

INSPECTION REPORT

KIMBERWORTH INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL

Kimberworth, Rotherham

LEA area: Rotherham

Unique reference number: 106845

Headteacher: Mrs G Russell

Lead inspector: Mrs B Crane

Dates of inspection: 15th – 17th March 2004

Inspection number: 256609

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Nursery
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 – 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	208
School address:	Kimberworth Road Rotherham South Yorkshire
Postcode:	S61 1HE
Telephone number:	01709 740879
Fax number:	01709 740879
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Councillor P Wootton
Date of previous inspection:	6 th July 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is an average sized infant school with a Nursery. There are 187 children in the main school and a further 41 children attend part-time in the Nursery, which is about half a mile away. The school's assessment of children when they start Nursery shows that for most, attainment is well below average, with particularly poor language development. The level of free school meals entitlement amongst pupils is above average.

The proportion of pupils with special educational needs has risen since the last inspection and is now three times what it was, at about a third of the school's population; this is well above average. A very small number of pupils have a statement of special educational need. There are also now more pupils who are learning English as an additional language, currently about a tenth of the pupils, with just over half at an early stage of acquiring English. Some of these pupils come from asylum-seeking families. Although about nine-tenths of the pupils come from white, British backgrounds, a wide range of ethnic groups is represented in the school.

The school is part of an Education Action Zone and the Excellence in Cities initiative. It received a Basic Skills Quality Mark in 2003 and Healthy Schools and School Achievement Awards in 2002.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21227	Barbara Crane	Lead inspector	English, English as an additional language, Foundation Stage, art and design.
19365	Gordon Stockley	Lay inspector	
10144	Mary Marriott	Team inspector	Mathematics, history, geography, religious education.
19120	Derek Pattinson	Team inspector	Science, information and communication technology, design and technology, music, physical education, special educational needs.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This good school is well managed so that all pupils do well. The staff have created a supportive and inclusive community in which pupils thrive. Although standards are below average by the time pupils leave, their achievement is good and their personal and social development is very good. Good quality teaching and an interesting curriculum are major factors in pupils' good progress. The high quality leadership by the headteacher sets the tone for the school and good management underpins its success in driving up standards in challenging circumstances. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- All pupils are included in what the school offers and are valued as individuals.
- The headteacher's leadership provides a very clear direction for raising standards, building pupils' self-esteem and supporting their personal development.
- Good teaching in all parts of the school ensures that pupils achieve well.
- The curriculum is enriched with a very good range of activities that stimulate pupils' interest and they use computers competently.
- The school gives a warm welcome to parents and works closely with them to support children's learning.
- Some pupils' handwriting should be better and pupils do not use their skills in writing as well as they should in some subjects.

There has been good improvement since the last inspection. Teaching and pupils' achievement are better. More able pupils are now well catered for because the staff know what they are aiming for. There is a smoother transition between the Nursery and Reception classes because of much better planning for what is taught. The senior managers check teaching and learning frequently and staff know what to do to improve. The governance of the school has improved.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Pupils' achievement is good throughout the school. Over time, standards at this school have improved at the same rate as nationally, in spite of a falling profile of attainment on entry to the school. By the time they start in Year 1 most children will not reach the goals for their age but they have made good progress from a well below average starting point. By the time pupils leave, standards are below average in reading, writing and mathematics but pupils' achievement is good. The proportion of pupils who are reaching beyond the level expected for their age is increasing year on year. Standards in science are below average and achievement is satisfactory but pupils' use of scientific language and ability to record their findings is limited. Pupils use their skills in reading and mathematics well to support learning in other subjects but do not often enough write for different reasons outside literacy lessons. Some lower attaining Year 2 pupils struggle with forming letters correctly and their problems are not always picked up and dealt with effectively. The progress of pupils who are learning English as an additional language is good because teaching meets their needs well. Pupils with special educational needs do well because of effective support. Pupils achieve very well to reach average standards in ICT (information and communication technology) and they competently use computers to support their learning.

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
Reading	D	E	D	C
Writing	C	D	D	C
Mathematics	C	E	D	B

Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals.

Pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is **very good**. This is because the pupils know the importance of making the right choices through careful guidance by the staff. Pupils have good attitudes towards learning and behave well. They enjoy very good relationships and pupils from different backgrounds get on very well. Attendance is below average, although the school makes a good attempt to improve it.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a good quality education. Teaching and learning are good and meet the needs of different groups of pupils well. Teaching assistants work as a team with the teachers very effectively and give very good support to pupils who need extra help. There are mainly good checks on how well pupils are doing so that work is planned to take them on to the next step. The pupils want to learn because of the good curriculum and they are given plenty of practical activities so that they learn through doing. This raises pupils' motivation and level of concentration. Some opportunities are missed for pupils to record what they have learned and to further develop their writing. There are interesting things to do outside normal lessons involving visitors to school or trips to places of interest. Pupils are taken care of very well and they know who to turn to if they have problems or concerns. The school has a strong partnership with parents and helps them to get involved with their children's learning at home and in school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good and support pupils' positive attitudes by ensuring that there is a warm sense of community in which pupils feel they can succeed. Weaknesses in teaching and learning are identified and dealt with effectively. The headteacher provides very good leadership and ensures that the school's aim of including all pupils is very well achieved. Good management ensures that the extra help and resources are well directed towards the pupils who most need them. In this way, pupils with social and emotional needs, as well as those with specific needs in learning, are well supported through nurture groups. The governance of the school is good and all statutory requirements are met. The staff and governors share the same aims and everyone knows what the school's priorities are and what they need to do to help it improve further.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The parents appreciate what the school provides for their children and have a good level of confidence in the staff. The school seeks their views and takes these into account, so that parents feel they are part of the school's efforts to improve. Pupils are very proud of their school and enjoy being there. They know that adults will listen to them and help them and so they feel secure and valued.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things that the school needs to do now are:

