

INSPECTION REPORT

DORSET ROAD INFANT SCHOOL

Mottingham

LEA area: London Borough of Bromley

Unique reference number: 101607

Headteacher: Mrs E A Keable

Lead inspector: Mrs Joy Richardson

Dates of inspection: 1–2 March 2005

Inspection number: 266744

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:	4–7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	49
School address:	Dorset Road Mottingham
Postcode:	SE9 4QX
Telephone number:	020 8857 3742
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Astrid Chklar
Date of previous inspection:	10 May 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This is a small infant school with 49 pupils in three classes, from reception to Year 2. Children are admitted in the September or January before their fifth birthday. Most children come from the surrounding community of Mottingham and many walk to school. Housing in the area is very mixed and most families live in rented housing. Eligibility for free school meals is above average. The school serves a diverse community. Three quarters of the pupils are white British; others are mainly of black or mixed heritage. Two pupils are refugees. Two pupils speak English as an additional language and are at an early stage in acquiring the language. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is higher than average and a significant minority has severe difficulties. Children's attainment on entry is below average and some have poorly developed language and social skills. The school was under threat of closure from March 2002 until February 2004 when the Schools' Adjudicator found in favour of keeping the school open. The admission number is 25 a year and the school is currently oversubscribed for entry to reception next year. The school makes provision for community use of its facilities.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
6676	Joy Richardson	Lead inspector	English Science Geography History Religious education
32670	Graham Saltmarsh	Lay inspector	
17826	June Punnett	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Mathematics Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Music Physical education Special educational needs English as an additional language

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a small school which provides a satisfactory education and has some notable strengths. Pupils make steady progress because of satisfactory teaching, leadership and management. Close attention is paid to the needs of individuals and the fostering pupils' personal development. Pupils, parents and the community value the school highly. Although costs are high because of its small size, the school gives satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The school's leadership has maintained a strong vision for the future of the school.
- Children make a good start in reception and enjoy learning.
- Expectations about what children should learn each year are not clear enough.
- Monitoring, leading to action to raise standards, is not yet well established.
- The school provides good support for vulnerable children and those with learning difficulties.
- Excellent induction arrangements reflect the school's family atmosphere.
- An interesting curriculum, enriched by extra activities, fosters pupils' all-round development.
- There is more to be done to improve attendance.

Improvement since the last inspection in May 1999 has been satisfactory overall. Progress has been made in record-keeping and lesson planning, in tracking pupils' attainment, and in improving the standard of pupils' writing. The monitoring of teaching and learning, to share and increase good practice across the school, is developing but is still at an early stage. Since 2002, much effort and energy has been expended in securing the school's future, in keeping it on an even keel through two years of uncertainty, and subsequently managing the building of an extension which was finally completed in December 2004. The school is now refocusing on planning for improvement in the longer term, and is developing a clear view of what needs to be done to raise standards further.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Achievement is satisfactory overall. Children start in reception with skills which are below average. They achieve well overall in making progress towards the early learning goals set nationally for the end of reception. However, only a minority are on course to reach all the goals in communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development by the end of the year, and a significant number of pupils now in Year 1 have yet to reach these goals. In the other areas of learning, children in reception are broadly on course to meet the goals set.

In Years 1 and 2, achievement is satisfactory. Over recent years, the trend in the school's results in the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 has been below the national trend. However, these results must be treated with caution because of the small number of pupils in each cohort, and because the number with significant special educational needs has increased in recent years.

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
reading	D	E	E	E
writing	D	D	E	D
mathematics	E	E	E	E

*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*

Standards in the work seen in Year 2 are below average in reading, writing and mathematics, but rather better than shown in the results for 2004. The school is beginning to track the progress made by each pupil on a half-yearly basis. This is a good system. However, there is not yet enough clarity about what the school expects pupils to have learned by the end of each term or each year, and the pace required to bring this about.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good. Pupils enjoy school and are friendly, confident and eager to learn. They behave well, and those who have behavioural difficulties are well managed. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory, but there is more to be done to prevent absences from undermining learning.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is satisfactory. Teaching is satisfactory overall, with some good teaching, and pupils make steady progress in their learning. Teachers and support staff work effectively with pupils who have special educational needs. Children are generally well taught in reception and enjoy a rich environment for learning. Assessment across the school is satisfactory, though not always used to full effect to guide teaching and to set a good pace. The curriculum is well planned, providing breadth in pupils' learning. It is much enriched by visits, special events and clubs and this is a strength of the school. The quality of care for pupils is high. Pupils are well known and valued as individuals. The school provides very strong support for vulnerable children, and for their families. Links with parents and the community are very good, contributing to the family atmosphere which is such a distinctive feature of the school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. Governance is satisfactory, ensuring that statutory requirements are met and fostering strong links with parents and the community. The main focus of leadership and management has been the school's survival, and the headteacher and governors have been very effective in harnessing the support of parents and the community to this end. The school's leadership is now refocusing on developing the quality of teaching and learning in order to raise standards further. It recognises the need to set clearer goals for pupils' learning, with school-wide action to secure improvements. The school's finances are managed well. The school has a balanced budget and has been able to complete its long-planned extension, making careful use of money carried forward over a number of years. As a very small school, the cost per pupil is high but the school uses its resources purposefully and gives satisfactory value for money.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents love this school and are full of praise for it. They are very appreciative of the staff and of the headteacher's leadership and support. They speak highly of the quality of care and value the school's strong sense of community. Parents and pupils from all backgrounds feel welcomed and included. Pupils enjoy school and are enthusiastic about the opportunities it offers them.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do in order to raise standards further are to:

