

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ANNUNCIATION RC INFANT SCHOOL**

Edgware

LEA area: Barnet

Unique reference number: 101330

Headteacher: Miss T. Lynch

Reporting inspector: Cheryl Thompson  
22822

Dates of inspection: 7<sup>th</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup> February, 2000

Inspection number: 181598  
Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	3 to 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Thirleby Road Edgware Middlesex
Postcode:	HA8 0HQ
Telephone number:	0181 959 2325
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Fr. Neil Burrows
Date of previous inspection:	17 <sup>th</sup> April, 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Cheryl Thompson	Registered inspector	English	The characteristics and effectiveness of the school
		Information technology	The school's results and pupils' achievements
		Areas of learning for children under five	Teaching and learning
		English as an additional language	Leadership and management
			Key Issues for action
Joan Lindsay	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
			Partnership with parents and carers
Tony Ford	Team inspector	Mathematics	Quality and range of opportunities for learning
		Geography	
		History	
		Physical education	
		Equality of opportunity	
Mike Roussel	Team inspector	Science	Pupils' welfare, health and safety
		Art	
		Design and technology	
		Music	
		Special educational needs	

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The Annunciation Roman Catholic Infant School is Voluntary Aided and an average sized primary school. It serves the parishes of Burnt Oak, Edgware and Kingsbury Green. The school is very popular and over-subscribed. There are 229 boys and girls on roll aged three to seven. There is a small minority of ethnic pupils, mainly of black African heritage and a small number of pupils who have English as an additional language although these pupils are not at an early stage of learning English. At the time of the inspection there were 87 pupils under five. The youngest attend part time in the nursery class and the oldest attend full-time in the two reception classes. Attainment on entry to the nursery is above the level expected in physical development but below the expected levels in literacy and numeracy skills. By the time they are five, children's attainment is generally in line with that expected for their age and above that expected in physical development. There are 47 pupils on the school's register of special educational needs, including one statemented pupil, which is broadly average. Twenty nine pupils are eligible for free school meals which is below the national average.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

The Annunciation is a very effective school which provides very good value for money. Pupils achieve high standards consistently and have very good attitudes to their work; they are kind and courteous and behave very well. Overall, teaching is very good. The headteacher, together with the deputy, provide very good leadership and management. The governing body provides satisfactory support for the school.

#### **What the school does well**

- At age seven, pupils achieve high standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science. The headteacher, governors and teachers are strongly committed to sustaining these high standards.
- Overall, teaching is very good with excellent teaching in science.
- Pupils are very well behaved and have very positive attitudes to school.
- The school provides excellent care for its pupils.
- Provision for pupils' personal development is excellent.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- Relationships are very good.
- Resources for learning are excellent.
- The headteacher provides very good leadership and manages the school very well.
- Parents play an important part in their child's learning.

#### **What could be improved**

- There is an inconsistent approach to providing work to stretch brighter pupils.
- There is no formal system for checking on the quality of teaching in the school.
- The school development plan does not include long-term planning.

*The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.*

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

Very good improvement has been made since the school was last inspected in April, 1996. High standards have been maintained in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards in science have risen and are now similar to those achieved in the highest five per cent of schools nationally. Leadership and management have improved particularly in the area of subject managers' leadership. Teaching has improved; the proportion of very good and excellent teaching is much higher. Good improvement has been made in relation to the key

issues raised by the last inspection; good schemes of work are in place which ensure clear progression in pupils' learning as they move through the school. Assessment procedures are now very good. The role of subject managers has developed well; they have made a sound start on checking on the quality of provision in their subjects. The school development plan now includes planning for professional development but has not extended to longer term planning. More opportunities are provided for higher attaining pupils but this provision is not consistent throughout the school.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
reading	A	A	A	A	well above average A
writing	A*	A	A	A	above average B
mathematics	A	A	A	A	average C
					below average D
					well below average E

This is an impressive set of results which shows that high standards are maintained and how well the school achieves when compared to similar<sup>1</sup> schools. In 1999, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected or higher levels in science was similar to those of the highest five per cent of schools nationally. The majority of children aged under five achieve standards expected for their age. Inspection evidence confirms the high standards achieved in the school, although standards in information technology are average rather than high because pupils do not have many opportunities to practise their skills. A particularly good feature is the standard of handwriting and presentation. The school is well placed to meet the challenging targets it has set for reading, writing and mathematics.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are keen and enthusiastic about their learning. They concentrate for good lengths of time and take pride in their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good in and around the school. Behaviour in class is closely related to teaching; where teaching is excellent, so is behaviour. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, so is behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	Excellent. The school is a community where all are treated with respect; everyone is kind and courteous to one another. Pupils respond very well to the high expectations set for independence and showing initiative.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Pupils love coming to school. The headteacher takes a firm line on unauthorised absence.

<sup>1</sup> 'Similar' schools are those with similar proportions of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.



Pupils' very good attitudes towards their learning and their behaviour in class have a significant impact on the standards they achieve.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Very Good

*Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.*

Overall, the quality of teaching is very good with many strengths and few weaknesses. Ninety seven per cent of teaching is satisfactory or better, with half being very good or excellent. One music lesson, taken by a specialist teacher, accounted for the three per cent of unsatisfactory teaching. A strength of the school is the very good teaching of basic literacy and numeracy skills; as a result, pupils learn enthusiastically, make very good progress and show confidence and independence in their writing and mathematics. Excellent teaching in science promotes very good learning and pupils' great enthusiasm for the subject. In the main, teaching meets the needs of all pupils, especially those with special educational needs. An area for improvement is a consistent approach to providing work to stretch brighter pupils.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good for children under-five and very good for Key Stage 1 pupils. The school provides a broad and relevant curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Teaching is very good, individual education plans are very suitable and reviewed regularly. Parents are as involved as much as possible in their child's learning.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Pupils are sensitively supported; teachers ensure that pupils fully understand any new vocabulary that may be introduced. There are no pupils who are at an early stage of acquiring English.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	A strength of the school is the excellent provision made for pupils' personal development. Within the school there is a sense of calm purpose built on mutual respect and shared values
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides excellent care for its pupils. Pupils feel confident and happy in school. Very good links with the junior school ensure a smooth transition between schools.

The school works very well in partnership with parents. The help parents give at home with reading has a strong impact on the high standards achieved. Teachers value parents' support.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Leadership is very good. The headteacher, deputy and all staff are committed to sustaining the high standards achieved in the school. All work very well as a team. Management is very good. The school development plan is clearly focused on improvement although longer term planning is not identified. Financial resources are used very effectively.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Under the strong leadership of their Chairman, governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities and give sound support to the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school makes good analyses of National Curriculum and baseline test results. It uses the outcomes to adapt teaching or the curriculum. There are no formal systems for checking on the quality of teaching.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes very good use of all the funding it receives; as examples, the specialist science teacher has a strong impact on the standards achieved; the excellent resources for literacy and numeracy have a strong impact on pupils' enthusiasm for learning.

