

INSPECTION REPORT

Pirton Hill Infant School

Luton

LEA area: Luton

Unique reference number: 109574

Headteacher: Miss D Thompson

Lead inspector: Mr L Lewin

Dates of inspection: 3rd – 6th November 2003

Inspection number: 260566

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:	4 – 7 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	243
School address:	Butely Road Luton
Postcode:	LU4 9EX
Telephone number:	01582 507924
Fax number:	01582 490551
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs S Stiff
Date of previous inspection:	September 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is situated on the northwest outskirts of Luton on an established estate of council and privately owned houses. Pupils are drawn from the local housing area, but because of the school's popularity around 50 per cent of the pupils come from an adjacent catchment zone of socially deprived housing. Their attainment on entry is generally below average. There is a high level of unemployment in the area and 36 per cent of pupils are currently known to be eligible for free school meals. Around two thirds of the pupils are from white British heritage backgrounds with around one third coming from a broad range of ethnic minority groups. The school has an above average number of pupils (24) on roll who speak English as an additional language, many of whom receive support as they are at the early stages of English language acquisition. The school has one pupil on roll with refugee status and three traveller pupils. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs, currently running at 18 per cent, is similar to other schools nationally, but has increased significantly over the last two years. The proportion of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs is below the national average. Seventeen pupils joined and 15 left the school other than at the usual times of leaving/joining, which represents a higher rate of mobility than is noted in most other schools nationally.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
22330	Mr L Lewin	Lead inspector	Science, Art and design, Design and technology, Music, Physical education, English as an additional language and Equality of opportunity.
14032	Mrs M Saunders	Lay inspector	
21034	Mr S Smith	Team inspector	Mathematics, Information and communication technology, History, Geography, Religious education and Special educational needs.
8845	Mrs H Sumner	Team inspector	English and Foundation Stage.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school with a welcoming atmosphere and strongly inclusive ethos. Strong leadership has enabled a good rate of improvement. Good teaching enables pupils to achieve well by the end of Year 2. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Very good systems for support and guidance result in pupils feeling happy, secure and confident.
- Strong provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development result in pupils behaving well and relating well to each other and adults with whom they work.
- Systems for supporting pupils with special educational needs and for whom English is an additional language are good.
- Teaching assistants work very effectively alongside teachers to support pupils' learning.
- The school has established strong links with parents.
- The school's results in the national tests for Year 2 pupils are not good enough.
- Sometimes work provided for Year 1 pupils does not challenge them sufficiently.
- The roles of the subject co-ordinators are under-developed.
- Information and communication technology is not sufficiently developed across the curriculum.

The school has successfully addressed all of the key issues raised in its last inspection and despite considerable changes in the teaching staff has managed to sustain a good rate of improvement. Considerable improvement has been made to the curriculum, thorough procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress have been introduced and robust systems have been developed to monitor the quality of work across the school.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

*Key: A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average
Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals.*

Overall, achievement is good. Children begin school showing below average and sometimes well below average attainment. Most children in the Foundation Stage work hard and achieve well and are on course to meet the expected levels in all of the areas of learning, by the time they start Year 1, except for personal, social and emotional development and physical development where they are likely to exceed the expected levels. Achievement in Year 1 is satisfactory and pupils are not always sufficiently challenged by the work provided. In Year 2, most pupils achieve well and are on course to meet the expected levels in reading, writing, mathematics, science, information and communication technology, religious education, history and geography. Not enough evidence was collected during this inspection to make judgements about standards in other subjects. The school's results in the national tests have improved over the last few years and reflect a sound picture in comparison with other similar schools. However, the results are still not good enough in comparison to other schools nationally.

Pupils' personal development is good. It is promoted well by the good overall provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils throughout the school are happy, secure and confident in their work and play. They relate well towards each other and adults with

whom they work and have a positive attitude towards learning. Despite the full efforts made by the school to promote good attendance, the rate of absence remains above average and attendance is unsatisfactory.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching and learning are good.

Pupils are consistently well managed by their teachers and generally try hard with their work. Very good relationships between staff and pupils strongly support pupils' learning. Lessons are generally well planned and proceed at a good pace. Teaching is sometimes very good in the Foundation Stage and in Year 2. Teaching assistants carry out their roles very effectively providing strong support for individuals and groups of pupils. The school has thorough and well used systems for assessing pupils' progress. Teachers do not always make enough use of ICT facilities to support pupils' learning. Sometimes work provided for Year 1 pupils does not challenge them sufficiently.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are very good. The work of the governors is satisfactory. The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide strong leadership for the school. Despite significant changes in the teaching staff over recent years they have managed to sustain the good rate of improvement and they ensure that there is a clear vision for the school's future educational direction. They work in close partnership and provide an atmosphere in which the staff work together as a fully committed and enthusiastic team. The school adopts a rigorous approach towards its self-evaluation. While some subject co-ordinators carry out their roles effectively, overall, the roles of subject co-ordinators need further development. The governors are appropriately informed about and involved in the school's management.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have a high regard for the work of the headteacher and staff and have no significant concerns. Pupils whose views were sought in Years 1 and 2 are very positive about all aspects of school life.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Further improve standards in English and mathematics so that the school's results in national tests at least match the results of other schools nationally.
- Improve teaching in Year 1 to ensure that work always matches the needs of the pupils.
- Further develop the roles of the subject co-ordinators.
- Fully develop the use of information and communication technology across the curriculum.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Overall, pupils achieve well in both the Foundation Stage and at Key Stage 1. Achievement in Year 1 is satisfactory and the school has identified rightly that improvement is needed in this year group in order to bring it into line with achievement throughout the rest of the school. By Year 2, most pupils attain average standards.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have improved since the school's last inspection but results in national tests are still not as good as most other schools nationally.
- The school has been successful in increasing the number of pupils who manage to reach the higher levels in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 2.
- Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language achieve well.
- Pupils in Year 1 do not always work at a sufficiently demanding level.

Commentary

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	14.3 (14.5)	15.9 (15.8)
Writing	14.0 (14.0)	14.8 (14.4)
Mathematics	15.0 (16.0)	16.4 (16.5)

There were 81 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

1. Compared to other schools nationally, the school's results are well below average in reading and mathematics and below average in writing. The picture is significantly better when compared to other similar schools, with results being average in reading and mathematics and above average in writing. Overall, good teaching helps pupils to achieve well in these areas so that although they come into school at the Foundation Stage mostly showing below, and sometimes well below average attainment, by the end of Year 2, the majority attain the levels expected for their age.
2. Inspection observations show that most children in the Foundation Stage work hard and achieve well and are on course to meet the expected levels in all of the areas of learning, by the time they start Year 1, except for personal, social and emotional development and physical development where they are likely to exceed the expected levels. However, the evidence from samples of work seen and lesson observations, indicates that the good progress being made by children in the Foundation Stage is not sustained at the same tempo in Year 1. Although Year 1 pupils make sound progress, some of the work is undemanding and does not extend their skills, knowledge and understanding sufficiently. For example, in science work carried out by Year 1 pupils last year, too many examples are seen of pupils colouring in pictures – work that does little to extend their scientific skills. Similarly, in English and mathematics, pupils do not always achieve as much as they could do. The school has rightly identified the need to boost performance at Year 1 and has assigned the deputy headteacher to work as part of the teaching team in this ¹year group. Already, this year, signs of improvement are apparent with good coverage of work noted in pupils' books since the beginning of the year when the deputy headteacher became year group leader.

