

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ALEXANDRA INFANTS SCHOOL**

Stoke-on-Trent

LEA area: Stoke-on-Trent

Unique reference number: 124011

Headteacher: Miss Linda Pennington

Lead inspector: Rowena Onions

Dates of inspection: 9<sup>th</sup> - 11<sup>th</sup> February 2004

Inspection number: 260565

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant  
School category: Community  
Age range of pupils: 3 - 7  
Gender of pupils: Mixed  
Number on roll: 173

School address: Melville Road  
Normacot  
Stoke-on-Trent  
Staffordshire  
Postcode: ST3 4PZ

Telephone number: (01782) 235 505  
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Appropriate authority: The governing body  
Name of chair of governors: Mrs J Donaldson

Date of previous inspection: 20<sup>th</sup> September 1999

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in the Normacot district of Stoke-on-Trent. Overall, the pupils' socio-economic backgrounds are disadvantaged. The school is proud of its wide cultural mix. About 40 per cent of pupils are from white British backgrounds, while others come from many different cultural backgrounds, of which Asian British Pakistani pupils make up the largest group. Over half of the pupils speak English as an additional language. This percentage has increased by more than ten per cent since the school was last inspected. The majority of the pupils enter the school with well below average attainments, in particular in their spoken language. The nature of the area served by the school is such that families more frequently move to and from it than is usually the case. The number of pupils with special educational needs (23 per cent) is above average. No pupils have statements of special educational need. The pupils' special needs include communication difficulties, social, emotional and behavioural difficulties, some moderate learning difficulties and some physical disabilities. At the time of the inspection, the new headteacher had been in post for five weeks and the governing body had undergone several changes of personnel over recent months. Prior to the inspection date being known, the school had arranged a curriculum enhancement week for the week of the inspection. While enhancing the curriculum well, this meant that fewer lessons in subjects other than English, mathematics and science were available for inspection than would otherwise have been the case.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
18354	Mrs Rowena Onions	Lead inspector	Areas of learning in the Foundation Stage Music
9999	Mrs Rona Orme	Lay inspector	
34078	Mrs Margaret Broad	Team inspector	English Geography History Religious education
33106	Mr Howard Gray	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Physical education Special educational needs
30935	Mrs Kathleen McArthur	Team inspector	Mathematics English as an additional language

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

Alexandra Infants School is a **sound school** that gives satisfactory value for money. Although standards are below average, overall pupils achieve as expected and pupils in Years 1 and 2 achieve well in English and mathematics. Those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language achieve well. Teaching is satisfactory overall but good in the nursery class and in English and mathematics in Years 1 and 2. The school is led and managed satisfactorily.

#### The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The school ensures that pupils from a wide variety of backgrounds and with different levels of attainment are able to benefit equally from the activities provided. The way the school educates the pupils to understand and value a wide variety of cultures is excellent.
- Although achievement is satisfactory overall, standards are not yet as high as they could be, especially in the reception classes.
- There is good teaching of pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. Teachers and teaching assistants work very hard to achieve this.
- There are very productive links with parents and with the local community.
- Attendance and the action taken to improve it are unsatisfactory.
- The school effectively increases pupils' interest in learning through the very good use of visits, visitors and a wide range of out-of-class clubs. Children like school and work very hard.
- Some aspects of management, including continuing to build the role played by governors and the way some key staff are supported and managed, are in need of improvement.
- Not all of the school's indoor and outdoor accommodation is used well.

The school has made **satisfactory** improvement since its last inspection. The school has tried hard to address all the issues identified in the last report. Although standards have not been raised overall, this is in part a result of the change in the profile of pupils entering the school. Higher attaining pupils are, however, achieving better and the school has maintained its very good provision for pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. The breadth and quality of implementation of the nursery curriculum has been improved, but that in the reception classes is less effective than it was. Pupils' attitudes have improved and are now very good. Links with both parents and the community have improved. Some aspects of leadership and management are less effective than they were.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

**The pupils achieve satisfactorily.** Children enter the school with well below average attainments. Many have particularly poorly developed language skills. They make good progress in the nursery, but some deficiencies in the way the week is organised in the reception classes means their progress slows. Particularly in communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development, their achievement over the two years of the Foundation Stage is only satisfactory. By the end of reception, many are unlikely to attain the standards expected.

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
reading	E	E	E	E
writing	D	E	E	E
mathematics	E	E	E*	E

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average; E\* - very low.*

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

Well-taught literacy and numeracy means that pupils achieve well in Years 1 and 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. Many, however, are continuing to need to learn English and this, together with the

need to make up some ground lost in the reception year, means that standards at the end of Year 2 in 2003, were well below both the national average and those attained in similar schools in reading and writing, and were in the lowest five per cent of results attained nationally in mathematics. Efforts to improve standards are beginning to pay off and standards are now better, being below average. Pupils with special educational needs, those of higher attainment and those with English as an additional language all achieve well. Standards in science are also below average but pupils achieve in a satisfactory way, as they do in information and communication technology, where standards are in line with national expectations.

**Pupils' personal qualities**, including their moral, social, cultural and spiritual development, are **very good**, as are their attitudes and behaviour. Attendance is, however, unsatisfactory.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory, as is the overall quality of teaching and learning.** In the nursery class, children are given a good start to their school lives. Teaching and learning are good. Some aspects of this good provision continue in the reception classes, but children are not directly taught early reading, writing and number skills often enough and this slows their progress. Throughout the school, pupils are very well managed and lessons are relaxed and friendly. This helps pupils to learn. Clear focused teaching of literacy and numeracy is effective in promoting good achievement in Years 1 and 2. There is very good use made of skilled teaching assistants to the particular benefit of pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. A balanced curriculum is significantly enhanced by a wide range of enrichment activities. Pupils are well guided and supported. The school makes every effort to work with parents and the local community and successfully promotes very positive partnerships.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are satisfactory.** The new headteacher has made a good start in getting to know the school. The smooth handing over of leadership has been well supported by the deputy headteacher. The contribution of other key staff is variable. Some well-established staff lead and manage their subjects well; others, who are either less experienced or who have too heavy a management load, have not received the help they need to be as successful. Governors are mainly new to their role and, although their governance is satisfactory, they rightly identify the need to become more systematically and actively involved in monitoring what happens in school and in structuring school improvement. There is a particular need to improve the way the school checks whether it is providing good value. The governors ensure that the school complies with statutory requirements.