The school is adequately staffed with suitably trained and experienced teachers and is fortunate to have a very stable staff. Very good use is made of specialist teachers for science and music. Teachers, support staff and the nursery nurse plan very well together to ensure that all are clear about their tasks and no time is wasted. Accommodation is good. Teachers work very hard to create a lively and interesting work environment with excellent displays of pupils' work. In the main, the quality and quantity of resources is excellent; each class has one computer and whilst this is adequate, the ratio of pupils to a computer is high compared to most schools.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The high standards achieved by the school.</li> <li>Their children love school.</li> <li>Parents of pupils with special education needs feel well supported by the school.</li> <li>They feel welcome in school.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More information about the work their children will be covering in class.</li> <li>More information about how their children are getting on in the nursery.</li> </ul>

Inspectors entirely agree with parents' positive comments. More information for parents would be helpful to those who would like to give more support to their child at home. Parents are always welcome in the nursery and have opportunities to talk to the teacher about their child.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and achievements**

1. The school is very successful in sustaining standards that are well above the national averages and the averages for similar schools<sup>2</sup>.
2. National performance data for the years 1996 to 1999, which uses pupils' average scores and compares them with national averages indicates that, at the end of Key Stage 1, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected Level 2 or higher Level 3 is well above the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. In 1998 and 1999, standards in these subjects were also above the averages for similar schools.
3. Results of 1999 National Curriculum teacher assessment in science, shows the percentage of pupils achieving the expected Level 2 or higher Level 3 to be very high compared to the national average and similar to the standards achieved in the highest five per cent of schools in the country. When compared to similar schools, the school achieves well above average. Standards in science have improved considerably since the last inspection where they were found to be 'in line with national expectations'. The main reason for the improvement is the employment of a part-time science specialist teacher who provides excellent teaching.
4. Further analysis of the 1996 to 1999 national data shows that more pupils achieve the higher Level 3 in reading than in writing and mathematics. The reason for this is the high level of parental involvement in hearing their children read at home. Overall, pupils achieve better standards in reading and writing than in mathematics, but this is a similar pattern to the rest of the schools in the country. In reading, boys achieve slightly better than girls and in writing and mathematics, boys and girls do almost equally well. Inspection evidence shows no significant differences in the attainment of boys or girls.
5. The school has set challenging but appropriate targets for achievement in 2000 National Curriculum tests and tasks. The school is on track to achieve these.
6. When children start part-time in the nursery classes at age three, attainment is above the level expected for their age in physical development but in areas of language and literacy and mathematics, attainment is generally just below. In the nursery, children make good progress, especially in developing their social skills and attitudes to school. By the time they reach statutory school age of five, most children are achieving the expected levels in all areas of the nationally determined outcomes for children's learning but remain above the level expected in physical development.
7. Given their starting point at the start of their full-time schooling and the standards achieved by the time they leave the school, it is obvious that pupils, generally, make very good progress in their learning. Inspection evidence supports this premise.

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<sup>2</sup> 'Similar' schools are those with similar proportions of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.

8. Inspection evidence shows that at the end of Key Stage 1, there is a high number of pupils in line to achieve the expected or higher levels in all areas of English. Given their generally 'average' starting point on entry to full-time schooling, pupils of all levels of attainment and those with special educational needs, make very good progress in their learning in reading, writing and speaking and listening. There are three main reasons for this very good progress. Firstly, teachers' very good understanding of what and how to teach in order to develop pupils' basic literacy skills and enthusiasm and love of English; secondly, teachers' high expectations for what their pupils should achieve and, thirdly, the very good parental involvement in pupils' reading and learning spellings. Pupils use a good range of strategies to help them read and spell. For example, they use letter sounds, groups of letters and, in reading, guessing the word from the meaning of the sentence around it. A particular feature in all areas of English is pupils' self-confidence; in writing, pupils are willing to have a go at spelling words they want to use rather than just the ones they know they can spell; in reading, pupils persevere with difficult texts and in speaking and listening pupils speak confidently to their class. Pupils make good use of their very good literacy skills in other subjects; for example, reception class pupils make very good attempts to write down their customers' orders in their role play café. Year 2 pupils had written good accounts of the story of Guy Fawkes in their history lesson.

9. In mathematics, again, achievement is high and pupils of all attainment levels make very good progress. There is a high number of pupils in line to achieve the expected or higher levels. At the end of Key Stage 1, the majority of pupils are able to solve simple problems such as half of 28 and can recall past work in relation to shape, number patterns and fractions. Pupils are familiar with the properties of shape, and right angles and are able to identify such features in the world around them. Mathematical skills are used well in other subjects such as science, where pupils recorded the heart and pulse rate when resting and when exercising and compared the two different rates.

10. In science, achievement is high and pupils make very good progress in their knowledge and understanding. Pupils show great enthusiasm for the subject because of the excellent teaching in the subject. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have particularly good experimental and investigative skills. Pupils show a very systematic approach to their work and know that they need to record their findings correctly in order to be able to make sensible comparisons.

11. In information technology, when pupils are actually using the computer, they make very good progress in developing their skills and knowledge. However, over time, progress is satisfactory because there are not many opportunities to practise new skills and consolidate others.

12. In history and geography, pupils achieve standards above those expected for their age and have a good understanding of the skills associated with the subjects. Their literacy and numeracy skills are used well within these subjects; for example to record what they have seen on school trips or to record a description of a historical artefact and work out how old it is. In design technology, pupils achieve standards above those expected for their age whilst in art and music they achieve standards expected for their age. In physical education, pupils achieve standards well above those expected for their age. Good links are made with science and personal development so that pupils are well aware of the effect of exercise on their bodies and the right sort of food to eat to keep them healthy. Pupils show good co-ordination and plan and perform simple sequences of movement with ease.

13. Throughout the school pupils with special educational needs are very well supported and make very good progress in relation to the suitable targets set for them. In the main, higher attaining pupils also make similar progress to their classmates but there are lessons where, if given more challenge, they could make even better progress.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

14. Pupils have very good attitudes to the school. These standards have been maintained since the last inspection. All parents report that their children love school. Pupils know they are valued; they feel secure and confident in school and know what is expected of them in terms of behaviour and application to work. The school is most successful in fulfilling the aims in its Mission Statement of 'Our school is a place ... where every person is known and loved, and ... where one another's gifts are recognised and valued'.

15. Nursery children are enthusiastic about attending school; they are eager to talk about what they like doing best and what they want to do next. In the nursery classes, children are very attentive in 'news' or story time sessions. They are eager to learn and stay at an activity for a good length of time. Older children under five in the reception classes also concentrate on their work and take pride in completing their tasks. In Key Stage 1, pupils' attitudes towards their work are usually very good but it depends on the quality of teaching. Where teaching is excellent, as it is in science lessons, pupils' attitudes are excellent; they are thoroughly involved in their tasks and very responsive to questioning. In the one music lesson where teaching was unsatisfactory, pupils' attitudes were unsatisfactory.