- clarify the learning expected each term and each year, to accelerate progress towards shared goals;
- develop the monitoring of teaching and learning across the school to identify areas for improvement and the action required;
- monitor patterns of absence and take action more insistently to improve attendance.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Achievement is satisfactory. In reception, standards in the work seen fall short of national expectations in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development, but are broadly in line with expectations in the other areas of learning. Children achieve well overall in building on their prior attainment. In Years 1 and 2, achievement is satisfactory. Standards in Year 2 are below average in reading, writing, mathematics and science, but better than shown in the results of tests in 2004.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in writing are improving, particularly in Year 2.
- Many pupils make a slow start in literacy and numeracy.
- Pupils are not challenged enough by clear school wide expectations.
- Pupils achieve well in practical activities, for example in art.

Commentary

1. The trend in results over recent years has been below the national trend, partly because of an increase in the number of pupils with learning difficulties. The school has introduced an effective tracking system, monitoring the progress made by pupils each half year, in reading, writing and mathematics. This shows that most pupils broadly make the amount of progress expected each half year in building on their prior attainment, and draws attention to those who have not. However, this analysis does not consistently lead to action across the school to accelerate learning where it has been slow, or to raise sights further. This is because systems for monitoring are not fully established, and there is no clear overview, shared by staff, pupils and parents, of specific targets for learning in each term or each year.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2004

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	13.0 (14.5)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	13.0 (14.2)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	14.2 (14.8)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 10 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

2. The school is taking some steps to improve standards. This is evident particularly in writing, and the confidence of pupils in Year 2 is growing as a result. The school recognises that there are weaknesses in pupils' mathematical learning and is beginning to place more emphasis on the application and use of mathematical skills in order to reinforce and extend these. Achievement in science is being strengthened by the introduction of assessment in Year 2 to track more specifically what pupils have learned.
3. Provision in other subjects was sampled, but there was insufficient evidence to reach overall judgements about standards. Pupils enjoy practical work within a broad curriculum, developing and applying skills in the course of topic work which makes links between subjects. They achieve well in art, observing carefully and expressing their ideas confidently.
4. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well, based on their prior attainment. Their needs are quickly identified and they are given good support, helping them to make progress towards the targets set for them. The very few pupils who speak English as an additional

language are assessed after one term in school. They make satisfactory progress overall, benefiting from the nurturing environment of their classroom and some external teaching.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development are good. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is very good. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory overall.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- An ethos of care, trust and respect underpins positive attitudes to learning.
- Pupils have a strong sense of ownership and belonging to the school.
- Behaviour is generally good and pupils' behavioural difficulties are well managed.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding is very good.
- There is more to be done in working to improve attendance.

Commentary

5. The school has an embracing ethos which nurtures positive attitudes, confidence and a sense of belonging. Relationships between pupils and adults are marked by warmth, respect and mutual trust. Pupils are courteous and friendly; they enjoy talking with visitors and are interested to know who they are and what they think of their school. The bridge between home and school is strong, and this reinforces the sense of community and extended family. Pupils and parents have a strong sense of belonging.
6. Behaviour is generally good. Pupils know what is expected of them and respond to positive reminders, for example about 'good sitting'. They understand the routines, for example playing purposefully and sensibly when they have to stay indoors during breaks because of bad weather. Pupils play well together in the playground, enjoying the equipment provided and playing harmoniously with anyone who wants to join. Pupils with behavioural difficulties are well managed by staff, with a minimum of fuss. Pupils accept and are interested in each other, as shown, for example, in their sociable conversation at lunchtimes. There have been no exclusions.
7. The school places great emphasis upon developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural understanding. Pupils are encouraged to think about caring for others and they express their opinions thoughtfully. The staff provide excellent role models, constantly reinforcing values of honesty, fairness and respect for others. Social development is very good: boys and girls all play well together and look after each other. Pupils have limited responsibilities but carry these out well, such as clearing up the classroom after independent activities. Pupils learn about the religious and cultural traditions of their community and the wider world. Understanding of different people and places is extended in many lessons and activities. The colourful displays around the school reflect and celebrate art, culture and life in a diverse society.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	7.5	School data	0.7
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

