

INSPECTION REPORT

HAMSTEAD INFANT SCHOOL

Birmingham

LEA area: Sandwell

Unique reference number: 103896

Headteacher: Mrs Sandie Bradie

Lead inspector: Mr Roger Burgess

Dates of inspection: 29th September – 1st October 2003

Inspection number: 246411

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
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3–7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll;	235
School address:	Tanhouse Avenue Great Barr
Postcode:	B43 5AS
Telephone number:	0121 357 1603
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Julie Winpenny
Date of previous inspection:	9 th – 12 th November 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Hamstead Infant School is on the northern outskirts of Birmingham and serves a mixed area of owner-occupied and rented accommodation. It shares a site with Hamstead Junior School. There are 196 pupils between the ages of four and seven, and a nursery with a further 77 children who attend part time. There are more boys than girls in the school. The number of pupils on roll has fallen since the last inspection. On entry to the reception year, the children have a wide range of attainment but, overall, it is broadly in line with the expectations for this age group. The level of attainment has improved over recent years due to an increase in pre-school provision and changes in the local community. Levels of attainment on entry to the nursery are currently broadly in line with expected levels, whereas, in previous years they have been below the levels expected. The number of pupils identified as having special educational needs is below average; most of whom have moderate learning difficulties. The number with a statement of special educational needs is broadly in line with the national average. The school has a high proportion of pupils, 19.2 per cent, who use English as an additional language, most of whom are Asian. A small number are in the early stages of learning English. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is broadly average and this number has declined by almost one third in the last three years, reflecting a decrease in the number of pupils taking school meals.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20950	Mr Roger Burgess	Lead inspector	Science Geography History Religious education
09146	Mr Mark Brennand	Lay inspector	
22856	Mrs Kath Campbell	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage curriculum Mathematics Art and design Design and technology Music
32401	Mr Nigel Minns	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology Physical education Special educational needs English as an additional language Personal, social and health education

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a good school which has some very good features, including very good leadership and good management. The school provides good value for money. Pupils achieve well throughout the school. Standards are generally close to national averages in reading, writing and mathematics in Year 2. Teaching and learning are good, with some very good features which results in good learning in classrooms. At the time of the inspection the school had undergone significant staff restructuring, due to falling rolls and the loss of two teachers.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are¹:

- The inspirational leadership of the headteacher.
- Good provision enabling in the nursery and reception classes to make a good start to their learning.
- The very strong support given to pupils in their moral and social development, while ensuring learning takes place in a secure and caring environment.
- There could be better use made of time to ensure full provision for all subjects of the curriculum.
- The school has identified the need for further development of problem solving in mathematics.
- The school has identified the need for a continuing emphasis on writing in order to raise standards in English.
- The good support provided for pupils with special educational needs and pupils who use English as an additional language.
- There are insufficient visits to places of interest to enrich the curriculum.

The school was last inspected in November 1998 and has made a good improvement since then. Additional provision has been made for information and communication technology. Standards of achievement have improved. The quality of teaching has improved. The work of all staff and governors contributes very effectively to the quality of provision. Provision for the children in both the nursery and reception classes is good and the curriculum provides a good balance of creative and more structured activities. The role of coordinators has been developed and they now play an active part in the development of their subjects. The school acknowledges that there is room for further improvement in the provision for higher-attaining pupils. The school is appropriately placed to continue to make further improvements.

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	C	C	C
Writing	D	D	C	D
Mathematics	C	D	D	D

*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.*

Pupils' achievement is good. When the pupils, currently in Years 1 and 2, started in the nursery their standards were below those expected for their age. On entry to the nursery, there is wide range of attainment which varies from year to year. Due to good teaching in both the nursery and reception classes, children's learning accelerates, and many achieve the learning goals expected by the end of reception. The children currently in the Foundation Stage² are achieving well because of good teaching. The good progress continues in all classes throughout the school. Standards in Year 2 are currently above average in science, and average in English, mathematics, information and communication technology and religious education. Standards are average in all other

¹ The strengths and weaknesses are listed in order of significance.

² The Foundation Stage caters for children from the age of three to the end of the reception year.

subjects, with pupils making good progress. These findings reflect good achievement overall. Information provided by the school indicated an improvement in results in 2003.

Pupils' personal development is good. The provision for pupils' moral and social development and equality of opportunity, relationships and racial harmony is very good, and provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is good. Pupils' good attitudes contribute to the good learning taking place in classrooms. Behaviour is good throughout the school and no pupils have been excluded. Pupils are very proud of their school and their achievements. They undertake their responsibilities enthusiastically and with maturity. Attendance is satisfactory; broadly in line with the national average.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided is good. Teaching and learning are good overall, with some very good features. The good quality teaching is resulting in better learning and improved standards throughout the school. This is a strength of the school bearing in mind that the school has recently been restructured due to falling rolls. The strengths and weaknesses of the teaching and learning are:

- Well planned lessons in the nursery and reception classes, which lead to good learning.
- Very good use of support staff within lessons.
- Very good provision for equality of opportunity for all pupils.
- Pupils with learning difficulties, and those who use English as an additional language, are all supported well and make equally good progress.
- Teachers know their pupils well. They develop good relationships in the classroom, which lead to better motivation and increased learning.
- Some lessons are not as inspiring as others.

The quality and range of the curriculum is good in the nursery and reception classes, and satisfactory elsewhere. Pupils with potential difficulties are identified early and given very good levels of support. Pupils make good progress, overall, towards their individual targets. Pupils learn effectively in a secure environment where health and safety provision is fully in place, along with child protection. The school has worked hard and successfully to involve parents in the work and life of the school. Parents are very supportive of the school. There are too few visits to enhance the curriculum.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The headteacher and deputy headteacher show very good leadership and are very much responsible for the improvements taking place. **Management is good;** there is a shared vision and determination throughout the school to improve standards and the quality of educational provision. The governance of the school is satisfactory. Governors are a committed team who know and understand the school and give strong support to the work of the staff as they strive to improve the school.

There is a continuing review of the way the school is heading and all aspects of the work of the school are kept under constant assessment. This is a school that is honest about its performance and realistic about how to improve. It has good resources, which it uses effectively for the benefit of all its pupils. Careful consideration is given to ensuring that the best possible value for money is obtained when spending takes place.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Almost all comments received from parents were positive and supportive of the school. A small number of parents expressed some concern over information about how their child was progressing. Responses from pupils indicate a high level of pride in their school. As the pupils become older, they indicate an increasing concern over the behaviour of a minority of pupils.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- continue with its strategies for improving skills in mathematical investigations and in writing;
- ensure appropriate provision for more able pupils is included in lesson planning;
- review the use of time;
- identify appropriate visits to enrich the curriculum.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

The school's results and pupils' achievements

Standards of work in the school are rising and are broadly average in English, mathematics and information and communication technology and above average in science, by the end of Year 2. Given the levels of attainment when children start school, these standards represent good achievement.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in the nursery and reception classes show a marked improvement.
- Standards are improving across the school.
- Further work remains to be done to provide consistently challenging work for more able pupils, and to ensure pupils of all abilities think for themselves and develop problem-solving skills.
- Not enough pupils reach the higher levels, particularly in writing.
- Given that children enter the nursery with attainment which is below average, achievement by the end of Year 2 is good.
- Pupils with special educational needs, and those who use English as an additional language, make good progress towards their individual learning targets.