- Improve pupils' opportunities to use their writing skills across the curriculum.
- Improve pupils' achievement in science, particularly in using scientific language and recording their ideas and findings.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils' achievement is **good** even though standards are **below average** by the time they leave the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children get off to a good start in the Nursery and Reception classes
- Pupils achieve well in most aspects of their work and very well in ICT.
- Boys' achievement has been raised through good initiatives that motivate them to learn.
- The needs of pupils who are learning English as an additional language and those with special educational needs are well met.
- Handwriting for older pupils should be better and pupils do not sufficiently practise their skills in writing in other subjects.

Commentary

1. The nature of the school's intake has changed over recent years, with more pupils identified as having special educational needs and more pupils who are learning English as an additional language. In spite of this, the school's trend in standards matches the national trend and this represents good improvement in standards over time for this school. The school's good recognition and management of its changing circumstances are major factors in this. Pupils' good achievement results from careful tracking of identifiable groups and adaptations to the curriculum, teaching and learning so that pupils' needs are met.
2. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes get off to a good start, particularly in their personal, social and emotional development and in developing their ability to listen. Children's speaking also develops well through the good example set by adults. Children get a firm platform of basic skills upon which they build further as they start Year 1 and the greatest stride they make is in learning to enjoy taking part in activities together.
3. Standards are below average in reading, writing and mathematics but pupils of all abilities, including those who are learning English as an additional language and those with special educational needs, are doing well in acquiring skills in each of these areas. This is because pupils' needs are quickly identified and well supported. In science, pupils' achievement is satisfactory but they are limited in reaching average standards because they do not sufficiently develop their ability to record their ideas or findings. There are other times when pupils do not use their writing skills in other subjects and this is a limiting factor in progress. This has resulted, in part, from the school's initiative in promoting learning through practical activities that engage pupils, particularly boys, a group who the school identified as not achieving as well as they might. This has certainly raised boys' motivation to learn and they are now making similar progress to girls. However, some opportunities are missed for pupils to write about what they have found or their ideas. Some of the Year 2 pupils do not form letters correctly when they write and their problems are not always dealt with before they learn to join letters. The younger pupils are learning to form letters properly because of steps taken to improve teaching in these classes, but specific intervention for older pupils is sometimes lacking and this limits their progress.
4. Pupils achieve very well in ICT and use computers competently. They use a program to create a grid from which they can select words and pictures that they combine to tell a story. Year 2

pupils use a CD-ROM to find out information about Mexico and know how to program a toy robot so that it moves along a pre-determined path.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	14.9 (14.7)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	14.1 (13.9)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	16.1 (14.4)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 72 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are **good**. Their personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is **very good**. Punctuality is **satisfactory** but attendance is **below average**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good effort is rewarded and pupils want to please the staff.
- Relationships are very good; pupils from different backgrounds get on very well together.
- Pupils know what is expected of them and abide by the school's rules.
- Pupils are very keen to learn and to take on responsibilities and they grow in self-confidence.
- Attendance is below average.

Commentary

5. The school's leadership and management place a firm emphasis on developing pupils' sense of responsibility for themselves and others, and pupils' personal development is very good. This is a very good improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils learn what is right and wrong through clear guidelines that are reinforced by all staff. When they start in the Nursery, children often find it hard to share or to work with others, but gentle encouragement and guidance, combined with sensible routines, help them overcome their difficulties. Although the children are not likely to reach all of the goals set for them by the time they start in Year 1, they achieve very well in learning to get on with others. Relationships are very good because of the many initiatives to help children to get on well together. The staff ensure that pupils learn to respect each other and take note of others' needs. This means that pupils from different backgrounds, or who join the school at times other than the usual points, are very well integrated and quickly make friends. Several older pupils are designated as 'playmates' for the playground area and pupils know that if they go to the 'playmate stop' one of these pupils will befriend them.
6. Pupils enjoy school because it has a very positive atmosphere that helps them feel that they can succeed. Good effort in work, in helping others or being thoughtful is rewarded in class and in assemblies. Pupils are proud to receive stickers and certificates that celebrate their success. They know that the school's first rule is 'make the right choice' and that they need to think about their options during the day. Most pupils rise very well to the school's expectations and their behaviour is good. They are given many responsibilities and are keen to carry them out. This was evident at the start of the week in a Year 2 class, when responsibilities were given for helping with the smooth running of the classroom and pupils were delighted at the prospect of being monitors. Pupils also organise playground equipment and help to keep communal areas tidy.

7. Pupils' awareness of their own and different cultures is good. Through music, art, theatre groups and visits, pupils learn about different cultural traditions. Most recently, pupils took part in a day of music making with a South American pan pipe band and a visit to a local mosque.