## **PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

Parents greatly appreciate the education provided for their children. Pupils like school and want to join in with the activities provided for them.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

The most important things the school should do to improve are:

- Raise standards, particularly through the improvement of the education provided in the reception classes.
- Improve attendance.
- Continue to improve the role played by governors in checking the work of the school and promoting school improvement.
- Improve the effectiveness of some co-ordinators by ensuring there is sensible deployment of responsibilities and by providing some with more time and better support.
- Make better use of both inside and outside accommodation.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

#### **Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects**

Achievement is **satisfactory** overall. Pupils in Years 1 and 2, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, achieve well in English and mathematics. Standards are, however, below average. Achievement is also good in the nursery.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good progress in English and mathematics.
- Children in the nursery do well in most aspects of their development.
- Children in reception do not achieve well enough in communication, language and literacy and in their mathematical development.
- Pupils with English as an additional language achieve well overall and very well in learning to speak and understand English.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans and achieve well.

#### **Commentary**

1. Children enter the school with well below average attainments. They have particularly poor spoken English. For about half, this is because English is not their home language and for a significant number of others, it is because they have not had experience of a language rich environment. Because they are well taught, children make good progress in all aspects of communication, language and literacy in the nursery. They continue to make good progress in their spoken language in reception but they do not do so in learning early skills in reading and writing. This is because they do not have enough focused teaching in these aspects of their learning. The same situation occurs in early mathematical development with good progress being made in the nursery but unsatisfactory progress in reception. This means that over the two Foundation Stage years, children achieve in only a satisfactory way overall and enter Year 1 with well below average attainment in English and mathematics. A lack of monitoring in the Foundation Stage has meant that the lack of sufficient progress in some aspects of children's development has not been identified and improved sufficiently quickly.
2. Standards in national tests have remained largely static since the time of the last inspection. Results have not shown the same improvement as they have nationally. This is in part because a greater number of pupils (an increase of more than ten per cent) have English as an additional language and also because children are not making the same progress in the Foundation Stage and so have further to go in Years 1 and 2. In 2003, standards were well below those in other schools in reading and writing and were in the lowest five per cent of schools nationally in mathematics. School and local education authority data, along with inspection observations, show that pupils achieve well over Years 1 and 2 and attain higher standards than might be predicted. This is because they receive well-planned, effective teaching. Higher attaining pupils make good progress because teachers set them appropriately challenging work.
3. Standards attained by pupils who speak English as an additional language are well below average, due to their lack of knowledge of English and limited language skills when they enter the school. Because of the thoughtful provision, including the very good support of teaching assistants, these pupils achieve well.
4. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because good leadership has directed a strong emphasis on pupils' personal development and ensured very good support, both in



class lessons and in withdrawal groups. Individual education plans are carefully constructed with achievable targets and are specific to individual needs.

- Pupils achieve in a satisfactory way in science and do well in learning to investigate and question scientifically; however, their recorded work in science is not as strong. Pupils achieve as expected in information and communication technology (ICT) and standards are average.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	14.0 (13.5)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	11.9 (12.8)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	13.4 (14.1)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 54 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

#### **Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

Pupils behave **very well** and show **very positive** attitudes and **very good** personal development. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good overall. Punctuality is satisfactory. Attendance is unsatisfactory.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Opportunities to learn about multicultural diversity are excellent.
- The provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is very good.
- Pupils' attitudes are very good, they like school, try hard and want to succeed.
- Pupils behave very well in lessons, around the school and at play.
- Attendance, and the action taken by the school to improve this, are unsatisfactory.

#### **Commentary**

##### **Example of outstanding practice**

##### **The school makes excellent provision for pupils to learn about the multicultural diversity of the world and the United Kingdom.**

Pupils are given plenty of opportunities to learn about the cultural backgrounds of the diverse communities represented in the school. The school also ensures that pupils learn about other cultures as well. Delightful displays celebrate the traditions of different religions. During the inspection week, pupils were given the chance to try African drumming, to listen to African stories and music and to make African masks. Many activities were planned to tie in with the week's theme and all pupils, from the youngest, were fully involved and excited by these. A highly professional presentation by visiting presenters enabled pupils to find out about traditional African Caribbean food and how it is now eaten in the United Kingdom, whilst also learning about how to write autobiographies. This was followed up very well in classroom sessions by staff. Pupils are extremely well taught to value diversity and the inclusion of everyone. Pupils talk about these activities with enormous enthusiasm and display very positive attitudes.

- The value placed on the pupils' personal development by senior management is very evident in practice. It is very well addressed. Nearly all parents consider that the school helps their child to become mature and independent. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. The school successfully gives pupils many chances to consider the big questions of life, their own feelings and those of other people. The Eco Club, which won a national award in 2003, enables pupils to consider environmental issues so they are well aware of the need to look after their surroundings. Assemblies and collective worship meet statutory requirements and are well planned and led. These occasions reflect the inclusive ethos of the school by valuing the beliefs of all. Social and moral development are very well promoted. Staff take

every opportunity to explain to pupils why some behaviour is valued and some unacceptable and pupils are taught how to work and play together in harmony. The school behaviour code works very well from day to day. The school has very effective measures to discourage bullying and the very few instances that arise are dealt with well. There have been no exclusions in the last school year. Pupils are given many chances to exercise responsibility.

7. Pupils are keen to take part in all the activities that the school offers and nearly all parents report that their children like school. Pupils enjoy talking about their work and their life in school. Behaviour is very good. Pupils who speak English in addition to their home language and those with special educational needs play a full and active part in school life and have very good relationships with adults. As a result they show a willingness to learn. Children in the Foundation Stage behave well and develop good attitudes to school. The majority of children meet the national goals for personal, social and emotional development by the time they enter Year 1.
8. Attendance is unsatisfactory. At 93 per cent, it was below the national average for the year 2002-2003. Registers correctly record the number of pupils present in the school for each session so that there are no safety concerns; however, the reasons for absence are not clearly entered so that it is not possible to determine whether an absence is legitimate. More accurate and thorough monitoring is required and, where necessary, followed up. Whilst some absence is caused by term-time holidays, the pattern for many pupils suggests that parents do not always ensure the regular and routine attendance of their children. The school acknowledges that attendance is important and presents a weekly cup to the class with the highest attendance and certificates to any pupils who achieve 100 per cent attendance over the course of a term. Punctuality is satisfactory.

**Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)**

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	7.0	School data	0.0
National data:	5.8	National data:	0.4

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

**QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The quality of education provided is **satisfactory**. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, although there is much good practice evident. The school provides a good basic curriculum and extends this very well. Good care is taken of the pupils and very effective partnerships forged with parents and the local community.

**Teaching and learning**

The overall quality of teaching and learning in the school is **satisfactory**. Teaching and learning in English and mathematics are good for pupils in Years 1 and 2, as is teaching and learning for children in their first year of schooling. Assessment and its use are satisfactory.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Throughout the school, relationships between adults and pupils are very good; this leads to easy discipline and a good atmosphere for working is created.
- Good teaching helps children in the nursery settle quickly into school and achieve well.
- Basic skills in English and mathematics are carefully and skilfully taught in Years 1 and 2.

- Although lessons are often satisfactory, the way each day is organised means that the impact of teaching on aspects of children's communication, language and literacy and mathematical development in reception is unsatisfactory.
- A clear focus on language development helps pupils, including those for whom English is not their first language, to make good progress in spoken language.
- Pupils with special educational needs are well taught by teachers and teaching assistants.
- The quality of target setting and marking is not consistent and does not always help pupils to improve their work as much as they could.

## Commentary

9. A key, very positive feature of all lessons is the relationships that are forged between adults and pupils. The pupils respond well to the calm atmosphere created and apply themselves well and work with good concentration. They follow the example set for them and show respect for each other, being able to work co-operatively in pairs and small groups. This allows pupils to be relaxed and to enjoy working. This enjoyment of work and ability to concentrate are greatly appreciated by colleagues at the junior school who comment that this allows pupils to make very good progress in their classes.
10. The starting point for this type of settled classroom practice is in the nursery class, where adults assist children to begin their school life in a warm, friendly way. Good teaching and learning in this class promote a range of basic skills well, in particular, the development of spoken English. Although there is mostly satisfactory teaching in individual lessons, the way the week is structured in the reception classes means that its overall impact on the development of early reading, writing and mathematical skills is unsatisfactory. Children are not given focused daily teaching in these aspects. Although there are activities available in each, the purpose of the activities is not always sufficiently clear to promote satisfactory progress. This means that children do not build their skills in the way that they should. Where lessons are unsatisfactory it is because children are not learning as much as they should in the time available. The lack of clear leadership and effective monitoring of work in the reception classes mean that deficiencies in practice have not been identified and improved.
11. In Years 1 and 2, there has been better leadership of the education provided. As a result, improvements in teaching and learning have occurred. Productive time and effort are spent on teaching pupils the basics of reading, writing and number. Lessons are well planned in units that assist the gradual building of skills in these aspects of English and mathematics. Good attention is given to providing pupils with a range of activities that interest and motivate them and help them to learn. Teachers use questioning well to deepen or check on pupils' understanding. In the main, time is used well, although there are some occasions where pupils do not have time to finish the activities set for them because the teacher has taken too much time talking to them at the beginning of the lesson. On these occasions, learning and progress are not as good.
12. Teachers are very aware that many of their pupils have a need to extend both their vocabulary and their ability to communicate. Care is taken to emphasise new vocabulary and to ensure that pupils understand it. Pupils are rewarded verbally for using the new vocabulary in their own speaking. Teaching is good for pupils who speak English as an additional language. Staff provide well-planned activities to meet their particular abilities. Very good use is made of the bilingual staff to ensure understanding but also to promote speaking in English. Generally, a good balance is maintained between the two. Although this aspect of teaching is largely positive, there are occasions when teachers do not make explicit their expectations of the length of a reply and accept one or two word answers when the pupil is capable of a longer reply.
13. Pupils with special educational needs are provided with a very good level of support from class teachers, the special educational needs co-ordinator and teaching assistants. They are also well supported through the use of well-devised individual education plans, which are effective

working documents. As a result, achievement is good. There is very good leadership which leads to clear ideas, goals and understanding. Staff are always looking for ways to improve provision for pupils with special educational needs.

14. Teachers undertake a considerable amount of assessment and recording of their findings in all subjects. This clearly provides them with the information they require because activities are usually well matched to pupils' needs. The amount of recording undertaken is large and the school should now consider whether all of this is necessary. Marking is conscientiously done but is not always sufficiently explicit in showing pupils how well they have done and how they could further improve. Similarly, the good system of target setting is not always fully exploited because targets are sometimes not focused on the most important area for improvement, sometimes concentrating too much on handwriting and presentation.

**Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 28 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	3	13	10	2	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 curriculum is **good** and meets all statutory requirements. The school provides a very good range of enrichment activities.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Very successful efforts are made to ensure that all pupils can undertake all activities.
- There is very good provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language and for those with special educational needs.
- The school has not yet fully considered the way in which learning in one subject can be used and extended through planned links with others.
- A very good range of activities, visits, visitors and clubs enriches the curriculum.
- Teaching assistants, including bilingual staff, make a very good contribution to pupils' learning.
- The nursery and reception outdoor learning areas are inadequate.

**Commentary**

15. The curriculum fulfils all statutory requirements, including religious education and a daily act of collective worship. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory, covering all required aspects of learning but lacking good organisation in the reception classes. In Years 1 and 2, planning covers all subjects and ensures pupils extend their personal experiences to help them develop speaking and listening skills. Determined leadership ensures very good equality of opportunity and access to all activities provided by the school. Efforts are made to ensure that all, irrespective of their gender, level of attainment or background, can participate fully. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language are very well supported in their learning by all staff, and activities are well matched to their attainment.
16. The school curriculum is well established with use of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy underpinning work in English and mathematics and helping pupils to achieve well in these subjects. The school has not, however, conducted a very recent curriculum review. As a consequence, links between subjects that enable pupils to extend and consolidate learning and thus raise standards further are not as well established as they might be. Good links with the

junior school ensure pupils are well prepared when they transfer to the next stage of their education at age seven.