Commentary

1. Standards in the national tests taken by pupils at the end of Year 2 were similar to the national average in reading and writing and below average in mathematics in 2002, when compared with schools nationally. Information provided by the school indicated an improvement in test results in 2003. At the end of their reception year a significant number of these children had not attained the learning goals expected for their age. The standards of pupils currently in Year 2 are average in reading, writing and mathematics. These findings represent a steady improvement in recent years. Much of this is due to good teaching and learning in lessons. The school has also capitalised very successfully on pupils' interests and enthusiasms in these subjects. This has been achieved largely by providing pupils with plenty of opportunity for exploring and developing their creativity. Standards are now broadly in line with national averages throughout the school and there is a rising trend of improvement as pupils consolidate their basic skills well.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2002³

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	16.3 (16.3)	15.8 (15.7)
Writing	14.3 (14.0)	14.4 (14.3)
Mathematics	16.1 (15.5)	16.5 (16.2)

There were 76 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

2. In the nursery and reception classes, children achieve well and make good progress in developing a wide range of personal and social skills, with increasing degrees of independence being nurtured through various role-play and other well-structured activities. Teachers and teaching assistants focus very effectively on developing these essential skills. Due to this very good teaching, in both the nursery and reception classes, children's learning

³ **Average Points Scores.** The average points scores table compares the school's performance with the national results. The calculations are arrived at by using the total of all test scores gained by pupils, and dividing the total by the number of pupils with a test result. This calculation is carried out for each subject tested.

accelerates and most are likely to reach the expected levels in all areas of learning by the end of the reception year. The good progress started here continues in all classes throughout the school and there is an improving trend in skills development.

3. All pupils achieve well in English. Standards of speaking and listening have risen throughout the school. Most pupils speak clearly and with confidence. Their pronunciation is good, and they show great willingness to answer questions in all classes in the school. Reading standards are also average. Pupils read a wide range of books and keep clear records of their reading, with some parents adding useful comments to help their children make progress. Writing is progressing well, and standards are also rising and are currently average. There are too few pupils attaining the higher Level 3 in writing, as their needs are not always clearly provided for in lesson plans.
4. In mathematics, achievement is good for most pupils. Despite the good progress being made in many areas, the oldest pupils are still not confident enough in analysing and interpreting problems, or in solving them. Sometimes this is due to pupils not understanding, clearly enough, what is being demanded of them. In other cases, it is due to a lack of practice, with some pupils forgetting to use appropriate strategies. In order to raise standards in mathematics, the school has focused its attention on more work in developing skills of mathematical investigation. This has begun to have a positive impact, and there has been an improvement on the previous year's national tests. The basic skills of numeracy are at an average level, as is pupils' understanding of shapes, how to measure and the calculation of area. Although not a great deal of work is done in handling data, pupils are able to produce bar graphs and other graphs, occasionally using information and communication technology. They know and understand the principles of tallying and converting statistics into graphs or charts.
5. In science, pupils have made good progress in understanding basic scientific skills and principles by the end of Year 2, especially in knowing how to conduct experiments and record them. This work is carefully built upon, with pupils acquiring a good range of understanding of fair tests, animal and plant habitats and forces such as gravity and electricity. Their skills of investigation are developed well and this is reflected in their good achievement in science.
6. Targets are based on a thorough analysis of pupils' potential. Inspectors judged there to have been an improvement all round in the performance of pupils, making the targets realistic and attainable.
7. The school has focused on the early identification and intervention to support and help pupils identified with special education needs. This includes pupils with learning difficulties as well as those with behavioural problems. Very good support is available in classrooms. Staff plan effectively and work with smaller groups when appropriate. There is a focus on improving the basic skills in literacy and numeracy, but also good support is given in other lessons, such as science and music. Pupils' individual education and behaviour plans are of very good quality and enable pupils to move one step at a time in their learning or behaviour modification. The resulting achievements are good. Although not necessarily on the school's special educational needs list, the work done with pupils, when they are placed in smaller groups, is valuable in helping these pupils make better progress as a result of more focused teaching. Because of the school's effective provision, pupils with special educational needs and pupils who use English as an additional language achieve well, with many pupils attaining the nationally expected standards.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. Pupils' personal development is very good, particularly their moral and social development. Their spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. Attendance is satisfactory, with the majority of pupils turning up on time.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school promotes good attitudes and behaviour and there is an absence of oppressive behaviour.
- Children in the nursery and reception achieve very well in their personal, social and emotional development.
- The school develops very good relationships with its pupils and provides them with many opportunities to demonstrate responsibility and growing maturity.
- The school has a strong moral and social code, giving pupils an understanding of the difference between right and wrong.
- The lack of visits to places of interest limits the opportunities to broaden pupils' cultural awareness.

Commentary

8. Pupils' attitudes are good. Nearly all parents returning the questionnaire reported that their children like coming to school. The vast majority arrive on time, allowing for a smooth start to the day. In the nursery, children enter happily but quietly and engage in their activities with enthusiasm. In lessons across all age ranges there were many examples of pupils showing enjoyment in their work with hands raised eagerly to answer questions. Pupils told inspectors they liked their school and enjoyed coming to school because they found the work interesting.
9. Behaviour is also good. In the vast majority of lessons behaviour was good and sometimes very good. Outside the classroom, pupils move around the school in an orderly manner, wait patiently in line to have lunch and sit quietly both before and during assembly. No instances of bullying or racism were observed, and conversations with parents and pupils confirmed that such incidences are very rare, but those that do occur are dealt with very effectively. Older pupils feel some pupils do not behave as well as they should. There are currently no exclusions and there were none during the previous year.
10. Relationships within the school are very good. Pupils' spiritual and cultural development is good. The diversity of cultures within the school allows pupils to appreciate and share their differing traditions and this is used to create an atmosphere of racial harmony. Staff treat all pupils with respect and provide them with the opportunity to develop maturity through the school council and 'buddy' system, together with a multitude of monitoring roles.
11. The school's strong moral and social code allows pupils to develop an understanding of right and wrong. For example, when pupils were asked what they thought were the worst aspects of their school, the majority mentioned the occasions when other pupils were not behaving as they should. This demonstrates that they have a clear sense of the standards that the school is seeking to achieve, and can tell when others fail to meet those standards. Pupils also clearly understood the rewards and sanctions that are applied.
12. Whilst the wide diversity of cultures within the school continues to allow pupils to appreciate the differing range of traditions, insufficient use is still made of visits to places of interest, such as museums, galleries, and theatres, and this needs to be addressed.

