

INSPECTION REPORT

NASCOT WOOD INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL

Watford

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117374

Headteacher: Mrs E Maykels

Lead inspector: Mr P B McAlpine

Dates of inspection: 29 September to 2 October 2003

Inspection number: 261135

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: | 239 |
| School address: | Nascot Wood Road Watford |
| Postcode: | WD17 4YD |
| Telephone number: | 01923 239653 |
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| Appropriate authority: | The governing body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Mrs C Groves |
| Date of previous inspection: | 21-22 November 2001 |

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is about the same size as other infant schools. Currently there are 179 full-time pupils in Reception to Year 2, organised into six classes. A further 60 pupils attend a nursery class part-time, 30 in the morning and 30 in the afternoon. The school is popular with parents and fully subscribed. A junior school to which almost all of the pupils transfer shares the campus.

The backgrounds of the pupils are economically advantaged. About five per cent of pupils are eligible for a free school meal; this is well below average. The school is more ethnically diverse than most with at least twelve groups represented. The bulk of the pupils are from white British families. The main other family backgrounds include Indian, Pakistani, and black Caribbean. Forty-one pupils speak English as an additional language. Most are fluent bilinguals but about three per cent are in the early stages of acquiring English and receive additional support. The main other languages are Urdu, Punjabi, and Chinese. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs, 13 per cent, is below average. Most of the moderate special needs reflect learning difficulties with literacy, a few with numeracy. The more significant needs are linked to speech and language, visual impairment, and physical disability. Pupil mobility¹ is low at about four per cent, with approximately two per cent joining and two per cent leaving during the last academic year. The general standard of attainment on entry is above average, with very wide individual variations.

¹ The term 'pupil mobility' refers to pupils joining or leaving the school at other than the usual times of admission or transfer, which at this school are September or January starts in Reception with transfer to the Juniors at the end of Year 2.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Members of the inspection team | | | Subject responsibilities |
|--------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|---|
| 21552 | Mr P B McAlpine | Lead inspector | English Information and communication technology English as an additional language Special educational needs |
| 9505 | Mr D Haynes | Lay inspector | |
| 11419 | Mrs J Underwood | Team inspector | Foundation Stage Mathematics Arts subjects |
| 30211 | Mr P Meehan | Team inspector | Science Humanities Religious education |

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

The school was last inspected in November 2001 by HMI and taken out of special measures. Previously, the school was inspected in the academic year 1999/2000 to the Framework for inspection introduced in April 1996 and amended in January 2000 and was placed in special measures.

OVERALL EVALUATION

The school is **effective** and provides **good** value for money. Standards are high in English, mathematics and science and the pupils achieve well, reflecting good teaching. The leadership and the management of the school are good overall, with the headteacher providing very clear, purposeful leadership. The headteacher has united the school and is well supported by the governors.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- the pupils **achieve well** in the core² subjects of English, mathematics and science and in these subjects pupils are working to capacity;
- current standards in the core subjects are **high**; they are within the top 25 per cent of all schools and compare well with similar schools;
- standards in the non-core subjects, including information and communication technology, though **average** overall, are lower than the core subjects reflecting some underachievement among the more able pupils in these subjects;
- the pupils' interest in school life, their confidence and self-esteem are **very good**; their behaviour is **good**;
- the teaching is **good** overall, with some high quality teaching in core subjects and in the Foundation Stage;³
- teaching in non-core subjects is **satisfactory** but does not always challenge the more able pupils sufficiently;
- assessment systems in non-core subjects, including information and communication technology, and religious education, are **underdeveloped**.

Improvement since the previous inspection has been **good**. Test results, the quality of teaching, and the progress pupils make in lessons have all improved significantly in English, mathematics and science. The school's response to the previous key issues has been positive and effective.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

| Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with: | all schools | | | similar schools |
|---|-------------|------|------|-----------------|
| | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2002 |
| reading | A | A | A | A |
| writing | B | A* | A* | A* |
| mathematics | B | B | A | A |

Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average

A-very high and in top 5% of schools*

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

The achievement of the pupils in reading, writing, mathematics and science is **good**. In 2002, the test results in Year 2 were well above average in reading, writing and mathematics and compared

² The core subjects are English, mathematics, and science; all of the other subjects form the non-core.

³ The Foundation Stage encompasses the nursery and the Reception year.

very well with similar schools. In writing, the 2002 results were in the top five per cent of schools. The early indications for 2003 are that the results are not as high as 2002 but have been sustained at well above average levels. The standard of current work in reading, writing and mathematics is fully consistent with the test results for 2002 and 2003 and the pupils are working to capacity. The current standard in science is high. Standards in humanities and arts subjects, including information and communication technology, and in religious education, are average. In these subjects, the bulk of the pupils achieve well in relation to their abilities but a few of the most able pupils could do better, reflecting teaching in non-core subjects that does not always challenge the more able pupils sufficiently. Standards in the Foundation Stage are very good; the pupils achieve well and many of them are on course to exceed the goals children are expected to reach by the end of the Reception year. The pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are **good**. The pupils' attitudes, behaviour and attendance are **good**.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The overall quality of education is **good**. Teaching is **good**, particularly in the core subjects, and much improved since the previous inspection. No significant inconsistencies in teaching remain and teaching in English, mathematics and science and in the Foundation Stage is often high quality. In all subjects and lessons, the bulk of the pupils learn quickly and with enjoyment. In core subjects, the more able pupils are consistently challenged and often make rapid progress. In these subjects, teachers are very good at providing motivating tasks at different levels of difficulty, well matched to individual learning needs. In non-core subjects, matching work to individual needs is sometimes as good as in core subjects but not consistently so mainly because assessment arrangements are underdeveloped and work is not always provided at different levels of difficulty. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is regularly high quality and pupils make quick progress, particularly in communication, language and literacy and in their mathematical development. The curriculum throughout the school has good breadth and depth, with particularly good extra-curricular and enrichment provision. Pupils are well cared for and supported, effectively promoting their confidence and self-esteem. Links with parents and the school community are good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are **good**. The leadership of the headteacher is **very good**. She has high aspirations for the school and is motivating her staff very well indeed. The educational direction of the school is clear and sharply focused on improvement. The governing body are effective. Within the past three years, they have successfully recruited a new senior management team, including the headteacher, and an almost entirely new workforce of teachers. They have supported the headteacher well, since her appointment, in her management of the many changes at the school.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are **very satisfied** with the school. About half of all parents responded to the parents' questionnaire, which is high compared to most schools. Responses were very positive. Pupils show **good** levels of satisfaction with the school.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- raise the achievement of the more able pupils in the non-core subjects to at least the same level as in the core subjects;
- increase the effectiveness of teaching in non-core subjects by providing work that is consistently well matched to different learning needs and making better use of assessment information.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement in core subjects is **good**. In the Foundation Stage, overall standards are **above average** in personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; and in mathematical development. By Year 2, standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science are **well above average**. Achievement in non-core subjects is broadly satisfactory and standards are average but the progress of more able pupils in non-core subjects is inconsistent and some of them underachieve. There are no significant differences in attainment between boys and girls or between pupils from different backgrounds and this is better than many schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- In core subjects, almost all of the pupils are working to capacity and attain or exceed nationally expected levels by Year 2.
- A substantial number of pupils with broadly typical attainment in the Reception year make very good progress in Years 1 and 2 and manage to exceed national expectations by the end of Year 2 in reading and mathematics.
- Test results in 2002 and 2003 were in the top 25 per cent of schools nationally and have improved faster than the national trend; results in writing in 2002 were in the top five per cent of schools.
- Test results in 2002 were much better than similar schools.
- In the non-core subjects, the substantial majority of pupils achieve as expected but the more able pupils do not always do as well as they do in the core subjects.

