

INSPECTION REPORT

OVERDALE INFANT SCHOOL

Leicester

LEA area: Leicester

Unique reference number: 120021

Headteacher: Helen Littlewood

Lead inspector: Keith Sadler

Dates of inspection: 7th - 9th June 2004

Inspection number: 264490

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

© Crown copyright 2004

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	268
School address:	Eastcourt Road Knighton Leicester
Postcode:	LE2 3YA
Telephone number:	(01162) 882 724
Fax number:	(01162) 570 323
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Lara Lang
Date of previous inspection:	7 th September 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Overdale is a large urban primary school with 268 pupils on roll from reception to Year 2. The school is over-subscribed and is located on the southern edge of the City of Leicester. Most, though not all, pupils come from the immediate vicinity, which is mainly made up of owner-occupied houses. Although pupils come from a variety of home backgrounds, overall their socio-economic circumstances are above average. The school is ethnically diverse with about one third of pupils from minority ethnic groups and having English as an additional language. Very few pupils leave or join the school at times other than those expected. Around five per cent of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals. This is below the national average. Although the full range of ability is represented in the school's intake, generally children's attainment on entry to the school is above that found nationally. The percentage of pupils on the school's register for special educational needs is below average. The percentage of pupils having statements of special educational needs is broadly in line with the national average.

The school shares a large site with the partner junior school. There are spacious grounds including playing fields and the school shares the use of an outdoor swimming pool with the junior school. The school gained the Investors in People standard in 2003.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
16405	Keith Sadler	Lead inspector	English Special educational needs English as an additional language Music Religious education
9417	Liz Owen	Lay inspector	
5862	Sally Heaney	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Design and technology Geography History
22291	Keith Saltfleet	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Mathematics Art and design Physical education

The inspection contractor was:

Tribal PPI
Barley House
Oakfield Grove
Clifton
Bristol
BS8 2BN

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made initially to the inspection contractor. The procedures are set out in the leaflet '*Complaining about Ofsted Inspections*', which is available from Ofsted Publications Centre (telephone 07002 637 833) or Ofsted's website (www.ofsted.gov.uk).

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	4 - 6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	7 - 9
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	9 - 13
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	13 - 14
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND AND SUBJECTS	15 - 27
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	28

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Overdale Infants is a successful and improving school. It is **effective** and provides **very good value for money**. The quality of teaching is good and helps the pupils to learn and achieve well. The headteacher provides very good leadership. Governance is good, management very good and the school runs smoothly. There is a very good ethos for learning. Pupils thoroughly enjoy lessons and have very positive attitudes. The impact of these aspects has led to improving standards to the current well above average levels.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Inspection findings are that standards are well above the national expectation in mathematics, reading, writing and speaking and listening. They are above average in other subjects and areas and pupils achieve well.
- The very good attitudes and behaviour of the pupils who enjoy the school and learning.
- The very good leadership of the headteacher who, aided in particular by the year group leaders, has had a very positive influence on the quality of educational provision and the standards attained.
- The quality and use of teachers' assessments of pupils' learning and the marking of their work.
- The very good curriculum enrichment opportunities provided by visits, visitors and extra-curricular activities.
- Very good care, guidance and support for pupils.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- Attendance was well below the national median in the last school year.
- Links with parents are very good and they have very positive views about the school.
- There is a need to improve the pupils' involvement in their own learning through teachers enabling them to raise their own questions and to seek solutions to them.

The school has shown very good improvement since the last inspection. All the weaknesses identified in the last inspection have been dealt with effectively. All pupils' achievements in science are now good and above nationally expected standards are attained. Attainment in information and communication technology (ICT) has been boosted to the current above average standards as a result of significant improvements in provision. Systems to review the school's effectiveness are very good, and very good use is made of data to evaluate the impact of the priorities for development. Arrangements for the professional development of staff are good and are well integrated into the good school improvement plan. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is now very good and is a strength of the school. In addition to these improvements, the school has tackled the large number of minor weaknesses very well and some, such as the effective use of learning support staff in literacy lessons, the teaching and learning policy and policy and practice for personal, social and health education (PSHE) are now very good.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

writing	C	C	C	D
mathematics	A	B	A	B

*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. Children enter school with generally above expected levels of attainment. They progress well in most areas of learning in the reception year and, by the time that they enter Year 1, almost all are on course to achieve the required goals. Standards are generally above expectations and are well above in the mathematics area of learning. Pupils make good progress in their learning and achieve well in both Years 1 and 2. In the national tests for seven-year-olds, standards have been well above average in mathematics, both in comparison with all schools nationally and similar schools. In the reading and writing national tests, standards have been in line with the national average in comparison with all schools for the past two years. In comparison with similar schools, standards in these aspects have been below average. However, this is not now the case. As a result of the school’s focus on improving writing and reading, standards have been significantly raised. Inspection findings are that the pupils’ attainment is well above national expectations in mathematics, reading, writing and speaking and listening. Standards are above average in other subjects.

Pupils’ personal qualities and spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good. The pupils’ attitudes to learning, to each other and to the school are all very good. The school’s positive and inclusive ethos for learning, which is created by all the adults, helps pupils to thrive in their learning, and have high self-esteem and levels of confidence. All pupils feel included in the range of activities that the school offers. Attendance was well below the national average in the last school year, though there has been some improvement this year to broadly average levels.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is good. The quality of teaching and learning is good with almost two thirds of lessons seen being good or better. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. Pupils learn well because teachers plan lessons well, are clear about what is to be learned, question pupils well and above all, their high quality assessments of pupils’ achievements enable them to pinpoint future work. The teaching of most subjects is good. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. However, there is a need to ensure that the pupils are given better opportunities to raise questions in the areas being studied and to find their own solutions to the questions. This currently occurs in a few of the best lessons. Provision for pupils with special educational needs, and for those with English as an additional language, are both very good. Teaching assistants make a particularly effective contribution to support these pupils’ needs. The curriculum is good and there are very good opportunities for pupils to take part in activities outside the school day. Arrangements for the care, guidance and support of pupils are very good and the school provides a safe, secure and healthy environment for both adults and pupils. Pupils’ education is enhanced by the very good links that the school has with parents, who support their children’s learning well.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are very good. The leadership of the headteacher is very good. She is rigorous and analytical when determining priorities for improvement. In addition,

she has a very clear vision for the development of the school, has secured a strong sense of teamwork and ensured that relationships are generally very good. Subject leadership is good overall and some areas are led very well. Year group leaders provide very good leadership. Governance is good, financial management is secure and the school runs very smoothly. There are good self-evaluation processes in place. Statutory requirements are fully met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents are very supportive of the school and they have very positive views. In particular, they feel well informed and involved in their children's learning. The pupils like attending the school; they enjoy lessons and have very positive views.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve attendance.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to be involved in their own learning.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils make good progress in the Foundation Stage and achieve well. This is maintained in Years 1 and 2 and by the time that they leave school, the large majority of pupils attain standards that are at above the national expectation and many attain higher standards. Pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs also achieve well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Inspection evidence shows that standards in mathematics, reading, writing and speaking and listening are well above those expected nationally.
- Achievement is good.
- Standards are above nationally expected levels in most subjects.