Attendance

13. Up until 2002 the level of attendance had fallen in successive years. Last year saw a reverse in that trend to a level which is **broadly in line** with the national average. Systems for monitoring and improving attendance are **good**, allowing for early identification of unauthorised absences. Extended holidays taken in term time make up a growing proportion of authorised absences. The school is working hard to encourage parents to take these holidays within school holidays in order to reduce the disruption to their children's education.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	7.7	School data	0.4
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.

Exclusions

There are currently no exclusions and there were none during the previous year.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is good. Teaching and learning are good. Overall, the curriculum is satisfactory. The promotion of equality of opportunity for all pupils is foremost in the school's ethos and permeates all its work. The involvement of pupils in the development of the school, through groups such as the school council, and the pupils' relationships with all adults in the school, are further strengths.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good overall, with some very good features.

The good quality of teaching is helping to raise standards and is very much responsible for the improvements taking place in the performance of pupils throughout the school. The school is still in a settling-down period, following a reduction in staffing, due to falling numbers on roll. The progress made by the school in establishing a stable and committed staff has been very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Very good use of support staff within lessons.
- The lessons are arranged to give all pupils older and younger, the same sort of experiences, with a focus on developing good levels of independence. All staff work very well as a team.
- There is very strong focus on developing pupils' personal and social skills, particularly for the children in the nursery and reception classes.
- Pupils' with learning difficulties or behavioural problems are all well supported and make equally good progress.
- Teachers know their pupils well. They develop good relationships in the classroom, which lead to better motivation and increased learning.
- Time is not used to best effect in some lessons.
- The effectiveness of teachers' planning in some lessons.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 24 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	5	13	6	0	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. An essential element of the good practice being established in planning throughout the school is through team-work. Staff work hard together to ensure that lessons are of a consistently high standard, that there is a focus on what pupils will learn, and that the process is thoroughly reviewed in the search for improvements. Most lessons begin with teachers

sharing their intentions with pupils. This means that pupils are very clear about what they are going to be doing, and teachers usually explain why and how as well. In a Year 2 physical education lesson, for instance, the nature and purpose of the warm-up was explored before the pupils began to exercise their muscles, in readiness for more complex dance movements. In a Year 1 mathematics lesson, by knowing and understanding the aims of the lesson, pupils shared ownership of their learning with the staff, immediately prompting enthusiasm and better learning. Pupils told inspectors that they found most of their lessons interesting, and that learning was often fun.

15. Teachers have high expectations of good behaviour; all classrooms contain displays which help to reinforce the need for high standards of co-operation and behaviour. When sharing equipment, such as during science investigations, pupils take turns with a minimum of fuss. They develop good listening skills and learn the skills of contributing to discussion without interrupting each other. Much of the development of skills such as these is reinforced through the personal and social education programme, throughout the school, where pupils use 'circle time'⁴ as a means of learning self-control and clear speaking. Principles of right and wrong are underlined well, for example in a whole-school assembly on 'telling the truth', which effectively reinforced the school's expectations of good consistent behaviour. In lessons such as art and design, and science, these skills are put into good practice, as pupils listen well to instructions and share resources fairly and equitably, wasting no time and tackling their work with interest and maturity.
16. Since September 2002, the deputy headteacher has been undertaking research as part of an on-going course studying the approaches to teaching. This has had a beneficial impact on pupils' learning. Staff show good expertise when teaching literacy and numeracy. Lessons focus clearly on what pupils will learn and the skills they will use to learn effectively. In many numeracy lessons this involves pupils explaining the strategies they have used to reach their answers.
17. In the nursery and reception classes, staff use questioning effectively to help children learn their basic skills, when learning about sorting into groups, or when reviewing their skills in physical education. In a lesson in a reception class in reading, the group work enabled all children to be fully extended and challenged, with tasks set that were neither too hard nor too difficult for them. This enabled all children to achieve well and make good progress. Homework is used satisfactorily to enhance the learning in class.
18. There is a good balance of classroom support and withdrawal of groups of pupils with learning difficulties, and this enables pupils to gain the maximum benefit from each type of support. Pupils' individual education plans are matched well to their needs, and work in the classroom reflects the targets set. Support staff working with pupils with English as an additional language are used well to reinforce the main teaching points of the lesson, or to introduce important skills which will be covered with the whole class. The staff prepare their strategies well, in conjunction with the teacher, and have clearly defined roles. They often sit near pupils who are experiencing problems, and help them during the first or final parts of the lesson. This is especially effective in many English and mathematics lessons.
19. There are very good relationships in the classroom, which lead to better motivation and increased learning. Very good relationships are a very strong feature of the school. Staff use praise well to encourage all pupils, for instance, learning was greatly enhanced in a Year 1 lesson in science about the sense of smell, as the teacher encouraged pupils by rewarding success, as pupils learnt about the functioning of the nose. Achievement was good and pupils learnt well as a result.
20. Good or better lessons account for about three-quarters of the teaching and learning seen. Almost all of the remainder is satisfactory. In the less successful lessons, the pace is sometimes a little too slow and this results in occasional lapses of attention by pupils. Sometimes lessons are too long to sustain pupils' concentration, however, learning is still

⁴ 'Circle time' is a session provided for pupils to discuss certain matters as a class, following strict rules about listening to others and taking turns to speak.

satisfactory and new skills and knowledge are acquired. Planning does not always make appropriate provision and challenge for more able pupils.

The curriculum

Overall, the curriculum is satisfactory, being broad and balanced.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Equality of access to the curriculum and inclusion is very good.
- Children are well prepared for their move from Reception to Year 1.
- The use of support staff is very good.
- The curriculum is well organised and monitored.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
- Personal, social and health education is good.
- The use of information and communication technology to support learning in other areas of the curriculum is good.
- The curriculum is not sufficiently enriched by the use of educational visits.
- The school needs to continue to develop its support for more able pupils.