16. Throughout, behaviour is generally very good in lessons, around the school and at playtimes. Parents are pleased with the standards of behaviour in the school. The quality of behaviour in lessons is closely linked to the quality of teaching. In approximately two thirds of the lessons observed, behaviour was very good or excellent. In the remainder of lessons, behaviour ranged from good to the one instance of unsatisfactory behaviour in the one unsatisfactory music lesson. There has been one permanent exclusion in the past year. The school was very reluctant to make this exclusion but it was made in the interest of safety. It is the only exclusion the school has made and all correct procedures were followed.

17. The youngest children in the nursery respond very well to their teacher's high expectations for behaviour. They quickly settle into routines, play well with each other, take turns and help each other. They tidy away well and look after equipment. They wait patiently for their breaktime milk. Older children under five in the reception classes also behave very well.

18. At Key Stage 1, behaviour is generally very good and has a positive effect on achievement and learning. In the excellent science lessons observed where pupils were given very challenging work, behaviour was excellent. In lessons where pupils sit on the carpet and introductions go on too long, they become restless and lose concentration but do not mis-behave. In assemblies and during wet playtimes, pupils' behaviour is excellent.

19. Relationships are excellent throughout the school. Pupils are polite, courteous and kind to each other and to adults; everyone shows regard and respect for each other. They admire each other's work and respect the talents of others. Adults provide very good role models by the care, concern and respect they show for pupils. Personal development is excellent. When they start in the nursery, high expectations are set for independence in such tasks as undressing and dressing for physical education sessions and looking after

their belongings. As they move through the school pupils have opportunities to be 'helpers of the day' or take on duties of looking after the class library. Pupils respond very well to all opportunities to show initiative and take responsibility.

20. Attendance is in line with the national average. Registers conform to regulations, are marked promptly and monitored rigorously. Pupils arrive punctually for school. The headteacher takes a firm line on unauthorised absences and discourages parents from taking their children on holiday in school time.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

21. Overall, the quality of teaching is very good and has improved significantly since the last inspection. Over three-quarters of the teaching observed was good or better. Half of all teaching observed was very good or excellent; sixteen per cent was satisfactory and one music lesson, taken by a music specialist, accounted for the three per cent of unsatisfactory teaching.

22. Many strengths underlie the quality of teaching throughout the school. Two are the very good relationships and the calm purposeful atmosphere teachers create in their classrooms. Such an atmosphere provides a situation where teachers can teach effectively and pupils learn successfully. Another notable feature is teachers' very good knowledge of how to teach the basic skills of literacy and numeracy; pupils learn and use these skills systematically and cumulatively as they move through the school. Excellent teaching in science promotes pupils' enthusiasm, enjoyment and understanding. Very good team work is another strength of the school. Teachers work well together in the planning stage; subject managers support their colleagues well with their subject expertise. All teachers work very hard to provide their pupils with an interesting and colourful classroom. Displays of pupils' work are excellent and contribute to the very effective learning environment and pupils' self-esteem.

23. In the main, the school is very successful in meeting the needs of all its pupils. Teaching is very good for pupils with special educational needs. The special educational needs co-ordinator provides very good teaching and support for pupils. She liaises closely with class teachers to produce very suitable individual education plans for pupils. Teaching for higher attaining pupils is at least satisfactory and sometimes very good. Currently, there is no consistency in the approach to providing work to stretch higher attaining pupils and allow them to make even better progress. The school has a small number of pupils for whom English is an additional language; however, none are at an early stage of acquiring English. Teachers are sensitive to any vocabulary difficulties these pupils may encounter, for example, in science or mathematics lessons, and do their best to check if pupils have fully understood specific terminology.

24. Overall, teaching is good for pupils under five in the nursery and reception classes. The quality of teaching for this age group ranges from satisfactory to very good. In the best lessons, teachers move their lessons along at a good pace and set suitable tasks for children of all levels of attainment. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use appropriate methods for teaching early literacy skills, such as letter sounds and how to use these to spell and early number skills such as counting and ordering. Pupils make very good progress in the area of personal development because teachers set very high expectations in areas such as consideration and thought for others, clearing up and tidying away. Planning is good and takes very good account of the nationally determined desirable learning outcomes and provides very good opportunities for the older children to make a good start on the National Curriculum programmes of study at the appropriate time.

Assessment is good; careful records are kept of pupils' achievements including areas of difficulty. An area for improvement is to use the outcomes of this assessment to set more challenging tasks for higher attaining children so they can make even better progress.

25. At Key Stage 1, teaching is very good and ensures that pupils learn literacy skills cumulatively. The school has excellent resources for literacy which teachers use skilfully to develop pupils' love and understanding of stories, poetry and words. During inspection, there were many lessons where pupils listened to stories and looked at illustrations entranced or joined in the repetitive parts of the story enthusiastically and spontaneously. Teachers have a very good understanding of how to teach literacy and numeracy skills in a meaningful and enjoyable manner. They make very good use of games to allow pupils to practise and consolidate their skills such as learning to remember words by sight or simple addition facts. Pupils learn enthusiastically and all make very good progress.

26. Throughout, teachers have adopted the programme of work recommended by the National Literacy Strategy but have adapted the format of a Literacy Hour to the needs of the pupils in the school. This adaptation is most successful. Instead of group reading activities, teachers use their dinner times to hear pupils read twice per week either individually or in a group. The time not given to group reading within the Literacy Hour is used more profitably in developing spelling and writing skills. For example, pupils have many opportunities to develop their skills in using a dictionary.

27. Teachers structure their mathematics lessons in accordance with the National Numeracy Strategy. Very productive use is made of direct teaching to encourage quick mental recall of number facts such as multiplication tables and addition facts. Group work is well organised and generally at the right level. Pupils make good progress in their learning, although for some higher attaining pupils there is a need for more challenging tasks to enable them to make even better progress.

28. In science, the specialist teacher provides excellent teaching for all classes. The tasks provided are interesting and at just the right level. Pupils respond eagerly, concentrate well and make excellent progress in their learning. Planning is excellent with clear learning objectives. Lessons are conducted at an appropriate yet brisk pace. Parents report how their children '... can't wait for their science lesson'.

29. In information technology, teaching is very good. When pupils are working at a computer, they make very good progress in their learning. They are keen to learn new skills and explore the possibilities of the program they use. Over time, progress is satisfactory rather than good because pupils do not have the opportunities to practise and develop their skills in order to make faster progress.

30. Teachers mark pupils' classwork and homework regularly and give helpful comments for improvement. In lessons, teachers give helpful feedback as to how pupils can improve. All teachers have worked very hard to put together a portfolio of pupils' work that they have annotated and 'levelled' against National Curriculum level criteria. This portfolio is very helpful to all staff in assessing their pupils' work and planning what they need to teach in order to move a pupil from one level to the next.

31. In geography, history and physical education, teaching and learning are very good. No teaching was observed in design technology, but scrutiny of pupils' work and photographic evidence shows that learning is at least satisfactory. In music, the quality of teaching ranges from excellent, when taught by a class teacher who knows her pupils extremely well, to unsatisfactory when taught by a music specialist. The main reason for the

unsatisfactory teaching was the teacher had difficulty managing a lively class of pupils that she did not know very well. However, the overall quality of teaching is satisfactory; pupils' learning is also satisfactory.