Commentary

1. Although the full range of ability is represented in the intake, overall, the children's attainment on entry to the school is above nationally expected levels. Due to the good provision in the reception year, the children achieve well and make good progress. Most children are on course to attain the specified learning goals for children at the end of the reception year and a significant minority exceed them, particularly in mathematics. Pupils continue to make good progress in their learning in Years 1 and 2 and by the time that they leave the school, standards are generally well above the national average and pupils achieve well.
2. However, this has not always been the case. In each of the past three years, standards, although average in comparison with all schools, have been too low, particularly in English and science. In comparison with similar schools, standards in reading and writing have been below average. This is not the case for mathematics, where standards have been well above the national average in comparison with all schools and above average in comparison with similar schools. In the 2004 tests for seven-year-olds, there has been a considerable improvement in pupils' attainment in both reading and writing. These results reflect inspection findings, which are that pupils attain well above average standards in reading, writing and speaking and listening. In science, previously, teachers' assessments have been that standards have been generally around the national expectation. Again, inspection findings are that standards are now above expectations and pupils achieve well.
3. The reason for improvements in reading and writing has been the over-arching priority that the school has had to raise standards in literacy. This has resulted in a considerable improvement in provision in all aspects of English since the previous inspection. The school has met its targets and undertaken good analyses of the performance of different groups of pupils. This information has helped to ensure that the actions taken have been timely and effective.

4. Overall, there has been good improvement. Standards have risen from the above average levels in reading and writing and mathematics that were previously reported.
5. The school has a relatively high proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language. The achievement of these pupils is good, they achieve standards that are at least in line, and often better, than the pupils who speak English as their first language. Pupils with special educational needs are particularly well catered for due to the high quality provision both in classes and in the withdrawal groups, which are usually taught by teaching assistants. As a result of the carefully programmed and targeted work, these pupils make good progress, achieve well, and attain standards that are in line with their individual education plans. One of the key reasons for their good progress and achievement is that these pupils are helped to feel included in all the activities that the school has to offer. Furthermore, the school is very careful to ensure that the achievement of different groups of pupils, such as high and low attainers and girls and boys, are suitably catered for. There are no significant differences in the performance of boys and girls.
6. Standards in most other subjects are above the national expectation. This is the case for ICT, history and personal, social and health education. There are indications that pupils attain above average standards in most other subjects.
7. As a result of the good provision and the school's focus on core skills, pupils' competency in literacy, mathematics, ICT and, in particular, their speaking and listening skills enable them to achieve well in other subjects.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.9 (16.2)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	15.1 (14.5)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	17.6 (17.1)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 85 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The pupils' attitudes to school and their behaviour are very good and a key strength of the school. Pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is very good. Attendance was well below the national average in the last school year.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is highly inclusive. As a result, pupils enjoy their learning and participate in their lessons with great enthusiasm.
- The overwhelming majority of pupils behave consistently well both in lessons and at playtimes.
- Attendance, although improved during the current school year, is still below the school target of 95 per cent. A small number of pupils arrive late each day.
- Pupils' very good social and moral development is a key contributor to the harmonious ethos of the school.

Commentary

8. Pupils are happy in school and feel secure and confident. Almost all parents who completed the questionnaire said that their children liked school. Pupils work hard, respond with enthusiasm to questioning and discussion, and participate fully in all opportunities on offer. Pupils are attentive and concentrate well in lessons and all pupils are helped to feel a strong sense of belonging. Playtimes and lunchtimes are relaxed and sociable.
9. The consistent approach towards pupils' behaviour ensures that they are clear about what is expected, and more than one example was observed of pupils making it very clear to a child displaying some reckless behaviour, that this was not acceptable to them either! Teachers manage the pupils, whose special needs have an effect on their behaviour, calmly and consistently, with the emphasis on encouraging positive aspects. Although no evidence of bullying was observed, there are good processes in place to ensure that any instances are taken very seriously and dealt with promptly. There have been no exclusions in the last five years.
10. Attendance has improved during the current year since last year's dip to the well below average rates. So far this year, it is just below the 95 per cent target. The school is most scrupulous over the correct authorisation of absences. Unauthorised absence is above the national average. There are very good procedures in place to monitor attendance trends and patterns, as well as every child's rate. This is carried out by the school bursar, who works closely with the education welfare officer and reports regularly to the headteacher. An incentive scheme has been introduced to encourage better attendance and the class with the best attendance is rewarded with a special toy to look after for the week. However, there is insufficient awareness among parents that attendance is an issue where there is a need for improvement, and although the fortnightly newsletter reports on the classes with the best attendance, no mention is made of the need to improve every class. There are also some missed opportunities to regularly remind all parents about the disadvantages of term-time holidays and the importance of punctuality.
11. Pupils have a very good sense of being part of a community and work and play well together. The school rule rated the most important in a survey of pupils was "be kind to others" and this is reflected in the pupils' behaviour and in the way adults in school treat them. Pupils of differing ethnic heritage have very good relationships and friendships with each other, and there is much evidence of racial harmony across the school. Pupils are developing well an appreciation of other people's feelings and beliefs as well as their own set of values and opinions. An example was seen of a Year 2 pupil who, when invited in assembly to tell others about his sporting achievement, spoke only about how well his classmate had played.
12. Aspects of different cultures and religions have been studied by pupils. Staff draw effectively on parents and members of the wider community to support the pupils' development. The school is aware of the need to develop further resources, including the library, to reflect better the multi-ethnic nature of the school and surrounding community.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (93.0%)

Authorised absence	
School data	6.3

Unauthorised absence	
School data	0.7

National data	5.4
---------------	-----

National data	0.4
---------------	-----

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is good. Teaching and learning are good and assessment is very good. The curriculum is good and the opportunities for additional learning beyond the school day are very good. Arrangements for pupils' care, guidance and support are very good.

Teaching and learning

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers assess pupils' achievements very well.
- The very good relationships between teachers and pupils have a positive effect on their learning as all pupils are included in the activities provided.
- Teachers' planning is very good and helps to make sure that the work is pitched at the right level for different groups of pupils.
- The quality of teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- Support staff make a very positive contribution to pupils' learning.
- There is a need improve the pupils' participation in their learning by providing more opportunities for them to pose questions and seek solutions.