8. Attendance is very low in comparison with other schools, although small numbers magnify this difference. Poor attendance by a few pupils because of family circumstances is a major factor and the school is working with outside agencies to address the problem. The school's

approach to securing good punctuality and attendance is satisfactory. The school has introduced a 'late book' and this is improving punctuality. The school has also recognised the need for greater robustness in following up absences immediately, monitoring patterns of absence and tracking the impact of absence on learning, and is taking action to improve its procedures.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is satisfactory overall. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and pupils make sound progress. The curriculum is broad and interesting and pupils are cared for well. Strong links with parents and the community contribute to pupils' welfare and personal development.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, and often good in reception and in Year 2. Assessment is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Well planned teaching gives children a good start in reception.
- Some of the teaching lacks pace.
- Classroom assistants support pupils' learning effectively.
- Older pupils respond well to practical challenges.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 15 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	0	8	6	1	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

- Children make a good start in reception, because the teaching is purposeful and often imaginative. Children learn well in the course of activities they choose for themselves because these are well planned, and staff intervene effectively to lead learning forward. As a result, children are interested and independent, for example discussing amongst themselves what makes ice, or where you might find polar bears, as they played with lumps of ice in a water tray and made reference to a world map.
- In some lessons, across the school, too much time is spent listening. Ideas are not demonstrated practically or in different ways to reinforce and extend understanding. Occasionally, teaching is unsatisfactory, because inattention grows and time is then diverted to managing behaviour. Pupils respond well when they are able to learn by doing, and invigorated by practical challenges. This was evident, for example, when pupils in Year 2 chanted spellings, jumping up and down with each letter, or tried hard to draw a bicycle, exploring the shades of grey made with a pencil. Teaching in English and mathematics is well planned to develop basic skills, although not always ensuring that pupils achieve as much as possible in the time available.
- Pupils with special educational needs are provided for well. Individual education plans are precise, regularly reviewed and used well to plan for future learning. Classroom support assistants work closely with class teachers to ensure that pupils with special educational needs participate and make progress. In the reception class, this classroom support is used well to extend opportunities for all pupils. A small amount of specialist teaching in English as

an additional language is provided for pupils at the early stages of acquiring English. Liaison is satisfactory between the specialist staff and the school.

12. Assessment is satisfactory. Teachers track pupils' progress through the levels of the National Curriculum, for example moderating a sample of unaided writing each year. Assessment is being extended as seen in the evaluation of learning in science in Year 2, following units of work within topics. Teachers are aware of the next steps to be taken, but not always of the pace of progress needed to keep up with expectations in the longer term. For example, when children are slow in learning sounds, or reading and writing independently, this does not trigger sustained action to accelerate progress and prevent pupils from falling behind.

The curriculum

The curriculum is good, and enriched very well by extra activities. The school's accommodation and resources are good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is much enriched by visits, special events and after-school clubs.
- Topic work is well planned, making good links between subjects.

Commentary

13. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum. It has worked hard and with some success to improve the overall planning of the curriculum. It has implemented the literacy and numeracy strategies effectively. Learning is supported by good links between subjects within topics. Schemes of work are in place for all subjects. Statutory requirements are met.
14. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage links all the areas of learning effectively, and provides a range of interesting opportunities for the children. The stimulating environment and richness of resources encourage the children to want to learn. The staff make good use of the outdoor area adjoining the classroom to extend learning, but this area is not covered, so its use is limited in inclement weather.
15. The school has good systems to ensure that pupils have full access to the curriculum. Pupils' special educational needs are identified early in their school life, and teachers produce detailed individual education plans to support their learning and to help them take a full part in all school activities. The school has sound procedures to identify gifted and talented pupils, and is beginning to explore ways of enriching their learning.
16. The curriculum is enriched very well by 'focus weeks' such as health education week, and by special events and activities which often involve families and friends in the community. Visits to local places of interest help bring the curriculum to life. Pupils are given a good range of opportunities beyond the school day. After-school clubs in dance, football and mathematics are currently on offer and pupils enjoy them greatly. Good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is enhanced by contributions from visitors, such as parents talking about their jobs in the health service.
17. The school has done much to improve its accommodation since the last inspection, and it is now good overall. There are physical limitations for gymnastics because of the small size of the hall and its low ceiling, but this is beyond the school's control. Resources are good. The continuing development of resources in information and communication technology (ICT) is extending opportunities for pupils. Overall, there has been good improvement in curricular provision since the last inspection.