32. The school is fortunate to have a proficient nursery nurse working full-time in the nursery and two full-time classroom assistants who provide very good support for teachers and pupils. Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined so that everyone knows what they are doing and no time is wasted. Support staff are considered a very valuable part of the school team, their input has a significant impact on the quality of education provided by the school.

33. Homework in the form of reading at home and learning spellings, has a strong impact on the standards achieved in the school. Teachers value the contribution parents make to their child's learning.

### **HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?**

34. The quality and range of learning opportunities provided by the school are good for children under five and very good at Key Stage 1. Statutory requirements are met for the National Curriculum and pupils experience a broad and balanced curriculum. Children under five in the nursery and reception classes have an appropriate curriculum which takes full account of the nationally determined areas of learning. The governors have an agreed curriculum statement which details the entitlement of all pupils according to ability. The school's Mission Statement indicates a strong commitment to equal opportunities and this is reflected in curriculum policies.

35. Curriculum provision for children under five is good. A wide range of good activities is provided to promote children's development in the nationally determined areas of learning. Resources to support these activities are very good and used to advantage.

36. The organisation of the curriculum and subject policies have improved considerably since the last inspection. Detailed subject policies have been developed by the staff and are subject to regular review. Good quality schemes of work, based on national guidance, are in place and are a strong feature of the school. They are very effective in promoting pupils' learning through the systematic coverage of the programmes of study of the National Curriculum.

37. An appropriate sex education policy has been agreed. Sex education is not taught but the school incorporates in its general curriculum appropriate teaching on matters of human love and an understanding of God's creative love. Health education, including drug awareness, is delivered successfully and imaginatively through the science curriculum.

38. The school places great importance on the development of numeracy and literacy and the teaching in these areas has a strong impact on standards across the curriculum. Pupils' learning is enhanced by the use of cross-curricular themes, or topics, which are meaningful to pupils. For example, the study of foods from other countries links geographical concepts with health and aspects of literacy and numeracy.



39. The school has adopted the National Literacy Strategy in terms of the programme of work but has adapted the format of a 'Literacy Hour' to suit the needs of the pupils. This adaptation is very successful, particularly in its contribution to the high standards achieved in writing.

40. The National Numeracy Strategy has been introduced since the beginning of the academic year. It is having an good impact on the quality of teaching and has brought about an improvement in planning and teaching methods through its systematic structure and delivery. The identification of specific learning objectives is contributing effectively to pupils' numeracy skills, especially in the area of quick mental calculations. They are confident in handling numbers and can give good explanations of the strategies they are using to explain their answers. Pupils' acquisition of skills relating to place and direction is well supported through geography, science and information technology activities.

41. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Early identification and intervention provides pupils with very good support in all areas of the curriculum. Individual education plans are very good and reviewed regularly. Most teachers plan for the full range of ability; however, this is not consistent across all year groups and age ranges. An area for improvement is for more consistency in the provision of opportunities to challenge and extend the learning of higher attaining pupils.

42. There are very effective links between the nursery and reception classes which ensures a very smooth transition from one class to the next and from part-time to full-time education.

43. The school has well established links with the junior school to which the majority of its pupils transfer. There is strong involvement in parish activities reinforced by curriculum and induction links with the junior school.

44. The range of colourful and attractive displays in classrooms and corridors around the school reflects every subject area, broadening pupils' learning experiences and adding quality to the school's curriculum. Stimulating displays based on books studied in literacy such as the Runaway Chapati, artefacts supporting Barnaby Bear's travels in America and pictures depicting the celebration of a Christian wedding enhance pupils' knowledge and understanding of the wider world.

45. Overall, the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. This provision makes a significant contribution to pupils' personal development.

46. Provision for spiritual development is excellent. The powerful Catholic ethos pervades the school. There is a strong and shared commitment to worship in an atmosphere where the gifts of all are recognised and valued. Pupils hear about and learn from the many celebrations within the Catholic faith. Pupils have good opportunities to appreciate the wonder of life through the study of plants and growth and their own physical development. The youngest children under five showed great excitement when their windmills spun when the wind blew. Year 2 pupils displayed great interest when discovering right angles in their classroom. Pupils are given many good opportunities to reflect and consider. For example, pupils in Year 1 had opportunities to discuss the illustrations in a large text book and consider why the artist had composed the picture as she did.

47. Provision for moral development is excellent. Parents agree that the behaviour in the school is good. Moral values are fostered through the very caring and supportive relationships which exist between all members of the school community and by the very good example set by all who work in it. There are very good systems in place for promoting pupils' understanding of right and wrong. The home/school agreement is comprehensive and sets out the responsibilities of the school and parents in fostering good behaviour. The behaviour management policy contains clear statements of how the school encourages good behaviour and identifies the rewards and sanctions. All teachers are consistent in their approach to managing behaviour according to the policy. This successfully contributes to a calm and orderly atmosphere in the school. Pupils understand what is expected of them and work very hard to earn their 'Golden Time' rather than have their name put in the 'cloud' for unacceptable behaviour. Each class is involved in discussing and setting their own class rules.

48. Provision for social development is excellent. Parents agree that the school helps their children to become mature and responsible. The example set by all staff provides a very strong foundation for pupils' social development. Pupils readily accept responsibilities as helpers and register monitors, develop independence and show a sense of responsibility in contributing to the smooth running of the school. They react very positively to the success of others in maths games and computer activities and respond very well when working and playing together. The school tuckshop gives pupils the chance to demonstrate social responsibility through queuing up and waiting their turn in an orderly way. Through raising funds for the Jumbalance and other parish projects pupils are successfully gaining an awareness of the plight of others. They demonstrate excellent care of the school environment by respecting display materials and play equipment. Pupils take part in the Barnet music festival and at Christmas time, visit a day centre to sing to elderly people.

49. Provision for pupils' cultural awareness is good. Pupils are provided with many opportunities to appreciate and develop their understanding of British culture and traditions. Pupils visit the RAF Museum and centres local to the school together with the study of national events and life in past times. They learn about the Gunpowder Plot and famous people. Activities, such as studying the works of famous artists and listening to the music of well-known composers enrich pupils' experiences most effectively. Pupils' study of life in Ghana is enriched by visits from Ghanaian parents. The school continues to develop its teaching of other cultures by providing a suitable range of books and multicultural clothing for role play areas. However, the teaching of other faiths is less well represented and remains an area for improvement.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

50. The pastoral care the school provides for pupils is excellent; during their time in school, all pupils feel confident and happy and are able to concentrate on their learning. There are excellent relationships between the class teachers and pupils. These relationships extend to all who work in the school and are an important element in the care provided for pupils. The quality of this care has been maintained well since the last inspection. However, whilst procedures for assessing pupils' academic attainment and progress are excellent, they are not so effective when it comes to using outcomes to support higher attaining pupils. Currently, the use of the outcomes of assessment to plan for higher attaining pupils is inconsistent.