Commentary

1. In most years, between 80 and 90 per cent of the children enter the Reception year with typical or better attainment for their age, including about a quarter whose attainment exceeds national expectations. Currently in the Reception year, almost all pupils in the September intake are on course to attain or exceed the national goals for learning in communication, language and literacy, and in mathematical development, with more than a third likely to exceed expectations. Throughout the school, pupils benefit from good teaching in core subjects; they are very secure in their relationship with the teachers, confident and making quick progress in these subjects. In Year 2, between 90 and 100 per cent of pupils are well on course to attain or exceed nationally expected levels by the end of the school year, including about a quarter in writing and approaching half in reading, mathematics and science likely to exceed expectations. All pupils are stretched by the teaching in core subjects, working to capacity, and achieving as well as or better than similar pupils in other schools. Current standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science are consistent with test results and teacher assessments for 2002 and 2003.
2. Results have been sustained at high levels since the appointment of the current headteacher and show good improvement compared to 1999, particularly in writing and mathematics. The 2002 test results were excellent in writing and very good in reading and mathematics. In 2002, almost all the pupils in reading and all of them in writing and mathematics attained the expected national level, with more than half in reading and mathematics and a quarter in writing attaining a higher-than-expected level. The early indications for 2003 are that the overall results are slightly lower than in 2002 but still within the top 25 per cent of schools. In 2003, almost all of the pupils attained the nationally expected level in all subjects tested and almost half attained a higher-than-expected level in reading and mathematics. The 2003 Year 2 cohort⁴ had more low attaining pupils on entry and fewer high attaining pupils than the previous Year 2 cohort and

⁴ The term 'cohort' is used to describe pupils in the same year group.

this is reflected in the slightly lower results in 2003. Records show that almost the entire 2003 Year 2 cohort made good progress compared to their attainment on entry.

3. The standard of current work in English, mathematics and science is well above average in Year 2. The substantial majority of pupils are already well launched into reading and writing and handle numbers well; they are at least a year ahead of typical pupils in many other schools, with some pupils already two or more years ahead. The standard of work in information and communication technology, religious education, and in other non-core subjects is average. The progress of the substantial majority of pupils in non-core subjects is consistent with expectations but the teaching in these subjects does not always provide work at different levels. The more able pupils sometimes coast through such work and are insufficiently challenged to think harder and deeper than they do.
4. Boys are doing particularly well in reading, writing and mathematics and the wide gap between boys' and girls' standards found nationally is not replicated at the school. The support for pupils with English as an additional language is effective and those at the early stages of acquiring the language make quick progress and soon become confident learners. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds achieve as well as white British pupils; almost all of them attain or exceed the nationally expected standards in core subjects. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is mixed. About half of those on the list are making good progress and records show that many catch up with national expectations by the end of Year 2. The progress of the remaining pupils with special educational needs is very variable, mainly reflecting the significance of the difficulties they face. However, the quality of individual education plans for these pupils is inconsistent and their work is not always focused sharply on their individual learning needs.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2002

| Standards in: | School results | National results |
|---------------|----------------|------------------|
| reading | 18.4 (17.8) | 15.8 (15.7) |
| writing | 16.8 (16.7) | 14.4 (14.3) |
| mathematics | 18.5 (17.2) | 16.5 (16.2) |

There were 59 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

This is a strong aspect of the school; attendance, attitudes, and behaviour are **good**. Pupils regard learning as fun and respond positively to the high expectations of staff. Relationships at all levels are very good. The provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is **good** overall: an improvement since the last inspection when provision was deemed to be satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attendance and punctuality are good.
- Behaviour is good, reflecting the teachers' high expectations.
- Pupils are enthusiastic and eager to learn. They get on very well with each other in lessons and at play time and have effective relationships with teachers.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is an integral part of school life.