Commentary

13. At the time of the last inspection, the quality of teaching and learning was satisfactory in the Reception Year and satisfactory in most subjects for pupils in Years 1 and 2. There has been a considerable improvement since that time. All of the teaching seen in the Reception Year was good or better with almost half being very good. In Years 1 and 2, the teaching is also good with over two thirds being good or better. There was no unsatisfactory teaching during the inspection. This good quality teaching has a positive impact on the pupils' learning and is an important feature in the improvements in standards since the last inspection.
14. Soon after taking up her appointment, the headteacher embarked on an improvement process to develop greater consistency and quality in the school's approach to teaching and learning. The success of this is evident in all classrooms and has led to strengths and improvement in the quality of teaching. All staff, including nursery nurses in the Reception Year, start lessons by outlining the objectives of the lesson, which are then written on whiteboards. These are referred to very well by staff through each lesson and invariably, the objectives are checked out at the end of lessons to ascertain the progress made towards targets. Teachers' planning is very good and great care is taken to ensure that the activities are appropriately pitched to meet the differing learning needs of all the pupils in the class. Linked to this, the staff consistently encourage pupils to do their best and they have very good relationships with the pupils. The teachers' insistence on good behaviour leads to a very positive climate for learning. It also helps all pupils to feel included in the activities and this, too, helps to promote positive learning for all.

15. Non-teaching staff make a very strong contribution to the quality of teaching. They provide very good support for individuals and groups of pupils, both when working with the teachers in the classrooms and also when they are withdrawn. The support staff make a particularly strong contribution to the overall very good quality of teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs. The individual education plans for these pupils are good and are used well by staff in most, though not all, classrooms. There were some instances in Years 1 and 2 when staff needed to refer more frequently to these plans to check individual pupils' targets.
16. Teachers' assessments of the pupils' achievements are a strength. It is also another area in which there has been considerable improvement since the last inspection. In almost all subjects, there are very good arrangements to assess and record pupils' progress. The evaluations of lessons, linked to the ongoing assessments, considerably enhance learning because staff are enabled to pinpoint the pupils' next steps in learning. Staff question pupils very well, both in plenary sessions and when talking with them during lessons. These very good questioning skills also enable teachers to spot any potential blockages or learning needs and, as a result, teachers are very accurate in their evaluations of lessons and learning. The marking of pupils' work is of high quality, offering opportunities for pupils to become more involved in identifying their achievements and priorities for further attention.
17. However, there is a weakness. In the best lessons, teachers are very skilful at steering the pupils' learning to ensure that they pose questions in the areas to be studied as a result of their mapping what they already know about the topic being taught. They then seek solutions to their own questions. This strategy is not used by many teachers, thus, occasionally, limiting learning for some pupils.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 36 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
1 (3%)	12 (33%)	12 (33%)	11 (31%)	0 (0%)	0 (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.

The curriculum

The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum that meets all statutory requirements. It is inclusive. There has been an improvement since the last inspection when the curriculum did not fully meet requirements. A wide range of after-school activities enriches provision for pupils through visits to places of interest and by visitors who share their experience and expertise with pupils in lessons. The school provides a good environment for learning where accommodation and resources are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum offers a good range of appropriate and well planned learning experiences.
- Teachers and support staff provide good role models for pupils, and they have the skills and expertise needed to meet the learning needs of pupils well.
- Provision for personal, social and health education is of very good quality and pupils show a responsible approach to the safety, care and welfare of themselves, one another, and the environment.
- The curriculum for pupils whose first language is not English and those with special educational needs is very good.
- Accommodation is spacious and well cared for by all members of the school community, offering a good environment for teaching and learning.

Commentary

18. Provision, planning, teaching and the use of assessment to inform curricular development in the Foundation Stage are well developed. This helps to secure the children's good progress. The curriculum for pupils in Years 1 and 2 offers good opportunities for learning in most areas of the national framework. Teachers are committed and effective and, together with the good support of teaching assistants, ensure high quality learning and achievement by all children. There is good liaison with parents and families throughout the school.
19. Since the last inspection in 1998, the school has moved forward. Improvements in the curriculum have been effected in the teaching of science and ICT, and by ensuring there are policy documents and a very good curriculum for PSHE, and for design and technology. Curriculum planning is now secure and of good quality. The curriculum provides a good framework for learning. It is well formed to meet the learning objectives of the programmes of study in the National Curriculum, adopts the guidance offered by National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy, by the QCA for other subjects, and by the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Teachers offer good role models for pupils and have the necessary expertise to meet the demands of the curriculum, as well as the diverse learning needs of pupils. The curriculum provision, for pupils with English as an additional language and for those with special educational needs, is very good. These pupils have equal access to the curriculum and make good progress in line with their abilities.
20. The curriculum is very well enriched by visits to places of interest and by visitors to the school. There is a good range of well-attended after-school clubs that promote pupils' interest and expertise in sports, the arts and other activities. The school celebrates and examines a range of Christian, Hindu and Muslim festivals as well as making an active contribution to local community and charity events. This supports the social, moral, and spiritual and cultural development of pupils.
21. Accommodation is good and resources are appropriate for the demands of the curriculum and the needs of pupils. The school provides a good environment for learning that is well cared for by all members of the community.

Care, guidance and support

The school makes very good provision for pupils' care, welfare and health and safety. The provision of support, advice and guidance, based on monitoring, is very good. The involvement of pupils in the work and development of the school is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The very good relationships, between pupils and adults in school, provide a very sound basis for pupil support.
- Well-managed and effective assessment ensures that pupil progress is carefully tracked and appropriate targets set.
- Good induction ensures a smooth transition both into school and on to the nearby junior school.
- The PSHE programme provides very effective support for pupils' personal development and has been introduced as part of the Healthy Schools initiative.
- A start has been made on seeking and acting on pupils' views.

Commentary

22. Class teachers and support staff know their pupils very well, and pupils are confident to approach adults in school if they have any concerns.
23. Child protection arrangements are in line with locally agreed procedures and have been checked recently by a governor. Governors also carry out regular health and safety risk assessments and are due to review current policy and procedures. Good arrangements are in place for first aid and for any pupils with medical requirements.
24. Pupils are aware of their individual targets and, in each lesson, are given guidance to help them evaluate how they have done by teachers asking questions such as “I know I’ve done well if” This is very good practice and is an important reason for the pupils’ good achievement. These very effective assessment arrangements also help to ensure that class teachers and support staff have a thorough knowledge of each pupil’s progress and development, which leads to well targeted support.
25. Very good arrangements for induction are in place, which ensure a smooth transition from a range of pre-school settings. Almost all parents completing the questionnaire felt the arrangements were good. The approach taken is a flexible one, which can vary according to the needs of individual children. For example, there is variation in the length of time children are allowed to attend part-time according to their readiness for full time attendance.
26. The school has been much involved in the Healthy Schools initiative, which has included the introduction of a very good quality PSHE programme, a number of healthy eating initiatives and encouragement to walk to school. The PSHE curriculum has been a key factor in promoting pupils’ personal development and they talk with confidence in front of the class about personal feelings. Assemblies are also used well to promote this area.
27. Some work has been done to seeking pupils’ views, including a questionnaire from the special needs co-ordinator on bullying. Another identified the wish for improvements in playground equipment. The school is aware that this is an area for potential development.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

Links with parents are very good. Links with the community and other schools are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good information is provided to parents about their children’s standards and progress and about the curriculum.
- Parents are actively involved with their children’s education and their views are sought and are acted upon.