51. Children in the nursery and reception classes are very well cared for in a calm and pleasant atmosphere. Induction procedures for children and parents are very good; children settle quickly and happily into the routines of the classroom. Parents bring their children into school and help them hang their coats and bags up outside their classrooms. Parents arrive on time and collect their child promptly at the end of the school day. This arrangement enhances communication links between the class teacher and parents. For example, during inspection, parents were choosing times on a list posted outside classrooms for parent interviews. Children are quick to learn what is expected of them and staff consistently reinforce good work and behaviour with praise. Good records are kept of the children's progress and any learning or social difficulties are identified at an early stage and very good systems put into place to support each child.

52. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported in all areas of the school by the Special Educational Needs co-ordinator, teachers and support assistants. There are appropriate and satisfactory assessment procedures, including individual education plans, standardised testing and observational records of support assistants. Individual education plans are very well organised with sharply focused targets that are reviewed regularly. Liaison between class teachers and learning support assistants are very good. A diary is kept as a record of observations by the learning support assistants and this is discussed with the class teacher and the Special Educational Needs co-ordinator.

53. The welfare of all the pupils is a high priority of the school. This is exemplified in the school Mission Statement and aims of the school. There is a proficient nursery nurse in the nursery. The two full-time classroom assistants and full time nursery nurse are all qualified first aiders. Class teachers welcome the pupils into school in the morning and make time to talk to parents who have an immediate concern. Pupils feel comfortable talking to their teacher about any worries they may have. Other adults in the school also know the pupils well and this ensures a continuity of care throughout the school day. The quality of supervision during the mid-day break is very good, and there are appropriate systems of communication between the mid-day staff, the class teachers and the headteacher.

54. The procedures the school has to govern health and safety and child protection are excellent. Regular visitors to the school include the community police officer, road safety officers, school doctor and school nurse. There is a member of staff with responsibility for first aid. Any medication for pupils is administered by the first aider only after parents have signed a permission slip. Pupils' with a specific allergy wear a badge to highlight their condition so that no danger can come to them. There is a well equipped first aid room and signs throughout the school identify where the first aid boxes are and also names the responsible person. The headteacher is the designated member of staff for child protection and both the deputy head and headteacher have received appropriate training. All staff have a copy of the school child protection policy and know who to alert if they have any concerns. Confidential records are kept well and liaison with outside agencies is very good. Pupils are taught about healthy eating and about how to keep themselves safe. There is a personal and social education subject manager and discussions in class contribute to the development of pupils' self-confidence and self-awareness.

55. Parents know that they have to bring their children to school on time and to advise the school at an early stage of reasons for absence. The school monitors punctuality very well and any pupils late for school have their name entered in the late book. The majority of parents co-operate very well in this respect. Holidays during term time are only authorised for ten days and no Year 2 pupils are expected to go on holiday in the first half of the summer term due to the National Curriculum tests. The procedures for monitoring and

promoting good behaviour are very good. There is a good level of communication between all members of staff concerning behaviour, both in class, around the school and in the playgrounds. Class teachers are consistent in the way they manage the behaviour of pupils. Pupils are expected to be courteous, well mannered and obey the school rules. Pupils know and understand what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviour.

56. The school meets statutory requirements for the National Curriculum testing of pupils at the end of the key stage. Very good use is made of the analyses of National Curriculum test results to set targets and to pinpoint differences in attainment of pupils of different gender. The school passes detailed records of Year 2 pupils' standardised test scores to the junior school prior to transfer. Baseline assessment is in its second year of use and from analysis of the first year, more focused work in the nursery has had a beneficial effect on pupils' learning. There has been significant improvement since the last inspection in the area of assessment. A suitable assessment policy is in place and to be reviewed in the autumn term 2000. The assessment subject manager has an action plan and has significantly raised the quality of assessment through working closely with subject managers, checking and monitoring the assessment throughout the school. There were plans to develop a policy for higher achievers but this is at present on hold. There are termly in-service training meetings at the teachers' centre and in addition there are twilight meetings for staff. All class teachers' files demonstrate that regular records and detailed assessments of individual pupils are kept up to date. Overall, the use of assessment is very good. However, the monitoring and supporting the progress of higher attainers is less well developed and is an area for improvement.

57. The school provides effective support and advice for pupils in terms of their pastoral care and personal and social development. Problems that arise are recognised quickly and support provided as appropriate. Pupils receive praise and encouragement for effort, good work and awards that, in turn, encourage pupils to work hard over a longer period of time.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

58. The school works very well in partnership with parents and carers. This good partnership has been maintained since the last inspection. In their responses to the questionnaire and at meetings with inspectors, parents indicate that they are very pleased with all the school provides for their children. All parents agree that standards of achievement and behaviour are high, their children like coming to school and that teaching in the school is good. Some parents feel they would like more information about the work their children will be covering in class. A small number of parents would like to be better informed about the progress of their children in the nursery. Parents of children with special educational needs feel that the two-way communication with the school is excellent and helps them to understand what the school is doing and how best to help their child at home. All parents report they feel welcome in school and that teachers are always ready to discuss any problems about their child's learning.

59. The home-school agreement reflects the school's Catholic ethos and clearly defines the parts played by the school and parents in the education of their children. There are two formal meetings per year for parents to discuss their child's progress with the teachers. In the nursery there are no formal parent consultation meetings but a detailed written report is given in the summer term. Annual reports are informative but, in the main, lack clear targets for improvement which makes it difficult for parents to give specific help at home. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are closely involved with individual education plans

and are suitably involved in the reviews of the progress their child makes in achieving the targets set.

60. Parents' involvement in their child's learning makes a strong contribution to the high standards achieved, especially in reading and spelling. Pupils read very regularly at home and practise spellings. Teachers value the parents' contribution to pupils' learning.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

61. The headteacher, together with the deputy headteacher and senior management team, provides very good leadership. The roles and responsibilities of the subject managers are well defined. All share a clear understanding of the direction for the school and a commitment to maintaining the high standards achieved. All staff are consulted on important management issues and kept well informed of decisions made; therefore, all staff feel valued and work very well together as a team. In their response to the 'Parents' Questionnaire', very nearly all parents strongly agreed that the school is well led and managed.

62. Even though standards throughout the school are high, there is no complacency; the school uses the outcomes of National Curriculum testing, baseline profiles and its own thorough assessments to identify areas of the curriculum for improvement in order to raise standards further. Very good delegation of management and subject responsibilities ensures the senior management team have a very good overview of the strengths and weaknesses in the school. From this well informed base they prioritise areas for improvement to be included in the school development plan. For example it was felt that teachers' subject knowledge in science could be improved. To this end, the school employs a specialist teacher to work alongside classteachers. The result is excellent teaching for pupils and an excellent role model for classteachers. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 in the subject has risen dramatically and teachers feel more confident in their ability to teach science.