Commentary

5. Pupils like school and attend regularly. They are punctual, settle quickly to the daily school routine, and participate widely in the enrichment extra-curricular activities offered. There are high expectations by teachers of pupils' good behaviour in all year groups and pupils live up to these expectations almost all of the time. There is a consistent application of the behaviour policy by both teaching and non-teaching staff and this is the main reason why behaviour is good. No incidents of bullying or other oppressive behaviour was seen and neither is reported as a problem by pupils or parents. There have been no exclusions in recent years

6. Social development is fully integrated into school life. Relationships between pupils and with adults are very good and well demonstrated in class and when moving about the school. Pupils are aware of those less fortunate than themselves. Feelings, values and beliefs of others are addressed well in lessons and through the support of charities, in particular through a link with a school in the Gambia. Pupils eagerly accept responsibility for the day to day running of the school. Pupils demonstrate very high levels of confidence, act as register monitors and class helpers and establish their own class rules. A school council operates effectively and pupils' views are valued.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

| Authorised absence | |
|--------------------|-----|
| School data | 4.8 |
| National data | 5.4 |

| Unauthorised absence | |
|----------------------|-----|
| School data | 0.0 |
| National data | 0.5 |

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

| Categories used in the Annual School Census | No of pupils on roll | Number of fixed period exclusions | Number of permanent exclusions |
|---|----------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| White – British | 85 | 0 | 0 |
| White – any other White background | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Mixed – White and Black Caribbean | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| Mixed – White and Asian | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Mixed – any other mixed background | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Asian or Asian British – Indian | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| Asian or Asian British – Pakistani | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| Black or Black British – Caribbean | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Black or Black British – African | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Black or Black British – any other Black background | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Any other ethnic group | 3 | 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. Only pupils in Years 1 and 2 are included.

7. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is **good**. Pupils are encouraged to show respect and to have positive attitudes towards one another. They are building up an appropriate understanding of the importance of the festivals and traditions associated with some of the major world religions and cultures. Pupils have regular opportunity to discuss issues such as tolerance, behaviour and caring for others. This raises their self-awareness and esteem effectively giving them the confidence to talk willingly about their feelings and thoughts. Assemblies and religious education help to reinforce spirituality by exploring questions of faith and the complexity and variety of the world in which pupils live.
8. The provision for pupils' moral development is **good**. All pupils are taught the difference between right and wrong and made aware of the effect of their actions on others. Members of staff give pupils praise for trying hard, behaving well or helping someone. A special weekly assembly gives pupils an opportunity to share their work, again raising their self esteem.
9. The provision for pupils' social development is **good**. Relationships between all members of the school community are good. Boys and girls of all ages and ethnic backgrounds play and work well together and care for one another. Pupils are expected to keep the school tidy and to respect the environment. An awareness of the needs of those less fortunate provides the children with a chance to raise money for a variety of charities. Visits to places of interest, together with a wide range of special visitors, give the children first hand experiences and enhance their curriculum.
10. The school makes **good** provision for the cultural development of pupils. Pupils learn to appreciate their own and other cultures. They have many opportunities to talk about their own cultures and festivals, especially in assembly. Parents often contribute to these assemblies. This involvement helps all children to feel valued. The environment is used imaginatively so children develop an understanding of the local culture. The older children visit the church to experience at first hand a Christian place of worship.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The overall quality of education is **good**. Teaching is effective in the core subjects and satisfactory in the non-core. Learning in the core subjects is good for all pupils. In the non-core, the substantial majority of pupils learn at a pace in line with national expectations but the high attaining pupils could learn more rapidly with increased challenge in the teaching. This partly reflects underdeveloped assessment arrangements in the humanities and arts subjects. The curriculum is well planned, provides interesting and motivating learning opportunities, and makes very good provision for extra-curricular and enrichment activities.

Teaching

The teaching is **good**. For children in the nursery and Reception, teaching is always good, often very good, and at times excellent. In Years 1 and 2, teaching is at least satisfactory and often good. Teachers in the Foundation Stage make good use of assessment and ensure tasks build on previous knowledge and match the learning needs of the children. In Years 1 and 2, teachers make effective use of assessment in English, mathematics and science but in other subjects, assessment is not used effectively to help teachers plan tasks that match the needs of all pupils.

Main Strengths and weaknesses

- Good planning, with clear purposes and objectives shared well with the pupils.
- Very good use of learning support assistants; this is an improvement compared to earlier inspections.
- Effective methods in core subjects, particularly the use of questioning.

- Good match of tasks to the learning needs of all pupils in the core subjects but inconsistent match in the non-core subjects to the needs of the more able pupils.
- Good assessment procedures in the core subjects but limited arrangements and use of assessment to ensure tasks match pupils' needs in the non-core subjects
- Inconsistency in marking
- Teachers have good knowledge and expertise in English, mathematics and science but there are inconsistencies in knowledge in non-core subjects.

Commentary

11. Teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection when several lessons were unsatisfactory. The range and quality is broadly consistent with the national picture but with more high quality teaching than found nationally.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection 26 lessons

| Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| 1 | 6 | 10 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 0 |

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; a total of 26 lessons were seen.

12. In the nursery and Reception, teachers are knowledgeable and enthusiastic. This permeates all they do, motivating the children to succeed. Staff members plan together as a team, sharing ideas and expertise, ensuring that the curriculum is taught in full, with each lesson a stepping stone to the next. Children are very well supported by all adults who, because of good liaison, know exactly what their tasks are and how to carry them out. Questioning is used effectively to extend children's knowledge or reinforce new ideas. Relationships between staff and children are very good and this gives children the confidence to respond. Every opportunity is used to develop children's language and mathematical understanding so that many achieve the nationally agreed goals for early learning, often before the end of the Reception year.
13. In all lessons, teachers' good relationships with pupils encourage good behaviour and positive attitudes towards work. This has a significant impact on standards attained. Pupils respond well to teachers and are keen to give of their best. In excellent lessons, the teaching is inspirational and motivates pupils highly.
14. Teachers plan well together in year groups. This ensures that ideas are shared and that all pupils in the year group benefit from the same range of learning opportunities. Lesson objectives are shared with the pupils. The National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies are followed but the methods amended to meet the needs of all the pupils. Within the planning for English, mathematics and science, tasks are well matched to the needs of the pupils. In the humanities and arts subjects, there is little evidence of such careful planning.
15. Throughout the school learning support assistants are used effectively. They work very closely with small groups of high or low attaining pupils and help to promote a positive approach to learning for both groups. Many of the assistants have received training in areas such as literacy and numeracy, giving them confidence to guide the chosen tasks; this is good practice. During shared sessions, the support assistants sit with specific pupils to help them remain attentive and involved in the lesson.
16. In many lessons in core subjects, questioning is used very effectively to stimulate discussion or extend pupils' knowledge. This skill is particularly well used in very good lessons. However, mainly in non-core subjects, teachers do not always vary the difficulty of the questions they ask to encompass all abilities within the group so occasionally the lower attaining pupils are unable to answer and the more able find the questions too easy.