- A number of education links with other schools and visitors enhance provision.

Commentary

28. Parents are very supportive of the school and the overwhelming majority feel well informed and involved in their children's learning. A school questionnaire had identified that some parents would like to know more about how their child was progressing, and in response the school has introduced open afternoons when parents can come into school during the working day, see the school in action, and be shown work by the children. This was seen during the inspection and a number of Year 2 parents spent time in school and had an excellent opportunity to talk through and see their children's work. This activity is in addition to the formal parents' evenings and Friday class assemblies to which parents are invited. A number of parents regularly help in school. Also, information is provided through the regular newsletters, specific curriculum evenings, and helpful guidance for parents of reception children. In addition, the prospectus, governors' annual report and induction sessions held by the headteacher for new pupils' parents provide useful information for parents. Parents feel confident to approach the school with questions or problems, and have the opportunity for informal exchange at the start and end of the school day.
29. Links with a local church are good, and representatives of other faiths visit periodically for assemblies. The local police officer is involved in safety aspects of the PSHE work, and other agencies like the fire service visit. Individuals from a range of organisations visit, including poets, artists and, recently, a representative from Guide Dogs For The Blind. This extensive range of additional activities has a positive effect on pupils' learning and helps to enrich the curriculum.
30. There are good links with the adjacent junior school which help the smooth transition between Year 2 and Year 3 and some facilities, including the swimming pool, are shared. Links with secondary schools have enhanced the PE curriculum and the murals around the external walls are a result of a secondary art link. The local Development Group is very active and enables the establishment of good links between subject co-ordinators.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Governance of the school is **good**. Leadership of the school by the headteacher and year group leaders, and the overall management of the school, are **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher has a very clear vision of how she wants the school to develop and a strong determination to succeed.
- Year group leaders give her very good support.
- Governors' understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school is good; they offer a good level of challenge and support.
- Further development of the role of subject co-ordinators is needed to increase their impact on raising standards.
- Very good management reflects a school with ambition.

Commentary

31. The school has made very good progress in meeting issues from the last inspection; all aspects have been addressed well. There are now very effective systems in place for school review and the school improvement plan is firmly linked to financial planning. Detailed action plans are informative and outline milestones for completion and success criteria, together with responsibilities for monitoring and evaluation. The co-ordination and management of professional development is good, and is suitably linked with priorities in the school improvement plan and performance management. The school gained the *Investors in People* standard in 2003.
32. The headteacher leads the school very well and is clear about the direction the school should take in the future. She enjoys the full support of year group leaders who share the beliefs and values of the school. Working together, this group carefully assesses the needs and priorities for the school, concentrating on improving the quality of teaching and learning, to raise standards and the achievements of all pupils. There are some areas where co-ordination is very good, for example, assessment, the Foundation Stage, science, PSHE, mathematics and special educational needs. Others are less well developed but show further potential. The school improvement plan acknowledges that the next step is to extend co-ordinators' roles so that they can fully evaluate the quality of teaching and learning, and so manage improvement in the subjects for which they are responsible.
33. The governing body fulfils all its statutory responsibilities, and through regular meetings, ensures that important decisions about the future of the school are made carefully. Liaison, between curriculum co-ordinators and their respective governor, is productive and provides them with a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The governors are fully supportive of the headteacher and are not afraid to challenge and question the reasons for decisions made. The budget is used well in ensuring that the school's priority for raising standards is met. The bursar maintains accurate records of all spending and regularly keeps the headteacher and governors well informed of the current position.
34. The management of the school is very good. Efficient routines are in place and the school is an orderly community, which runs very smoothly. Administrative staff work effectively and efficiently to support the teachers. The current school improvement plan is a good working document which ensures that the school's priorities are met. It has taken account of an analysis of the school's current performance and has clear targets for development and criteria for evaluating success. The priorities identified within the plan are closely allied to costs and the governors seek to gain the best value they can when purchasing goods and services. Staff development is firmly linked to the school improvement plan and is designed to enhance the school's quality of teaching and to contribute to teachers' professional development. Performance management is well established and school self-evaluation plays an important role in identifying appropriate priorities for action.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	603,521
Total expenditure	614,101
Expenditure per pupil	2,309

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	17,677
Balance carried forward to the next	7,143

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

35. Provision for children in the reception classes is good overall and has improved since the last inspection. The accommodation both inside and outside is good and the space is used creatively for imaginative play. The quality of teaching is consistently good, with very good teaching seen in each of the three classes. Each teacher has the full time support of an experienced nursery nurse; they work very well together planning a wide range of relevant and interesting activities that are well matched to the children's needs. Assessment is used particularly well to chart children's progress and to determine subsequent learning. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator leads her colleagues very well, evaluates provision well and has a clear vision about what needs to be done next to further improve the quality of teaching and learning. The priorities identified are appropriate. These are to refine further moderation of the Foundation Stage profile and to establish a baseline to establish children's attainment on entry so by the end of the year 'value added' can be reliably assessed.
36. Children enter the reception classes in the September of the year they become five. Their attainment is above average on entry and most children have had some pre-school experience. As children are well taught, and have very positive attitudes to their learning, they forge ahead and achieve well. High proportions of them are on course to attain the expected level in all areas of learning by the end of their reception year, with a significant number to exceed it. Consequently, their attainment is above average in most areas and well above in mathematics. The needs of those who have special educational needs are well met. Individual help is also given to the small number of children who are at an early stage of English language acquisition and they, too, achieve well.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The relationships between staff and children are very good.
- Children are polite and well behaved, and they try hard in all their work.
- Good teaching develops children's confidence and maturity and so they become receptive learners.

Commentary

37. Developing children's self-esteem and confidence has a high priority. All children are encouraged to be independent and, as a result, they are keen to join in activities and group discussions and so achieve well. They play happily with each other in the home corner, and in the sand and water areas. All children have very good attitudes and show a willingness to learn. As a result, they soon develop positive relationships with each other and with their teachers, nursery nurse and other adults. They share and tidy equipment away and, for example, in circle time, wait their turn patiently, showing respect towards others. Children in reception play a full part in school life, and the daily routines and rules help them to develop an understanding of living in a wider community. Almost

all children are on course to attain the expected learning goals by the end of the year, with a significant number exceeding it.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan to give children a wide range of opportunities to develop their language skills across all areas of learning.
- As a result of consistently good teaching, almost all the children have achieved the early learning goals expected for their age by the time they leave the reception class.