Attendance

8. Attendance is below average and punctuality is satisfactory. The school has good procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance. The school tries hard to improve the figures by making weekly awards to classes and children with high attendance. A significant factor in the level of unauthorised absence is the number of children who are taken out of school for extended visits during term time or families who leave the area but do not notify the school as to their whereabouts.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.2	School data	1.5
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black African
Asian or Asian British – Indian
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Any other ethnic group

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
208	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0
2	0	0
9	0	0
5	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The school provides a good quality education. The pupils are interested in learning because of a stimulating and well-planned curriculum. Teaching and learning are good and meet the needs of different groups of pupils well. Pupils are taken care of very well and the school helps parents to understand how they can support children at home and in school.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **good**. Assessment is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching means that pupils with specific needs learn at a good rate.
- Pupils are motivated to learn because of lessons that have varied and interesting activities and because of opportunities to work together.
- Teaching ensures that pupils think about what they are doing and explain what they feel or have found out.

- Pupils benefit from good support by well-trained teaching assistants who play a full role in supporting learning throughout the school.
- Assessment is not always well used to pinpoint problems in forming letters amongst older pupils and there are missed opportunities to extend and consolidate skills in writing across the curriculum.

Commentary

- Teaching and learning are good and both have improved since the last inspection. This is because of concerted efforts by the school's leadership and management to face up to weaknesses and deal with them. Similar strengths in teaching and learning are seen in all parts of the school. Children in the Nursery are known well as individuals and their specific needs are quickly identified and supported. The basic skills are well taught in the Nursery and Reception classes so that children feel that they can succeed. Children learn by doing and are stimulated by exciting activities to promote their language, such as the visit of a fire engine and crew, as part of their work on people who help in the community. Teaching capitalised on children's learning very well following this visit, extending their ideas through talking about what they had seen and heard. This sensory approach is evident in many of the activities provided and is a significant factor in children's good achievement.
- This good teaching and learning continues in other year groups and the school's effective management ensures that all pupils benefit from its provision. Pupils with special educational needs, who form a large part of the school, have good individual programmes of work that mean that they make good progress towards the targets that are set for them. The teaching assistants play a major role in this. They are very effective because they are well trained in aspects such as reading recovery strategies, supporting pupils' emotional and social development through the 'fair play' initiative, and in enabling pupils to talk to each other as 'talking partners'. Pupils who are learning English as an additional language are equally well supported. Adults check their understanding well and give them what they need to grow in confidence.
- The school's initiatives to improve speaking and listening and pupils' thinking skills are very well reflected in teaching and have been supported through well-focused training for the staff. Pupils have plenty of chances to talk to each other, discover how to solve problems and air their ideas and solutions. This is a major factor in pupils' achievement in mathematics, where pupils are encouraged to explain how they can solve problems in different ways. The use of short activities in which pupils get actively involved raises pupils' interest. This was well demonstrated in a Year 2 literacy lesson, when discussion as a class, then in small groups, followed by recording on whiteboards, meant that pupils were engaged and fully involved in the session and thought of many ideas to improve the opening of a story.
- Teaching misses opportunities for pupils to use what they have learned in writing to set down their ideas in other subjects. The balance between learning through practical activities and recording is not always achieved and this restricts pupils' progress on occasions. While assessment is good in nearly all aspects, some gaps are seen in the accurate assessment of Year 2 pupils' handwriting so that problems can be resolved.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 26 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	6	13	7	0	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

The curriculum

The school provides a **good** curriculum for its pupils and there is **very good** enrichment through activities outside normal lessons. The school's staffing, accommodation and resources are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A very good range of visits, visitors and clubs brings the curriculum to life.
- The curriculum provides very well for different groups of pupils, helping them to succeed.
- Children receive a good start to their school life.
- The curriculum provides well for pupils who have special educational needs.
- Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is very good.

Commentary

13. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. All of the required subjects are securely represented, with literacy and numeracy given good attention. There is a clear framework for developing pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding as they move through the school that has been well supported by the school's leadership and management. Developing links between subjects are helping to make learning more relevant for pupils. There are increasing opportunities for pupils to solve problems and carry out investigations, which keeps them interested and involved and facilitates learning. However, pupils' achievement in science is weaker because they have too few opportunities to learn how to record what they find in different ways. Writing is not given enough emphasis in many subjects to help improve pupils' literacy skills. Pupils use ICT to support their learning in other subjects well and develop average competency through the good opportunities to use computers.
14. Very many 'first hand' experiences help to bring the curriculum to life, making learning relevant and often exciting for pupils. Visits, such as to the local library and to Blackburn Meadows, and visitors, such as theatre and music groups, and the fire service, which brought a fire engine into school during the inspection, enrich pupils' experiences. Well-led and popular clubs, in drama, physical activities and ICT, help to develop important skills. This is an improvement on the findings of the last inspection, when no clubs were provided.
15. The curriculum provides for the needs of different groups of pupils very well. For example, teaching approaches have been adapted and additional resources purchased to help make learning more relevant for boys, pupils for whom English is an additional language and asylum seekers, to help raise standards. As a result of these measures and the rigorous tracking of progress as pupils move through the school, all pupils, whatever their background, are given good opportunities to succeed.
16. The quality and range of learning opportunities for children in the Foundation Stage of learning are good and take account of the early learning goals. Teachers ensure that children in the Reception classes carefully build on work undertaken in the Nursery, which is an improvement on the findings of the last inspection. Children take part in a wide range of planned and carefully structured activities and experiences, which gives them a good start to their education.
17. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, enabling them to achieve well. This is because work is usually carefully matched to their abilities in English and mathematics, and support assistants are effective in helping to meet their diverse needs. As a result, most make good progress towards the targets set for them.
18. Personal, social and health education is very good because it has a high profile and embedded in the school's work. The actions of pupils provide evidence that they know the

golden rule that it is important to 'make the right choices' in their work and play. Pupils learn about the beneficial and harmful use of drugs, and the importance of a balanced diet as part of a healthy lifestyle. The school has received a Healthy Schools Award for its work.