17. Assessment procedures in the core subjects are good and teachers use the information to track pupils' progress and highlight difficulties. However, assessment in the non-core subjects is insufficient and very limited in its use. Because there is a lack of assessment in these subjects, planning to match tasks to the needs of the pupils is more difficult. The school is aware of the how important assessment is; devising successful assessment criteria for non-core subjects is a priority for this academic year. Despite a comprehensive policy, marking is used inconsistently across the school. Where it contains constructive ideas it is good but in many books there is a tick or 'well done'. This is an area that needs to be reviewed so all staff know and apply the guidelines. Targets set for pupils are not always measurable. It is not always clear to pupils when targets have been achieved.

The curriculum

The curriculum and other learning opportunities offered to pupils overall are **good** and meet the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum as well as that for the provision of religious education and collective worship. The school provides very good learning opportunities for the pupils through a wide range of extra-curricular activities in sport and the arts. The school has continued to build upon its improvements since the last inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Cross-curriculum links between subjects are good.
- Links with the partner junior school are effective.
- A wide range of extra-curricular activities is provided.
- An effective partnership with parents has been built over the past two years.
- The quantity and organisation of resources for information and communications technology are constraining the teaching.

Commentary

18. The school has developed effective strategies to teach numeracy and literacy resulting in very good standards being achieved. The planning of the curriculum is appropriate for all subject areas including religious education. Provision for information and communication technology is underdeveloped and this limits the standards that pupils achieve in this subject.
19. The curriculum in the Foundation Stage is good and is planned to meet the early learning goals. A good range of learning opportunities are provided with activities that allow children to learn through child initiated practical and investigative activities alongside teacher directed work. Curriculum provision in the Foundation Stage is well matched to the needs of the children.
20. Within Years 1 and 2, the quality and range of learning opportunities for pupils is good and there is an appropriate balance between subjects. The school has effectively implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and this has a positive impact on the pupils' learning. The skills of literacy and numeracy are effectively developed in other subjects across the curriculum; this is good practice. All subjects are supported by effective schemes of work and policies, and the termly planning builds systematically upon previous teaching.
21. The headteacher recognises that the school still has much to improve with regard to the development of information and communication technology and considers that the school is still not achieving a high enough standard. To address this, the school has introduced a new scheme of work, which will challenge all pupils. This complements the professional development training provided locally and nationally in order to improve the teachers' expertise. The school has also provided training for learning support assistants to improve the expertise of all staff.

22. The school has good links with partner institutions especially with the junior school. The two schools discuss and share curriculum planning and moderate the assessment of pupils' work. The school have also bought in a specialist teacher of physical education to help develop staff expertise in dance, gymnastics and games. The school successfully applied for Sports Council funding in order to refurbish the playground. This support has made an impact on pupil's self-esteem and enjoyment for sport and physical education.
23. The wide range of extra-curricular activities provides very good support for learning outside the school day. These cover sporting, cultural and academic aspects of learning. Pupils have the opportunity to attend violin and football lessons, both organised by external providers. The pupils also have the opportunities to learn French, tennis and chess and attend choir. All these activities are well supported by the pupils.

Care, guidance and support

The school cares well for its pupils and there is a high level of attention to matters of welfare and health and safety. Parents are very happy with the care and welfare the school provides for their children.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Members of staff know children and families very well.
- High level of personal support.
- Very good induction procedures to the nursery and Reception.

Commentary

24. Child protection and health and safety procedures are satisfactory and all classroom staff and other staff in school are aware of their responsibilities. Lunchtime supervision is very good and there is a good selection of play equipment. The school promotes a good team approach that includes the caretaker and cleaners. This is leading to standards of maintenance and cleanliness that are very good and instils high values in the pupils, who show good respect for property and resources.
25. Teachers know the pupils and families well and provide a very good level of personal support for pupils. Pupils feel confident approaching adults in the school. A reward system agreed with the pupils encourages all aspects of personal and academic development.
26. Induction arrangements for pupils entering the nursery and reception are very good and establish a good home-school relationship. There is a good range of opportunities for pupils to take on responsibilities for the day to day running of the school. The school council has contributed to the development of the school and is proving to be a valuable means of communication.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has **good** and **effective** links with parents and **satisfactory** links with the community. Links with other schools are very strong. The views of parents were very positive in the parents' questionnaire and at the parents' meeting.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good links with other schools.
- Parents very pleased with the school.
- More guidance on homework required.

- No regular parent assemblies.

Commentary

27. Communication to parents, especially about their children's progress is very good but parents feel the need for more guidance on the use of homework. Parents can elect to receive general information by letter or via the school's website. The use of reading diaries is good and is an effective means of communication with home. Parents are welcome in school and attend special events and parent evenings but there are no regular parent assemblies. An opportunity for working parents to meet with school staff is provided each year. Procedures for pupils entering the nursery and reception are very good with staff making visits to playgroups and providing a progressive introduction to schooling for both pupils and parents.
28. Parents hold the school in high regard. There is an active Parent and Friends Association that provide funds and undertake work for the school. The school has very good links with other local schools and transfer arrangements for pupils are very good. There are very good procedures for teaching and non-teaching staff to interchange information with other schools in the area. Links with the local community are satisfactory

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and the management of the school are **good** overall and have improved since the previous inspection. The governance of the school is **effective**. The leadership of the headteacher is **very good**. The leadership of other staff with management responsibility is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher, senior management and those with governance of the school are rightly focused on high standards and helping pupils achieve their best.
- The governors provide appropriate challenge and support for the headteacher and appropriately influence the development of the school.
- The leadership of the headteacher is providing firm direction and focus to the work of the school.
- The systems for school self-evaluation are well developed and the findings used effectively.
- The roles of subject managers are clearly identified and understood but the managers are relatively new to the school and need more time to become established.