¹ The deputy headteacher will take up this role of working as part of the Year 1 teaching team in the near future after a prolonged period this term during which she has been covering for the headteacher who has been away on sick leave.

3. Year 2 pupils progress at a good rate and samples of work from last year's cohort show much in-depth coverage of work. Good and sometimes very good teaching ensures that they achieve well. In response to an analysis of previous national test performances teachers have placed an increased emphasis on extending higher attaining pupils and have thereby succeeded in increasing the number of pupils reaching the higher levels in the 2003 tests. The school now correctly identifies the need to further improve the performance of the middle and lower attaining pupils in order to match its test results to other schools nationally and the work currently underway to improve Year 1 performance is a key feature within this initiative.
4. Careful planning and effectively targeted support ensures that all pupils with special educational needs and for whom English is an additional language achieve well. Although the content of work carried out by these pupils may not always be as detailed as their classmates, the good support provision ensures that they cover the same areas as the others.
5. The development of speaking skills tends to be slow in Year 1, with many pupils only providing one word answers during discussion work. By Year 2, progress in speaking improves as pupils engage in paired work and are asked to explain their points of view. Most pupils become competent readers by the end of Year 2, but the school has rightly identified the need to improve pupils' comprehension skills and places a good emphasis on developing this area during guided reading sessions. Pupils usually make effective use of dictionaries, contents lists and indexes, but library skills are underdeveloped. Writing skills are improving and now broadly in line with those in reading by the end of Year 2. Virtually all pupils grasp that sentences need to make sense and pupils learn about different types of writing and are beginning to apply the ideas learned in their own writing. Some good examples are seen of pupils producing written accounts in science, but generally pupils do not extend their writing skills sufficiently in other subjects.
6. The scrutiny of Year 2 pupils' mathematics work shows that they cover much work across the year, but the coverage in Year 1 is not so extensive and does not always extend pupils' skills sufficiently. By the end of Year 2, pupils use the correct mathematical language confidently, show a sound ability to recall simple number facts and know the names of common two and three-dimensional shapes.
7. By the end of Year 2, pupils have lots of experience of practical investigations in science and gain a broad understanding. Pupils record their observations carefully and a significant minority of pupils are starting to develop the higher level skills of predicting what will happen and drawing conclusions in their practical work.
8. Pupils show appropriate skills in information and communication technology (ICT) by the end of Year 2, but do not make enough use of these skills in supporting their learning in other subjects.
9. Standards of work in religious education have improved since the last inspection so that most pupils' now meet the expected levels in their work by the end of Year 2. The samples of pupils' work seen in history and geography indicate pupils meet the expected levels in Year 2. In all other subjects insufficient evidence was collected during this inspection to enable judgements about standards to be made.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour throughout the school are **good**. In the reception classes they are **very good**. Pupils' personal development is **good**. Promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **good overall** and **very good** with their moral development. Attendance is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is very successful in fostering very positive relationships throughout the school.

- The school is very effective in ensuring that all forms of bullying and harassment are dealt with.
- The school has very high expectations of pupils' behaviour and procedures are applied consistently throughout the school.
- All pupils are treated equally and with respect.
- Pupils have a very good understanding of the principles of right and wrong.
- In spite of the very good systems in place to support parents in raising the level of attendance, not all parents ensure the good attendance of their children.

Commentary

10. A major strength of the school is the strength of relationships, both between pupils and between pupils and adults. Pupils believe that they are treated fairly and have high regard for the care and approachability of all staff. This has a significant effect on both pupils' academic progress and personal development, as pupils are able to work co-operatively on projects from an early age. Pupils from a wide range of social and cultural backgrounds work and play well together.
11. The school's system of rewards and sanctions is clearly understood by all pupils. Assertive discipline is well used to increase pupils' self esteem. Whilst behaviour in lessons is generally good and sometimes very good, some pupils with special education needs can be disruptive if not appropriately supported. This can prevent progress for the whole class. Behaviour and attitudes in the reception classes are very good. Children are quickly learning how to behave and show great enthusiasm and interest in all their activities.
12. Provision for pupils' personal development, including their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development, has improved since the last inspection. There is now a planned approach to assemblies and whilst opportunities for spiritual development are not planned through the curriculum, there were good examples of pupils listening and reflecting. In a reception dance class, the whole class listened with rapt attention to *The Dance of the Sugar Plum Fairy*. The school has developed a cross curriculum plan for cultural development and is raising pupils' awareness of other cultures through both assemblies and within religious education lessons. Pupils' social development is significantly enhanced by the very positive ethos within the school that centres on respect and equality. Pupils' moral development is very good as a result of the consistent and very effective approach throughout the school to promoting pupils' good behaviour.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	7.4	School data	0.6
National data	5.4	National data	0.5

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

13. Pupils' attendance is unsatisfactory with an above average rate of unauthorised absence. The school has taken effective steps to reduce the level of unauthorised absence but this has not yet had a positive effect on the overall attendance rate. The School Family Worker makes a very good contribution to improving attendance by working closely with families to help overcome any difficulties that may prevent them from getting pupils to school. Procedures for monitoring attendance are very good, and the school makes effective use of the education welfare officer when appropriate.

Ethnic background of pupils**Exclusions in the last school year**

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	81	0	0
White – any other White background	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	15	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	4	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani	2	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	3	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	26	0	0
Black or Black British – African	4	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	2	0	0
Any other ethnic group	2	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	1	0	0

The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education across the school is good overall.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good overall. Good systems are in place for assessing pupils' attainment and progress.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are consistently well managed
- Very good relationships between staff and pupils strongly support pupils' learning.
- Effective lesson planning ensures that work usually proceeds at a good pace.
- Teaching is sometimes very good in the Foundation Stage and in Year 2.
- Teaching assistants carry out their roles very effectively.
- Insufficient use is made of ICT facilities to support teaching and learning.
- Sometimes work provided for Year 1 pupils does not challenge them sufficiently.
- Some afternoon lessons are too long and involve pupils in too much sitting and listening.

Commentary**Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 49 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (2%)	8 (16%)	24 (49%)	12 (25%)	4 (8%)	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.