17. The provision of activities that enrich the curriculum is very good. The range of clubs is much wider than normally seen in an infant school. Most are run by the staff, who willingly give up their time either after school or at lunchtime. There is very good support for pupils' learning outside the school day through the language, maths and science clubs. The recorder, drama and football skills clubs enable pupils to participate in arts and sports and they learn to care for their environment at the Eco club. A particular strength is very good cultural development promoted through regular 'enrichment weeks'. During the inspection, pupils of all ages learned about African drumming, food from all round the world and circus skills. These weeks not only deepen knowledge but also motivate and interest pupils and help them understand that learning is fun. Pupils also make visits to a castle, the local shops and have good links with a rural school. Pupils are taken to visit a range of local places of worship and this further extends their social and cultural awareness. Visitors to school include the local vicar, community policeman and fire service. These activities support the curriculum very well and form a valuable part of the pupils' experiences.
18. There is a sufficient number of teaching staff to deliver the curriculum, ably assisted by a very good number of trained teaching assistants who make a very good contribution to pupils' learning. Most subjects are satisfactorily resourced. There are sufficient library and reading books, although some are rather worn. Resources available in the nursery and reception classes are, however, inadequate, being too few with too many in poor condition. There are sufficient computers in each classroom but the organisation of these makes whole class teaching difficult.
19. The school's accommodation is spacious, but is not always used well. There are several rooms in the school that do not currently have a clearly designated purpose and are underused as a consequence. Much equipment is kept in the corridors due to lack of organised storage. The outdoor learning areas for both nursery and reception classes are both small and poorly resourced.

## Care, guidance and support

The school looks after pupils **well** and parents appreciate the all-round care their children are given.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- All pupils have a very trusting relationship with a member of staff.
- Pupils receive good personal support and guidance.
- Pupils' views are valued and acted upon.

## Commentary

20. Relationships in the school are very good and pupils turn easily to adults for help. No health and safety concerns were seen during the inspection. At present, however, there is no shaded or sheltered area for nursery and reception pupils when they play outside in hot sun. Child protection arrangements are good and there are good procedures to ensure that children in public care are well looked after. There are very good induction arrangements for children entering the nursery and at the beginning of the year. Children settle very quickly into the school.
21. All staff know pupils and their families well. Pupils receive good advice and support. Their personal development is well understood by staff and this awareness is often apparent in lessons. Pupils are given some targets to help them improve their work, but these are not yet of a consistent quality. The school's code for behaviour successfully encourages all pupils to behave well in lessons and around the school.

22. Staff listen carefully to what pupils have to say and value their opinions. Staff see it as important that pupils should be happy and comfortable in school and talk to pupils to make sure that this is the case. The activities of the Eco club provide a valuable channel for pupils to make suggestions about school life, especially the way the outside accommodation might be developed.

## **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

The school has a **very positive** partnership with parents and with the local community.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school places importance on partnership with parents and is successful in promoting very effective parental links.
- The school is active in encouraging community education.
- Links with other schools are good.

### **Commentary**

23. The school works effectively to maintain very good links with all groups of parents. Nearly all parents feel comfortable about approaching the school with concerns or questions. The school provides very well for parents who speak little or no English. Family learning sessions, for example, are held to encourage parents to speak to their children in English and also to help them develop their written English. Parents attending these sessions are very positive about their benefits. Efforts are made to ensure that all parents are made to feel comfortable and welcome in school. Most signs in the school are, for example, in at least two languages and bilingual assistance is readily available where needed. Parents receive good information about the progress their children make and good information about the general life of the school. All parents are invited to the weekly 'good work' assembly and parents are keen to borrow books and games to use with their children at home.
24. The school has an energetic parent, teacher and friends association that is active in supporting the school both with time and financially. This support is greatly valued by the staff in the school and is further evidence of the very good partnership with parents.
25. The new 'Community Room' is being used very well to extend links with the neighbourhood. Short, taster courses, for example in aromatherapy, are being used well to encourage people to begin to feel comfortable in using the facility. A parent and toddler group is well attended and provides a positive route into the school.
26. The school enjoys a positive relationship with the local junior school. Year 2 pupils use the junior school's ICT suite each week. This supports their current achievement as well as giving pupils confidence to transfer to their new school. Links are also established with a local nursery school that enable the few pupils who enter the school at the beginning of the reception year to settle easily and well. The school also arranges for higher attaining pupils to take part in master classes with pupils from other schools and in some events run by local universities.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

The overall leadership and management of the school are **satisfactory**. Although too early to make an overall judgement of the leadership of the new headteacher, she has made a good start in getting to know the school. Governance is satisfactory as are the leadership and management of key staff.

## Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school ethos is strong. All pupils are valued and helped to make progress.
- There is a strong sense of being a team evident amongst staff, who all strive to improve the quality of education provided.
- Some subjects and aspects of the school are well led and managed, while others are not because responsibilities have not been well allocated and some key staff have not had the time and support they need to help them successfully fulfil their roles.
- Governors are interested and supportive but they rightly identify a need to further develop their skills in monitoring the work of the school and in playing a greater part in planning improvements.
- Day-to-day financial management is good and funds have been spent appropriately but improvements are needed in the systems used to ensure that the school is providing best value.

## Commentary

27. The leadership effectively ensures that all pupils are given every opportunity to learn and that they are provided with extra support when they need it. The governors and staff are determined that the school should be fully inclusive and the promotion of the moral, social and cultural development of the pupils and the very successful links with the community ensure that the whole school community, staff, parents and pupils work to this end.
28. There is a strong team feeling amongst all staff. Relationships between staff are very productive and all work well together to the benefit of the pupils. During the inspection, it was very clear by the positive and professional way in which the inspectors' evaluations were accepted that the staff wish to improve their contribution to the school's effectiveness. The deputy headteacher has been instrumental in ensuring that the new headteacher has been welcomed and become part of this team. This has helped the headteacher to become familiar with the work of the school very quickly and enabled her to have begun to identify for herself the strengths of the school and where some improvements are needed. This smooth transition sets the school in a good position for the future.
29. All key staff wish to promote their subjects or areas of responsibility but some are more successful in fulfilling this than others. Where leadership is well established, for example in special educational needs and mathematics, it is good and the quality of the provision reflects it. Where leaders are not as experienced, however, they have not received the support and guidance that they need to ensure that they can fulfil their role. In addition, overall responsibilities have not been well deployed and this means that some staff are overloaded and some key aspects of the school are being led by inexperienced staff. Although there has been a satisfactory amount of monitoring of the quality of education provided in the past, the quality and effect of this has also been variable. The impact of monitoring has depended both on the experience of staff undertaking it and the time that has been given to them for this purpose. A lack of monitoring has had particular impact in the Foundation Stage where staff in the nursery are not well supported and inadequacies in the provision in the reception classes have not been identified.
30. Many members of the governing body are very newly appointed. There has not been time for them to become comfortable with their role. They are a very supportive group of people who are rightly proud of their school and the work it undertakes. They have begun to formalise the way that they gain and evaluate information about the school and are becoming less dependent on information directly fed to them from senior management. They understand their role in both supporting and challenging the school but are currently more comfortable with the former. They recognise the need to put in place systems that mean they play a bigger part in improvement planning and the new chair of governors has already played a part in the writing of the latest improvement plan. The governors ensure that the school complies with all statutory requirements.