19. The building, despite its age and obvious shortcomings, presents a tidy, attractive appearance internally. Displays are used well by most teachers to motivate pupils, celebrate their efforts and help them to move forward. The school has made the most of its limited playground space, with an attractive seaside area and climbing wall providing interest and enjoyment for pupils. However, the absence of a field limits the range of physical education activities. There are enough resources to ensure that the curriculum is fully implemented. The school has good links with the junior school to which most pupils transfer, which ensures pupils make a smooth transition.

Care, guidance and support

The school takes **very good** care of its pupils. It provides **very good** support, advice and guidance for pupils and involves them **well** in its work and development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good health and safety routines and child protection procedures ensure that pupils are very well looked after.
- Very good assessment systems enable teachers to track pupils' progress very well and to give them very good support.
- There are very good arrangements for settling in pupils who are new to the school.

Commentary

20. The school's management ensures that care and support given to pupils are very good and have a high priority. All staff regard this aspect of their work as extremely important and parents feel that staff take very good care of each child. The governors undertake health and safety inspections and an impressive range of risk assessments has been completed for all identified risks, including the many visits that take place. The school's commitment to this area of its work is further evidenced by the fact that it has gained the Healthy Schools Award. The school nurse visits regularly and provides a 'drop in' service for parents.
21. There are very good procedures for child protection and all staff have had training in this important area. Children are taught how to keep themselves safe. For example, the crossing patrol warden has spoken to the children about road safety and they have drawn posters about crossing the road safely.
22. Teachers keep very thorough assessment information and this ensures that they are very familiar with their pupils' strengths and weaknesses. This allows them to identify quickly those pupils who would benefit from additional help in any aspect of their work. The school provides a very good range of additional support, such as brain gym, fair play, and the nurture group for pupils needing additional help with language or social development. Good support is also given to the children and families of asylum seekers.
23. Children who are due to start school in the Nursery are invited to visit with their parents prior to admission. The first visit lasts for a short time, during which the staff talk to parents and provide an information booklet. Starting dates are staggered so that staff are able to settle the children in small groups at a time. There is also a staggered start for children who join the Reception class and they are also helped to get used to the lunchtime routines in the dining room. Nursery pupils visit the main school prior to moving into the Reception class, so that they become familiar with the different building and the daily routines.

24. Pupils gain an understanding of responsibility and have a say in the running of the school through the class councils and the recently introduced school council. Discussions have included matters such as how to reduce litter around the school, and sensible routines in the toilets. The children themselves have suggested the provision of a 'Hippo' rubbish bin on the playground and posters in the toilets reminding of the need to wash hands and flush the toilet. The rubbish bin has been provided and the notices are being prepared. One example of the mature level of discussion taking place in the councils is that the pupils sought clarification from staff about the operation of consequences in relation to behaviour in the playground at lunchtimes. The matter was discussed by the staff and the position clarified for the children.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has **very good** links with parents and **good** links with other schools and the community.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides very good information for parents about pupils' standards and progress.
- Good links with other schools and local partnerships enhance the quality of pupils' education.
- The school involves parents well so that they provide good support to pupils' learning.
- There are good procedures for ensuring that pupils make a smooth transfer to the junior school.

Commentary

25. The school's friendly and caring ethos encourages parents to get involved with their children's education. There is a lovely warm atmosphere in the classrooms at the beginning of the day as parents of Reception children read or play games with their children before the registers are called. This sets a good tone for the day ahead and provides a very good opportunity for parental involvement.
26. The school also provides a very good range of other opportunities for parents to support their children's learning. These include sessions where guidance is given on helping children at home, parenting sessions, training for the better reading partnership, computer skills training, as well as opportunities for parents to meet together for the popular yoga sessions. During the inspection several parents were clearly enjoying an interesting and informative session led by the specially trained Nursery teacher designed to show parents the best way to support their child during the early stages of learning to read. Parents also worked alongside their children during 'science week'.
27. The school provides parents with a very good range of information about the school and particularly about their children's standards and progress. Parents receive an impressive 'welcome pack' containing all they need to know about school life. The documents are nicely presented and enlivened by children's drawings. The annual written reports on pupils are excellent. Using a combination of narrative and tick boxes, they give parents a very clear picture of how their child is progressing and how their performance compares with national expectations. There are detailed comments on personal development and targets for English, mathematics and science. Regular newsletters keep parents well informed about events and also give details of individual children's special achievements.
28. There are good links with the community which support learning well. These include visits by people such as the local police and fire service. Pupils also visit places in the locality such as the library. The school is seeking to extend community links further by making the large room in the Nursery building available as a community facility, offering a range of opportunities for local people.