14. In all classes teachers lay a careful emphasis upon pupils following the code of behaviour laid down. They are consistent and persistent in ensuring that pupils know exactly the kind of behaviour that is expected of them. High expectations for work and pupils' behaviour are set in a clear and supportive way and pupils respond by trying hard for their teachers. Even pupils with behavioural difficulties, whilst occasionally struggling with their own behaviour, work through these difficulties because they understand that the staff are trying to help them. As a result of good classroom management, lessons are usually conducted in a calm and purposeful atmosphere and any distraction to pupils' concentration is minimised. Teachers and teaching assistants have a very good rapport with all of the pupils and a detailed understanding of their individual needs. Many of the pupils show a strong affection and respect for the staff and are therefore eager to work hard to please them. Teachers and teaching assistants capitalise fully on the strong relationships established with the pupils, using this as a basis for encouraging and boosting the confidence of individuals as appropriate. This approach is particularly successful in boosting the performance of pupils with special educational needs and for whom English is an additional language. As a result, through careful prompting and guidance from staff, these pupils make good progress with their learning and cover the same areas of work as their fellow classmates.
15. Teachers generally plan and prepare their lessons well. All required resources are ready to hand so that there are no hold ups for activities. The lesson objectives are clearly defined and explained to pupils and activities are carefully explained so that all pupils usually know exactly what to do and get on without the need to ask too many questions. Subject co-ordinators mainly do a good job of writing the lesson planning for their subject areas and, in this way, teachers support each other well.
16. In the very good lessons seen in the Foundation Stage and in Year 2, teachers showed a particularly enthusiastic approach that enlivened the work and got the pupils working in a motivated way. For example, the very dramatic way in which the 'big book' story of *Little Red Riding Hood* was told by one of the Foundation Stage teachers meant that every child was spellbound and fully involved. Similarly, the energetic and interesting explanations about electricity by a Year 2 teacher meant that all pupils thought very deeply about the concepts involved and worked at a rapid pace to finish the activities provided. Teaching assistants often play a key role in supporting the pace of work in these very good lessons. For example, the specialist teaching assistants who support pupils for whom English is an additional language do a very effective job of prompting pupils and maintaining their understanding during teachers' explanations and class discussions.

Example of outstanding practice

An excellent presentation of a history theme helped pupils to develop a very sensitive awareness to the issues surrounding wars past and present.

In a Year 2 lesson, the teacher provided a newspaper illustration and a photograph of a French poppy field as a stimulus for discussion. Excellent questioning, with questions such as 'Why do you think it is important to remember?' very much engaged the hearts and minds of the pupils with many of them showing, through their comments, a deep insight into the cost of wars in human terms.

17. Teaching assistants provided very effective support for teachers and pupils. They work in close partnership with the teachers, are fully briefed about the work planned and play a pivotal role in helping teachers manage the work of different groups of pupils. In particular, they provide strong and intensive support for lower attaining pupils, pupils with special educational needs and pupils for whom English is an additional language. They interact very well with all of these groups and individuals, supporting them during class discussions, keeping them precisely focused on the work and providing advice and support where needed. As a result, all of these pupils develop good self-esteem and a 'have a go' mentality with all assignments attempted.
18. The school has established very thorough systems for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. Much useful error analysis is carried out from tests done by the pupils and this information as well as information from regular ongoing assessment is used well by teachers to

inform future lesson plans. However, despite the good use of assessment in this way, some teachers are not sufficiently accurate when assessing the levels attained by pupils. Occasionally, some of the work set for pupils in Year 1, does not extend their skills sufficiently and it is likely that inaccuracy in assessing levels of attainment may be at the root of this problem. In the very small number of unsatisfactory lessons seen in Year 1, work being too easy for the pupils was the main cause of difficulty that inhibited pupils' progress. Some of the lessons organised for the afternoon sessions are very long. A few lessons seen in the afternoons also involved long periods of sitting on the carpet in discussion or listening to the teacher and, during these times, pupils became restless and struggled to maintain their concentration.

19. A few of the teaching staff make a good effort to use the school's ICT facilities to support teaching and learning. However, in the main, teachers do not make sufficient use of computers to boost pupils' learning.

The curriculum

The overall quality of the curriculum is sound with good provision made for the Foundation Stage. Sound provision is made for the school's accommodation and resources, although library accommodation is currently too small.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Curriculum planning is well organised.
- The school adopts a very inclusive approach towards promoting pupils' learning.
- Provision for supporting pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Provision for pupils with English as an additional language is good.
- Insufficient use is made of ICT to support learning across the curriculum.

Commentary

20. Children in the Foundation Stage benefit from the provision of an up-to-date and well planned curriculum. Teachers provide the children with a wide range of interesting activities and ensure that all of the areas of learning are covered fully. There is a good balance and blend between structured practical activities that enable children to learn through exploration and more formal activities that require children to work together with their teacher or teaching assistant. The curriculum for Years 1 and 2 is broad and balanced and work is particularly well organised and planned to help pupils acquire the literacy and numeracy skills they need. The strength of this provision lies in the well organised planning for these subjects. The school also has a good system through which subject co-ordinators write the planning for their subjects. This not only helps teachers provide strong support for each other, but also strengthens the school's ability to monitor the work that is taught and ensure that pupils' learning is organised in a continuous and progressive manner. This is an area of particular improvement since the last inspection. The school has also created a clear and detailed curriculum overview plan that is enabling the teachers to make suitable links between subjects.
21. The school ensures that all pupils, regardless of ability, gender or ethnicity have equal access to the opportunities it provides. Teachers and teaching assistants are vigilant in ensuring that all individuals have every opportunity to participate in activities. In particular, staff are very skilled in boosting pupils' confidence and creating an atmosphere in the classrooms where all individuals feel comfortable to join in.
22. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good overall, and is well led by the special educational needs co-ordinator. Through planned training and support from the co-ordinator, teachers provide good quality individual education plans based on manageable targets for improvement and which include full details about the levels of support and the resources needed. Teachers ensure that pupils have a good awareness of their targets so that they know what is expected of them. Pupils are fully integrated into the life of the school, and the positive self-esteem that they display and the good progress they make are indications of the high quality of care they receive. Similarly, the provision for supporting pupils who speak

English as an additional language is good and well managed by the co-ordinator for this area. The specialist teaching assistants assigned to this area of support work closely with the co-ordinator and the teachers to ensure that full use of their time is utilised in the best way to support the pupils concerned. They monitor, guide and advise individual pupils effectively during lessons, synchronising their efforts very carefully with the way that the teacher is working with the rest of the class.

23. Teachers make some suitable use of ICT in their lessons to support pupils' learning, but generally the use of computers to support different subjects is underdeveloped. For example, too little use is made of computers to research for information.
24. The school accommodation is satisfactory overall and is kept very clean. However, the library is insufficient in terms of size and the range of books available and the school has rightly earmarked this as an early priority for further development.
25. The many attractive displays of pupils' work successfully celebrate the achievements of individual pupils and brighten the working environment throughout the school. Generally there is a good level of resources to support teaching and learning. However, there are not enough resources available to support work in design and technology.