31. The financial management of the school is secure and correctly linked to the school improvement plan. Spending options have not always been fully documented, however, and discussions about the impact of various different ways of allocating money are not shown in the minutes of the finance committee. It is unclear, therefore, how the school can be sure that it is getting best value for the money spent. Additionally, over the last term, the position of chair of finance on the governing body has been unfilled and the management of the school has not had the security of knowing that spending is being regularly monitored by the governors.

***Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003***

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	435,063
Total expenditure	429,966
Expenditure per pupil	2,515

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	30,793
Balance carried forward to the next	35,890



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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

32. Provision in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall. Children are taught in three classes, one nursery class (Foundation One) and two reception classes (Foundation Two). Provision in the nursery year is good, and has improved since the time of the last inspection. Some aspects of provision in the reception year are also good. Many children enter the school with well below average skills in speaking English and with very narrow social experiences. All Foundation Stage staff work very hard to try to promote good achievement. There are, however, areas of weakness in the education provided in the reception year that affect the children's achievement. There are weaknesses in the way the curriculum is organised for this year group. The overall quality of education in the reception year is not as good as it was at the time of the last inspection.
33. The leadership and management of the whole Foundation Stage are unsatisfactory. The co-ordinator has not been given the time, support or authority to check the success of what is happening. This has resulted in too much being expected of the staff in the nursery. It is to their credit that they have provided such an effective education for the children. The lack of leadership and management has also meant that inadequacies in the reception class provision have not been identified and improved. In both the nursery and reception years, the generous indoor accommodation is not used as well as it could be, with children working in more cramped conditions than they need to. Outdoor learning is available in the reception year but not as easily accessible to nursery children. The outdoor environment for both sets of children is not as stimulating as it could be and this affects achievement in some areas of learning. Neither nursery nor reception classes are well resourced, with too much tatty equipment untidily stored.

### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **good**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Consistent, firm and friendly management of the children means that they settle into school life quickly and learn to like school.
- Very good relationships provide very good examples for the children to follow.
- Children are given good opportunities to develop the ability to choose between activities and direct their own play, but in the reception classes, the activities available to them are not always of good enough quality.

#### **Commentary**

34. Overall, there is good, careful teaching and learning of personal, social and emotional skills. In the nursery they are of very good quality with clear routines and expectations set within a warm and happy environment. There is a good amount of adult directed learning which helps children not only learn in other areas of their development but also successfully teaches them to co-operate with adults and within a group. Children are also given good opportunities to choose between purposeful activities as well as being given license to set up activities for themselves. As a result, they settle rapidly into, what is for many, a very different situation in which most adults do not speak their home language. The presence of well-trained bilingual assistants is instrumental in promoting the children's confidence in this situation.
35. Many of the strengths of teaching and learning evident in the nursery are also evident in the reception classes. All staff treat the children with respect and clearly demonstrate respect for

others. As a result, children learn to work and play well together. As they get older, children are helped to think about their own feelings, for example talking about what makes them afraid, and they are helped to respond appropriately to the feelings of others. In the reception year, however, the lack of a planned link between the activities children have been taught to do on previous occasions or in previous weeks and the current activities available for them to choose between, means that they do not develop a breadth of play skills as quickly as they could. Overall, however, children achieve well in their personal, social and emotional development over the two years they are in the Foundation Stage and most have attained the national goals set when they enter Year 1.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children are given many opportunities to develop spoken language.
- Children with English as an additional language achieve well in learning to speak English.
- Because of the way the week is organised, children in the reception year do not get enough teaching in early reading and writing skills.

### **Commentary**

36. Children enter the school with well below average skills in communication, either because they have English as an additional language, or because they have not experienced a language rich environment before they enter school. Overall, teaching, learning and achievement are satisfactory. In the nursery year, they are good. A good range of planned activities helps children to learn new vocabulary, learn to communicate in longer sentences and to develop an interest in books and writing. Adults are very clear about what they want children to gain from each activity and thus are careful to ask the right questions, emphasise target vocabulary and give children space and opportunity to speak. Books and rhymes are well chosen to fit into a theme and this ensures that the children are given good opportunities to hear vocabulary specific to the theme over several days, thus extending and reinforcing their learning.
37. The teaching of children for whom English is an additional language is good. Teachers use teaching assistants well to ensure that they understand what is happening in the classrooms, as well as to help the children learn to speak in English. A good balance between the two is maintained and, as a result, learning of spoken language is good.
38. Once again, much of the good practice seen in the nursery is also seen in the reception year, with themed weeks, development of vocabulary and good opportunities for children to speak and listen. Spoken language continues to develop well and children achieve well in this. The teaching of skills of reading and writing is, however, unsatisfactory. This is because of the way that the week is organised with children not receiving focused teaching of reading and writing on a daily basis. When the skills are taught, they are taught in a satisfactory way, but there is insufficient building of skills over a period of time. In reading, too much teacher time is spent in hearing individual children read and thus children do not get as much teaching in reading as they could. In writing, children do not have enough structured opportunities to write independently. As a result, achievement in these aspects of communication, language and literacy is unsatisfactory in the reception year. By the end of reception, many pupils are far from attaining the national goals and attainment overall is well below average.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children are given good opportunities to count, to experience shape and measures and to learn the associated vocabulary.
- Mathematical development is not directly taught sufficiently often in the reception classes.

### **Commentary**

39. Overall, teaching, learning and achievement are satisfactory. In both nursery and reception years, teachers are careful to plan activities that promote children's ability to count and to develop an early understanding of what counting is for. Displays show children numerals and teaching helps them to link numbers to their written representations. Fun activities in the nursery, such as number rhymes where you need to move about, further promote understanding, as well as encouraging the children to enjoy playing with numbers. In both years, there is development of concepts of shape and measure promoted through activities. Careful teaching of vocabulary assists all to develop mathematical language. In the nursery, there are sufficient of these opportunities to mean that children achieve well and thus the impact of teaching and learning is good. In the reception classes, there is a lack of a 'little and often' approach to teacher focused teaching of mathematics. Although mathematical activities are often available to the children, they do not always have a clear enough objective and do not help the children learn quickly enough. As in communication, language and literacy, where teachers focus on the teaching of mathematics, learning is at least satisfactory, but the organisation of this teaching makes the overall impact on the children's learning unsatisfactory in the reception year and their progress slows. Most children are unlikely to attain the national goals by the end of reception.