Care, guidance and support

The care for pupils' welfare, health and safety is very good. The school provides good support and guidance in helping pupils to learn. It involves pupils well in the life of the school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- An excellent induction programme draws children and families into the life of the school.
- The school provides a very caring, safe and happy environment for pupils.
- Each pupil is respected and valued, whatever their individual needs.

Commentary

18. Parents speak warmly of the school's reputation as a very safe and caring place. This was expressed by one parent who said, 'I feel they love my children as much as I do'. The staff show committed concern for the happiness and welfare of each child. Parents and their children are actively encouraged to share their concerns. As pupils know and trust all of the staff, they are very confident in their relationships with adults.
19. Very good relationships between the headteacher, staff, pupils and parents have created a comfortable and cheerful community atmosphere. Pupils are very well known as individuals. They feel valued and supported because their views and feelings are listened to and taken seriously. Any pupil who has a learning, personal or medical problem is treated with great sensitivity. The headteacher and staff go out of their way to ensure that each individual receives the support they need to help them thrive in school. That support frequently extends to families who often turn to the school in times of need.
20. Child protection procedures are well established and very effective. All staff have been appropriately trained to report and record any concerns related to pupils' care and welfare. Arrangements for accidents, first aid and for dealing with pupils who may become unwell are well established and effective. Health and safety is of paramount importance to the school and any defects are immediately noted and steps taken to rectify them. For example, plans are in hand to resurface the playground which has become very uneven.
21. A healthy lifestyle is promoted through the curriculum and pupils demonstrate an awareness and knowledge of healthy eating and personal safety. During breaks and mealtimes, pupils are very well supervised and have very good relationships with midday supervisors.
22. Induction procedures are excellent. They are particularly comprehensive and reassuring for both parents and their children. The school hosts a series of activity sessions over the half term before children start, so that they are gradually drawn into school life and staff, parents and children get to know each other. Each July, all those starting the following year join together in a family visit to a children's farm. All this helps children to settle into school quickly and confidently. Parents were particularly pleased with the efforts made to ensure that they and their children feel secure from the start of their partnership with the school. Pupils who join the school at other times are equally well cared for.
23. Good guidance is provided for pupils to help them make progress in learning. This is evident in the individual education plans for those with special educational needs, and the support for individuals provided by teachers and classroom support assistants. Pupils from different language or ethnic backgrounds are welcomed and included.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has very good links with parents and with the local community. It cultivates good links with other schools.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The close partnership with parents supports every aspect of school life and learning.
- A very active parent teacher association brings significant benefits to the school.
- The school plays a pivotal role in the local community, which gives it unqualified support.

Commentary

24. Parents and pupils talk of the school as being an extension of home, because everyone knows and supports each other. Parents, along with staff, governors, pupils and members of the community have a strong sense of ownership and this has been strengthened further in working together to secure the school's future.
25. Parents are very satisfied with the school. They have confidence in the headteacher and staff and believe the teaching to be good. They are appreciative of the wide range of assistance the school gives them as well as their children. Staff and parents work well together, as seen in support for reading and other homework activities. Parents are actively involved in helping the school, on visits and various school functions and activities. There is a thriving parent teacher association which raises money for resources, organises social activities, underpins the school's participation in community life, and provides a sounding board for the headteacher in planning developments.
26. The school has an open door policy for parents at all times to discuss any matters of concern. All parents are invited to regular coffee mornings to meet the staff and other new parents. School newsletters are regular, colourful and interesting. Reports to parents are observant and informative, and parents have every opportunity to discuss any concerns directly with the staff. The school does not, however, provide regular information about what is going to be learned each term, or about expectations of progress in knowledge and skills.
27. The school's links with the local community are extremely strong. There are numerous examples of the curriculum, and pupils' personal development, being enhanced and enriched as a result. The school always takes part in the Mottingham Festival with a 'walking float' and country dancing by the pupils, and the school has a stall during this village festival. The school has a close working relationship with the nearby Methodist Church. Pupils make frequent visits to the local library to hear stories read by the librarian and to select their own books. Regular visits are made to a senior citizens' residential home and to the local 'Over 60s' club where pupils talk with and entertain residents and members, and learn from their experiences and memories.
28. The school is an active member of a small schools cluster and has good links with the two main feeder junior schools to which the pupils transfer. Visits are arranged for pupils in Year 2. Year 3 teachers are invited into the school to meet with pupils and parents who find the entire process reassuring. There are links with other schools and colleges through work experience and childcare placements, and help with the after school mathematics club. The school building is made available for a variety of community clubs and functions.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. Governance is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's leadership cultivates a very strong sense of community.
- Monitoring and evaluation are at an early stage of development.