Care, guidance and support

Provision for pupils' care, welfare, health and safety is **very good**. Overall provision for the support, advice and guidance for pupils based on monitoring of their progress is **good**. Arrangements for seeking and acting on pupils' views are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have an excellent level of regard and trust for adults throughout the school.
- Parents view the school as very caring.
- Provision for monitoring the progress of those pupils not achieving their targets is very good.
- Induction arrangements for pupils are very good.
- Very good use of the family worker to provide support and guidance to families.
- School has a strong commitment to keeping pupils with behaviour difficulties in mainstream education.

Commentary

26. Through the very good relationships established between staff and pupils, the school has successfully created an atmosphere in which pupils feel safe and secure. Pupils have a high regard for the staff and there is an excellent level of trust and mutual respect between the staff and the pupils. All pupils are known well by most adults in the school. Many of the midday supervisors work in classes during the day. This ensures a positive continuity of approach toward pupils between the classroom and the playground.
27. Parents support the view that this is a very caring school with a high emphasis placed upon pupils' personal development and safety. Arrangements for dealing with routine health and safety matters are good and the site manager is an integral part of the school community. Arrangements for first aid are good. There is good monitoring of minor accidents and arrangements for notifying parents of minor incidents. Parking outside the school at the start of the day and at home time is a hazard to the pupils' safety. The school is trying hard to dissuade parents from parking outside the school. Unfortunately, not all parents are co-operating.
28. In English and mathematics, pupils have individual targets. These are closely monitored and analysed and potential reasons for not meeting them are recorded.
29. Induction arrangements for both the Foundation Stage class and Year 1 are very good. The extensive programme of home visits undertaken by the family worker and staff provides a very useful initial assessment of pupils' abilities, which takes account of parents' views of what their child can do. The involvement of the family worker during the induction also provides a strong

link with parents should support be required at a later stage. The school is forging positive links with the large number of feeder playgroups.

30. Provision for supporting and guiding pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language is good. The school is rightly proud of its commitment to provide mainstream education for a number of pupils with behaviour difficulties. In most cases, pupils are effectively managed and respond well to the school's behaviour policies and code of behaviour. The assertive discipline policy is proving particularly effective with these pupils.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school's links with parents and with other schools is good. Links with the community are satisfactory overall, but with good links established with pre-school parents through the school's 'family worker' (see separate section on page 16).

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents are provided with very good information about the school, the curriculum and pupils' progress.
- The school is very active in seeking and acting upon parents' views.
- The school is open and welcoming to parents.

Commentary

31. Each term parents are told about the curriculum and the school produces a very informative prospectus. Annual written reports on pupils' progress usefully include individual targets for improvement in English and mathematics. Pupils' contributions to the reports, with their own assessment of what they are good at and where they can improve, also improve the parents' knowledge of how well their children are doing.
32. Good procedures are in place to survey parents' views. An annual questionnaire is sent to parents and the responses are analysed and acted upon. For example, the school has responded to the request to provide more notice about forthcoming dates for class assemblies and to provide curriculum information more frequently. Parents are welcomed into school although few take up the school's invitation for them to help in the classrooms. Parents make good use of the opportunity to speak to class teachers at the end of the school day.
33. There are strong social links with the junior school. Year 2 pupils attend events at the school and Year 3 pupils return to events at the infant school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management of the school are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher and deputy headteacher provide strong leadership for the school.
- There is a clear vision for the school's future educational direction.
- Staff work together as a fully committed and enthusiastic team.
- The school adopts a rigorous approach towards its self-evaluation.
- While some subject co-ordinators carry out their roles effectively, overall, the roles of subject co-ordinators need further development.

Commentary

34. The headteacher has a dynamic approach and has worked energetically to enable the school to make good progress in its improvements since the last inspection. As well as ensuring that all of the key issues from the last inspection were fully addressed and resolved she has ensured that curriculum development continues at a good pace, has installed rigorous systems for monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning and the curriculum and enabled the school to develop very thorough systems for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. Through comprehensive analysis of the assessment information and thorough self-evaluation of current systems, she

ensures that strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning and the curriculum are clearly isolated to help further improvement in the quality of education. She is fully supported by and works in close partnership with the deputy headteacher who also fulfils all of her leadership roles energetically and efficiently.

35. Together, the headteacher and deputy headteacher have established a clear vision for the future educational direction of the school, which is clearly expressed in the good quality and detailed school improvement plan. They have also promoted an atmosphere in which the staff work together as an enthusiastic, committed and effective team. This has been no mean feat in the face of a high level of staff turbulence faced by the school over the past few years. In the light of this turbulence, priorities have been rightly established to develop the roles of the co-ordinators now that the school has a more settled team. Much of the work done by the co-ordinators has been good, especially in the area of devising schemes of work and planning for colleagues. English, mathematics, science, the Foundation Stage, special educational needs and support provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language have all been well managed, but co-ordination of ICT is weak with a lack of clarity as to how this area is maintained and developed. Overall, the school recognises the need to get all co-ordinators to play a bigger part alongside the senior management team in monitoring teaching and learning and to increase their role in sharing in the creation of the school development plan.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	620945	Balance from previous year	88275
Total expenditure	658353	Balance carried forward to the next	50869
Expenditure per pupil	2664		

36. Overall, the work of the governors is satisfactory and they are appropriately informed about and involved in the school's management. In particular, they maintain a clear overview of the school's finance and, working closely with the headteacher and administration officer, ensure that the best use is made of the budget available.

COMMUNITY PROVISION

The school makes good provision in this area.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good provision to support parents whose children are soon to start school.
- Good provision for teaching parents about numeracy and how it is taught to their children.