Commentary

21. The school offers good support to pupils as they move through different stages of their education. Children are well prepared for the move from the Foundation Stage to Key Stage 1⁵ and from the infant school to the adjoining junior school. Links with the junior school are good, with regular liaison meetings, while pupils and parents have the opportunity to visit during Year 2.
22. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education and citizenship is good. The school has allocated specific time for these areas and the curriculum is well organised. The school has a strong focus on healthy eating, for example through the provision of fruit.
23. The school meets the needs of pupils with special educational needs well. The school has a good range of support staff who are used very effectively, particularly during English and mathematics lessons. The experienced special needs co-ordinator is clearly focused on ensuring that pupils achieve their potential. Pupils' individual education plans are matched well to their needs and the work in the classroom reflects the targets set. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is enhanced by a volunteer support project, which involves volunteers, including governors, parents and dinner supervisors, working with pupils on a one-to-one basis. This project benefits pupils and is a source of great satisfaction to the volunteers. As a result of the school's provision, pupils achieve well, with many pupils with special educational needs attaining the nationally expected standards.
24. All pupils have full access to the curriculum and to extra-curricular activities, and those with special educational needs, and pupils who use English as an additional language, are integrated well. Inspectors found pupils did not identify themselves as belonging to a particular group, but rather as equal members of the school community.
25. Some areas of design and technology, history and geography are not covered in sufficient depth. There are insufficient visits to enhance the curriculum. As a result pupils are unable to achieve their full potential in these areas.
26. The school provides a good range of opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology to support their learning in other areas of the curriculum. All classes have specifically timetabled sessions in the information and communication technology suite for developing skills in literacy, numeracy and other subjects. During the

⁵ Key Stage 1, sometimes referred to as the infants, caters for pupils aged between 5 and 7 and refers to pupils who are in Years 1 and 2.

inspection, good use was made of information and communication technology to support learning in mathematics, English and art and design.

27. The school is firmly committed to regularly reviewing and developing the curriculum and takes the sensible precaution of piloting initiatives in particular year groups to ensure that they meet the needs of pupils before adopting them across the school. The staff are enthusiastic about the current pilot project involving the use of cross-curricular books in Year 1 which is having a good impact on standards.

Care, guidance and support

The school is good at caring for its pupils. It has effective procedures to ensure their welfare and safety. Staff know pupils well and they provide good support when required. The school is good at seeking, valuing and acting upon pupils' views. Pupils feel that their views are heard and responded to positively.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Concerned staff, who are always on hand to address the needs of pupils.
- Systems for monitoring and ensuring good behaviour are very effective.
- Arrangements for seeking and acting upon pupils' views are very good.

Commentary

28. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good. Staff are responsive to the needs of pupils and provide good pastoral support when needed. The empathetic manner in which the headteacher comforted a pupil who was crying in the corridor was just one such example. The headteacher has undertaken periodic reviews of accidents and this has been used to reduce lunchtime play by five minutes for those in the Foundation Stage, with a corresponding reduction in those who were suffering minor cuts and bruises. Parents and governors consider pastoral care to be a strength of the school. Arrangements for the induction of children when they start school, and for the transfer of pupils to the junior school, are also good, the latter aided by the close proximity of that school.
29. Arrangements for monitoring and promoting behaviour are good. Teachers do this well by setting high expectations and applying the principles of assertive discipline, by regularly praising the positive. Where behaviour is unacceptable, it is monitored using the tracking sheet, and pupils are clear how this system works.
30. Although the pupils are relatively young, the breadth of opportunities to take on responsibilities, together with a strong moral code, means that many mature quickly. Through the school council, the school gives pupils the opportunity to raise their views. In two areas, namely the decoration of the pupils' toilets and the allocation of space on the playground at break times, the suggestions of the council have been heeded. Within the 'buddy' system there is also an understanding that pupils will have the maturity to select those who replace them and will train them prior to leaving the school.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has established very good links with parents. It has established good links with both the community and other schools and colleges.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The open and welcoming approach of all staff, who listen to, and act upon, concerns.
- The positive way in which the school seeks parents' views and acts upon them.
- The good links with the nearby Royal Society for the Protection of Birds Reserve (RSPB), local secondary schools, and an ASDA store.
- The information in the pupils' annual reports needs to provide a better indication of the level at which each pupil is working, and whether this is appropriate for their age.

Commentary

31. The links which the school promotes with its parents are very good. The parents' questionnaire was overwhelmingly supportive of the way in which the school is run. This view was confirmed by the prevailing opinion at the parents' meeting and in interviews with parents during the week of the inspection. The only area of minor concern, shown by parents, was the information provided about their child's progress.
32. Before they start their education, all children receive a comprehensive induction, and, as part of that, parents are invited to an information evening, when all aspects affecting their child's education are discussed. Once at school, parents are kept informed about events through regular correspondence and a monthly newsletter. The headteacher operates an open regime making herself available to see parents at any time. This welcoming approach has the benefit of resolving issues before they become significant. The school is also good at seeking parents' views and acting upon them. Once a year parents receive a questionnaire from the school asking them for views on how they feel it is run, together with suggestions on ways in which they feel it could be improved. Those that are felt to be of greatest benefit are included in the school development plan and, in turn, this information is fed back to parents.
33. The numerous links which the school has with its local community provide an extra dimension to pupils' experiences of the wider world. The local RSPB nature reserve is used regularly as resource for science. The RSPB have also used this relationship to pilot learning materials that they have been developing specific to young children. There are close ties with the ASDA superstore, and visits there give pupils a feel for life in the working world. The school has good links with the University of Central England and local secondary schools providing work experience to those students and pupils who may either training to be teachers or considering a teaching career. They are also involved in the Active Mark Physical Education initiative, whereby, representatives from secondary schools, particularly Wood Green, provide help in planning physical education lessons.
34. Reports to parents on pupils' progress are satisfactory. They are appropriate in that they give an indication of knowledge and understanding within each subject. The targets that are set, however, are vague and need to be more specific. The reports should also give an indication of the level at which each pupil is working and whether this is appropriate to their age.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The quality of leadership and management is good. The head teacher is very good in leading and motivating her staff and governors and has a total commitment to equality of opportunity for all in her care. She is very well supported by her deputy. This is the school's most significant strength in accounting for the good progress being made. Management by the senior team of staff is good, and is responsible for the good improvements taking place. The work of the governing body is satisfactory. They give strong support to the school; however, there is a significant reliance on the lead given by the headteacher.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has a clear sense of direction for the school, based on the creation of a shared vision of success for all.
- The school rigorously evaluates its performance.
- The headteacher provides excellent inspiration and motivates her staff to work well as a team.
- There is a genuine concern and excellent commitment to meeting the needs of all pupils.