63. The leadership and management of the school have improved since the last inspection. The main reasons for the improvement are the school's good response to the key issues of the last inspection where areas for development were the role of the subject manager and the use of assessment. Subject managers now provide excellent or very good leadership and take more responsibility for monitoring their subject areas; they check on planning very regularly and check to see if planning has been put into practice by scrutinising a selection of pupils' workbooks. The assessment manager provides detailed analyses of the school's National Curriculum tests and baseline test results. The outcomes of the analyses are used to set targets and make changes in what or how teachers teach. For example, it was noted that children did not achieve well in their literacy skills in baseline testing. As a result, the school changed the nursery planning to include more specific teaching of literacy skills and results have improved.

64. The management of special educational needs is very good. The school's provision for its pupils is a strength. The policy for early identification of pupils' difficulties, coupled with very good individual education plans and teaching, ensures that pupils make the best possible progress. All statutory requirements are met. There are clear, efficient systems to ensure that pupils' needs are systematically reviewed.

65. The school is generally very successful in providing equality of opportunity for pupils of different ages, ability and gender to make the best possible progress. However, there is a need for a more consistent approach in the provision of suitably challenging work for higher attaining pupils. There are instances where these pupils are not given work to help them make the progress of which they are capable.

66. The headteacher monitors teaching on an informal basis and, as such, has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in teaching in the school. However, there is a need for more focus and rigour to this monitoring so that the outcomes can be used to help teachers improve their teaching further. Subject managers monitor the provision of their subject areas but do not take the opportunity to monitor teaching. A good system of appraisal is in place which is suitably focused on teachers' perceived needs for further professional development.

67. The governing body are kept well informed by the headteacher and chair of governors. Governors fulfil their statutory obligations conscientiously, although the provision for pupils with special educational needs was not reported in the latest annual report to parents. Suitable committee structures and terms of reference are in place, making the best use of the talents and expertise of individuals. The chair of governors has a clear understanding of standards, trends in National Curriculum test results and the need to maintain and build on these. Governors are keen to ensure that all pupils achieve the highest standards they are capable of and hold the school to account for the standards it achieves. In the main, the governors rely on the headteacher to provide the direction for the school and give her their full support. However, an area for improvement is for governors to be more proactive in their role of understanding what goes on in the school so that they can make informed decisions in shaping its future direction.

68. The school development plan is good. It is comprehensive, clearly focused on improvement and identifies areas for further development in the school. Currently, the school development plan is for one year only and as such is not a useful document for long-term planning. The school has long term plans, for example, modifying the curriculum in line with new national guidelines, reviewing policies and providing some safety surfacing in the nursery play-ground. However, these are not identified within the school development plan, therefore its use in providing a long term overview of where the school is heading is limited.

69. The headteacher manages the school's finances extremely well and is supported by an able finance committee. Governors are supplied with excellent monthly budget statements. The results of this careful management of funding are evident in the excellent resources to support English, mathematics and science and the ways in which the old building has been adapted to provide a comfortable learning environment for pupils. In general, the school is very well resourced except in the area of computers. There is a computer in each classroom but the number of computers in the school is low compared to national figures. A small underspend has been earmarked for safety surfacing in the nursery play-ground and making necessary adaptations to the staffroom to allow staff more room to work. A recent local education authority financial audit found the school's financial administration and management to be of a good standard. Minor recommendations were made and have been acted upon satisfactorily by the school. All funding received for special educational needs is used appropriately. The school is beginning to establish arrangements for evaluating the cost effectiveness of its decisions and practices, for example, it looks carefully for value for money in the tenders it receives for proposed alterations and has informally monitored the effect of employing a specialist science teacher.

70. The school is adequately staffed with suitably trained and experienced teachers and is fortunate to have a stable staff. Very good use is made of specialist teachers for science and music. Teachers, support staff and the nursery nurse plan very well together to ensure that all are clear about their tasks and no time is wasted.

71. Accommodation is good and, in the main, adequate for the delivery of the National Curriculum. However, for pupils under five in the reception classes, there has to be an 'over-spill' play area in the corridor. Whilst pupils' behaviour is very good in the corridor, it is a thoroughfare and people using it have to step carefully over 'precious' models or weave through dressing up materials and therefore disturb the pupils' play. The nursery has an adequate and safe play area and is very well equipped with a good range of play equipment. The library is very well resourced but not easily accessible for a whole class or large groups of pupils, and, therefore, not used to the full.

72. The aims of the school are founded on the Catholic ethos. The school is extremely successful in fulfilling its stated aims of the Mission Statement, particularly in the areas 'To foster an active partnership between home, school and parish' and 'To help our children to be happy, caring and eager to learn'. Relationships are excellent throughout the school. Teachers and pupils feel valued. There is a strong commitment to maintaining high standards in pupils' attainment and behaviour. Pupils start full-time schooling with average attainment. They are provided with very good teaching which helps them to achieve well above average results by the time they leave the school. They are very well prepared for their future schooling. The school provides very good value for money.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

73. The headteacher and governing body should consider the following when planning for school improvement:

- (1) Provide challenging work for higher attaining pupils to enable them to reach their potential by:
  - identifying higher attainers in the school;
  - being consistent in the approach to providing work for these pupils by identifying, in lesson plans, activities for these pupils that will extend and challenge their thinking.(Paragraphs: 13, 23, 24, 27, 41, 50, 56, 65, 75, 76, 77, 112, 120)
  
- (2) Improve monitoring within the school by:
  - Providing training for the headteacher and subject managers to enable them to monitor teaching effectively;
  - Introducing a system for regular and rigorous monitoring of teaching;
  - Using the outcomes of monitoring to share good practice and improve standards of teaching.(Paragraphs: 66, 103, 116, 137, 146, 158, 165)
  
- (3) Extend the current school development plan and include any long term developments already planned by the school.  
(Paragraph: 68)

In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan. These are indicated in paragraphs: 18, 67, 71, 98, 100, 101, 109, 156

- On occasions, pupils spend too long sitting on the carpet area. Teachers need to consider how they can organise their teaching time to provide a better balance between the time pupils sit on the floor and the time they spend engaged in their tasks.
- A high proportion of pupils in all classes are using an inappropriate pencil grip. Whilst this does not prevent pupils from writing neatly, it is slowing their rate of writing and not preparing them well for using pens.
- The library is not used enough for teaching and developing library skills.
- Higher attaining pupils need to be able to change their books (if they have finished them) rather than having to wait until their teacher has heard them read.
- Lower attaining pupils, who have difficulty coping with remembering the many different words they encounter within the wide range of reading material, need a more structured programme so that they have chance to build a secure sight vocabulary.
- Develop the role of the governing body so that they have a more informed understanding of the work of the school.



## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	36
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	25

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
8	42	31	16	3	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26 FTE	178
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		29

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	47

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	11

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	13
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.1
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	1999	33	27	60

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	33	33	30
	Girls	27	27	26
	Total	60	60	56
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	98 (99)	100 (100)	94 (98)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	33	33	33
	Girls	27	27	27
	Total	60	60	60
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (96)	100 (98)	100 (97)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

*Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.*

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	2
Black – African heritage	19
Black – other	6
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	89
Any other minority ethnic group	5

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### **Exclusions in the last school year**

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage		1
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White		
Other minority ethnic groups		

*This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

### **Teachers and classes**

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.28
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.2
Average class size	26.5

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y2**

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	95

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	30

Number of pupils per FTE adult	13
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	1998/1999
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	£
Total income	393 657
Total expenditure	373 872
Expenditure per pupil	1 815
Balance brought forward from previous year	33 212
Balance carried forward to next year	52 997

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	231
Number of questionnaires returned	140

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	78	22	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	69	30	0	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	76	21	0	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	40	40	5	1	14
The teaching is good.	76	22	0	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	46	37	13	1	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	59	37	1	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	74	24	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	52	33	9	2	4
The school is well led and managed.	81	19	1	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	69	29	0	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	28	33	14	8	18

### Other issues raised by parents

The great majority of parents are very pleased with all the school offers.

Parents felt that they would like to have even more information about the work their children would be covering in school so that they could help as much as possible.

## **PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

74. During inspection there were 87 children under five. The youngest attend the nursery classes either for the morning or the afternoon session. The older children who are either just five or nearly five are accommodated in the two reception classes – one of 28 pupils and the other of 30 pupils. Attainment on entry to the nursery is above the level expected in physical development but generally below the expected levels in literacy and numeracy; there is a significant number of pupils with articulation and speech/vocabulary difficulties. By the time they are five, attainment in all areas of learning is broadly in line with the National Desirable Learning Outcomes except in physical development, where attainment remains above the level expected. There are a few children who achieve standards well above the levels expected and a few who achieve below.

75. Provision for children under five to achieve the National Desirable Learning Outcomes is good in both the nursery and the reception classes. This good provision has been maintained since the previous inspection. In all classes, the provision is generally well matched to the children's needs and prior attainment; however, there is a need to provide more tasks to stretch the higher attaining children so that they can make even better progress in their learning.

76. In the nursery, planning is good and clearly focused on the six nationally determined areas of learning. Activities are carefully structured to develop children's personal and social development and learning. Currently, there are no systems within the planning for providing higher attaining children with more challenging activities to move them on in their learning.

77. In the reception classes, planning is very good and takes very good account of the wide age range and stages of development of the children in the classes. In most sessions work is suitably planned for children of all levels of attainment but there are some instances where the work provided for some higher attainers does not challenge them enough.

78. A strength in the provision in the nursery classes is the strong working partnership between the class teacher and proficient nursery nurse.

#### ***Personal and social development***

79. In their personal and social development, children in the nursery classes make good progress. All nursery staff set high expectations for behaviour and kindness and consideration for others. Children learn how to listen to their teacher, follow instructions and co-operate with classroom routines. They take turns willingly to paint or play in the role play area. Children are provided with very good guidance to help them learn how to clear up and tidy away equipment they have used. The quality of teaching and support for children's personal development is consistently good.

80. In the reception classes, children continue to make good progress in their personal and social development. By the time they are five, standards are in line with those expected for their age. Children discuss and record their own 'class rules' and have a good understanding of the need to consider others. They behave very well in class, in the corridor and in assembly. The quality of teaching to promote children's personal development continues to be good and teachers' expectations are high.

### ***Language and literacy***

81. Children in the nursery make good progress in this area, especially in developing their listening and speaking skills. Pupils with articulatory difficulties and limited vocabularies make very good progress because they are well supported and have plenty of opportunities to practise their speaking and listening. Children have, or very quickly develop, a love of stories and high expectations of enjoyment from sharing a story or picture book. Some children know a few letter names and sounds and can write their names unaided. Nearly all children can recognise their names. In their 'reading' children hold the book and turn pages correctly; some are keen to re-tell the story in their own words using the pictures. The teaching of language and literacy skills is generally good. However, it could be further improved by placing more emphasis on developing children's awareness of letter sounds and rhyme, and teaching letter sounds in an order that allows children to use the sounds they learn to spell and read simple words. The present system of learning the sound of a letter each week and learning these in alphabetical order does not facilitate the best possible progress.

82. In the reception classes, children continue to make good progress in acquiring language and literacy skills. By the time they are five, most pupils achieve the standards expected for their age; a few pupils exceed these standards and a few do not reach them. Pupils develop a good sense of rhyme and some can generate rhymes and understand that only the beginning letter has to change in words such as 'cat', 'hat', 'sat'. Children develop independence in attempting to spell words they want to use and make good use of letter sounds they know to help them. For example, children were confident in attempting to write down their customer's order in their role play café. Very good use is made of the concept key board to help children write whole sentences and/or phrases. Children have completed some well presented and illustrated books using this method. The quality of teaching in the reception classes is never less than good and sometimes very good. In the very good lessons, the teacher questions children more, assesses their response and if suitable, takes them further in their learning. Teachers make very good use of the excellent resources for language and literacy.

### ***Mathematical development***

83. In the nursery, children make good progress in counting, recognising numerals and learning mathematical terminology such as 'one more than' or 'one less than'. Many good opportunities are provided for the children to practise their counting; for example, counting the cars that will fit into the garage or simply counting up to 10 or 20 with their teacher. The quality of teaching is good.

84. In the reception classes, children continue to make good progress so that by the time they are five, standards are in line with those expected. Children develop their counting skills and nearly all can recite, or count, to 20 but not all have a secure understanding of the process or how many 14 (for example) actually is. Higher attaining children understand the concept of very simple addition and are confident making simple number bonds to 10. Most children have an appropriate understanding of data handling and can compile and interpret simple graphs recording their favourite fruits. Overall, the quality of teaching is good, especially in the area of reinforcing the subject specific language. Very good links are made with literacy. In a very good lesson, the teacher used a large text book (big book) to share with children to teach specific words and reinforce the concept of taller/shorter than.

### ***Knowledge and understanding of the world***

85. In their knowledge and understanding of the world children in the nursery make good progress. Children are confident in the use of information technology. They use a mouse to click on letters and activate the speech facility. Children are helped to make simple windmills and show great delight in finding out the best way to make them work.

86. In the reception classes children make very good progress. By the time they are five, they achieve standards that are in line with national expectations. Children use the listening centre tape recorders and earphones competently and thoroughly enjoy their stories. Information technology is used well, especially the concept key boards as a means of writing stories or recording their findings in a science activity. Children are keen to talk about their families, where they live and some describe their route to school. Older children have made a good start on understanding the relative size of the United Kingdom when compared to Africa and other continents. Teaching is good in this area especially in teaching correct terminology and allowing children to have opportunities to practise using it.

### ***Creative development***

87. In the nursery classes, children have many good opportunities for using paint and a good range of materials to create pictures and models. They make good progress in learning how to use paintbrushes, scissors and glue and are keen to talk about the things they have made or the pictures they have created. The well-equipped role play area provides very good opportunities for creative play. Teaching is good in this area.