Commentary

37. The school provides good facilities for supporting parents and involving them in their children's learning. For example, the family worker, employed through the Luton Council 'Flying Start' programme, provides very effective support for parents whose children will soon start school. She currently organises stay and play sessions for around 20 parents with pre-school children. These sessions concentrate on providing parents with structured and unstructured opportunities to play with their children and effectively build up ideas about learning through play that can be used at home. In addition, a family numeracy course is provided using outside tutors for Year 2 pupils and parents. The tutors that visit the school to provide this support, set up good relationships with the parents involved and give them a clear insight into the way in which the pupils are taught mathematics at school.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

38. Standards achieved by the majority of four to five year olds in the reception class generally match those expected of children in the age group, though attainment in a few of the six areas of learning sometimes exceeds them. The provision for the age group is **good** and children at all levels of prior attainment achieve well, the majority building effectively on below average standards at their time of entry into the school. The children work to an up to date and well planned curriculum. Teaching is almost always good and occasionally very good. Standards have improved since the time of the last inspection.
39. The co-ordination of the Foundation Stage is good. It is informed by a clear vision and the intention to effect improvements. These are shared by all the staff involved who are dedicated to the interests of the children, their welfare and their achievements and work together as an effective team.
40. The good links with the pre-schools and the very good relationships the school builds with parents before the children arrive ensures that children settle into school quickly. Parents' engagement continues through their good support for the home-school reading arrangements. A well organised assessment system enables the teachers to set appropriate targets for each child, tracking their progress in detail so as to provide appropriately for their needs. A few children have special educational needs that are well addressed through their individual education plans. A significant minority have English as an additional language and their progress is much enhanced by very good, specialist support. This, together with their interaction with other children, contributes to their good achievement by the time they enter Year 1. The school has correctly identified a gap in continuity between the Foundation Stage and Year 1 curricula and, through careful reviews of the work in Year 1, has already taken the first steps to resolve this problem.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well and are on course to exceed the expected level.
- Good teamwork by the staff enhances pupils' development.

Commentary

41. Achievement in this area of learning is good, with almost every child on course to exceed the expected level. They are much helped by the very good quality of the relationships within the Reception department. Staff are very committed and teamwork is very good. Those with special responsibility for children with particular development problems show exceptional levels of care and commitment to their welfare and achievement. The children sense the happy, relaxed atmosphere and learn to treat each other with consideration and respect. They co-operate well in role-play situations and respond with interest in the motivating, whole class sessions. Children share materials when working in groups and show concentration when engaging independently in self-chosen tasks. Teaching is good, with an effective balance between teacher-directed activities and child initiated learning through play. Achievements are reinforced by whole class personal development sessions in which discussion is encouraged. Good attention to developing children's skills of clearing up after activities contributes well to developing attitudes of responsibility. All groups of pupils get on well together.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good and occasionally very good teaching enables children to achieve well.
- Not enough emphasis placed on developing writing skills.

Commentary

42. Provision for children's development in this area leads to good achievement, with the majority working effectively towards the early learning goals, though achievement in writing is less secure. Children's communication skills are well developed for their age, helped by their generally good social development. Teaching is invariably good, sometimes very good, including for those with special educational needs and English as an additional language. Teachers use a good range of motivating strategies, making learning fun whilst establishing good links between the development of speaking and listening, reading and writing skills. Well planned literacy lessons usually contribute to all these aspects. The *Red Riding Hood* story was the focus of attention during the inspection and teachers showed a very imaginative approach as they exploited its potential for the children's development. A striking example was an end of lesson discussion between children and their teacher, who wore a wolf's mask made by the children themselves. Conversation flowed easily as children answered and asked questions about his behaviour in the story. Role-play activities such as 'playing teachers' in the literacy learning corner enhance children's progress still further.
43. The children become familiar with the basic features of books and the clues provided by illustrations. On one occasion, children learned the basic elements of story structure as they contributed to the making of a map to show the route of Red Riding Hood's walk through the woods. They recognise repetitive phrases and experience the pleasure of chanting them. The systematic introduction of every day words, recognisable on sight, combines with the well planned learning of letter sounds to provide a secure basis for helping children learn to read. Amusing strategies, such as the use of imaginative creatures like 'Inky Mouse', make the learning of letter sounds entertaining. Progress in reading is very well managed. It is assessed, and achievements are recorded at least once a week. Writing is the least well developed aspect of children's literacy skills. The school employs appropriately sequenced strategies to support writing skills and the majority of children are achieving satisfactorily. Their writing is obviously written to convey meaning, but a minority are finding it difficult to make significant progress towards the writing of legible letters, largely because of pencil manipulation problems and a too limited emphasis by teachers on developing this area.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching helps children to achieve well.
- A wide range of strategies is used to help children develop the necessary skills.

Commentary

44. Achievement in mathematics is generally good with most children on course to meet the expected level in this area of learning. Teaching is good, with well planned lessons based on clear objectives, which are realised through number games and activities. Relevant mathematical vocabulary such as 'more' and 'less' is emphasised. Thinking as well as memory skills are stressed. A few children, including two who are especially gifted in this area of learning, show above average progress as a result. Children's number sequencing skills and their understanding of the one-to-one match when counting items to ten and over, develop well

in the majority of cases. All children participate enthusiastically in counting songs that are used effectively by the teachers to develop numeracy skills. The sequencing of numbers is also reinforced through child-initiated play with jigsaw puzzles and other tabletop activities. Ideas of capacity develop through sand play, which also enables children to explore shapes as they use various plastic containers. Variations in speed and direction are explored as children play with toy cars on illustrated floor mats and pattern recognition skills are developed through threading activities, for example. Notions of size and height emerge through play with a wide range of construction materials, while role-play involving money provides a motivating opportunity to apply numerical knowledge as children recognise low value coins. Children also have access to computers with numeracy-based programs on which they work amicably together. Playground markings provide for counting games of various kinds and classroom displays include a good range of numeracy support materials to which teachers refer as required.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **good** and has improved since the last inspection when it was unsatisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching helps children to achieve well.
- Children learn through a wide range of interesting experiences.

Commentary

45. Good teaching helps children to achieve well so that the majority are on course to meet the expected level in this area of learning. Children get regular and appropriate experiences in using the computer, though no use of programmable toys such as floor turtles is apparent. The vocabulary of the natural world is emphasised as the currently under-developed outdoor facilities are exploited and story opportunities arise. Teachers encourage children to talk about their views. They are introduced to picture maps to which they respond with interest and understanding. The properties and changes in the state of materials are explored in the contexts of water and sand play and in cooking. Teachers exploit these occasions well, leading children into thought provoking discussions, and giving individuals much encouragement to contribute their observations. Many good opportunities for construction activities are provided. They range from teacher led creative activities to free play with a wide variety of construction kits. Teachers use religious education lessons effectively and the backgrounds of the different ethnic groups in the classes to help children learn about other cultures. For example, children have recently been introduced to Diwali, its customs and artefacts, together with the story of Sita and Rama. Awareness of different countries is effectively enhanced with teachers encouraging pupils' to answer the register in a different language each week. In all these learning opportunities teachers show very good child management skills, offering praise and encouragement, together with support as required. The children respond well.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good teaching results in children achieving well and exceeding the expected level.
- Outdoor facilities are limited.