## **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children are given good opportunities to gain knowledge of different cultures.
- First-hand experiences help children to learn about the world they live in.
- Experiences are limited by the lack of stimulating outdoor areas for learning.

### **Commentary**

40. The ethos of the school, in which children are taught about the lives and cultures of others, permeates the Foundation Stage. During the inspection week, the children in both year groups were given the opportunity to play African drums and try Caribbean food, as well as listening to music, reading books and talking about what they had seen and done. This effectively extended their knowledge of the world.
41. In all three classes, children are given opportunities to explore, for example, textures of different dry substances. This first hand experience increases interest and learning. In the main, activities have a clear purpose, although this is not always clear in the planning in the reception classes. Children are not always helped to target their exploration in a way that would help them learn even better.
42. There is a good range of indoor activities available, including suitable use of computers to play simple games, construction toys and the making of models. The provision is, however, limited

by the lack of a stimulating outdoor area, particularly for the nursery children. This limits children's opportunity to explore a natural living world, especially when little distinction is made between times when the outdoors is being used for physical activity and when it is being used to promote an interest in and a knowledge about, the outdoors. Thus, the overall impact of teaching and learning throughout the Foundation Stage is no better than satisfactory. Children make satisfactory progress overall but most are unlikely to reach the goals set in all aspects of their knowledge and understanding of the world by the end of the reception year.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

43. There was insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement about teaching, learning and achievement in this area of learning. Children normally have opportunity for physical activity in the school hall during the week but were not doing so during the inspection week as the hall was being used for the 'focus week' activities. Outdoor activity is available each day but the limited equipment means that this is not as productive as it might be. Children are taught skills that help them develop fine manipulative skills, such as cutting, drawing and writing.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children are encouraged to observe keenly and to try to represent what they see using a number of different techniques and materials.
- Music is an everyday part of the environment, promoting this aspect of creative development well.
- Areas for imaginative play are not used as well as they might be in developing children's skills.

### **Commentary**

44. Children are given opportunity to draw, paint, make models and experience other techniques, such as dying material. Good adult intervention helps them observe more closely and has the additional benefit of further developing spoken language. Products are valued by adults, but standards of display are not as high as they could be. There is often music playing in the classrooms and children are encouraged to move to this or listen to it as appropriate to the other activities being undertaken. Cultural experiences are developed through activities such as the playing of African drums. Children successfully learn a variety of different songs.
45. Imaginative play is not as well developed, in part because the rooms are not used as well as they might be and in part because there are insufficient resources to support a range of such play. There is currently no planned progression and development of skills in this area for either year group.
46. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning in creative development is satisfactory and children achieve as expected. They are set to meet the goals in some aspects of their creative development but not in imaginative play and thus, their attainment is below average overall.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan work that interests pupils and makes them want to learn.
- The work of teaching assistants supports pupils' learning very well.
- Pupils' speaking and listening skills are promoted well.
- Pupils of all abilities achieve well.
- The subject co-ordinator does not have sufficient time to monitor and evaluate the subject effectively.
- Marking does not always give pupils a clear picture of how well they are doing or what they have to do to improve.

#### Commentary

47. In the 2003 national tests, standards at the end of Year 2 in both reading and writing were well below those attained nationally and in similar schools. Although overall results in writing were below the national average, the percentage of pupils attaining the higher level was in line with the national average showing these pupils had done well. Standards have declined since the previous inspection because more pupils are starting school with well below average skills in speaking and listening. Data shows that between their entry into the reception year and the end of Year 2, pupils make progress above the local education authority average. Inspection findings show that, as a result of the additional focus on the teaching of English, pupils' attainment is set to rise in 2004 in both writing and reading and at present is below rather than well below average.
48. Currently, pupils are achieving well. They make good progress and are developing the ability to read, write and communicate with increasing confidence, fluency and accuracy. It is evident both from lessons and completed work that the quality of teaching is good overall with an emphasis on helping pupils to develop their literacy skills through purposeful and relevant activities, thus enabling pupils to learn successfully. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported by teaching assistants and every effort is made to raise their attainment through carefully structured work and good support and encouragement. As a consequence, they achieve well. Pupils whose first language is not English make good progress because teachers and teaching assistants help them to develop their spoken language.
49. Standards in speaking and listening are below average but pupils of all abilities and those for whom English is not their first language make good progress. Pupils are keen to answer questions and share their ideas. Teachers and teaching assistants provide a wide range of opportunities for pupils to practise and extend their skills, including the imaginative use of drama. Teachers encourage pupils to use high standards of pronunciation when introduced to a wide range of new vocabulary.
50. Most pupils are achieving well in reading because they have the opportunity to work with their teachers and teaching assistants in small groups. There is good emphasis on the systematic teaching of phonics (the link between sounds and letters) for younger pupils. The school has recently invested in a wider range of reading books which enable pupils to read interesting books at the appropriate level. Guided, small-group reading sessions are well planned and based on careful assessment. Pupils also take part in 'Everyone Reading In Class' (ERIC) sessions where they are encouraged to select books of their own choice to read independently. The lack of a clear objective and planning for these sessions means, however, that the time is not very effectively used and pupils' learning is limited. Parents and carers are

encouraged to support pupils' reading at home and have been given good guidance as to how best to do this.

51. Teachers are working hard to improve standards in the pupils' writing and although standards are still below average there is evidence that pupils are making good progress, especially the higher attainers who are working at appropriate levels by Year 2. This is because activities are well planned to challenge pupils of all abilities, interesting writing tasks are set, opportunities are provided for pupils to write across a range of genres and pupils' writing is celebrated in a range of displays. Occasional use of computers in English adds to the range of activities offered.
52. Leadership of English is satisfactory. The school management team has identified the need to raise standards in English as a school priority and has developed and implemented a satisfactory plan to achieve this. Training opportunities have been provided and these have had a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning. The relatively inexperienced subject leader has, however, had little opportunity to evaluate the impact of new initiatives; for example the consistency of target setting and marking to ensure pupils are clear about how well they have done and what they have to do to improve, the introduction of a handwriting scheme, which is not consistently applied in all classes and the implementation of 'ERIC', which lacks a clear purpose. There are, therefore, aspects of the education provided that could be further improved to assist the further raising of standards.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

53. The good speaking and listening skills shown in literacy are used and further developed in many other subjects. Opportunities for developing speaking and listening skills are identified in teachers' planning in all areas of the curriculum. Reading and writing skills are purposefully developed in other subjects where pupils practise writing for different purposes.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Lively, well-focused teaching helps pupils achieve well.
- Pupils like mathematics. They work hard and behave very well in lessons.
- Teaching assistants make a very good contribution to pupils' learning.
- Despite much hard work, standards are still well below average.
- Not enough use is made of ICT to aid pupils' learning in mathematics.