29. Links with other schools and the local Education Action Zone are very good and have provided much benefit to pupils' learning, for example in ICT. In addition, the school has enhanced the skills of its own teachers through its arrangements for a highly proficient teacher of music to work alongside them in lessons.
30. There are good procedures for supporting children during the transfer to the junior school. These include visits by the junior school headteacher, who reads stories to the children, an opportunity for pupils in Year 2 to spend a day at the junior school prior to transfer, and science work which is started in the infant school and continued in the junior school. The headteacher visits the junior school in the autumn term to check on how well the children have settled in to their new school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **good**. The leadership by the headteacher is **very good**. The school is managed **well**. Governance is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher's very good leadership means that everyone has a clear understanding of what the school is aiming for and how they can contribute to its success.
- The right priorities are being worked on and all pupils are included very well in the school's work.
- Key staff provide good support because they know what needs to improve in their areas of responsibility.
- Governance is good and the governors look to how they can further improve their support for the school.

Commentary

31. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. The headteacher has a very clear vision for the school, based on raising pupils' achievement and creating an exciting environment in which their personal development is nurtured through a caring and supportive atmosphere. She ensures that resources are very well used and the school puts extra support where it is needed to help pupils from different groups. The school's investment in extra teaching support has led to good achievement by pupils with special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language. The professional development of staff is planned very effectively so that the school can tackle areas that it has identified for improvement. This has been particularly successful in raising achievement in mathematics. The school knows what it needs to do next because it looks closely at the performance of different groups of pupils and at how teaching, learning and the curriculum can be improved. Teachers are given feedback about what works well and where learning could be better promoted. This has led to better achievement by boys, as adaptations to teaching have ensured their greater engagement through practical activities.
32. The school is well managed. The key staff know what they need to do because they also look carefully at the improvements that are needed. There are clear action plans to take subjects further, based on careful checks of what is happening. The school's management ensures that it is innovative, as well as reflective. An example is the provision of a climbing wall to extend play opportunities for pupils on the limited playground area. The school makes use of a teacher with advanced skills to support class teachers' confidence in teaching music. Through the Education Action Zone initiative, pupils benefit from after-school provision in learning how to use ICT, most recently to make short films about different topics.
33. Governors provide a good sounding board for the school and are actively involved in its daily life. They carry out all of their responsibilities well. They are linked to classes and visit frequently to find out what is happening and how well the school is working towards its targets.

Governors reflect on which skills they need to improve to better support the school. They identified, for example, that they needed to improve their capacity to act as a 'critical friend' to the school and undertook training to help them ask the right questions to ask the school to help it move forward. This has increased governors' understanding of why the school has certain priorities, and how it is planning to overcome difficulties and plan for the future. Governors play a full role in ensuring that the school's finances are well directed towards its priorities and that funds are used prudently. The current carry-forward of funds reduces greatly over this year to protect staffing in the light of a falling roll.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	587475
Total expenditure	583504
Expenditure per pupil	2210

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	28225
Balance carried forward to the next	32196

PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

34. Children get a good start to their education because of effective provision in the Nursery and Reception classes. The Foundation Stage is well managed so that the right areas for development are identified and worked upon. There has, for example, been good improvement since the last inspection because the planning for the Nursery and Reception children is much more continuous than previously. Teaching and learning are good for children in all classes, with a good emphasis on promoting speaking and listening, as well as providing very well for children's social and emotional needs. The staff make the most of the accommodation and the environment is bright and welcoming for children so that they are interested in learning.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for personal, social and emotional development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Warm relationships are quickly established so that children feel secure.
- Independence is well fostered through well-established routines.
- Children learn to share and work together through well-planned activities and good guidance.

Commentary

35. Teaching and learning are very good in this area of learning and although most children will not meet all of the goals set for their age by the end of the Reception Year, they achieve very well. This is because teaching helps them to form good relationships and enjoy learning. The start of the day is calm and staff extend a warm welcome to children that ensures they settle down quickly and happily. The staff know individual children's needs very well and give support at just the right level to build children's confidence as well as promoting independence. This was well demonstrated in the Nursery, when a teaching assistant intervened to help children resolve a dispute over resources to build a model and then withdrew after explaining that sharing would result in a bigger and better result. She kept a watchful eye from a distance to see that they were following her guidance before moving to support another group.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision for communication, language and literacy is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children love listening to stories because of teachers' lively reading.
- There are plenty of opportunities to learn that writing has meaning, through play activities.
- Teaching mostly extends children's language very well, but a few opportunities are missed to model extended language.
- Children's listening is very well promoted in all classes.

Commentary

36. Good teaching ensures that children learn at a good rate. Children who are learning English as an additional language are sensitively and effectively supported. Children enjoy books and have easy access to these as well as plenty of opportunities to listen to stories. Adults read these in a lively manner, often with additional resources that capture children's imagination. In

one session in the Nursery, for example, the teacher used a hat decorated with objects to grip children's attention very well and children listened very carefully, using the language from the story in their replies to her questions. Children in Reception look at books together at the start of the day, talking about what is happening as they gather clues from the pictures. Teaching ensures that the sounds of letters are learned thoroughly and this helps children with their spelling. Play activities are set up so that children can write for different purposes, making lists or recording telephone messages in the role-play areas. In Reception, the teacher skilfully guided children to write sentences about the visit of a fire-fighting crew. Children knew what they wanted to write because they had rehearsed their sentences first. Nearly all opportunities are grasped to extend children's language but there are a few occasions when adults accept short replies or single words and do not model extended language for children.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a good emphasis on developing mathematical language.
- Children learn through a wide range of practical activities.
- While most more able children's needs are well catered for, there are a few times when teaching does not encourage them to go even further.