Commentary

38. Due to good, challenging teaching, all children begin to flourish and get a flying start with their reading and writing skills. By the end of their reception year, most children have made a good start as emerging readers and a significant number of children are working well within the early stages of the reading scheme of the school. They also make good progress in writing from initial mark-making to writing their names and simple sentences with reasonable accuracy, both in spelling and handwriting.
39. Because there are additional adults to help children with special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language, children are often taught in small groups. This means that activities can be finely tuned to their needs, and constant talk and reinforcement from adults enables them to achieve well, particularly those whose speech acquisition is slower. Children love reading large print books along with their teachers. The most able children complete speech bubbles and show an imaginative use of vocabulary when describing a new animal. *'I am a green thing with lots of teeth.'* All children's desks have a copy of the reception word trail and this is an effective way of ensuring these words are learned securely. Children's learning is very flexible as they move from one activity to the next.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above those expected at the end of the Reception Year because children are taught well and they achieve well.

Commentary

40. Daily opportunities to count and use mathematical language help children make good progress in understanding number, so that by the time they start in Year 1 almost all have reached the early learning goals in this area of learning. Good planning and assessment

mean that teaching is precisely targeted at what children need to learn. Children are at ease with the number work they encounter and most can count reliably up to ten and beyond. For example, they partition 10 in lots of different ways and compare the weight of objects using cubes. They have a clear recognition of two-dimensional shapes such as circle, square, triangle and rectangle and make colourful and interesting pictures using these shapes. They use the computer to draw shapes to show the differences and record which are longer or shorter. Teaching encourages children to ask questions and this helps those with special needs or those who are learning English as an additional language.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Accommodation and resources, both indoors and outdoors, are good.
- Children achieve well.

Commentary

41. By the end of the reception year, children's attainment is likely to be well above average. In all classes, children have many opportunities to develop their fine motor skills and use small play equipment to construct buildings and to use implements such as scissors, paintbrushes and pencils. Teachers also plan plenty of opportunities for children to work with coloured dough, which they roll, squeeze, push and knead into recognisable shapes, for example, when making animal shapes. The same qualities of teaching observed in other areas of learning are clearly evident. Children become familiar with using computers and listening stations. In the hall, children show good agility and confidence for their age and how they can respond to instructions when, for example, forming themselves into large and small shapes. Teachers plan outdoor physical activities very carefully to extend the children's control of larger movements. Resources are good with a range of large equipment and wheeled toys in a newly surfaced outdoor area.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Activities are well designed to develop children's creativity.
- Links with other subjects are good.

Commentary

42. A wide range of interesting creative activities is planned. Underpinning the good teaching, in this area of learning, is good planning which, by giving an imaginative twist to tasks, makes learning interesting and allows children to explore colour, texture, shape

and music. Useful links are made between literacy and creative development. So, for example, children paint or design a creature like those in the story they have read with a teacher or act out the story with toy animals. As a result, by the end of the reception year, their achievement is good. All children enjoy the opportunities for creativity and are proud of their efforts. Children enjoy making a range of models using various media and are encouraged to use paints, crayons and pastels to create pictures. They learn how painting using the computer is different from physical painting.

43. It is not possible to make a judgement about provision to develop the children's **knowledge and understanding of the world**. This is because too few lessons were seen during the inspection in this area. However, there are indications from displays of work, scrutiny of teachers' planning and discussion with children and staff that the children's attainment may well be at least in line with the expected early learning goals. In some aspects of the learning area, particularly ICT, children may achieve particularly well.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards have improved in the last year to the current well above expected levels.
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy their lessons, they concentrate well and make good progress in their learning.
- Teachers' marking and assessments of pupils' work are very good.
- The quality of teaching and learning are good.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- There is a need to provide more opportunities for the pupils to raise their own questions and seek solutions.

Commentary

44. In national tests for seven-year-olds, standards, in comparison with all schools, have been generally in line with the national average for both reading and writing. In comparison with similar schools, standards have been below average. The school is keenly aware that these standards have been too low and, as a result of a whole school focus, particularly on writing, standards have improved. Currently, standards are well above the national average in reading and writing. The, as yet unpublished, 2004 test results show considerable improvements in standards from the previous year and are in line with inspection findings. Groups of pupils of differing abilities are supported well to ensure that they achieve well in reading and writing. Progress in speaking and listening is very good and pupils achieve well to attain the current well above average standards. This is due to the very good opportunities that teachers take to extend speaking and listening skills across all subjects. Provision for pupils with special educational needs, and those

with English as an additional language, is very good. They are supported particularly well in all their learning.

45. Due to the very good provision in the Foundation Stage, most pupils enter Year 1 with a good grounding in language and literacy skills. Teachers place a strong emphasis on developing pupils' speaking and listening skills. In many lessons, there are good opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively and, in most lessons, high quality plenary sessions that involve good questioning from teachers ensure that the pupils are given opportunity to express their viewpoint or what they have just learned through extended talk. As a result of this, by the time that they leave the school, Year 2 pupils are very fluent in speaking and listening. They are confident in explaining themselves; they make good suggestions to both teachers and other pupils and most show a good understanding of main points in discussion. These well above average standards make a strong contribution to standards across the whole curriculum.
46. Standards in reading are now well above the national expectation. Almost all current Year 2 pupils are on course to attain the national expectations for reading, and a significant minority are on course to attain the higher expected level. There is a good emphasis and strong focus made on the teaching and learning of reading. Parents report that they are pleased to be involved in their children's reading programmes. There is a school-wide policy for pupils to read at home and almost all parents make very good use of home-school reading diaries. The teaching and learning of reading are very good. The school has made very good adaptations to the National Literacy Strategy and there is a consistency of approach in almost all classes, which helps the pupils to progress well without interruptions in learning when they move year groups. Support assistants take a major part in supporting groups of pupils in a wide range of reading activities that take place both during and outside literacy lessons.
47. The school has a clear focus and priority on raising standards in writing. As a result of the concerted efforts of staff, standards have improved significantly to the current well above average levels. Teachers organise writing lessons very well. Their direct teaching of new ideas and concepts is very good, with clear explanations and perceptive questioning that helps pupils to understand. For example, in one very good Year 2 lesson, in which pupils were devising questions to extract information about animals, the class teacher asked the pupils to imagine that they owned a zoo and the task was to write a series of questions to find out information about different animals. She was very clear in her expectations of the pupils and told them that they would be successful when they had written out four questions "to find information." This helped both to focus the pupils and help them to gain an understanding of the task itself. All the pupils then learned well. They were excited, and raised some very good questions such as: "Why do ponies have swishing tails?" "Why do rabbits smell?" "Why do crocodiles eat people?" and "When do hamsters have to have their cage cleaned?" The most able pupils used correct punctuation when writing out the questions, presented them in the form of questions and used very ambitious vocabulary. In addition, their presentation was very good.
48. The quality of teaching and learning is good, though there are some inconsistencies. In the best lessons, teachers make clear what is to be learned and they outline exactly what is expected of all the pupils. In addition, there are good opportunities provided for pupils to work independently and collaboratively. However, this is not always the case. Although all teaching was satisfactory, in some lessons there were too few opportunities

provided for the pupils to raise their own questions and seek solutions: some activities were too teacher directed and lacked opportunity for the pupils to take control of their learning. Teachers generally have high expectations of what the pupils can achieve and they manage the pupils particularly well. As a result, pupils thoroughly enjoy lessons, are keen to learn and they concentrate very well. Teachers make very good assessments of pupils' skills in English and, in addition, their marking is of high quality. Teachers provide good pointers for improvement, relevant comments and the marking relates very well to lesson objectives. This strength is an improvement since the previous inspection when marking did not indicate to pupils how they might improve.