Commentary

29. The school's leadership and management have been effective in maintaining a steady course for the school through a period of uncertainty. Strengths in leadership are reflected in the highly developed sense of community, the care for pupils' personal welfare, and determination to move the school forward further in the future. The headteacher knows everyone involved with the school community very well. She shares the teaching of a class and has been heavily involved in working successfully to secure the school's future. The school's leadership recognises that it is important now to direct energies towards improving teaching and learning, and evaluating this in terms of the impact on standards.
30. Procedures for performance management are in place, and have led to the setting of targets related to the tracking of pupils' progress. This is a good move forward. The monitoring of teaching and learning, planning and pupils' work is at an early stage of development, and not yet focused on achieving improvement across the school. The school's leadership is thoughtful and reflective, but processes for self-evaluation are not yet incisive in pinpointing what works well and what could be better.
31. The management of provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The headteacher liaises well with parents and external professionals over pupils' individual needs. Pupils are taught well by the part-time special needs teacher, although this work is not always fully integrated with work in the classroom. Staff are effectively encouraged to take careful consideration of individual needs, and pupils' language and cultural backgrounds. This is an inclusive school where pupils and parents know that they are valued and welcomed, and that the school is intent on helping each individual to flourish.
32. Governors support the school strongly. Governors have been highly committed in working to secure the school's future, and in seeking to improve its facilities. With the headteacher, the governing body is working to develop processes of evaluation in pursuit of improvement, and to challenge the school. The governing body ensures that statutory requirements are met.

Financial information

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

		Balances (£)	
Total income	268,421	Balance from previous year	97,768
Total expenditure	275,769	Balance carried forward to the next	90,420
Expenditure per pupil	5,515		

33. The school is well managed financially. Income and expenditure are high because of the small numbers, but the school uses its resources well, pursues best value in its decisions, and has a balanced budget. The accumulated surplus has been used carefully to pay for the extension which has now been completed. Despite the high unit cost, which reflects the small size of the school, the school gives satisfactory value for money.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Provision for children in the reception class is good. The school provides a stimulating and well-resourced environment for learning in the reception class and has made good improvements since the last inspection. The teaching is good overall, in all the areas of learning, and the teacher and support staff work well as a team. They have a clear understanding of the needs of young children and are skilled at making learning fun for them. The Foundation Stage is led and managed well to give children a broad and interesting curriculum in all the areas of learning. There is an effective balance between the teaching input and children's independent learning. Many children have limited pre-school experience and, because entry is divided between September and January, some have only two terms in reception before starting in Year 1. However, the excellent induction arrangements and the very close links forged with parents ensure that children settle quickly into school life. Assessments of children's development are satisfactory, giving a clear view of individual needs and progress in learning. However, expectations of what children should achieve in reception are not clearly mapped out in relation to the progress expected over the whole three years in school.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Relationships are very good between children and with adults.
- There are good opportunities for independent learning.

Commentary

34. The high expectations of adults ensure that children know what is expected and how to behave. The staff teach personal and social skills well through carefully planned activities. Children work well in groups, showing maturity in sharing and listening respectfully to each other's ideas. Children become absorbed in their independent activities. Classroom routines are well organised and children learn to take out and put away their resources without fuss. A good proportion of children are on course to meet the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. The staff are very aware of children who have special educational needs, and great care is taken in helping any who have social, emotional and behavioural difficulties to participate as fully as possible.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children's spoken language develops well.
- There are good opportunities for children to have a go at writing and to enjoy books.
- There is not enough attention to the pace of progress in developing early reading and writing skills.

Commentary

35. Teachers provide stimulating activities to develop children's communication, language and literacy skills. Children speak confidently to adults. When participating in the class group, most listen well to the teacher and to each other. Children take an interest in writing and there is a well-equipped writing area where children often attempt words and letters. Many can write their name with some accuracy. Children write their own menus for the 'café', and are keen to share these with visitors. Children enjoy books and handle books carefully. They take books home regularly and this enriches their learning. The children are introduced to simple common words, and to letter sounds. A few are beginning to read and write familiar words using their knowledge of letter sounds. Most children achieve well in building on their prior attainment, particularly in the development of language skills. However, few are on course to reach the early learning goals in reading and writing by the end of the year. Teaching is effective in helping children to take the next steps in learning. However, there is not enough focus on working towards specific goals, particularly in the linking of sounds, letters and words.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Many good practical activities help learning.
- Learning by some children who are at an early stage needs more reinforcement.