Commentary

37. Teaching and learning are good and children achieve well but most will not reach all of the goals in this area by the time they start in Year 1. The good emphasis in both the Nursery and Reception classes on developing mathematical language means that children talk about what they are doing using accurate terms, such as 'more than', 'the same as', 'longer' or 'shorter', as they work. The good use of resources by all adults means that children learn through practical activities. In a number game involving the whole of a Reception class, for example, teaching used number cards and a puppet to promote recognition of numbers up to 20. The teaching here met the needs of all abilities very well and children who were learning English as an additional language were very carefully included. There are a few times when more able children are not taken as far as they could go, as in the Nursery when teaching did not help a small group of children to demonstrate recognition of number symbols.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision for knowledge and understanding of the world is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The classrooms are full of things to do and find out about and children are encouraged to use their own ideas about why things happen.
- Children learn from first hand experiences that are carefully planned.
- Computers are very well used to support children's learning.

Commentary

38. Teaching and learning are very good because children are encouraged to think for themselves and try out their ideas. This is evident in both the Nursery, where children make things from recycled materials, or in the Reception classes where children persevere to build with wood and find different ways of cutting and joining materials. Staff make sure that children learn from first hand experiences and talk to them about why they think things happen, such as plants growing. Reception children's awareness of personal safety, for example, was very well

promoted through a visit from the local crossing patrol. Children enjoy using computers and in one session, a group used a laptop computer to find images of the fire-fighters' visit that had been recorded earlier in the day. Children know how to click on different parts of the screen to make things happen and click and drag images to different positions. Children understand how they have changed by looking at books of photographs that show their development since the Nursery. Most children will not reach all of the goals by the time they leave Reception but have achieved very well in this area of learning.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Fine control over tools is very well developed through a good range of activities.
- The outdoor play areas, although limited in scope, are well used to promote imaginative play and exploration of space.

Commentary

39. Children achieve well because of good teaching. They have plenty of opportunities to cut materials using different tools and to join these in different ways. Control over paintbrushes and pencils develops well through adults' good guidance. In the hall, Reception children learn to control their movements and follow instructions to vary the speed and level at which they move. The outdoor play areas for both Nursery and Reception children are limited but the staff make the best of the space available. In Reception, children have fixed equipment so that they can climb and play imaginatively, for example using the frame to create a fire station, but there is very limited space to ride wheeled vehicles in either the Nursery or Reception areas.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are encouraged to express their ideas individually, through a good range of media.
- Role-play areas are well resourced and children use the language that they have been taught when they play in them.

Commentary

40. Teaching and learning are good. Children's individual creativity is well promoted by the staff in both the Nursery and Reception classes. In the Nursery, for example, children learn that different colours can be used to create different moods in paintings and attach other objects of the same colour to create a pleasing texture. In Reception, children work imaginatively with clay. One child, for example, worked with great concentration to build a model pond, attaching a roll of clay around the edges to keep in the water. There are good resources for role-play that are very well used by children. The staff are careful to set these up so that they are equally appealing to boys and this successfully attracts them to play imaginatively and extend their ability to co-operate with others and extend their language. Effective teaching means that children's language is extended well through imaginative play. In Reception, for example, children used the words and phrases they had learned previously about fire fighting as they acted out parts in the 'fire station'. In spite of children's good progress, few are likely to meet all of the goals set for their age by the time they start in Year 1.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good support for writing, such as word banks and lists, helps pupils to achieve well.
- Pupils' interest is maintained through varied activities, such as drama.
- More able pupils are challenged well through good teaching.
- Identified groups of pupils are well supported.
- There are too few opportunities to use writing across the curriculum.
- Assessment is generally well used but is weaker for pinpointing problems with handwriting.
- Good management has ensured that the school is focusing on the right things.

Commentary

41. There has been good improvement since the last inspection, with more pupils achieving at the higher level although there are now many more children entering the school with low levels of attainment in language and literacy. Pupils are achieving well, even though standards in reading, writing and speaking are below average. Pupils' listening is at an average level. Groups identified for extra support, such as pupils with special educational needs or those learning English as an additional language, are well catered for because their needs are precisely identified. The staff know what to do to help these pupils achieve well and include them in lessons effectively. More able pupils are also identified and have challenging targets to aim for. This helps them to understand what they need to do to improve and they achieve well.
42. Teaching and learning are good because of careful checks on provision and pupils' performance by the subject manager. She knows what needs to improve, such as using pupils' writing in other subjects more effectively, and sets a good example in her teaching. The school's initiatives in improving reading, writing and speaking have been successful and underpinned by well-planned in-service training. Teachers maintain pupils' interest through a broad range of strategies, such as using 'talking partners', recording ideas on whiteboards and using drama as a stimulus. In a very good session with Year 1 and 2 pupils, for example, pupils recorded phrases such as 'the wind is whistling through the crackling leaves' as they imagined walking through landscapes that they had previously constructed as settings in 'setting boxes'. This meant that pupils were able to construct the setting for a story very effectively, when they later wrote down their ideas. Teaching provides good support for writing through word banks and lists that pupils build in discussions that precede their writing. As a result, pupils write confidently about their ideas.
43. Pupils read to each other, as well as in groups or individually with adults. They enjoy reading but often struggle to infer from what they read, returning to describing characters or events rather than reading between the lines to see why certain things happen or why characters act as they do. Teaching places a good emphasis on extending this aspect of learning, through well-led discussions that probe pupils' understanding. In a good lesson with Year 2 pupils, the teacher and teaching assistant gave effective support to groups of lower attaining pupils who gained an understanding of the structure and setting of a story and of the main characters.
44. Assessment is good for most aspects of pupils' development and well used to set targets for pupils to aim for. This has a positive effect on pupils' achievement in most areas but is weaker for handwriting. Some Year 2 pupils have not yet learned to form letters correctly and their specific problems are not always recognised and dealt with. This is restricting these pupils' ability to join their handwriting.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