Commentary

29. The governing body is helping to shape the vision and direction of the school. The body is well organised and manages its work efficiently through a sensible mix of committees and delegated responsibilities. All relevant statutory requirements are met. Governors understand the main strengths and weaknesses of the school and are fully involved in its development through their planning and strategic thinking. They review performance data and test results annually, require the headteacher to keep them informed of developments, and visit the school regularly.
30. The headteacher is providing teachers, governors and the school community with a comprehensive vision of high standards and good practice in teaching and the curriculum. She also has a strong sense of purpose and direction for the work of the school. The leadership of the headteacher has helped turn the school around and remedy the underachievement found previously. The headteacher's vision is shared by all of the members of staff, who support her well. The arrangements for school development planning fully reflect the aims and ambitions of the school and help to unite teachers and governors considerably.

31. The headteacher is creating a high performing team of teachers who are fully committed to evaluating and improving their work. Delegation is appropriate. The leadership of others with management responsibility is satisfactory, reflecting their newness to their posts. The acting deputy headteacher had been in post only three weeks at the time of the inspection and two of the three core subject managers less than a year. All with responsibility understand their roles well and are working determinedly to increase effectiveness but need more time to become fully established.
32. The arrangements for self-evaluation are good. The headteacher observes teachers working with pupils regularly. This information is used to share good practice and set targets for improvement where necessary. Performance management is appropriately linked to the programme for observing teachers and is effective. Staff development is organised well. Staff have been recruited and selected carefully over the past two years to meet specific needs. The positive ethos and the constructive involvement of all staff as members of a team are helping them to develop as teachers and feel confident. This is helping to retain staff and bring stability.
33. Financial management is good. The budget is properly directed towards maintaining and raising standards. Good care and thought goes into planning expenditure and ensuring that value for money is achieved.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

| Income and expenditure (£) | |
|----------------------------|---------|
| Total income | 565,638 |
| Total expenditure | 600,370 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 2,873 |

| Balances (£) | |
|-------------------------------------|--------|
| Balance from previous year | 55,000 |
| Balance carried forward to the next | 20,268 |

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The provision for the Foundation Stage is **very good** and is a considerable strength of the school. This includes provision for physical development and creative development, which were not a focus of the inspection on this occasion.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Welcoming and stimulating environment
- The quality of teaching overall is very good, with very good support provided by all other adults.
- All members of staff share in the planning.
- Activities encourage role play, language and mathematical development and also aim to develop children's personal and social skills.
- The outdoor play area is very well used, with a very good range of planned activities.
- Children are happy, motivated and enjoy attending.

Commentary

34. Children are admitted to the reception twice a year, dependent on birth date. Transfer to the Reception classes is either in September or January. Although the nursery is housed in a temporary classroom the staff members have made a real effort to ensure the environment is stimulating and exciting for the youngsters. Children are happy, well adjusted to the demands of school and enjoy their time at the nursery. The outdoor area is very well used and tasks are carefully planned, each day of the week having a different focus. Both nursery and Reception children play and work together in this space. There is a good range of resources to support the activities.
35. The quality of teaching is very good overall. This is an improvement since the last Inspection. Teachers in both the nursery and Reception, and the nursery nurses work as a team and plan together, sharing ideas and expertise. Because of this, progression and continuity across the nursery and Reception classes are good. Planning is closely linked to the nationally agreed goals for early learning. All adults supporting the learning in either the nursery or reception class know exactly what they have to do because they liaise closely with the class teachers. Teachers' knowledge and enthusiasm motivate the children to succeed and also helps to build on previous experience and skill so that children develop appropriately. Questioning is used effectively to promote full involvement in the task and extend children's knowledge. The use of day to day assessment ensures all children are challenged, be they higher or lower attaining pupils.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision is **very good**. Children are learning to respect each other, share resources, take turns and play together.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good and standards are above average.
- A good range of activities to encourage children to relate to each other.
- Adult involvement to develop children's role play.

Commentary

36. Nearly all of the children are on course to attain or exceed the national goals for early learning by the end of the Reception year, including about a third who are likely to exceed them. They are fully engaged by the activities and are doing well in relation to their capabilities. In all activities, adults encourage children to explore and develop their vocabulary. Often they provide a role model to help children learn the social skills of relating to each other and playing together. This has a positive effect on their learning, helping the children to become confident and articulate. In all group sessions children are encouraged to share and take their turn. The vast majority in the Reception are good at this but a few of the younger children in the nursery are still too keen to call out the answers. Teachers encourage the children to listen to each other and share their thoughts. The Reception children listen very well and are keen to respond. All children enjoy coming to school and are aware of what teachers expect. In all classes there is a calm relaxed atmosphere where children are confident to explore for themselves and are encouraged to share and help each other.

COMMUNICATION, LITERACY AND LANGUAGE

Provision is **very good** because it encourages children to become articulate, confident speakers, to enjoy both sharing and reading books and to be able to write their thoughts and tell stories.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good and standards are above average.
- The quality of teaching is very good.
- The range of activities to stimulate the children is very wide and well planned.
- Every opportunity is used by adults to extend children's vocabulary.

Commentary

37. Most children enter the nursery with typical or better skills for their age. All of them are developing their skills well in both the nursery and the Reception classes. Almost all of the children currently in Reception are on course to attain or exceed the national goals for early learning by the time they transfer to Year 1.
38. Children enjoy stories and listen well. In a session in the nursery, children listened intently and enjoyed a story about "Stone Soup". This linked with the vegetable soup the children had made earlier. Each child had a character from the book and could help "act out" the story as it was told. The nursery nurse who read the story asked a good range of questions to extend children's knowledge and to encourage them to guess what might happen. Children are actively encouraged to share books and all observed with a book treated them carefully and read them correctly. They were disappointed when they were told to put the books back.
39. In the Reception classes, children show a well developed awareness of author, title, publisher, illustrator that is unusual for their age. Many of the children recognise a few familiar words and initial sounds and are already achieving the expected levels and some above. They are excited and enthusiastic about books and enjoy the follow up activities. Teachers are knowledgeable and interesting in their presentation of lessons; they motivate the children to learn. Children respond positively to the input and remain well focused on their tasks. Some excellent teaching was seen that highly motivated the children, so that they gave of their best and excelled themselves.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision is **very good**. In the nursery every opportunity to count is used including registration and snack time.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good and standards are above average.
- The range of opportunities offered to the children is good.
- The quality of teaching is very good.
- The use of computers is sometimes inappropriate, with programs being too challenging for the less able children.