Commentary

36. Most children achieve well, and a few are on course to reach the early learning goals by the end of reception. Teachers provide many exciting activities to develop children's awareness of number and shape. These include counting games and practical tasks such as sorting and making comparisons between shorter and longer objects. Some children recognise and name numbers accurately to ten, and several are confident with numbers up to 100. Children gain a good understanding of money using the role-play areas to practise buying cakes and drinks at the café with coins. They develop a sound awareness of measurement and capacity through the use of water and sand. Teaching is often good in taking learning forward within activities. When working as a class, however, there is not always sufficient pace and clarity of expectation to ensure that ideas are reinforced and fully grasped.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The staff make effective use of a wide range of resources.
- Children are interested and curious about the world around them.
- Children make good, independent use of computers.

Commentary

37. Children achieve well and most are on course to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the year. They gain a sound understanding of the world around them through visits to the village and on outings further afield. They develop a good awareness of the wider world, taking a lively interest in people and places. For example, children were excited about making and tasting different types of bread, including bagels, naan and pitta. They used their senses to investigate the differences between the breads, also taking an interest in where these breads originated. The children were fascinated by ice in the pond on a cold day, discussing

amongst themselves 'What will make it go back to water?' and wondering how they could save the snails. Teaching extends their knowledge, so that children can point out, for example, places on the globe that are freezing cold. Staff encourage children to ask questions and to investigate. Children are confident in using a computer, manipulating the mouse with developing dexterity. They are good at moving objects across the screen and using the drawing and painting tools available on the computer.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good use is made of the outdoor area.

Commentary

38. The staff make good use of a small outdoor space to develop children's physical skills. In physical education lessons, children move around the hall with confidence. They show good balance and co-ordination. Children are given frequent opportunities to develop hand control in a range of activities, such as cutting and sticking, drawing and painting. They use tools and explore materials with independence and control. Most children use the mouse tool on the computer with developing dexterity. They are good at moving objects across the screen and are confident in using the drawing and painting tools on the computer. Most children are on course to reach the early learning goals in this area of learning by the end of reception and their achievement is good.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths

- The wide variety of stimulating activities.
- The good opportunities for role play.

Commentary

39. Children play imaginatively with road layouts and small figures in the doll's house. The staff intervene effectively to help them act out stories. Children use role-play areas, such as the café, well. They become absorbed in the creation of other worlds, as when playing with models of bears and whales among ice floes in the water tray. Staff provide many interesting opportunities for children to work with paint, different types of pencils for drawing, and a variety of materials for collage. Early painting skills, such as how to hold a brush correctly, are well taught. Children confidently mix colours, for example explaining that they needed blue and yellow to make green for the stems of daffodils. Their paintings show careful observation. Children achieve well and most are on course to reach the early learning goals by the end of reception.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have good access to books and they enjoy reading.
- Speaking and listening skills are well developed.
- Expectations of progress in reading and writing are not shared enough across the school.
- Pupils develop confidence in writing and standards are improving.
- Structures are not used consistently to help pupils spell correctly.

Commentary

40. Standards in reading and writing are below average, but pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils achieve well in speaking. They benefit from small numbers in having many opportunities to share experiences, to explain their ideas and to ask questions. They are eager to contribute and comfortable in talking within smaller or larger groups. They often listen well, but are not always sharply attentive or challenged to listen for a purpose.
41. Most pupils enjoy reading. The school has a good stock of books which are well organised in reading levels. Pupils make steady progress through the levels, in reading regularly at school and at home, and there is good communication between home and school about this. However, where progress is slow, particularly in Year 1, there is not enough lively practice to ensure that goals are met and that gaps in learning are filled. Pupils learn common words and the sounds of letters. However, some younger pupils are very tentative in putting sounds together to read words, and have yet to reach the early learning goals that they are expected to have reached by the end of reception. The use of shared, guided and individual reading sessions is not planned consistently across the school to maximise learning.
42. There is continuing improvement in the standard of pupils' writing. Many pupils in Year 2 write confidently and with enthusiasm, for a range of purposes, although standards remain below average. Many pupils make a slow start in using the sounds and common words they have learned in order to write independently. Some systems are in place to help pupils find the right spelling of words, but these are not used consistently. Pupils in Year 2 practise spellings eagerly, jumping up and down as they say each letter. However, they do not always apply what they have learned to their own writing, and teaching and marking do not draw attention sufficiently to this.
43. Teaching is satisfactory overall, and sometimes good. Classroom support assistants give valuable support in hearing pupils read. They help pupils with special educational needs to participate in line with others, for example introducing them individually to a story which is being shared by the class. Leadership and management of the subject, and improvement since the previous inspection, are satisfactory overall. There has been improvement in the organisation of resources and the monitoring of progress in reading and writing. There is more to be done in sharing and developing good practice across the school.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

44. The curriculum is well planned so that language and literacy are used well in other subjects and cross-curricular topics. Ideas are explored through talk. Non-fiction books are widely available and popular with pupils. Older pupils write widely, for example in science and history, to record what they have learned.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's focus on investigative work is helping to raise standards.
- Classroom support assistants give good support to pupils with special educational needs.
- Insufficient opportunities are provided for pupils to remedy errors in their learning.
- The lack of dated work makes it difficult for pupils and parents to measure progress over time.
- Lesson plans are insufficiently clear about how pupils will achieve their targets.