### **Commentary**

54. Pupils work hard and make good progress but, because they enter Year 1 with well below average standards and because many are still learning English, they do not reach the levels expected at the end of Year 2. This means that standards remain low in spite of the introduction of various strategies to raise pupils' attainment. Good teaching that captures their interest and enthusiasm for mathematical activities ensures the pupils achieve well. Data shows that pupils make better progress between reception and Year 2 than do the majority in other schools in the local education authority. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language also achieve well. This is due to very good support from the teachers, teaching assistants and bilingual staff who ensure they understand their tasks and can participate fully in all activities.
55. Pupils enjoy working with numbers during lively mental 'warm-up' activities. As a result of consistent teaching of number, by the age of seven, the majority recognise number patterns

and sequences. Year 2 pupils show good mental recall when finding different ways of making ten, and higher achieving pupils quickly calculate to 20. Pupils efficiently assemble equipment and organise themselves well, for example when estimating the weight of food items. This promotes their independence and sense of personal and social responsibility. Their behaviour and attitudes to work are very good because they respond to their teachers' high expectations and are interested by the well-planned activities. Most pupils complete their homework sheets regularly. The school provides useful mathematics workshops to give parents ways to support their children's work at home.

56. Teaching is good overall and this leads to good learning and achievement by the pupils. Lessons and activities are well matched to pupils' abilities. Teachers make very good use of skilled teaching and bilingual assistants to support the learning of all groups of pupils. Practical tasks are organised well. Pupils are given good opportunities to explain how they reach an answer. Many find this hard because they have not yet learned sufficient vocabulary and do not organise their ideas well. Teachers use mathematical language well to help their pupils in this. Pupils are not, however, given enough opportunities to use the computer to support their learning and the selection of programs is limited. Occasionally, pupils are not given a clear idea of what they are aiming to learn in a lesson. They become confused and their progress is limited.
57. The implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has provided a good framework for pupils to build up and practise number skills progressively. There is greater emphasis on helping pupils acquire number and calculation skills than on learning other mathematical skills, including telling the time, recognising shapes and measuring accurately.
58. The co-ordinator provides good leadership and management and has a good knowledge of the subject. She has maintained a constant drive to raise standards by observations of teaching, monitoring pupils' progress and careful analysis of national test results. The action plan for improvement includes a good range of strategies to raise standards, including more practical activities and the use of number lines. An after-school mathematics club is provided for Year 2 pupils. The pupils currently in Year 2 have been set challenging targets for their national tests and there are indications that they will reach higher standards. There has been satisfactory improvement in mathematics since the previous inspection.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

59. There are some opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical skills in other subjects. Year 2 pupils, for example, carried out a meaningful practical activity in a geography lesson. They estimated how long it would take them to walk to the local junior school by various routes and then timed themselves as they walked each route. Explaining how they reached an answer provided opportunities to use and extend their speaking and listening skills.

## **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Support for pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language is good, so these pupils achieve well.
- Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to work in a practical way in science lessons.
- There is insufficient written or recorded work to show pupil understanding or progression in the subject.

### **Commentary**

60. Standards of attainment throughout the school are below the national average and a little better than the results of the 2003 national assessments for pupils in Year 2, when standards were well below average. Standards are similar to those reported at the time of the previous inspection. At the end of Year 2, a small percentage of pupils attain higher levels and these pupils have achieved well because teachers have taken care to challenge them properly. Pupils with special educational needs are given suitable levels of work and good support, so they make good progress and achieve well. Those with English as an additional language are usually strongly supported by very effective teaching assistants, who ensure that they understand the work and what is required of them. As a result, their progress is good.
61. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. In the lessons seen during the inspection, they were good. Teachers show a good understanding of the subject and of the language and writing difficulties individual pupils experience. Teachers ensure that language development is an integral part of science lessons, not only by listing relevant vocabulary on the board but also by encouraging pupils to use phrases or sentences in their answers to questions. The science co-ordinator has encouraged an increased emphasis to be placed on investigational science. Teachers plan lessons in which pupils can gain first-hand experience. Pupils in Year 2, for example, explored electrical circuits and, as a result of using a variety of materials, came to understand that metal objects conduct electricity. Pupils are interested in science, their behaviour is good and they listen well.
62. Pupils are also developing observational skills through their practical investigations. There is, however, too little recording of work. This reduces the impact of good teaching in lessons, meaning that pupils do not consolidate what they have understood and, as a consequence, do not remember work as well as they could. Additionally, pupils do not have planned opportunity to consolidate their writing skills. Marking of work is not consistent and pupils do not have their own specific targets to work towards, so opportunities are missed to give them a better understanding of how to improve.
63. Overall leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has limited time to check science provision across the school and cannot, therefore, promote improvement as rapidly as she would like. The science curriculum is well supported by the Eco club, which meets during the autumn and summer terms. Those who are involved in this activity show more confidence and appreciation of their environment and this leads to a better understanding of the subject.

## INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Because of carefully organised teaching, together with positive support given by teaching assistants, pupils gain experience of all aspects of the ICT curriculum.
- Pupils are interested in work in ICT and this helps them to learn.
- The subject is well led and managed by the co-ordinator, who has effective plans to develop the ICT provision within the school.
- Although there are links with other subjects, these are currently underdeveloped.

### Commentary

64. As at the time of the last inspection, standards are in line with expectations by the end of Year 2. Teaching is satisfactory. Teachers work hard to promote learning but this is made difficult by the present organisation of ICT resources. Currently, each class base has access to listening centres, televisions, videos and computers. Although there are sufficient resources overall, the small number available for each class at any one time means that whole-class teaching is problematic. Careful planning enables Year 1 teachers to teach the units of the ICT scheme



over a period of time and thus statutory requirements are met. By keeping a rota system of computer use, staff ensure that all pupils have experienced the designated teaching unit. In this, the support of teaching assistants is invaluable. In Year 2, pupils have the opportunity to use the junior school ICT suite on a fortnightly basis and this accelerates their progress. Overall, however, the restricted amount of time pupils can have using computers limits their achievement, which is satisfactory overall.