45. The pupils use their skills in reading, speaking and listening well in other subjects but do not write often enough for different purposes in other areas of the curriculum. This restricts pupils' learning in applying what they have learned in writing in relevant situations to organise their thoughts and find the best way of presenting them.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are plenty of opportunities for pupils to work together to solve problems.
- Teachers set the work at the right level for different groups of pupils.
- Pupils can remember and calculate quickly in their heads because of good teaching at the start of lessons.
- Good checks are made on patterns in the school's performance.
- Checks on pupils' progress in Year 1 are sometimes limited because little recorded work is retained at the end of lessons.

Commentary

46. There has been good improvement since the last inspection because the subject is well managed. Raising standards in mathematics has been a priority for the school and the school's trend has kept pace with the national trend. Standards continue to rise and are now just below those normally seen. The school's initiatives have been successful even though pupils start from a very low base and there is a larger than average proportion of pupils with special educational needs. All pupils achieve well and this is because of the consistently good teaching that they receive.
47. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers set the work at the right level for different groups of pupils and this enables them to understand what it is they are learning. Consequently they achieve well. Teachers make sure that pupils have plenty of opportunities to work together to solve problems and pupils use their problem-solving skills. Teachers know their subject well and use skilful questioning to adapt the national guidance to the needs of their pupils. Teaching assistants are well trained and have a good knowledge and understanding of the mathematics curriculum. The support they give to their pupils is good and has a good impact on the standards that the pupils achieve. Teachers promote mental mathematics very well during introductions to mathematics lessons. In a very good lesson the pace of the lesson was rapid and the questions were quick and precise. This helped children to become confident learners and improved their mathematical achievement very well. Assessment is often used well in lessons to help teachers check on pupils' learning and give quick feedback on how well they are doing. However, because Year 1 pupils do not record a great deal of work, except on whiteboards, teachers cannot easily check progress on a daily basis for all groups of children.
48. The subject is well managed and organised. The subject manager has a good overview of the subject and knows exactly what it is she needs to do to raise standards. There are good checks made on the patterns in the school's performance that have enabled the school to improve particular aspects of teaching, such as in solving problems and developing pupils' mathematical language. Target groups, where Year 2 pupils are grouped by ability, are established on the basis of assessment and precise teaching for all groups of children, and this is helping to drive up standards.

Mathematics across the curriculum

49. Pupils use their mathematical skills and knowledge well to support learning in other subjects because of teachers' good planning. For example, in a Year 2 lesson in geography, pupils used their skills in solving problems to decide how many items of clothing to take with them on holiday and what these would cost.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a good emphasis on investigative skills, reflecting the school's initiative to improve pupils' thinking skills.
- Too little science is recorded and this limits pupils' skills and teachers' opportunities to check on pupils' progress.

Commentary

50. Overall, there has been satisfactory improvement. Standards are below average by the end of Year 2 and pupils' achievement is sound. Most pupils make satisfactory gains in learning as they move through Years 1 and 2. This is because teachers give good emphasis to developing the skills of scientific enquiry as a means of ensuring that pupils develop scientific understanding. This reflects the school's initiative on improving pupils' ability to think logically through practical experiences and is a good improvement since the last inspection. For example, Year 2 pupils, in work on electricity, experiment with wires, bulbs and batteries to make a simple circuit, and investigate which objects make good insulators and conductors.
51. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Displays are used well to motivate pupils and celebrate their work. Extra activities, such as a 'science week', in which parents were invited to get involved in their children's learning, bring the subject to life and help pupils develop essential skills. Reports to parents indicate clear targets for development for pupils. Teachers are now more confident teaching science than they were because of the training they have received in teaching investigations. Most pupils enjoy science, especially when investigating, where practical activities engage pupils' interest and motivate boys very well. However, teaching does not always enable pupils to develop skills in recording their ideas or findings in a range of ways. This means that sometimes pupils are unable to reflect on what they have learned or learn how to write scientific terms.
52. The subject is soundly led and there are clear plans for its continued development, including better planning for pupils to record their findings. The co-ordinator is developing a portfolio of assessed work to help teachers to better understand how investigative work can be matched to meet the needs of pupils of different abilities.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision for information and communication technology is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve very well to reach average standards by the time they leave.
- Staff confidence has been raised through effective training and so teaching is good.

Commentary

53. There has been very good improvement since the last inspection because of clear guidance for teaching and improved resources. The subject is well led and managed, with a clear plan that sets out what the next steps are to improve further. The subject manager has followed up checks on teaching and learning with good planning to move the school on. Teachers' and teaching assistants' confidence has been raised through in-service training and good use is being made of laptop computers to support pupils' learning.
54. Pupils do very well to reach average standards by the time they leave the school. Teaching and learning are good. Year 2 pupils know how to program a toy robot so that it follows a set path and use a paint program to draw images. They competently use the keyboard to enter text and know how to use a program that puts in pictures that are associated with words. Children use the Internet, with supervision, to find out information and also use CD-ROMs.
55. There is an ambitious after-school club at which pupils can extend their skills further. In a session seen, a specialist teacher from the local Education Action Zone initiative helped pupils to make a short trailer for a film, using digital cameras linked to computers. Pupils learned how to add titles and sounds during the session seen and learned at a very good rate because of expert input.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

56. The pupils' level of competency with ICT means that they can satisfactorily use it to support learning in other subjects. Some of the school's resources are very new, such as the interactive whiteboard, and staff are learning how best to use these. Teachers are identifying more opportunities than previously for pupils to use ICT in other subjects, such as in science, to present information in graphs and tables, but this is not yet firmly embedded in everyday work.