Commentary

35. The vision is underpinned by the belief that all pupils can succeed, and that they and their learning are the school's number one priority. This contributes positively to the effective provision for all pupils who come from a variety of racial backgrounds. The work of different groups of pupils is carefully analysed to ensure all are achieving equally. The headteacher has worked hard to develop leadership at all levels, which is apparent in all the school does,

from the good quality of subject leadership to the very good role of the school council. Additionally, the headteacher has developed a culture amongst the staff of sharing good practice. This has resulted in the good standard of teaching and learning seen throughout the school and has been fundamental in successfully restructuring the school as pupil numbers fall and staff numbers have been reduced. The staff share good ideas to improve teaching and learning and make sure that school policies are followed.

36. The governing body is a committed team and a support to the staff and the school. Governors have realistic expectations. In order to improve their expertise, they have evaluated their strengths, and sought further training where appropriate. The governors are helping to shape the future direction of the school effectively. They have a sound knowledge and understanding of the school. Some governors visit the school regularly, with a clear purpose and agenda and are aware of its strengths and weaknesses. Governors monitor the progress and implementation of policies carefully through these regular visits. They are well informed on the progress of the school's improvement plan. Governors ensure their spending decisions are monitored and improvements measured where practicable.
37. Subject leaders play a key role in monitoring and evaluating the school's work. They observe colleagues teaching and look at pupils' work, and this is contributing to the good teaching in the school. Pupils' progress is carefully analysed and appropriate action taken to target and improve learning. Teachers' performance and professional development have been closely linked to the school's priorities, and are helping to raise standards further.
38. The school's improvement plan provides a clear direction, both in the short and long term. The careful consideration given to the plan is apparent in the time-scale for tackling the priorities and their costs. The school's aims and values are reflected throughout. Governors and staff are actively involved in implementing the plan. The plan focuses appropriately on raising standards and educational provision. The budget is carefully and wisely spent, with the amount carried over being largely the need to provide for the anticipated fall in income in future years.
39. The experienced co-ordinator for pupils with special educational needs, and for those who use English as an additional language, makes a good contribution to the arrangements for pupils. Pupils are included in the full range of curriculum opportunities. Records are well organised, detailed and up to date. Pupils' individual education plans are clearly focused on their needs and are reviewed regularly. Resources have been carefully arranged to make them as accessible as possible to teachers and support staff. The school deliberately invests more of its resources in special educational needs than allocated, which ensures that a very good level of classroom support can be provided. This support is used very effectively and has a beneficial effect on pupils' progress.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	661,080
Total expenditure	651,648
Expenditure per pupil	2,186

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	25,291
Balance carried forward to the next	34,743

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The provision in the Foundation Stage is **good**. It has improved considerably since the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision for children of different abilities and backgrounds is good.
- Teaching and learning are consistently good and show an improvement on previous provision.
- Teaching assistants are of high calibre and make a strong contribution to children's learning.
- Good assessment procedures are used effectively to match activities to individual children's needs.
- A good induction programme helps children to settle quickly.
- The curriculum is well planned. It is balanced and effectively matches the six areas of learning.
- Good leadership and management are promoting good improvement.
- Parents regard Foundation Stage provision highly. The school has very strong relationships with its parents.

Commentary

40. At the time of the inspection, 42 children were attending the nursery part time, and 62 children in the reception classes were in their second week of attending full time. Most children had received some pre-school experience. Despite only being in school for a short time, children were confident and secure because the good induction programme helps them to settle in quickly.
41. The attainment on entry of children currently in the nursery and reception classes is broadly average, though wide ranging. However, children's language and literacy skills are not as strongly developed as other areas of learning, and there are some children in the early stages of learning to use English. In previous years, children's attainment on entry has not been as high. The recent improvement has been due, in part, to better pre-school provision within the area, and also to changes in the local community.
42. The staffing and organisation within the Foundation Stage has changed considerably this term. Although some teaching staff are still adjusting to working with this age group, the new team is confident in its role and is working as a cohesive unit. The consistency of approach, particularly in planning, is much improved since the previous inspection. The overall quality of teaching is good and children of all abilities and backgrounds achieve equally well because work they receive is well matched to their needs. Children's personal and social development is very good and is a strength of the provision.
43. The management of the Foundation Stage is good. There is a clear plan for future improvement and good capacity for making provision even more effective. There are very strong indications that children currently in the Foundation Stage are on course to reach the goals set for them in all areas of learning.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in personal and social development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are valued and quickly become part of a very caring school community.
- All nursery and reception staff are good role models.
- Children's independence is developed very well.

Commentary

44. The teaching of personal and social development is very good and children throughout the Foundation Stage achieve very well and standards are very good. Children make rapid progress from the minute they enter the nursery because learning is fun. Staff work together well and transmit their enthusiasm. Clear expectations for behaviour, courtesy and collaboration are calmly explained and children respond by treating each other with care and respect. A good example of this occurred during discussion time, when children were passing 'Mrs Tiggywinkle' around the circle. They waited patiently and gave the toy a gentle hug when it was their turn.
45. Staff in the reception classes build very well on secure foundations. There is a strong commitment towards independence and children show enthusiasm in all their work. During one lesson, children demonstrated great excitement as they opened their 'Happy Meal' boxes. There was a high level of discussion, co-operation and negotiation. Children and staff clearly enjoy each other's company and this contributes to good achievement in emotional development, independence and standards of behaviour.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well because teaching is good.
- All staff engage children in purposeful conversation and develop children's speaking skills well.
- Children develop a love of books and gain good experience of writing independently.

Commentary

46. Children achieve well through good teaching and standards are satisfactory. Good use of assessment ensures the individual needs of children are well met. Children with English as an additional language are given good support. Two new children in the nursery, in particular, have already grown noticeably in confidence and are able to make themselves understood, despite their short time in school. When working in small groups, all adults engage children in purposeful discussion. Children effectively develop speaking, reading and writing skills in taught sessions and play activities. They know numerous rhymes and already have many favourite stories.
47. In the reception classes, reading routines are well established and children of all abilities demonstrate a love of books. In discussion, children knew exactly why they found the story of 'Tiki the Tiger' interesting. Most identified important words and knew the sounds of some letters.
48. The school's emphasis on developing writing skills right from the start is showing positive results. Children in both nursery and reception classes achieve well because they are encouraged to write independently. By the time they reach Year 1, although some still have to rely heavily on adult support, most children make recognisable attempts at spelling familiar words. More able children write in simple sentences and recognise the importance of full stops.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff in the nursery teach skills effectively by linking work to topics and stories.
- Children in the reception classes achieve well because learning is fun.

Commentary

49. Children achieve well throughout the Foundation Stage and standards are satisfactory. They show a real enthusiasm for mathematical activities. Counting activities in the nursery are effectively linked to topics or stories, such as 'Mrs. Wishy Washy'. When counting the clothes on the washing line, all children identified number three correctly. Most counted to five unaided and some were confident with higher numbers.
50. By reception, children have a secure basic knowledge. They know who is taller and which is the biggest bowl in the 'Goldilocks' story. Some demonstrate greater ability. A good example of this occurred when one child drew three different sized bedroom windows in the Three Bears' house.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well because activities are interesting.
- They develop good, independent computer skills.