49. Support staff make a very strong contribution to the pupils' achievement, both in withdrawal groups and in classes. They are a key factor in the very good provision for pupils with special educational needs. They are deployed very well by teachers, have a good understanding of the targets in each pupil's individual learning plan, are well trained and, in consequence, enhance the quality of teaching and learning.
50. The co-ordinator's leadership is satisfactory. She has a clear understanding of the need to improve writing and, with the support of the senior management group, the need to ensure that good strategies and projects are in place to raise standards. The checking of the quality of teaching and learning is not rigorous enough. Teachers' planning is reviewed, but the co-ordinator has not undertaken systematic reviews of the pupils' work, nor has there been enough observation of other teachers. As a result, there are some inconsistencies in the quality of the teaching. The subject co-ordinator has good plans in place to address this in the next school year.
51. Overall, there has been satisfactory improvement in English since the previous inspection. This is because at that time, in 1998, attainment was above average in reading, writing and speaking and listening. However, there has been an improvement in the quality of teaching and learning and also in the support provided for pupils with special educational needs. In addition, there was a weakness found in the work of learning support staff during the first part of literacy lessons. This is now a good feature of the provision for English.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

52. Teachers take many opportunities to extend pupils' skills in speaking and listening, reading and writing in most subjects. This is through very good questioning skills and good opportunities being provided for pupils to collaborate together. In most subjects, pupils use the Internet to research information and they regularly use reference books to retrieve information. In addition, there are good opportunities provided to practise and develop writing skills in most subjects and many opportunities are provided for them to write in different styles and at length.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

- Attainment in mathematics for pupils in Year 2 is well above that expected nationally.

- Pupils achieve well because of the good teaching and learning.
- Further develop the planned opportunities for pupils to use and apply their mathematical skills.
- Pupils are not involved in setting and assessing their specific individual targets for learning.

Commentary

53. Performance in the national tests in the last three years shows that pupils' attainment is well above average when compared with all schools nationally. When compared to similar schools over the same period, there is a similar positive picture of above average attainment. Almost all pupils in the current Year 2 group are on course to attain the nationally expected levels for seven-year-olds with a substantial proportion attaining the higher standard. These findings show a continuation of the well above average standards. The school does well for its pupils, with all groups of pupils making good progress and achieving well.
54. In the lessons seen, the quality of teaching and learning was equally divided between good and very good. Teachers ensure that the pace of learning is quick and they are also adept in setting high challenge in most lessons. The pupils respond enthusiastically and they are motivated to want to learn. As a result, they make good progress. The National Strategy is used effectively and lessons are planned with clear objectives and these are always shared with pupils. A particularly good feature is the use of success criteria, which helps pupils to know what they have to do. In addition, this supports the teachers' assessments of what gains in learning have been made during lessons. Questioning is used well to make pupils think, and teachers direct them well so they understand what is to be done. The good use of modelling shows them how to do it. Teachers use structured apparatus effectively with pupils to ensure that everyone fully understands the concepts being covered. Teaching assistants are well-briefed and often effectively lead groups on specific tasks.
55. The marking of pupils' work is thorough, giving pupils both encouragement and advice, such as *'I think you are ready for more challenge'* or *'practise your pound sign £'*. Information and communication technology is used well to develop pupils' understanding of shape, direction and position and they confidently add procedures into a programmable toy to follow a course they have made.
56. Co-ordination of the subject is very good and has a positive impact on the standards gained. By regularly monitoring lessons, checking teachers' planning and pupils' work, the co-ordinator has a very good understanding of the strengths and areas for further development. Pupils

are regularly assessed and useful information is collected about their progress. However, they are not sufficiently involved in assessments of their learning and personal improvement targets are not in place to enable them to raise their achievement. Although pupils have weekly opportunities to develop their using and applying skills, there are not enough activities focusing on this critical area. There is a need to extend using and applying activities to enable them to become an intrinsic part of teachers' everyday planning covering all aspects of mathematics. Links with other subjects are needed for pupils to develop an appreciation of the practical uses of these skills.

57. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. The National Numeracy Strategy has had a positive effect in making the school's long and medium-term planning more consistent as well as providing staff with training courses to increase their subject knowledge. As a result, standards have improved because of the increased challenge across all ability groups.

Mathematics across the curriculum

58. Mathematics is used satisfactorily across the curriculum. For example, in science, pupils collect details of each other's hair colour into a database and print out their results in graphs.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is very good. Standards in science are now above national expectations. Pupils achieve well because there is good quality teaching and the learning needs of all pupils are addressed well. This shows a good improvement since the last inspection in 1998.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Standards are above national expectations.
- Pupils make good progress and achieve well.
- Curricular provision covers all of the programmes of study in the National Curriculum.
- Teachers have good teaching skills, plan their lessons well, and are responsive to the learning needs of individual pupils.
- Marking shows pupils what they have achieved and what steps they should take to improve.
- Pupils respond well in lessons, co-operate well and are well supported by staff, particularly when recording their work using their own ideas and language.
- Teachers need to give further attention to supporting pupils when raising questions and planning investigations.

Commentary

59. In 2003, the teachers' assessments of pupils at the age of seven show that standards in science were below national expectations. The percentage of pupils achieving the expected level was below national expectations and well below that achieved by similar schools. However, the percentage of pupils achieving the higher level was in line with national averages, but below that obtained by similar schools. Inspection findings are that there has been an improvement in the last year. Pupils are now achieving well and

standards are above national expectations, particularly in the pupils' understanding of life and living processes, and in their observations and skills of recording. This has occurred because teachers plan their lessons well, provide good opportunities for pupils to learn through first hand experience, and give good support for the development of pupils' understanding and skills in science. Learning tasks are designed so that all pupils are able to make progress. There has been an improvement since the last inspection when standards for seven-year-olds were judged to be in line with national averages.