Commentary

46. Children achieve well and exceed expectations for their age although their work with finer motor skills such as using pencils, paint brushes and scissors is less well developed. Many opportunities are provided for the development of these as children manipulate materials such as play-dough and use cutting and joining skills to construct paper and card items. Refinement

of computer mouse control skills is effectively achieved through such exercises as dragging and dropping items on the computer screen. Outdoor facilities are currently limited – with no suitable large climbing apparatus - as ways to avoid vandalism are explored, but children have access to a satisfactory range of larger, wheeled toys that contribute effectively to the development of balance and co-ordination. Children delight in the very good physical education lessons. The lessons seen included very effective support for children’s learning about the important effects of physical activity on the human body. Children moved very well in response to music and the teachers used the theme of fireworks well to motivate all individuals. The majority showed a good awareness of space and above average flexibility and imagination in their movements as well as good balance and co-ordination. The good provision for the development of these skills contributes significantly to children’s confidence and sense of well being.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good.
- Music is particularly well used to develop pupils’ creative ideas.

Commentary

47. Children usually achieve well and the majority are likely to meet the expected level by the time they reach Year 1. Their artwork includes self portrait collages that involve colour mixing and the use of wool to simulate hair. Teaching is good and ensures that children have a good range of opportunities to explore and develop their skills. For example, children make handprints and collages involving experiments with colours, use computer programs well to make impressive fireworks pictures and make cards and tissue paper divas with card candles to enhance their learning about Diwali. Music is used well by teachers. For instance, effective use of Handel’s fireworks music thoroughly engaged the children’s listening skills and they needed little prompting as they moved arms, hands and fingers to reflect the sounds. They were thrilled by the opportunity that followed to make their own firework music using a range of percussion instruments, responding well to the teacher’s conducting as they played in ensemble. Teaching in this lesson, was especially imaginative in linking the music to the artwork.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Overall good teaching.
- Effective support provided for pupils with special educational needs and for whom English is an additional language.
- The good leadership by the co-ordinator.
- The effective introduction and use of new strategies to raise standards.
- Work is not always sufficiently challenging for pupils in Year 1.

Commentary

48. Achievements in this subject are good overall, though less consistently so in Year 1. Standards in language and literacy are set to be broadly in line with national averages by the end of Year 2. The school’s recent results in national tests for reading and writing have matched those of schools in similar circumstances though not quite reached the national average for schools generally. Current levels of attainment match reading levels at the time of the last inspection,

though comprehension skills are improving as a result of recent initiatives. Standards in writing also show some improvement.

49. The school is determined to continue the current trend of improvement and a significant number of new initiatives have been put in place to achieve this. In particular the current rate of progress of pupils in Year 1 has been correctly targeted as an area for development and, for example, the reorganisation of the teaching team in this year group is a good step in this direction. Work seen carried out by last year's Year 1 pupils indicates that they were not always sufficiently challenged by the work provided so that achievement was satisfactory in contrast to the good achievement for pupils in the Foundation Stage and Year 2. In Year 1 and Year 2, pupils with English as an additional language achieve well as a result of expert support they receive from teaching assistants.
50. The development of pupils' speaking and listening skills in Year 1 tends to be slow. There are opportunities to participate in question and answer activities in the early stages of each lesson, but many pupils in Year 1 do not go much further than one-word answers. By Year 2, progress in speaking improves as pupils engage in paired work and are asked to explain their points of view. Pupils with English as an additional language show enjoyment in communication with their specialist assistant and those with special educational needs extend their vocabulary, and with it, their confidence as they work with their support staff.
51. Year 2 pupils read at a satisfactory level, but the school has rightly identified the need to improve pupils' comprehension skills. A clear focus on this area through the guided reading sessions is already showing signs of success in this area. For example, the emphasis placed on punctuation is beginning to improve expression in reading as well as pupils' writing skills. Below average readers benefit in particular from the extra support in the guided reading lessons. By Year 2, higher attaining pupils are reading more or less fluently. The majority of pupils make good progress in developing their reading skills and confidently talk about the books they have been reading. Some effective use of ICT is seen to boost pupils' reading skills. Classrooms have reasonable stocks of books, but currently, the school library is under-developed as its enlargement in the near future is awaited. Stocks of reading scheme books are good. Older pupils usually make effective use of dictionaries, contents lists and indexes but library skills are underdeveloped.
52. Writing skills are improving and now broadly in line with those in reading. Pupils benefit from good arrangements for the development of spelling, extension of their vocabulary and the effective teaching of basic grammar. Virtually all pupils grasp that sentences need to make sense, with higher achieving pupils writing and punctuating short sequences of them. However, pupils' ability to combine sentences and write for different purposes is generally underdeveloped. Teachers set high expectations in Year 2 and pupils are carefully grouped according to their needs. Pupils study fables and apply the structure of story telling to their own writing. Pupils' work includes occasional poems and lists of instructions and the range of vocabulary used is generally satisfactory, with increasing use of connective words to make more interesting sentences. Higher attainers recognise and use changes in the tense of verbs and make good use of adjectives. Lessons are well constructed and teaching is good and sometimes very good.
53. The subject is led by a dynamic, well informed co-ordinator. She ensures that the monitoring of pupils' achievements is thorough. Additionally, all pupils have personal achievement targets in their literacy books, enabling them to monitor their own progress. The quality of teaching is systematically monitored and the results of national tests carefully scrutinised as a guide to improving standards.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

54. Appropriate opportunities are provided for pupils to extend their literacy skills in other areas of the curriculum. Examples of extended written accounts were noted particularly in science and history.

MATHEMATICS

Provision for mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are improving with an increasing number of pupils reaching the upper levels of attainment.
- Supportive medium term planning is provided.
- Good teaching and learning overall – particular strengths in Year 2
- Teaching assistants provide very effective support for pupils.
- Good leadership and management.
- Year 1 pupils do not always progress as rapidly as they could do.
- ICT is not used enough in some classes to support teaching and learning

Commentary

55. The school's results in the national tests for Year 2 pupils have improved over recent years and most pupils met the expected level in 2003. Inspection observations also confirm this picture for the current cohort of Year 2 pupils. The school has worked hard to improve standards in mathematics and has been successful in increasing the number of pupils who reach the higher levels. However, despite the improvements, the school's results are still not as good as other schools nationally although they are now average in comparison with other similar schools.
56. Overall, pupils make good progress and achieve well by the end of Year 2. However, the school has rightly identified that the overall satisfactory achievement of Year 1 pupils is not good enough compared to the more rapid progress noted for children in the Foundation Stage and pupils in Year 2. The scrutiny of work for pupils in Year 1, in particular, and some of the work seen in lessons confirms this point and indicates that there are too many occasions where all pupils work at the same level and tasks are not always sufficiently demanding and do not aid individuals in progressing as rapidly as they could do. The school has put suitable initiatives in place to help boost performance in this year group; for example, deploying the deputy headteacher to work as part of the Year 1 teaching team and by organising setting to start soon for the classes in this year group. On the back of these initiatives, the planning of lessons for Years 1 and 2 is now good and caters well for the needs of all groups of pupils including those with special educational needs and for whom English is an additional language. The scrutiny of Year 2 pupils' work shows that they cover much work across the year. In both Year 1 and 2 classes teachers place a good emphasis on getting pupils to learn by using and applying their mathematical knowledge in practical tasks.
57. Teaching and learning are good overall. Teachers generally question pupils skilfully so that all individuals are encouraged to think, reason and explain and are fully involved in developing their mental/oral skills. As a result, individuals gain a solid grasp of number facts. Activities are presented in an enthusiastic and interesting way so that all pupils are motivated and keen to complete tasks. The teachers also set high expectations for what pupils should achieve in the time available and mostly explain tasks clearly so that all individuals get on without delay. In one unsatisfactory Year 1 lesson, the pace of work was too slow and the task set did not extend the skills of pupils sufficiently. All teachers concentrate well on the development of mathematical language so that pupils develop a confident approach to using different mathematical terms.
58. Teaching assistants provide very effective support for teachers and pupils and, in particular, they provide strong support for lower attaining pupils, pupils with special educational needs and pupils for whom English is an additional language. Teachers and teaching assistants work well together. They carefully check and assess pupils' work and correct misconceptions during lessons, and, in this way, further enhance pupils' progress. This is backed up by regular formal assessments, which provide clear evidence of progress and evaluations of strengths and