Commentary

51. Standards are satisfactory. Children have wide-ranging experiences in this area of learning on entry to the nursery. They achieve well because they receive a rich variety of activities that successfully develops their knowledge and understanding. A key feature of good teaching in the nursery is the quality of discussion that takes place. Children of all abilities increase their vocabulary and are keen to try something new. During one session, for instance, the children discovered that bread was 'soft' when it was new, but 'crunchy' when it was toasted. Many were eager to try different toppings on their toast and waited excitedly to find out whether they liked their choice. A sense of fun prevailed throughout.
52. More tasting was observed in the reception classes. Porridge tasting stimulated much focused discussion and everyone achieved well. The children in the reception classes have a good understanding of other lifestyles, because they celebrate many festivals, such as Diwali.
53. In both year groups, children's independent computer skills are developed well. For instance, squeals of delight were heard, as children dressed the on-screen teddy or positioned furniture in the three bears' bedrooms. They displayed increasingly accurate keyboard and mouse skills.
54. By the time they start Year 1, children have a secure knowledge and understanding of the world in which they live.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development, although **satisfactory** rather than good, is much improved since the previous inspection.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Provision in physical development is much improved.
- Opportunities to develop children's physical skills are better than in the past, but further work remains to be done to improve outdoor play provision.

Commentary

55. Standards are satisfactory. Most children enter the nursery with varying degrees of expertise when using pencils, scissors and paintbrushes. They develop secure skills, because activities

are purposeful and interesting. One girl beamed, and was particularly proud of her painting skills, as she showed her picture of a football. Children have access to a good-sized outdoor area that enhances physical development. The school has worked hard to develop this area, but recognises further work remains to be done.

56. Physical skills develop satisfactorily in the reception classes. The day-to-day routines of dressing and undressing are firmly established. Children already know the importance of exercise and display reasonable control and co-ordination in their physical education lessons. They demonstrate increasing dexterity as they cut out porridge bowls for the three bears and develop good pencil control in their handwriting. They complete puzzles and games with a good level of perseverance and strong collaboration.
57. Provision for outdoor play for children in the reception classes, criticised in the previous report, is much improved but needs further development. It does, however, provide children with better opportunities than in the past to develop physical skills.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning throughout the Foundation Stage is good.
- Children receive a wide variety of good quality learning activities.
- Accommodation is spacious and displays are lively and relevant.

Commentary

58. Standards are satisfactory. In the nursery children show good achievement as they engage in imaginative play, when experimenting or when singing songs or rhymes. Music plays an important part in daily routines and children develop clear preferences. They particularly enjoyed the 'jazzed up' version of 'Hickory, Dickory, Dock'. 'Bob the Builder' was also a strong favourite. Children choose art materials from a well-organised and accessible range and they paint with confidence and enjoyment.
59. Teaching and learning are good throughout the Foundation Stage because children experience a wide variety of good quality learning activities and staff constantly encourage children to do their best.
60. Reception artwork is often linked very effectively to topics. Children were observed making good quality clay pots for the Three Bears' porridge and using a variety of media to create drawings of the 'Goldilocks' story.
61. Foundation Stage accommodation is spacious and attractive. Classrooms are bright and displays are lively and relevant.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**. Teaching is good and, as a result, pupils achieve well, attaining similar standards to pupils in other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum in English is broad and balanced.
- Teaching is good and, as a result, pupils' achieve well.
- Not enough pupils reach the higher levels, particularly in writing.
- Role-play and collaborative talk are used well to develop pupils' writing skills.
- Support for pupils with special educational needs is very good.

- English is well led and managed.
- Some tasks are insufficiently linked to learning objectives.

Commentary

62. Standards in English are in line with national average by the end of Year 2. In the 2003 National Curriculum tests taken by pupils at the end of Year 2, the proportion of pupils achieving the nationally expected level in both reading and writing, although not yet confirmed, appears to have been above national expectations, but the number of pupils attaining levels higher than expected was below the national average. Inspection findings, based on work seen in lessons and in pupils' books, confirmed that standards generally match those found in similar schools.
63. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers explain clearly what pupils are expected to learn. They explain tasks clearly and expect pupils to work productively. They have good subject knowledge and use questioning well to extend pupils' thinking. Resources are used well to support pupils' learning. Support teachers and support assistants are used very well. They maximise the amount of direct teaching time that pupils' receive and make a significant contribution to pupils' learning.
64. Teachers generally have a clear idea of what they want pupils' to learn. However, although valid learning experiences in themselves, some tasks are insufficiently linked to learning objectives. As a result, pupils do not always have the opportunity to practise the skills they have been taught.
65. The school has clearly identified the need to develop pupils' writing and has adopted an approach based on role-play and the use of collaborative talk. During these activities, there is a strong and effective focus on developing pupils' language, which is having a significant impact. For example, the oral language and writing produced as a result of a role-play based on the seaside was of a high standard, whilst the writing produced, following work on 'Big Bad Bill', was also of high quality.
66. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in English. They receive focused support, both in class and in small groups and, as a result, many of them attain nationally expected levels. In-class support is often led by a support teacher and reinforces and builds on whole class teaching. Where pupils are withdrawn from lessons, for example for group reading sessions, the timetable is organised in such a way that they do not miss any direct teaching.
67. English is well led and managed. The co-ordinator has a good grasp of the National Literacy Strategy, which is firmly established in the school. She has undertaken monitoring of teaching and of pupils' work and has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject effectively identifying the need to develop pupils writing skills. The school has focused on particular issues, such as the teaching of writing, and has a clear action plan designed to raise the quality of pupils' written work.
68. Overall, the provision for English has improved since the last inspection. Teaching has remained good, while the National Literacy Strategy has been firmly and soundly embedded in the school. The school needs to continue to focus on writing, consolidating the promising progress which is being made, and ensuring that more able pupils have the opportunity to achieve their full potential.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

69. English is used well to support learning across the curriculum and other subjects, including information and communication technology, to support the development of literacy skills. For example, in one lesson effective use was made of a computer word bank to improve pupils' sentence writing, while, during another lesson, work on a non-fiction book led to an interesting discussion about reversible and irreversible changes in science.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is good and has improved since the staffing was restructured.
- Pupils sometimes find it difficult to sustain concentration when lessons last for more than an hour.
- Additional support for more able pupils is of high quality but further work remains to be done to provide consistently challenging work for more able pupils and to ensure pupils of all abilities think for themselves and develop problem solving skills.
- Assessment procedures are good and information is used well to provide for individual pupils' needs.
- Teachers develop pupils' numeracy skills well.
- The subject co-ordinator is a skilled practitioner who leads by example. Leadership and management of mathematics are good.
- Teaching assistants are of high calibre and they enable less able pupils to achieve well.