HUMANITIES

57. No lessons were seen in **history** and so the subject was sampled. There was not enough evidence to make firm judgements about overall provision. However, it is evident that pupils develop a sound sense of chronology. Children in Year 1 talk about how they know that toys are old and new. They explain, for example, that a teddy bear must be old because it is dirty and bald in places, whereas a new teddy bear is shiny and fluffy. Children in Year 2 have looked at buildings from different times and at how appearances and materials have changed. They understand that some things happened a long time ago and that they were born more recently.
58. Only two short sessions of **geography** were seen and there is insufficient evidence to make firm judgements about overall provision or standards. In the sessions seen, teaching promoted pupils' understanding of how life in a Mexican village is affected by its physical features, and pupils in Year 2 could identify the main physical features of the area on a map. Some opportunities were missed for pupils to record their ideas in writing because worksheets were used that prevented them from organising their own ideas.

Religious education

The provision for religious education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is enriched through visits and visitors.
- The subject manager makes sure that the children learn from first hand experience.
- There are missed opportunities for recording.

Commentary

59. The school has made good improvement since the last inspection, by enhancing and enriching the curriculum. Standards are broadly average and pupils' achievement is good. This is an improvement on the last inspection when achievement was satisfactory.
60. Year 2 pupils have a sound knowledge of the major festivals in the Christian year. They know that the Bible is a holy book and that other religions have different special books. Teaching is very good because it makes use of pupils' own experiences to help their learning and probes their thinking of important issues in their lives. A Year 1 lesson, on preparing for a visit to the Mosque, demonstrated how teaching makes use of pupils' first hand knowledge very effectively used to promote others' learning and contribute to children's cultural development. The teacher skilfully asked a pupil, who was of the Muslim faith, to describe and discuss the routines that people of her faith follow in preparation for a visit to the Mosque. Children in the class were fascinated and joined in asking questions, for example, "When do you go?" and "How long do you stay and do you have anything to eat?" The last question prompted a discussion on the festival of Eid and pupils used what they had previously learned about this festival to explore their ideas about fasting. The rich curriculum ensures that pupils visit other places of worship, and is extended by a range of visitors to the school.
61. The subject is well managed by the co-ordinator and she has good knowledge and understanding of the subject across the school. She has skilfully developed an enriched curriculum that includes the provision of personal and social development within the religious education curriculum.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

62. There was insufficient evidence to make firm overall judgements about provision, teaching and learning, standards or achievement in physical education, art and design, design and technology and music and these subjects were sampled. Each of these subjects has a secure place in the curriculum.
63. Pupils' observational skills are well promoted through teaching in **art and design** and pupils' work shows some good detail, as in Year 2 pupils' portraits showing eyelashes and how people's fringes fall over faces. There is some good colour mixing and use of stippling to create texture in paintings of hyacinths by Year 1 pupils. Pupils work in a good range of media, including collage and clay, as well as using a drawing program on the computer. Art from different parts of the world is well used to raise pupils' awareness of different cultures.
64. Some good learning takes place in **design technology** as teaching places emphasis on encouraging pupils to think carefully about how best to plan and set about what they are going to make. This was evident when Year 2 pupils were deciding on designs for masks. Secure knowledge of the requirements of the curriculum, combined with good organisation, high expectations, good use of resources and focused questioning, ensured that pupils made good progress in acquiring skills.

65. The school has identified that teachers' expertise in **music** is lower than in other subjects and is attempting to improve this through support by a teacher with advanced skills from another school. This is proving to be very successful and is leading to increased confidence in teaching, and to good learning by pupils. Pupils' understanding of different rhythms and pitch is developing well and, through good encouragement, pupils' ability to listen attentively and to recall sequences of musical sounds is secure. Their singing is tuneful and they enjoy performing together. Pupils are currently enthusiastically working towards a performance at the local church as part of the Easter festivities.
66. In **physical education**, standards in gymnastics are above average. This is because teachers know how to plan challenging lessons that build well on what pupils have achieved. Teaching places a good emphasis on developing important skills, such as awareness of how body shape, control when changing position and starting and finishing positions. As a result, pupils achieve well. The school makes the best use of its limited facilities outdoors, but there is no grassed area.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

67. No lessons that dealt specifically with personal, social and health education and citizenship were seen but it is evident that these aspects are well represented in all aspects of teaching and learning. The school supports pupils' learning through learning about healthy living in science, and fresh fruit is provided daily, as well as easy access to water in lessons. There are also times when pupils have opportunities to consider particular issues as they sit together to talk about their ideas. Pupils' personal development is very well promoted through lessons in religious education, as they consider what is important in their lives, such as family and friendship. Pupils' understanding of the importance of getting on with others of different ages, backgrounds and cultures is evident in the school's daily life and is reflected in pupils' very positive relationships and pride in their school community.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	5
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).