60. Pupils in Year 2 record their observations, using scientific language, pictures, photographs, and captioned diagrams. They also show competence when taking and recording basic measurements, using simple tables and charts to present data. However, pupils show less confidence about the link between their observations, the questions they are investigating, and their findings. These seven-year-old pupils have a good understanding of plants and animals, the conditions for healthy living, and the ways in which they grow or develop over time. They can group living things on the basis of observable features and, because teachers use the local environment and school grounds well, pupils have a good appreciation of what lives where, and why. They also show care and respect for living things and the environment. Pupils have explored a range of materials to consider their characteristics and can group these in terms of texture, but they have had less opportunity to examine other properties, for example: transparency, flexibility, whether the material floats, is waterproof, magnetic or conducts electricity. Further exploration of these qualities, and the ways in which the materials change through pulling, folding, heating and cooling, should increase the pupils' appreciation of the ways in which particular materials are used. Pupils can relate their hearing of sounds to the distance between themselves and the source of sounds. They can locate emitters of light around the school, but have had fewer opportunities to examine the way in which light from the sun or a torch behaves and travels, but they do know that a complete circuit is needed for a bulb to light. Pupils know that pushes and pulls are forces that affect the way in which a toy car moves, but show less confidence about explaining what causes moving objects to slow down, speed up or change direction.
61. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers plan their lessons well, using clear objectives that are shared with pupils, and they work hard to ensure all pupils are able to make progress within a lesson, and over time. Teachers work from a carefully structured curriculum for the subject, and they design learning tasks that meet the diverse needs of pupils in their classes. Pupils, capable of higher attainment, are encouraged to meet the high expectations that teachers set for them. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are well supported by teacher assistants in lessons. Resources are carefully selected for use in lessons, and good use is made of information and communication technology to aid teaching and learning. Because there is mutual respect between adults and pupils, behaviour is good and because teachers have good class management skills, lessons focus on the development of pupils' understanding and skills in the subject. Teachers have a good understanding of pupils' abilities and standards. They mark pupils' work constructively; showing them where it is of good quality, whilst also indicating what pupils can do to improve. Teachers use assessment information to support their planning and teaching well. Because pupils enjoy their science, show enthusiasm for the subject and co-operate well, they make good progress in their learning. Their work is well presented, showing care and attention to detail.

62. The subject leader for science is well supported by the senior management team and is both knowledgeable and enthusiastic about the development of the subject throughout the school. She has a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development in the curriculum, and is in a good position to further enhance provision and standards in science.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Standards in information and communication technology are above national expectations and pupils achieve well because of effective teaching and learning across the school as a whole. This shows a good improvement since the last inspection in 1998.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above national expectations.
- Pupils make good progress and achieve well.
- Curricular provision addresses all areas of the programmes of study in the national curriculum.
- Teachers have good subject knowledge.
- Pupils respond well in lessons, co-operate well and are well supported by staff.
- Resources are good and they are used very effectively.
- Teachers can now give further attention to helping pupils recognise and record their achievements, and plan what they will do next to improve still further.

COMMENTARY

63. AT THE LAST INSPECTION IN 1998, IT WAS REPORTED THAT THERE WAS A NEED TO RAISE STANDARDS BY IMPROVING RESOURCES AND TEACHERS' UNDERSTANDING OF THE SUBJECT. THIS WAS A KEY ISSUE. THE SCHOOL HAS ADDRESSED BOTH AREAS EFFECTIVELY.
64. Pupils in Year 2 use information and communication technology to organise, classify and present their findings, using word processing, images and databases. They prepare text, tables and a broad range of graphics, including pictures, diagrams and photographs. They combine these in interesting, informative and imaginative ways to illustrate their learning. Pupils know how to save and retrieve their work. They can control the distance and direction of movement by programming a Roamer and find this very exciting. They also know how to use a range of tape recorders, including those that are hand-held, and can instruct their peers about how best to use these machines. These seven-year-old pupils use the mouse and keyboard competently, have good experience of a range of relevant programs, and take some responsibility for storing and retrieving their own work.
65. The pupils' information and communication technology skills are well used to support their learning and the presentation of work across a broad range of subjects. The evaluation and development of ideas in information and communication technology remain implicit within the texts, images and charts that pupils prepare. At present, there are few opportunities for pupils to become more involved in making decisions about their learning, especially through tracking achievements and setting targets to improve the quality of their work.
66. The quality of teaching and learning in the subject is good. Teachers understand the subject and ensure pupils are taught how to use the computer and a range of software to enhance their learning. They work hard to ensure the skills of information and communication

technology are taught so that pupils can use them when learning in other subjects. It is particularly pleasing to see that teachers manage technological resources in such a way that the originality of young pupils' ideas is not lost through an over-reliance on mechanical 'corrections' to their work. Opportunities to use the computer to enhance learning are effective.

67. The school's hardware for information and communication technology is well organised to support teaching and learning. Teachers use software, selected from a broad range of programs available to support pupils' use of word processors, databases, modelling and control technology, and to enhance the teaching of most subjects. Whole class sessions, in the computer suite, ensure pupils are taught how to use the computer and how to use an appropriately broad range of programs. The mini-suite, housed in the library, is used especially to aid the learning of pupils with special educational needs where teacher assistants provide very good support for the development of pupils' basic literacy and numeracy skills using appropriate software. Teachers can book the use of this suite of computers to support the work of small groups as the need arises, and they make effective use of such opportunities. The computers in each classroom are used to enhance pupils' learning across the full range of the primary curriculum. Teachers also use effectively the recently installed interactive whiteboard when working with classes. These arrangements of the hardware, and the flexibility of use, both contribute to the effectiveness of the teaching and use of information and communication technology. All of the computer facilities are used very well to support teaching and learning across the school as a whole.
68. The subject leader for information and communication technology is well supported by the senior management team and she is both knowledgeable and enthusiastic about the development of the subject throughout the school. She has a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development in the curriculum, and is in a good position to further enhance provision and standards in information and communication technology.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

69. The knowledge, understanding and skills of information and communication technology are effectively used by pupils in English, mathematics, science, geography, religious education and personal, social and health education. In each of these subjects, pupils record information in an appropriate way and illustrate their work imaginatively.

HUMANITIES

History

Attainment in history is above national expectations and pupils achieve well, particularly where teachers adopt an enthusiastic and lively approach that links pupils' experience to selected events and people of the past. There has been an improvement in attainment since the last inspection because the curriculum, resources and the quality of teaching and learning are all more effective than they were in 1998.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attainment is above national expectations.
- Pupils make good progress and achieve well.
- Curricular provision addresses all areas of the programmes of study in the National Curriculum.
- Pupils respond well in lessons, co-operate well and are well supported by staff.
- Resources are used effectively to illustrate people and events of the past.

- Teachers can now give further attention to helping pupils answer questions, using different sources of evidence to develop their skills of interpretation.
- Further work on the concept of historical time will enhance pupils' appreciation of the subject.