Commentary

70. In 2002, standards were close to the national average. This is similar to the findings of the last inspection. They were below average when compared to similar schools. The school rightly identified that, although both girls and boys achieved equally well, not enough pupils reached higher levels. It tackled the problem by providing high quality additional input for more able pupils. To some extent, this initiative has worked well, but further work remains to be done to ensure that these pupils receive equally challenging work at times when they do not receive additional support.
71. Inspection findings indicate that current standards are average and that the school is well placed not only to raise standards, overall, but also to increase the proportion reaching higher levels.
72. The school is aware that pupils' problem solving skills, although improving, are not sufficiently well developed. Pupils frequently lack the confidence to find other ways of reaching an answer. There is an air of uncertainty about straying from the method they have been taught.
73. Evidence from previous work indicates that pupils have made uneven progress in the past. Prior to restructuring, staffing problems were a key adverse factor. There was no consistent approach towards how work was presented, or the quality of marking. Some work was of a high standard; other work was messy, with little follow up if pupils did not understand. The current situation is much better and pupils achieve well across the school.
74. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good. The subject co-ordinator is a skilled practitioner who provides best practice for others to follow. In her very good lesson, pupils of all abilities grasped the basic idea of using a number line, because there was such a rich variety of practical activities to consolidate learning. The speed with which pupils tackled simple addition, put numbers in order and completed activities in group work was breathtaking. The 'teddy bear' game provided the perfect final activity. The teacher used the session at the end of the lesson very effectively to check whether the pupils understood so that work in the next lesson matched their needs. In all lessons, pupils with special education needs achieve well because teaching assistants provide high quality support. However, some lessons are 75 minutes long and, although most pupils cope well with the long sessions, some find difficulty in sustaining concentration.
75. Subject leadership is very strong and has successfully moved the subject forward. There is good capacity for further improvement. Assessment procedures are simple, but effective. Analysis of test results accurately identifies areas in most need and initiatives to rectify weaknesses are implemented promptly. The school strives to provide the best for its pupils.

Targets for improvement are developing well and information and communication technology activities make a sound contribution towards pupils' mathematical learning.

Mathematics across the curriculum

76. Skills are developed well through other subjects. Work on; for example, favourite foods or information about ways to travel to school makes effective use of mathematics skills.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**. Overall, standards in science are above average. This represents good achievement when compared with pupils' starting points when they enter the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching helps pupils to make good progress.
- Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are good.
- The leadership and management of the subject are good.

Commentary

77. Teachers plan their lessons carefully, matching the aims with appropriate resources and activities. They make good use of investigations which engage the pupils' interest and contribute to the good standards attained. Lessons start with teachers telling pupils what they will learn, and how this fits in with their previous learning. Pupils are able to reflect on what they have learnt at the end of lessons, when teachers ensure that key points are shared. Teachers use good examples to illustrate points and provide clear explanations. They structure learning effectively, which results in pupils making good gains in their knowledge and understanding. For example, in a Year 1 lesson on the five senses, pupils started by experiencing a range of scents and identified that scent travels through the air; they then tried to identify scents blind and record their results before comparing them with the whole class. Effective questioning is well used to promote learning, for example in developing pupils' sense of smell during this investigational work on the body's five senses. All pupils achieve well and make good progress. Very good support for pupils with special educational needs is provided by well-matched activities and effective guidance and support from teachers and classroom assistants.
78. Pupils enjoy science. They handle equipment carefully and safely. Teachers make lessons exciting and fun, which helps pupils feel that they can succeed. Relationships between teachers and pupils are good. Pupils work well together, sharing tasks and equipment. All of these lead to a better learning environment, where progress is accelerated and improved.
79. The subject leader has established clear priorities to raise standards. These are based on her good monitoring of science across the school, through lesson observations, looking at pupils' work and teachers' planning, and include the development of assessment in science so that pupils' progress can be tracked throughout the school, to help teachers target learning more effectively.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Whole-class teaching of information and communication technology skills is good, however, the small information and communication technology suite, with a limited number of computers, makes teaching difficult.
- Use of information and communication technology across the curriculum is good.
- Time is not used as effectively as possible in some lessons.
- The subject is well led and managed.

Commentary

80. Standards in information and communication technology are in line with national averages by the end of Year 2. Pupils achieve well throughout the school.
81. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers explain clearly what pupils are expected to learn and demonstrate the skills effectively using the interactive whiteboard. They explain tasks clearly and expect pupils to work productively. Teachers make as effective use as possible of the information and communication technology suite and adjacent classroom, providing paper-based and computer based tasks for different groups, enabling them to use the computers on a rota basis. Occasionally, tasks are not sufficiently challenging to require the time allocated to them. As a result, some valuable learning time is lost and the standard of behaviour declines.
82. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in information and communication technology. Additional teaching time before school is used well to support learning in mathematics.
83. Information and communication technology is well led and managed. There is a clear scheme of work and the co-ordinator has identified opportunities to use information and communication technology across the curriculum. She has begun to assemble a useful portfolio of pupils' work and has purchased good quality resources to support teaching in the subject.
84. Overall, the provision for information and communication technology has improved since the last inspection.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

85. The use of Information and communication technology is being developed well to support learning across the curriculum. For example, in one lesson, effective use was made of an integrated learning system to support pupils' learning at their individual level in mathematics, while, in another lesson, a computer word bank was used well to improve pupils' sentence writing. The school has identified the need to continue to develop this aspect of information and communication technology work.

HUMANITIES

Geography and history

Provision in geography and history is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Consistently good development of skills in both subjects.
- Good teaching enables good learning to take place.
- Both subjects encourage the development of numeracy and literacy skills effectively.
- In both subjects, insufficient use is made of information and communication technology to enhance learning.
- The good management of the two subjects enhances learning effectively.

Commentary

86. Standards in both subjects are average in **geography** and **history** by the end of Year 2. This represents good achievement by pupils. The school has recognised the need to develop these subjects. To achieve this, promote skills development and raise standards overall, the school has skilfully analysed what needs to be done and drawn up individual action plans for each subject. This focus has already resulted in pupils making good progress. In history, there are many opportunities for pupils to undertake research and produce their own work on

topics, such as holidays in the past. This is well supported by classroom displays which pupils spoke about enthusiastically and knowledgeably.