65. Pupils enjoy using computers. By Year 2, they use menus confidently and use a word processing program to create a set of simple sentences. They gain experience of a variety of uses, for example creating pictures using a painting program and controlling a programmable toy. They use CD-ROMs to find the answers to questions about other countries and animals that live there.
66. The leadership and management of the subject are good. A careful check has been maintained to ensure that, despite the resourcing difficulties, pupils have sufficient experience of ICT. Sensible linking of the classroom computers means that there is a core of programs for teachers to use with pupils. Good attention has been given to teachers' professional development and this has enabled them to gain the skills they need to teach and to keep up with modern developments. Additionally, the co-ordinator has very positive plans for the development of the subject, in particular, to facilitate more whole class teaching in ICT.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

67. Where links are made with other subjects there is undoubted benefit to the pupils. A video about life in Tanzania, watched by Year 2 pupils, for example, offered an effective comparison between life style and culture. Other pupils, exploring a CD-ROM, were able to discover facts about Africa as a follow up to their African drumming workshops held during the week. Although such experiences are positive, there is insufficient planning to maximise their number in supporting learning in other subjects.

### **HUMANITIES**

68. As there was only a very limited amount of teaching to be seen during the inspection in religious education, history and geography, work in each was sampled. It is not possible to give an overall judgement on provision. The evidence available from work in books and on display and discussion with pupils indicates that they are working at the appropriate level.
69. In **religious education**, teachers' plans, discussion with the co-ordinator and work on display, show that the school provides worthwhile opportunities for learning. The school ensures that statutory requirements are met through the use of the locally agreed syllabus.
70. There is good evidence from displays around the school that pupils learn about a range of faiths and that religion is being linked interestingly to their everyday lives. Year 2 children, for example, have been working on identifying beliefs and practices in naming ceremonies, focusing on Christian christening and Islamic welcoming ceremonies. They had considered ways in which new babies are welcomed and had had good opportunities to develop their writing skills by making congratulation and invitation cards and baby books.
71. Teachers use the local community well by arranging visits to the local mosque and to a church to help pupils learn about Islamic and Christian traditions and celebrations. In the autumn term, pupils studied how religious people celebrate special festivals, including Eid, Diwali and Christmas. Parents spoke positively about the inclusion of all pupils in the Eid and Christmas parties.
72. Subject leadership and management are good. The co-ordinator is an effective and enthusiastic advocate for the subject. She is proactive in her approach and has devised a written scheme based on the new locally agreed syllabus, which gives a very clear vision for

the future development of the subject. She has made a good start in ensuring pupils have access to a range of good quality resources to appeal to the different ways pupils learn. These include videos, artefacts, such as oils of frankincense and myrrh, and big books to develop links with literacy and jigsaws.

73. In **geography**, there is clear evidence that teachers make the work interesting and relevant by linking activities to other areas of the curriculum. Pupils in Year 1, for example, had drawn pictorial representations of their way to school and mapped routes to the junior school. This work had been well linked to work in mathematics as the pupils had estimated and then measured the time each route took. They were able to express their views on what they liked and disliked about the environment surrounding the school. Pupils have clearly enjoyed their work. They spoke with enthusiasm about their visit to a local village and were able to discuss similarities and differences between where they live and the village environment.
74. A strong feature of the work in **history** is the way teachers make good use of artefacts to make the work interesting and relevant. Year 2 pupils were contributing to a toy museum, which included pictures and photographs depicting life in the last 100 years. Good links with parents and grandparents were reinforced by them answering a questionnaire with their children about favourite toys past and present. Pupils were given the opportunity to examine a range of interesting toys and to further develop their historical skills and knowledge through researching, using books and ICT programs.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

75. No lessons were seen in art and design or design and technology as the school was engaged in a curriculum enrichment week and only one lesson was seen in physical education. It is not possible, therefore, to make a firm judgement about provision or standards. Inspectors, however, spoke to the subject co-ordinators about their work, to pupils about what they had learnt and looked at pupils' work. They also discussed with the co-ordinators and pupils the displays of work around the school. No work in music was seen, so this subject is not reported on.
76. It is evident from this and from the agreed scheme of work and policy, that provision for **art and design** covers the areas of the National Curriculum programmes of study. There were sufficient examples of painting, printing and textile work to judge that pupils have had access to the full curriculum. The co-ordinator has recently compiled a new scheme of work to improve provision across the school. Art and design is often taught alongside other subjects, notably science and ICT, where pupils draw representations of vegetables and fruit and create computer generated faces. In Year 1, pupils create observational drawings and make shape and object rubbings. Painted bags create a link with design and technology. In Year 2, collage work illustrations of 'Jamil and his Clever Cat' make a link with literacy. A corridor gallery shows examples of work from all classes.
77. In **design and technology**, pupils gain suitable experience of the use of various materials, techniques and mechanisms in designing and making products. Year 1 pupils create figures with moving joints and design bags decorated with patterns. Year 2 pupils make a toy with a winding mechanism and also cut and join materials to create puppets.
78. In **physical education**, there is a comprehensive scheme of work that covers the skills for gymnastics, dance and ball skills. During the one Year 1 lesson observed, pupils warmed up appropriately and explored a range of stretched and curled shapes, firstly on the floor and then in groups, around various pieces of apparatus. They were able to demonstrate effective sequences of movement and used the apparatus sensibly and quietly. Pupils were quick to respond to teacher directions and advice.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

79. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good. The caring school ethos supports pupils' personal development very well. All adults set an example that pupils are able to follow in learning to care for themselves and each other. Pupils benefit from a well-planned programme of personal, social and health education. They enjoy and gain confidence in the small discussion groups at 'circle time'. Simple games including '*Pass the ripple*' encouraged pupils to take turns, in a quiet, expectant atmosphere. They shared their ideas and listened well to others whilst considering friendship and keeping healthy. The school's 'healthy school' status is valued and healthy eating is carefully promoted through the provision of drinking water and fruit at break time.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

### *Inspection judgement*

### *Grade*

<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4

<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>5</b>
Pupils' achievement	4

<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	5
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>4</b>
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
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	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
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	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3

<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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