Commentary

45. Standards in mathematics are below average overall, but achievement is satisfactory. Many of the pupils currently in Year 2 are working broadly in line with expectations for their age, although there is little higher attainment. The school is working to raise standards across the school, through a greater emphasis on the use of skills to investigate problems. All staff have received useful training in teaching numeracy skills.
46. Pupils in Year 1 are making progress in counting and calculating, and learning about time, but some have yet to achieve the early learning goals that they are expected to reach by the end of reception. In Year 2, pupils are developing quick recall of number facts and a good proportion count in twos and tens easily. They identify fractions of shapes and are confident in finding halves and quarters and, in some cases, thirds. Pupils are becoming skilled at solving problems, for example working out how much money would be left if you had 45 pence and lost 20 pence. Pupils enjoy such challenges, eagerly asking, 'Can we do more?' Nearly all the pupils in Year 2 measure and use money with some degree of accuracy. They use a variety of ways to present information, for example showing the results of surveys in graphs and pie charts
47. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers use questions and extension activities well at times to challenge the more able pupils. The teaching is sometimes lively and interesting and, when this is the case, pupils respond well, concentrating and working hard. Assessment of individual pupils is satisfactory. The involvement of pupils in assessing their own work is at an early stage of development. Lesson plans are not clear about where more work is needed, or what pupils must do to achieve their targets. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, but this does not always lead to the correcting of errors, for example in the writing of numerals. Work is not routinely dated, and in some instances the use of worksheets makes it hard for staff and pupils to review progress over time.
48. Homework is used well to support and extend the teaching that is going on in the classroom, and pupils and parents enjoy the mathematical games which are sent home from Year 1. A mathematics club after school, led by the headteacher with help from secondary school students, is adding to the quality of provision in mathematics.
49. Leadership and management are satisfactory, with senior staff showing a sound knowledge of what needs to be done next to improve standards in mathematics. The identification of the need to focus on investigative work is already helping to raise standards. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

Mathematics across the curriculum

50. The school has developed sound links with other subjects to help increase pupils' understanding of mathematics. Pupils draw short and taller objects in art and design, and measure accurately to design their own percussion instruments. In art, they recognise shapes,

for example identifying the cylinders that hold a bike together. They use timelines in history and produce graphs and charts using computers to show, for example, their favourite traditional tales.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are interested and enjoy investigating.
- Teaching does not consistently foster learning through practical enquiry.

Commentary

51. Pupils' achievement in science is satisfactory. Standards in the current Year 2 are better than in the previous year when the National Curriculum teacher assessment results were well below the national average. Pupils enjoy practical activities such as exploring the sounds made by instruments in Year 1, or lighting a lighthouse in Year 2. Older pupils are beginning to understand the idea of a fair test, for example in investigating how long ice blocks took to melt in different places. When presented with scientific questions, pupils in Year 2 respond well and they sustain their interest, for example in making monthly observations of a horse chestnut tree in the playground. Pupils throughout the school are keen to explore and to find out.
52. Teaching is satisfactory. It is well planned to ensure that the curriculum is covered, and that learning is set in context within topics. Some of the teaching poses challenging questions but this is not always the case. Sometimes the emphasis is on telling rather than finding out and there is not always enough involvement by pupils in practical activity. The recording of pupils' work varies in quality between classes, but pupils in Year 2 often record their work well in topic booklets.
53. Satisfactory progress has been made since the last inspection in the planning of the curriculum. The school is piloting assessment in Year 2 to show the level of pupils' attainment following the completion of units of work, for example about electricity. This is providing useful information, but the approach has yet to be adopted throughout the school to guide planning and teaching. The leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Staff share their ideas but the monitoring of teaching and learning across the school is not well developed.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

54. No lessons were seen in information and communication technology, and little work was available for scrutiny, so it was not possible to make overall judgements. However, computers are used well in classrooms for a range of purposes. Pupils are confident in using the mouse and keyboard, and some are able save their work. All staff have received government-funded training, and the school benefits from a readily available technician. Class teachers each have a laptop computer. Resources in classrooms are satisfactory, and the governors are planning to improve further on the current ratio of one computer to eight pupils.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