Commentary

70. Attainment in history is above national expectations and has improved since the last inspection because the subject is now taught in a more lively and interesting manner, using pupils' experiences as a starting point for them to learn to make comparisons with the lives of people and events of the past. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well. The curriculum is now well formed and resources, including information and communication technology, are effectively used to support teaching and learning.
71. Pupils in Year 2 can make simple comparisons between aspects of their own lives and the lives of people who lived in the past. For example, they are able to explain how their experiences of holidays at the beach, and their understanding about the management of the household, are different from their parents' and grandparents' experiences. Through the use of interesting and well-told stories, good quality pictures and enrichment visits, pupils are also able to make comparisons with similar events of the past beyond living memory. They know about important people and events of the past, including Florence Nightingale, and they understand the purpose of Remembrance Day, appreciating the symbolism of the Poppy. They are able to make a personal record of the events that led up to the Great Fire of London, and can describe how the people involved were affected. The pupils' records of their work in history are carefully noted, using their own language, whilst also incorporating drawings and photographs. However, they show less confidence about the timing of historical events in relation to their own lives. Whilst pupils give careful accounts of their knowledge of the past and make comparisons between the present and the past, there are too few opportunities for them to develop their skills of enquiry and interpretation in history.
72. The quality of teaching and learning in the subject is never less than satisfactory. Teachers work from a well-focused scheme of work and plan their lessons with clear objectives that are shared with pupils. They tell stories and use pictures and artefacts well. In lessons, pupils often discuss their thoughts, ideas and feelings in pairs before answering the teacher's questions about the topics they are working on, and this gives them good opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills. The homework which teachers set often involves pupils asking their parents or carers for information about the past, and the response from home is good. All of these strategies help pupils understand events of the past, and help them empathise with the lives of people in the past. Teachers and teacher assistants support pupils well and all pupils are able to make good progress and achieve in line with their capabilities. As a result, pupils respond well and prepare careful accounts of their learning in workbooks, often using word-processing, graphics programs and photographs to support their records. It is particularly pleasing to see that teachers manage technological resources in such a way that the originality of young pupils' ideas is not lost. The pupils' work in history is personal, interesting and well illustrated.
73. The subject leader for history is enthusiastic about the development of the subject. She has a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development in the curriculum, and is in a good position to further enhance provision and achievement.
74. No judgement about provision can be made for either **geography** or **religious education** because there was only one lesson taught during the period of the inspection. However, through discussions with pupils and reviewing samples of their work, there are indications that standards attained are in line with the national expectations in geography and those of the locally agreed syllabus in religious education. The curriculum for both

subjects is of good quality, meeting statutory requirements and providing a broad and balanced range of units to meet the pupils' needs. In one very good religious education lesson seen, standards were above national expectations. Year 2 pupils were learning about how to value others' opinions and they showed very good understanding of the difficult concept. The teacher used recorded music and asked the pupils what feelings the music evoked in them. They reflected well and discussed why they felt as they did, and the nature of their mood and the emotions raised by the music.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

75. It was not possible to see **art and design** taught during the inspection. However, from talking to teachers and their pupils, and an analysis of work, it is clear that the curriculum is effectively covered. However, because of the lack of evidence, it is not possible to make secure judgements on the quality of teaching and learning or the standards achieved.
76. The displays in classrooms and corridors add colour to the school environment and show the range of activities offered to the pupils. They use crayons and pastels to draw self-portraits and vegetables such as aubergines and broccoli and brightly paint sunflowers in the style of Van Gogh.
77. Only two **physical education** lessons were observed so it is not possible to make detailed judgements on the quality of provision throughout the school. However, it is clear that teachers plan their lessons carefully. They make sure that pupils warm up and down properly, have a good range of activities and know exactly what they want them to achieve. Lessons are planned with good regard to health and safety and pupils understand the benefits to health of regular exercise. Good levels of enthusiasm are evident in pupils' attitudes. They are very keen to attend the wide range of sports activities provided for them, both at lunchtime and after school. These enhance the physical education curriculum and provide opportunities for those pupils who show promise, to develop their skills. The sharing of a swimming pool with the adjacent junior school ensures that all pupils are confident in the water and on course to become competent swimmers.
78. One **music** lesson was taught during the period of the inspection, hence no overall judgement on provision can be made. However, it is evident that from talking with pupils, hearing singing in assembly and from the one lesson observed that standards in singing are likely to be above national expectations. The lesson observed was a Year 1 singing lesson in the hall led by two teachers and a nursery nurse, who made a very positive contribution to the very good lesson. The pupils thoroughly enjoyed the lesson. They sang with gusto, very tunefully and sensitively. The lesson was carefully planned so that all the songs fitted the current topic of sea, sand and sun. Separate non-pitched percussion resources were used effectively by pupils to accompany most songs. Every pupil joined in enthusiastically, and in this lesson, standards attained were in line with expectations for pupils one year older.
79. No lessons were seen in **design and technology**. However, it is evident from displays, portfolios of evidence and reviews of pupils' work that pupils' attainment is at least in line with national expectations. The curriculum for design and technology is good and has been well adapted to meet the school's needs.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION

Provision in personal, social and health education is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement is good and they attain above expected standards.
- The curriculum is very good with excellent assessment arrangements.
- Pupils thoroughly enjoy lessons and make good progress.
- Leadership is very good.

Commentary

80. Standards in PSHE are above national expectations. This is due firstly to the overwhelming positive climate for learning in the school, the good teaching and also the very good provision in these areas. As a result, pupils make very good progress from the secure start that is provided for their personal and emotional development in the Reception Year, and by the time that they leave the school, pupils have made good progress, achieved well and have a well developed sense of themselves as individuals and members of a community. Their social skills are good and the pupils have a clear understanding of the importance of environmental and health issues.
81. Pupils are encouraged to take a full part in the life of the school. Relationships are very good, and teachers ensure that all pupils take an active part in lessons. As a result of the good teaching and, in particular, the very positive and inclusive ethos of the school, pupils thrive. They feel secure, love school and have very positive attitudes to learning. The very good provision for the moral and social development of pupils is evident in most lessons. Pupils develop a good understanding of the importance of being tolerant, listening to each other and respecting others' values and viewpoints. This results in a school community that cares for each other and promotes racial harmony.
82. In the lessons seen, pupils were taught well, learning about respecting differences in one lesson and dealing positively with their feelings in a second lesson. In both lessons, the teaching was sensitive, supportive and demanding. In the better lesson, the pupils were read "Amazing Grace", the story of a girl who wanted to be Peter Pan, even though she was both a girl and black. Pupils showed very good understanding of Grace's feelings when she was not able to be Peter Pan. They showed a mature and responsible attitude when identifying her feelings. "She feels sad and left out", said one pupil. Another pupil said "It doesn't matter whether you are black or white or boy or girl, everyone should have a chance." In this lesson, the pupils achieved very well, were reflective and totally engrossed for most of the lesson.
83. The curriculum for PSHE is a strength. The scheme of work, developed by the co-ordinator, provides units of study that cover requirements very well and offers high quality activities. Taken together, the curriculum is broad and rich.
84. The co-ordinator has provided a very strong lead in the subject. She has adapted national materials very well to suit the school's needs, has a clear vision for the further development of the subject and has also taken a lead in the work to gain the "Healthy Schools" award. Assessment of PSHE is outstanding. There are clear assessment criteria for staff, a portfolio of evidence to show work of different levels and very good processes in place for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school. In addition, last

year, all staff had a development target, as part of their own performance management, to enhance provision in PSHE.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

INSPECTION JUDGEMENT

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	2
Value for money provided by the school	2

Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	2
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
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	2
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	2
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	2

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