weaknesses. All assessment information is used well to inform future planning. All pupils have individual targets that are regularly reviewed, giving them a good idea of their own progress.

59. Mathematics is well led and managed. The co-ordinator has drawn up a good range of strategies to aid improvement in the subject and through regular monitoring of the teaching and learning and the planning has a clear overview of the strengths and weaknesses across the school. She devises good quality planning for teachers.

Mathematics across the curriculum

60. Mathematics is satisfactorily developed through other subjects of the curriculum, and the school has a clear focus to ensure that as many opportunities as possible are taken to give pupils the chance to apply their knowledge and skills. Although some teachers make appropriate use of ICT facilities to support learning, generally pupils do not have enough chances to improve their learning through the use of computers.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good leadership and management.
- Good focus on developing pupils' learning through practical work.
- Good in-depth coverage of the science curriculum in Year 2, but work in Year 1 is not always sufficiently challenging for pupils.
- Pupils are well managed.
- The way in which teachers question pupils is sometimes not precise enough.
- Tasks set in lessons do not always extend the higher attaining pupils sufficiently.
- Teachers' assessment of the levels attained by pupils are not always accurate.

Commentary

61. The co-ordinator for this subject has a full overview of the quality of work across the school due to her full involvement in activities such as:
- Monitoring and evaluating lessons across the school.
 - Monitoring samples of pupils' work.
 - Writing the medium-term lesson plans for teachers in Year 1 and Year 2 classes.
62. The provision of medium-term plans for teachers provides a solid basis upon which class teachers devise their weekly planning for science lessons and ensures that pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding are built on progressively as they move through the school. Teachers generally use the planning well to ensure pupils' learning is developed through involving them in a good range of interesting practical investigations. Most pupils in Year 2 attain the expected levels in their science work, but the practical work they are given helps them gain a good understanding of how to plan and set up a science investigations and a few exceed the expected levels in this area, showing a basic understanding of the more advanced concepts - the principles of fair testing and the ideas of predicting results and explaining outcomes.
63. Year 2 pupils' work shows much in-depth understanding of the areas covered, with some detailed written accounts that also support the development of their literacy skills well – this indicates that they are taught well during the year. They also record results carefully and accurately in tables and graphs. As a result, these pupils achieve well. However, in Year 1 the coverage of work indicated through a scrutiny of pupils' books shows that while pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall, the work lacks depth and challenge. There is often too much time spent colouring in pictures indicating that opportunities are not fully utilised to extend pupils' scientific skills and understanding.

64. Across the school the quality of teaching and learning seen in lessons was satisfactory overall. However in one good lesson in Year 1 and one very good lesson in Year 2, the succinct and clear explanations and high level of interaction between the teachers and the pupils meant that all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their mother tongue progressed well and adopted a particularly enthusiastic approach towards the tasks provided. In some of the lessons seen, pupils did not progress as rapidly as they could because the teachers' questions during the discussions were not precise enough and this meant that pupils took longer than they should have to develop an understanding of the main concepts taught. Also, too often, teachers set whole class tasks that do not fully extend the higher attaining pupils.
65. The co-ordinator has devised good quality assessment materials to help teachers make regular checks on pupils' progress. However, the school has identified correctly that teachers' assessments of the levels attained by pupils in science are not always sufficiently accurate. This undermines the ability of teachers to further develop within their planning the precision with which they match tasks to suit the needs of pupils.
66. In all classes, teachers are good at managing pupils' behaviour. They are patient and persistent, ensuring that all pupils fully understand the expectations set. As a result, pupils listen carefully and most carry out their science tasks conscientiously.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

The provision for ICT is **unsatisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The mobile suite of lap top computers gives good support to developing pupils' learning.
- Teaching assistants support pupils well.
- Leadership by the co-ordinator is unsatisfactory.
- Some teachers are not confident in using computers.
- ICT is not used consistently to support learning in other subjects.

Commentary

67. Teaching is satisfactory across the school. All lessons observed focused on ensuring pupils acquired sound skills in using ICT and the achievement of pupils is satisfactory. As a result, pupils mostly reach the expected levels showing an appropriate knowledge of how to log on/log off, save/retrieve work and use ICT to record and amend work. They show a suitable knowledge of the keyboard and use the mouse appropriately to access screen facilities. Teaching in one Year 1 class was unsatisfactory, with work provided that did not sufficiently challenge the pupils or extend their skills.
68. Co-ordination of ICT is unsatisfactory. The medium term plans written by the co-ordinator are vague in places and do not provide sufficiently specific learning objectives. The co-ordinator does not have a clear overview of the quality of work across the school or a clear view of future developments in the subject.
69. Teachers have had suitable training to develop their skills and the school now has an appropriate range of resources to support teaching and learning. In particular, the mobile suite of computers is an effective way of ensuring that as many pupils as possible have access to the computers in ICT lessons. Also the interactive whiteboards are used well by a few of the teachers. However, some of the teachers still lack confidence in using the equipment and do not therefore make full use of ICT facilities to support learning.
70. Pupils work well together, and are supportive of each other when working together on the computers. Teaching assistants provide very effective support and guidance for pupils, giving

particularly effective help to lower attaining pupils to ensure individuals are fully focused on the tasks provided and understand what to do.

71. Conversations with pupils and examples of their work show that they regularly use the classroom computers for language and mathematical support activities, but they have no idea of how to use the technology to research a topic. Only limited use is currently made of the Internet by staff and pupils.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

72. During the inspection, very limited use was made of ICT to support learning in other subjects. Teachers make some use of their classroom computers to support pupils' learning in learning in literacy and numeracy but generally computers are not used sufficiently in other subjects.

GEOGRAPHY

One geography lesson was seen and samples of work were scrutinised, but this does not constitute sufficient evidence to make an overall judgement about the quality of provision.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are provided with a good range of interesting activities.
- Good quality displays help to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding.