55. ICT is used well in art, and usage is developing in literacy, mathematics and science.

HUMANITIES

56. Part of a lesson was observed in history, but no lessons were seen in geography or religious education. It was not possible, therefore, to make overall judgements about these subjects. However, there is evidence that they contribute strongly to the breadth of the school's curriculum.
57. Work in **geography** is integrated well within topics. This is evident, for example, in pupils' study in Year 2 of the Antarctic, spanning literacy, history, geography, science and technology. Maps and globes are readily available. Pupils take a lively interest in different parts of the world, and enjoy sharing their knowledge of places. They are beginning to appreciate the diversity of cultures, and this is encouraged, for example, in work about musical instruments, which included a display of instruments from Africa.
58. Pupils are interested in **history**. The work that they do is giving them a sense of the past and of change over time, though their understanding of chronology is not well developed. In Year 1, pupils were fascinated by photographs from their teacher's childhood and keen to share their own memories from different ages. Pupils in Year 2 have been studying how transport has changed and showed a keen interest in the detail of how cars were different in the past from those of today. Pupils' imaginations have been fired by stories of historical events, including the Gunpowder Plot, and Captain Scott's polar expedition. Visits, for example to London museums, extend the curriculum.
59. Work is well planned in **religious education**, and the school is implementing the new locally agreed syllabus to good effect. Learning is supported through a variety of activities, including drama, and is well linked to other subjects. Festivals are celebrated and linked with pupils' experiences, as when an Asian parent brought sweets for Diwali. A visit from the Bishop, and to the local Methodist Church, have added to children's understanding of the practice of religion in their community. The celebration of harvest is shared by all as a major event in the annual calendar. The whole school, with parents, makes a visit to a different location each year, for example to a fruit farm, the sea, or a windmill, to celebrate the 'harvesting' of food from different sources.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

60. One lesson was seen in music, one in art and one in physical education. No lessons were seen in design and technology. There was insufficient evidence in these subjects to reach overall judgements about the quality of provision.
61. **Art and design**, features strongly in the curriculum. Pupils' work and displays around the school suggest that standards meet national expectations and that pupils achieve well. Pupils learn to look carefully, for example in drawing a bicycle and in making close observational drawings of the life cycle of the horse chestnut tree. Pupils learn to use pencils effectively for shading. They pay good attention to line, tone and texture. The use of computer-generated pictures is developing well, as in the creation of images of penguins and cats linked to a class topic, and the use of drawing and painting tools to make pictures of faces. Pupils learn to appreciate the work of famous artists, using paintings, for example by Rousseau and Van Gogh, to inspire their own work. Pupils' work is displayed in the village library, and the school contributes paintings for the local horticultural show.
62. Work in **design and technology** develops within topics. For example, pupils in Year 1 made interesting percussion instruments after listening to 'Peter and the Wolf'. Pupils in Year 2 have made simple models of penguins, and constructed lighthouses. Pupils enjoy the practical work involved in design and technology.

63. In **music** the school has purchased a new commercial scheme of work that is helping to ensure continuity across the classes. In assemblies, pupils sing enthusiastically but higher notes are less secure. Pupils learn the words of songs well, and readily join in with the actions. Instruments are 'tired' and would benefit from refurbishment and replacement. Pupils enjoy joining in, for example humming a tune together before assembly, but they are not always challenged enough to listen carefully and to try hard in musical activities.
64. In **physical education**, sound use is being made of a scheme of work which the school has adapted. Resources are satisfactory with some limitations imposed by the low height and small size of the hall for gymnastics and games. Good use is made of a local secondary school's running track during the summer term. Pupils have access to a range of extra-curricular provision including dancing and football. The school's policy is in need of updating and there has been little monitoring of the subject. The school is about to embark on a local authority initiative in physical education.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

65. No lessons were seen in this aspect of the curriculum, but the school is active in promoting pupils' all-round personal development, and their understanding of healthy living. For example, pupils take part in a health programme which includes a four-week focus in physical education on health-related fitness. Pupils are aware of the importance of healthy eating. Themes in assembly are well planned to explore values which are important in pupils' social and emotional development. 'Circle time' provides opportunities for pupils to explore feelings and to gain understanding of others as well as themselves. The school's inclusive approach helps pupils to be tolerant, accepting and interested in others. The strong sense of community, embracing pupils, parents and other people in the locality, builds pupils' sense of belonging and of the importance of their contribution within larger social groups.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4
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	2
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	4
The governance of the school	4
The leadership of the headteacher	4
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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