Commentary

40. Almost all of the children in the Reception are on course to attain or exceed the national goals for early learning by the end of the school year. The vast majority of children in the nursery are doing well for their age and few have learning difficulties. Teaching is effective and every opportunity is used to develop mathematical understanding and appropriate vocabulary. During registration and snack time in the nursery, children count the number in their group and the number of boys or girls using vocabulary such as more than, less than and how many altogether. Many count accurately to 10 already achieving some of the early learning goals normally achieved in the Reception. When looking at a kiwi fruit, children noticed that the teacher only had 5 pieces but that 10 were needed, so suggested that the slices were halved.
41. In the Reception class, children explore numbers from zero to 20. Most can order three numbers. A very few struggle with numbers to 20 whilst a few can order four numbers over 99. Children are appropriately challenged, with tasks matching their needs. They enjoy their mathematics sessions particularly when one of the teachers uses a singing rhyme and puppet to help them count. This adds fun to the lesson and keeps the children well focused. Additional mathematical activities are provided for children to choose and to help develop further counting skills. Computer programs are used to extend children's learning but these do not always match the lesson objectives, especially when the children change the activities for themselves! The majority of children are already achieving the expected levels normally achieved by the end of the Reception year.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD, CREATIVE AND PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in all these areas is **very good**. Although not a focus of the inspection, evidence was gathered, when observed, to illustrate aspects of these areas.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good use of the outdoor play area throughout the Foundation Stage.
- Lively physical education sessions for nursery children.
- Children are achieving well in all these areas and are on course to attain the early learning goals, many before the end of the reception year.

Commentary

42. Introductions to lessons are interesting and teachers encourage children to use the correct vocabulary: for example naming parts of the body. Some children recall they have muscle under the skin and veins which carry blood. They also remember what happens to their hearts when they exercise.
43. Children use the outdoor play area as an extension to the classroom and each day the activities have a different focus. For example literacy, numeracy, physical or creative

development. Children are free to choose the activities once the main teacher led sessions are complete. A wide range of resources is available and children enjoy wheeled toys, a drum kit, a very large sandpit and a garden area where they have grown their own vegetables. The opportunities this area offers the children have a positive effect on their learning.

44. Children in the nursery enjoyed a lively exciting physical education lesson in the hall. The teacher's enthusiasm was catching. The children worked very hard to copy the movements and they all achieved well. They moved in time to the music and pretended to be rag dolls: most were successful in this. Outside in the play area they climb, and pedal the wheeled toys with confidence.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1

ENGLISH

The provision is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The achievement of pupils is good.
- Test results have improved over the past few years.
- Standards are high in reading and very high in writing compared to the national picture. In 2002, the results in writing were in the top five per cent of schools.
- The teaching is good.
- The leadership and management of the subject are effective.

Commentary

45. Standards in Year 2 are well above average and have improved since the previous inspection. The majority of pupils enter Year 1 already exceeding the national expectations for their age in speaking and listening, reading, and writing. Almost all pupils are appropriately challenged by the teaching and make or exceed the nationally expected progress. The more able and very able pupils generally do well. In the recent national tests, almost all pupils attained the expected level for their age by the end of Year 2; in reading, approaching half exceeded the nationally expected level; in writing, about a quarter did so. Between the Reception year and the end of Year 2, the proportion with high attainment nearly doubles and this is better than in many schools nationally.
46. Test results have improved considerably over the past few years, reflecting the improved provision. In 2002, the results in reading and writing were well above average. In reading, they were in the top 25 per cent of schools. In writing, they were in the top five per cent. The results in 2002 compared very well with similar schools. The early indications for 2003 are that results are slightly lower than in 2002 because several of the pupils had significant special educational needs but have been sustained in the top 25 per cent of schools and still compare favourably with similar schools.
47. The standard of current work in reading and writing is well above average. Many of the pupils just entering Year 2 are already attaining levels in reading and writing that are close to those expected by the end of the school year; they are a year or more ahead of national expectations. These pupils are well launched into reading, tackling familiar words fluently and developing good skills to decipher shorter unfamiliar words. They can write several sentences that are organised logically. The attainment of about a quarter of the pupils in Year 2 is very high indeed. They are reading and writing at levels close to those expected in Year 4, which is very advanced for their age. They are largely independent readers and their writing is often lively and interesting. The remaining pupils have attainment that is consistent with national expectations. Very few read or write at a level that is significantly below that expected for their age. If current progress is sustained, the proportions of pupils attaining or exceeding national expectations by the end of the year are likely to be consistent with the high standards achieved in the 2002 national tests and an improvement on those in 2003. Skills of speaking and listening are well developed for the substantial majority of pupils and very few pupils have significant difficulties with speech.
48. There are no significant variations in attainment or achievement between boys and girls and this is better than the national picture. Pupils from minority ethnic groups, including those with English as an additional language, generally achieve well and their attainment is rarely different from white British pupils. A handful of pupils are at the early stages of learning English. These pupils are supported well and making rapid progress in learning English. About 10 per cent of pupils at the school have special educational needs linked to literacy. Their progress is mixed,

though all are supported caringly. About half of those with special educational needs respond well to the support and catch up with national expectations by the end of Year 2. Of the remainder, a few do not respond and make insufficient progress while others make some progress but not enough to attain nationally expected levels. In large measure, this reflects the severity of the difficulties these pupils face though inconsistencies in the provision, particularly the sharpness of the early diagnosis of need, mean that the caring nature of the provision is at times insufficiently focused.

