in Calcutta. The more able pupils identify and write about how faith helped their work.
137. Teaching is satisfactory throughout the school. Lessons are well planned and include opportunities for pupils to research information using the computer. Teachers plan interesting activities, but the pace of learning is often relaxed and higher ability pupils are not sufficiently challenged. Pupils are given clear instructions and questions are used well to check understanding and knowledge. Learning objectives are not always communicated to pupils and teachers do not always reinforce learning in the final stages of the lesson. Literacy and ICT are

used well to find out information and for pupils to write about their findings. Religious education has an appropriate focus around the school.

138. The headteacher is acting as caretaker co-ordinator. Resources are satisfactory with sufficient artefacts; teachers also use the local library to supplement resources for lessons. There have been no visits to religious centres other than Christian churches. There has been no formal monitoring of teaching and learning and there are currently no assessment procedures for religious education.