Commentary

73. Work in pupils' books shows that they cover a good range of interesting geography activities in Years 1 and 2 and there are strong indications that they achieve well and meet the expected level by the end of Year 2. Sound work was seen in carrying out traffic surveys, studying contrasting localities and gaining a basic understanding of maps. Pupils take a keen interest in the travels of 'Barnaby Bear', who often travels with a member of staff's husband and sends postcards from places he visits. An attractive display charts Barnaby's explorations and helps pupils to locate a variety of places at home and abroad. First hand explorations of the locality help pupils to recognise geographical features. Pupils make good use of their literacy skills to produce written accounts in geography.

74. The co-ordinator has produced effective medium-term planning to support the teachers.

HISTORY

Two lessons were seen in history and some work samples were scrutinised, but this did not constitute sufficient evidence to enable an overall judgement about the quality of provision to be made.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' literacy skills are well supported through work in history.
- The subject is well led and managed.

Commentary

75. Pupils achieve well and Year 2 pupils reach the expected level. Pupils cover an appropriate curriculum and learn about a range of famous people and events in British History and make good comparisons of past and present events. For example, in one excellent lesson about 'Remembrance Day', pupils gained a deep insight and awareness into the occurrences of the two world wars and understood that wars from the past and present bring death to many. Pupils responded very well, asking good questions and enthusiastically expressing their points of view.

76. Pupils' literacy skills are developed well in history sessions, with good chances for pupils to write detailed written accounts. Work in lessons and in pupils' books shows that they gain a good understanding of the sequence of events over an historic time-line.
77. The co-ordinator is newly in post, but has already provided medium term planning for the autumn term and developed a good range of resources to support teaching and learning. For example, there is now an appropriate provision of Big Books to support each topic planned. Good systems are in place to ensure that action planning for future developments in this subject is fully effective.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Consistently good teaching.
- Role play is used effectively to promote pupils' learning.
- Occasionally the teaching/discussion sessions are too long.

Commentary

78. Teaching in religious education is consistently good and enables pupils to achieve well and meet the expected level in Year 2. All teachers are well supported by the medium term planning and resources provided by the co-ordinator. Although she is newly in post, she has already provided updated planning, which supports the work of her colleagues well. She has ensured that good opportunities are provided for pupils to fully grasp concepts through practical activities such as role-play and working with artefacts.
79. Teachers focus effectively on discussing pupils' own experiences and, in this way, develop spiritual awareness well. This was seen, for example, in a Year 2 lesson where the teacher's good use of questioning triggered discussion of pupils' experiences with weddings they had attended. Resources for teaching and learning were very well prepared and organised for these sessions so that the activities flowed smoothly and sustained pupils' interest. The good use of role-play helped pupils to develop a clear understanding about the importance of special promises that couples make to each other, the love and care for each other, and the hope through symbols of rings that they would stay together. They talked confidently about and understood the significance of carrying out the wedding ceremony in front of God.
80. All lessons seen contained a good focus on helping pupils to learn the correct vocabulary. ICT was used well to help pupils learn about ceremonies. Occasionally, the time taken for the teacher to talk to pupils or lead discussions at the start of lessons was too long and led to pupils becoming restless.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

81. Two physical education lessons, one music lesson and one art lesson were seen during the inspection. In addition, a very limited sampling of pupils' work was made in art and design and design and technology. This evidence is insufficient to enable an overall judgement about provision to be made in these subjects
82. Year 2 pupils' **artwork** shows that they have an appropriate range of experiences in investigating different uses of colour in painting; for example experimenting with shades when making rainbow patterns. Some good quality, detailed work was seen with pupils making observational sketches of shells. Pupils also have appropriate chances to develop their ability to use patterns, for example in drawing animal camouflage designs. In a Year 2 lesson seen, pupils gained a solid idea about different drawing techniques but too much time spent on discussion and listening to the teacher meant that they became restless with the lack of direct involvement and activity.

83. Some good opportunities were noted for Year 2 pupils to develop their literacy skills in **design and technology**, with detailed written evaluations made of puppets as a forerunner to pupils designing and making their own puppets. Pupils cover an interesting range of work in this subject, including food technology, with, for example, pupils making 'Caribbean Fruit Salads'. They have the chance to make moving picture designs that incorporate pivoting mechanisms and different methods of joining and fixing materials. Much of the work seen has been carried out with care, good attention to detail and good attention to producing an attractive finished product. A scrutiny of the resources area for design and technology indicates that there is not enough equipment readily available to support teaching and learning.
84. The new co-ordinator for **music** has been very active in reviewing systems and setting up new resources for teachers in her short time in post. As a result, teachers now have effective new planning systems and a range of music especially recorded on compact discs to support teaching and learning. Photographic evidence indicates that all pupils across the school have suitable opportunities to carry out work with percussion instruments. Good dramatic presentation by the teacher in a Year 2 lesson seen ensured that pupils were thoroughly engaged in the work. They listened attentively and successfully identified the kind of atmosphere, mood and dynamics of the music played to them, and learned to recognise different rhythm patterns.
85. In a satisfactory Year 1 **physical education** lesson pupils carefully explored different movement ideas and moved with suitable co-ordination when responding to different stimuli and instructions linked to music. They moved around the hall confidently and with good consideration for safety. However, the work was not sufficiently challenging for some of the pupils and missed the opportunity for pupils to evaluate the quality of each other's work. In a good music and movement lesson for Year 2 pupils, the teacher managed pupils' behaviour particularly well to ensure that they all remained clearly focused on the tasks provided. Good emphasis was placed upon pupils understanding the effects of exercise on their bodies. Good chances were provided for pupils to appraise each other's performances and pupils incorporated a good range of movements such as star jumps, walking, hopping and jogging into their sequences.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION (PSHE) AND CITIZENSHIP

86. No lessons were observed in this area and therefore no overall judgement is made about the quality of provision. However, the school schedules regular sessions of PSHE each week and has established a formalised curriculum with medium term plans provided by the co-ordinator for each teacher as a basis for their weekly planning – this ensures that pupils build on their learning in a progressive way as they move through the school. In addition, strands of PSHE are appropriately built into other subjects; for example much attention is given to healthy living within science work.
87. The co-ordinator has successfully established a school council that meets once a week to consider pupils' suggestions for improvements around the school. Pupils are elected through a secret ballot system and carry out their roles properly. The council meetings lead to appropriate actions such as the recent improvements made by the school to lines and markings on the playground. Other activities, such as visiting the local council chambers, writing inserts for the school newsletters and writing to parents about the hazardous car parking outside school are good examples of the useful ways in which the school is developing pupils' understanding of some of the principles of citizenship.

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	3
Attendance	5
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
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	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	4
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
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	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	2
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).