87. Teachers plan both subjects well. There is effective use of resources and good subject knowledge. The preparation and very good discussion create an environment for learning which promotes enthusiasm and stimulates pupils' desire to learn. In all lessons seen particular emphasis was paid to speaking and listening. These opportunities encourage pupils to convey their ideas and opinions to their classmates, who listen carefully and respond appropriately, using correct terminology. The reporting of historical events by pupils Year 2, such as the Great Fire of London, helps to extend their writing skills.
88. In these two subjects, limited use is made of places of interest in the area to investigate historical and geographical features to enhance pupils' learning through first-hand discovery and experiences and to help them develop their skills of enquiry. Such visits and research would contribute to stronger, more effective learning, whilst bringing the subjects alive.
89. The school recognises the need to develop its use of information and communication technology in these subjects. This is basically due to the fact that there are few suitable software resources available to help pupils research or to learn new skills. Such resources are currently being examined critically in an audit, with a view to improving their quantity and quality.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are limited opportunities to gain an understanding of the diversity and richness of different cultural traditions.
- The use of information and communication technology is very limited.

Commentary

90. Although no religious education lessons were seen during the inspection, an examination of pupils' work and displays, and discussions with younger pupils, indicate that pupils' knowledge and understanding of the subject meets the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and that standards are in line with those expected for pupils at the end of Year 2.
90. In Year 2, pupils understand the Christmas and Easter stories. They recognise different faiths have their own traditions, and learn about some of the similarities and differences between Judaism, Sikhism, Islam and Christianity. Pupils' knowledge about other religions is in line with the core requirements of the locally agreed syllabus.
91. Teachers' subject knowledge is satisfactory and the scheme of work supports their teaching well. There are few opportunities to visit different places of worship. This restricts pupils' awareness of other faiths, cultures and traditions. Pupils have had little opportunity to use computers to enhance their learning or to find out information.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Art and design and design and technology

Provision in art and design, and design and technology is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides an attractive, welcoming environment, with good quality displays in communal areas.

Commentary

92. It is not possible to make a secure judgement on the quality of teaching due to the small number of lessons seen. Based on these observations and the quality of work on display, it is possible to make the judgement that pupils achieve average standards by the end of Year 2. Pupils have experience of an appropriate range of media. Good quality computer graphics, in the style of Jackson Pollock, demonstrate effective use of information and communication technology skills in artwork. Pupils' paintings of poppy fields, inspired by Monet, capture the style of the artist well and indicate good attention to detail. Their self-portraits frequently show an instantly recognisable representation. Pupils have the opportunity to develop sewing skills well when volunteer helpers work with them on a one-to-one basis. On these occasions, pupils show intense concentration and great pride in their work. In lessons, artwork is frequently linked to other subjects. In a good Year 1 lesson, activities focused effectively on symmetry. The teacher also incorporated good use of the computer to create symmetrical patterns. Pupils achieved well because they were motivated by the topic and enjoyed the practical nature of the subject.
93. The school has identified creative arts as an area for development during this academic year. It wants to ensure more pupils are involved. Through initiatives such as creative arts workshops and the creation of a specialist room, the school is well placed to raise the profile of the arts within the school.

MUSIC

Provision in music is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school makes effective use of high quality specialist teaching to ensure pupils receive a worthwhile learning experience.
- All pupils have opportunities to participate in concerts and performances.
- Music makes a positive contribution towards pupils' personal development.
- A small number of pupils receive instrumental tuition.
- There are too few extra-curricular activities to enhance music provision and develop skills further.
- Class teachers have some subject insecurity.

Commentary

94. The school has taken very effective steps to make sure music is an enjoyable part of school life. The part-time music specialist gives pupils an exciting range of activities that successfully ensures steady progress and the systematic development of skills. The well-organised curriculum provides balanced coverage.
95. By the end of Year 2 most pupils achieve satisfactorily and reach average standards. Every pupil has the opportunity to participate in school concerts and productions. During the inspection, pupils were practising for their Harvest Festival celebration. They knew a good range of hymns and songs, sang sweetly during rehearsal, and enjoyed the sense of social occasion. Music makes a positive contribution towards pupils' personal development. However, there are not many opportunities for musically talented pupils to develop their skills further through extra-curricular activities. A small number of pupils receive cello tuition. Parents value this opportunity.
96. It is not possible to make a judgement on the overall quality of teaching because too few lessons were observed. These were taught by a music specialist, whose teaching was of a consistently high standard and demonstrated many features of best practice. In a very good lesson in Year 2, pupils achieved very well because activities were lively and were pitched at exactly the right level to ensure success. Pupils of all abilities were given the opportunity to be creative. Some came up with very imaginative ideas as they sang 'Head, Chest, Knee, Toe'. Their enjoyment was clear to see when someone asked if there was time to sing the 'Snail

Song'. This was a challenging lesson in which pupils had to concentrate hard to keep up with the pace.

97. Class teachers are not totally secure with the subject. They have gained greater confidence by observing lessons being taught by the skilled practitioner. However, because each class only receives specialist teaching every alternate half term, there is some variation in the overall quality of provision at other times.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Provision in physical education is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good provision for swimming.
- Good stock of resources.

Commentary

98. As only one lesson was observed during the inspection, it was not possible to make a judgement about the quality of teaching. However, the school provides a broad curriculum for physical education and, by the end of Year 2, pupils attain the expected level. Despite the obvious financial challenges, the school has taken good account of the needs of the local area, particularly the amount of open water, and has ensured that all pupils have the opportunity to attend swimming lessons during their time in the school. The classes in Year 2 have a weekly lesson at the local swimming pool for 15 weeks.

99. Physical education is well led and managed. The subject is well organised with a clear scheme of work, sufficient time is allocated, and the co-ordinator maintains a good stock of resources which are easily accessible.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Personal, social and health education

No direct teaching of personal, social and health education was observed during the inspection. As a result, it was not possible to make a firm judgement about provision. However, evidence of the development of pupils' personal, social and health education can be found throughout the curriculum.

Commentary

100. The school has allocated specific time for developing personal, social and health education and the curriculum is well organised. Although lessons are based on various published schemes, they are adapted to meet the needs of the pupils in the school. Teaching usually takes place through 'circle time' when pupils gather in a whole class group and support staff are used well to ensure that pupils have the opportunity to discuss personal and social issues in small groups. Teachers use a range of stories to highlight issues such as divorce or bereavement.

101. The school has a strong focus on healthy eating. Staff set a good example for pupils, who are aware of the need for a healthy balanced diet. This is exemplified, for example, through the absence of sweets and biscuits at break and lunch times and through the provision of fruit.

102. The management of personal, social and health education is sound. The co-ordinator has identified links between personal, social and health education and other areas of the curriculum and is in the process of developing a useful resource book identifying multi-cultural resources and artefacts in school.

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	4
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	3
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	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	3

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