49. The teaching is good overall. All of it is satisfactory or better. More than half is good and some is very good. Pupils are learning quickly in the main, with the more able pupils often learning at a rapid pace. The teaching is leading to pupils being well motivated, applying themselves enthusiastically, and completing tasks in the time available. The teaching methods are effective and good use is made of resources. Planning follows national guidance and is capably implemented. Information from assessment, together with the teachers' good knowledge of the pupils, is used to provide challenging work at different levels in all classes, particularly during small group and guided work.
50. The subject coordinator leads very effectively by example. She is relatively new to the school, and part-time, and this is affecting her opportunity to monitor teaching and support teachers, including others who are new to the school. Nevertheless, management has identified the broad strengths and weaknesses in the subject, is acting sensibly to bring about improvement, and is satisfactory overall. The arrangements for assessment are satisfactory. Curricular guidance is clear and appropriate. Resources, including the library, are good.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

51. This is recognised by the school as an area for development. Some progress has been made but more is necessary. Useful links with other subjects have been made in the planning and this is good practice. In particular, opportunities for sustained independent writing have been built into the planning in the humanities subjects. These opportunities, however, do not specify the type of writing, such as biography, persuasive writing, or accounts of travel and this limits their usefulness.

MATHEMATICS

The provision is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good and standards are well above average.
- The quality of teaching is good.
- Planning in teams leads to good equality of access for all pupils.
- Tasks are carefully matched to pupils' needs and the higher attaining pupils are well catered for.
- Effective use of support staff.
- Assessment data is analysed to highlight problem areas and to help teachers to plan.
- The subject leader is newly appointed and has not had sufficient time to develop her management role.

Commentary

52. Standards across the school are well above average. The pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making good progress and achieving well. Standards since the last inspection have been slowly rising until 2002 when they rose more sharply. The results of the 2002 national tests show all pupils attaining the expected level with half the pupils attaining above this level. In comparison to all schools nationally and to similar schools, achievement is

above average. The 2003 results are likely to be very similar although no validated data is available to make comparisons.

53. The oldest children can subtract two-digit numbers using a number line, extending to three-digit numbers for the higher attaining pupils, skills that are a year or more ahead of national expectations. About half the pupils are already confident using hundreds, tens and units. Three gifted pupils were working to thousands. This is exceptional for their age. Younger pupils happily ordered three or four two-digit numbers. Pupils are taught appropriate vocabulary and were using words such as minus, less than and the difference between.
54. The quality of teaching across the school is good overall with some examples of very good teaching. Lessons are well planned and based on the National Numeracy Strategy but amended to meet the needs of the pupils, particularly the higher attaining pupils. Teachers plan in pairs to promote continuity and progression and equality of opportunity for all pupils. Lesson objectives are effectively shared with pupils so that they know what they are learning and what their targets for that day are. This helps the pupils focus on the task and has a positive effect on their learning. Sessions begin with quick fire mental activities often using individual whiteboards. Pupils enjoy this and respond with enthusiasm. The brisk pace of most introductions helps to motivate pupils. Teachers can also identify immediately any pupils having problems. Questioning is mostly used effectively and usually offers an opportunity for all pupils to respond. However, this is not consistent and sometimes questions are not directed at pupils with different abilities. Because of good relationships, pupils are confident to explain their methods and write their answers on the board.
55. Members of the support staff are used very effectively, working with lower attaining pupils. There is also provision for additional support for higher attaining pupils so many pupils benefit from the extra adults in the classroom. Class teachers ensure the learning support assistants are well briefed so they understand the tasks. This has a positive effect on the pupils' learning.
56. Assessment data is analysed and used to highlight any areas where pupils are not achieving as well as they should. This informs the planning. Pupils' attainment is tracked throughout the school. This enables additional support to be provided where it is needed most. Marking is in need of further development. Sometimes it is constructive and helpful but this is not consistently so throughout the school.
57. Information and communication technology is used to support learning but it is not always effective, particularly when programs do not support the learning objectives or are too hard for the pupils. For example, lower attaining pupils who were only competent with number bonds to 10 were struggling to find answers to questions that involved subtracting numbers such as 26 from 43. This is an area for development.
58. As the subject leader has only recently been appointed there has been insufficient time for developing the role. No lessons observations have been undertaken although there has been some checking of plans and looking at pupils' work.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good and standards are well above average.
- Teachers use of questioning to challenge pupils is good.
- The development of speaking and listening opportunities is good.
- Use of teaching assistants is effective.
- Relationships between adults and pupils are good.
- Use of information and communication technology is a weakness.

Commentary

59. Almost all of the pupils in Year 2 are on course to attain or exceed the nationally expected level for their age by the end of the school year and a significant proportion are likely to exceed expectations. Most make good progress including those with special educational needs. The quality of teaching is good overall; in one lesson it was very good. Much of the science is taught through an investigative approach and this strengthens the pupils' knowledge and understanding of the subject. Lessons are practical and provide many opportunities for the pupils to develop their investigative skills. In the best lessons, skilled and differentiated questioning challenged the pupils to explain what might happen and why. This helped them to make logical predictions. For example in Year 1, pupils carefully considered and predicted with great accuracy the reflective qualities of a variety of materials. The pupils could identify sources of light and knew the importance of wearing reflective clothing.
60. The teachers make lessons interesting through effective use of resources and involve all pupils in practical activities. Good use was made of the teaching assistants to extend the learning of individual pupils or groups of pupils. Teaching assistants are well informed so that they suitably challenge the pupils and as a result these pupils also make good progress. All teachers have good classroom management skills and use these to develop positive relationships with the pupils, giving them further confidence to contribute their views, opinions and ideas. The pupils enjoy the activities, concentrate throughout the lessons and their behaviour is good. There are many opportunities for the pupils to work collaboratively with each other and assist each other in making decisions. For example, pupils in Year 2 discussed how to make an electrical circuit and most could introduce buzzers and bells into these. The pupils completed accurate and detailed sketches of their circuits and could discuss what would happen if two bulbs were introduced into the circuit. Pupils respected the views of one another and listened attentively to each other.
61. The subject is well planned into a series of half-termly topics with well matched work for different groups of pupils. The subject co-ordinator has good knowledge and understanding of the subject and monitors all medium term planning and, in addition, she undertakes work scrutiny, has taught demonstration lessons and monitored some of her colleagues' teaching. Any issues arising are discussed with staff to identify in-service training requirements and the school improvement plan. Pupils' work is monitored through class teacher assessment and analysed throughout the year and, especially, at the end of Year 2 so that curriculum links can be developed with the junior school.
62. The subject leader recognises that the use of information and communication technology is a weakness. Much of the software is not yet fully used in the learning and teaching of science.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is satisfactory; the substantial majority of pupils attain standards in line with the expectations for their age but the more able could do better.
- Resources, though improved since the previous inspection, are still limited in quantity and not organised in a way that is conducive to efficient teaching.

Commentary

63. Nearly all of the pupils attain standards consistent with the expectations for their age. Few, however, exceed that expectation, reflecting teaching and curricular provision that does not always provide sufficient work at different levels. Standards are similar to those found during the previous inspection. There have been improvements since then in resources and in the methods used, sufficient to keep up with national improvements, but more is necessary. There are no significant variations in achievement or standards between pupils of different gender or background.
64. Almost all of the pupils in Year 2 are confident users of computers. They have a good knowledge of the programs taught and can generally find and select specific programs from the menu options. Keyboard skills are good. Pupils know where the main keys are located and their purpose though they are not always familiar with the correct terminology. They have good knowledge of different uses of computer technology and can use word processing and data base programs plus a range of programs to assist learning in other subjects satisfactorily. However, the more able pupils are under-challenged by their work and have the capacity to extend their knowledge quickly when presented with tasks that are more demanding.
65. Teaching is satisfactory and leading to the majority of pupils learning at pace and depth in line with national expectations. Use is being made of shared teaching methods, particularly demonstrations of new programs to the whole class. This is good practice but is constrained because teachers can only use one computer to demonstrate and the size of the computer screen is too small for all pupils to see clearly. The lack of computers for pupils to use in large groups means that pupils practise and develop the knowledge gained from shared teaching at later times, sometimes several days later, and only when working in small groups or individually, often needing a class assistant to support them. This timing and organisation have the potential for pupils to forget what was taught and are inefficient.
66. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Teaching methods are being shared and developed and good practice is being introduced. Teachers' subject knowledge and expertise has benefited from training and is satisfactory. The national programme of study is taught in full and planning is adequate. However, the arrangements for assessment are underdeveloped and this is preventing teachers from tracking pupils' progress rigorously and using the findings to plan and teach challenging work for the more able pupils. Resources are insufficient to teach the subject effectively and efficiently.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

67. Good use is made of computers to support work in English and mathematics. A sufficient range of programs is available and used to support learning in the nursery, Reception and in Year 1 and Year 2. The links between subjects are planned in detail and this is good practice.

HUMANITIES

Provision is **broadly satisfactory** in the humanities, including history and geography, which were not inspected in depth on this occasion.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The planning is detailed and shows appropriate links with other subjects but is not sufficiently informed by rigorous assessment arrangements.

Commentary

68. Planning is detailed and ensures that the National Curriculum programmes of studies for the humanities subjects are taught in appropriate range and depth. The planning is well documented and provides satisfactory guidance for teachers. However, the arrangements for assessment are limited in scope and insufficient for teachers to track the progress of pupils. The impact of this is greatest on the more able pupils, who are not always challenged by the work provided.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Provision is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' understanding of other faiths and how people live is good.
- The work is generally provided at one level and is sometimes insufficiently challenging for the more able pupils.

Commentary

69. At the end of Year 2, the standards attained are at the expected level and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The school's programme for religious education is appropriately planned to follow the Hertfordshire Agreed Syllabus. In lessons, teachers show a satisfactory grasp of the subject's requirements and their teaching is satisfactory. Good use is made of role play, pupils' experiences, and discussion to make the teaching interesting and come alive for the pupils. The pupils are acquiring an appropriate knowledge of festivals and key beliefs from their studies of a satisfactory range of major world religions. The work shows that the school used local resources, for example St. Andrew's church, to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding. In Year 2, pupils experience work relating to the Christian, Hindu, Buddhist, Sikh and the Islamic faiths; this represents a good range of major world religions. Pupils can compare the different symbols and places of worship. Subject leadership is satisfactory and the planning for the year and each term is adequate. However, little use is made of assessment and the arrangements are underdeveloped. Resources are sufficient.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

The provision for the creative arts within the school is **good**. Physical education was not a focus of the inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good range of experiences is offered to the pupils.

Commentary

70. The creative arts, including art and design, design and technology and music were not a main focus for this inspection. However, some evidence was gathered through looking at pupils' work, checking planning for coverage and observing a small number of lessons. The standard in art and design, from the work seen, is in line with expectations, although examples of observational drawing produced by the present Year 2 pupils are good and show a high degree of skill and care in representing flowers and leaves. During the inspection a visiting artist showed Year 2 pupils how to paint a basket of cherries in the style of Chinese painting, using inks. This was enjoyed and successful, with pupils taking great care to achieve good results. In a lesson in design and technology, pupils enjoyed making lighthouses but were given few opportunities to evaluate their efforts and discuss how they could improve their models. Because the range of materials provided was narrow, pupils could not experiment with different ways of joining and jointing the materials and this was a missed opportunity. The standard of the finished product was in line with expectations. Work is planned so that pupils experience either art and design or design and technology in any one half-term. Where possible, model making is linked to other areas of the curriculum. For example, the lighthouse links to the story of Grace Darling. Planning shows an appropriate range of activities to ensure pupils develop their skills.
71. Evidence of standards in music were found in music lessons and singing during assembly. The pupils sing in tune. In a class lesson, Year 1 pupils sing with enthusiasm and interest. They know the names of untuned percussion instruments and, given the opportunity, choose instruments to accompany a song or make sound effects for a story. Standards overall are average. All of the Year 2 pupils learn to play the recorder; this is good practice. They are very well taught by a knowledgeable teacher. Pupils have an option of learning to play the violin. There is a choir open to pupils in Years 1 and 2. Concerts are produced twice a year and parents and friends are welcome to attend.

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 | 3 |
| How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection | 3 |
| Value for money provided by the school | 3 |
| Overall standards achieved | 2 |
| Pupils' achievement | 3 |
| Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities | 3 |
| Attendance | 3 |
| 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 | 5 |
| 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 | 2 |
| 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 | 3 |
| The leadership of the headteacher | 2 |
| The leadership of other key staff | 4 |
| The effectiveness of management | 3 |

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