88. In the reception classes, children continue to make good progress. By the time they are five they achieve standards in line with national expectations. In a music lesson, children showed a good appreciation of rhythm and could easily clap in time with a steady pulse. They sing with enthusiasm and in tune when singing 'Ten fat sausages'. In their role play area, children assume the roles of waitress, chef and customer and run their café with enthusiasm, inviting visitors to join in. Teaching is good with an appropriate balance struck between teaching children specific skills and allowing them to be creative.

### ***Physical development***

89. In the nursery classes, children have many good opportunities to develop their fine motor skills by doing jigsaws, painting, colouring and cutting out. Nearly all children achieve good standards in this area and are above the level expected for their age. The school has a very good range of large toys and equipment for outside play but due to rainy weather, it was not possible to observe children using these.

90. In the reception classes, children continue to make good progress and develop their skills. They use construction kits with care and show very good control when building their tall tower to make it taller than their teacher. No teaching was observed in this area, but teachers' planning and the work completed by the children indicates that teaching is at least good.

## **ENGLISH**

91. The last inspection in 1996 judged standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing to be in line with the national average, with a small minority achieving well above this. The percentage of pupils achieving these standards was high. This remains the case.

92. National data for the years 1996 to 1999, shows that the school achieves and sustains high standards in all areas of English. Using pupils' average scores and comparing them with national averages for these years shows the percentage of pupils achieving the expected Level 2 or above is well above average. In reading and writing, the percentage of pupils achieving the high grades within Level 2 and the higher Level 3, is well above the national averages.

93. Results of 1999 National Curriculum tests show that almost half the pupils achieved the higher Level 3 in reading; in writing, just over half the pupils achieved the high grade at Level 2 or Level 3. Results of teacher assessments in speaking and listening are also well above average. Compared to similar schools, results are also well above average.

94. Analysis of pupils' results over the past four years shows that boys do slightly better in reading than girls; in writing, the performance of girls and boys is similar. Both boys and girls achieve more of the higher Level 3 in English than they do in mathematics.

95. Inspection evidence shows that at the end of Key Stage 1, there is a high number of pupils in line to achieve the expected or higher levels in all areas of English. Given their generally 'average' starting point on entry to full-time schooling, pupils of all levels of attainment and those with special educational needs, make very good progress in their learning in reading, writing and speaking and listening. There are three main reasons for this very good progress. Firstly, teachers' very good understanding of what and how to teach in order to develop pupils' basic literacy skills and enthusiasm and love of English; secondly, teachers high expectation for what their pupils should achieve and, thirdly, the very good parental involvement in pupils' reading and learning spellings. Another important factor is the support given to pupils with special educational needs; teachers are quick to note if pupils are having difficulties grasping basic skills and ensure that support is given in order that the pupil can succeed.

96. At the end of Key Stage 1, in the area of speaking and listening, pupils listen very attentively to their teachers and each other. In discussions, they take turns to speak and listen carefully to each other's point of view. Teachers' high expectations and excellent relationships with their pupils ensure pupils feel confident in talking in front of their whole class. In a very good lesson, pupils retold part of the 'Snowlamb's' story and were very confident in taking the parts of the people and animals and could explain, clearly, how they thought the animals would be feeling. In an excellent assembly taken by a Year 1 class, pupils were very confident in speaking to the whole school and many visitors. They spoke clearly and distinctly and were well aware of their audience.

97. At the end of Key Stage 1, in reading, there is a high proportion of pupils on track to achieve the expected Level 2 or higher Level 3. All pupils like reading, are confident and very positive about their choice of book. Higher attaining pupils can name their favourite authors and give reasons why they like them. Pupils make good use of a range of strategies to help them read the unknown words they encounter. They use picture clues, letter sounds, what has happened in the story so far and guessing the unknown word accordingly. Pupils know how to use a contents page and the index of a non-fiction book to help them locate specific information.

98. In the main, pupils' progress in learning to read is very good. Teachers give very generously of their lunchtimes to hear their pupils read at least twice per week. These sessions ensure pupils read appropriate material and teachers can assess pupils' strengths and weaknesses. The programme for reading is well organised to ensure pupils learn and practise a range of strategies to help them read within a wide range of reading material. In



the main, this organisation is very successful for most pupils but some higher and lower attaining pupils could make even better progress. Higher attaining pupils need access to more books, instead of having to wait until they have read to their teacher to change their book. Some lower attaining pupils need more structure to their programme of reading; they have difficulty remembering the wide range of different words associated with the variety of reading material. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress in achieving the appropriate targets set for them. They have good support from their teachers and their families and, most importantly, they have good self-esteem.

99. At the end of Key Stage 1, in writing, there is a high proportion of pupils in line to achieve the expected Level 2 or higher Level 3. Teachers provide a very good range of meaningful opportunities to write poetry, stories and personal accounts. All pupils enjoy writing and are very confident in their approach. They have good strategies to help them spell unfamiliar words; for example, they use letter sounds or use simple dictionaries. Pupils use punctuation well and can easily identify commas, question marks and apostrophes in the large text books. Nearly all pupils have made a very good start on using speech marks. In a very good lesson, most pupils could identify and record the words said by the characters in the story of the Snowlambs. Pupils' handwriting is neat, fluent and well formed; standards of presentation are high, reflecting their teachers' high expectations. Pupils use a word processing program competently to present their poems and stories. The high standards achieved in writing and reading are used well in other subjects such as science, where pupils record their findings, and history where pupils write good accounts of the story of Guy Fawkes.

100. Pupils make very good progress in learning to write because teaching is very good. Pupils are taught basic writing skills systematically and cumulatively and have an interesting range of opportunities to practise and consolidate what they learn. For example, pupils in Year 1 thoroughly enjoyed making sentences about what their Gruffallo liked to eat. They used dictionaries competently to help them spell the words they chose to use and used capital letters and full stops appropriately. Teachers model the writing process well; for example, when teaching pupils to read what they have written to make sure it makes sense, the teacher deliberately left out a word in the sentence she wrote and subsequently corrected her 'mistake'. Very good teaching helps pupils learn to spell by listening carefully to see if a word rhymes with one they know how to spell; for example, nearly all Year 1 pupils could spell 'house' and easily changed the beginning letter so that they could spell 'mouse'. Handwriting skills are taught well. However, an area for improvement is to ensure all pupils use a correct pencil grip. There is a high proportion of pupils in all classes who are in the habit of using a poor pencil grip.

101. Throughout the school, pupils have very positive attitudes towards reading and writing. The reasons for these positive attitudes are teachers' high expectations and skilful use of the excellent resources for literacy. During inspection there were many lessons where pupils of all ages sat entranced by stories and exciting illustrations in the large text books. Behaviour in lessons is very good and has a very positive impact on the standards achieved. Pupils work very well together in group work sessions. They share their ideas and help each other to spell unknown words. In the reception class, pupils played a word matching game together very sensibly, taking turns and giving one another clues if the word was unknown. In lessons where pupils have to sit on the floor for long periods, they become restless but remain well behaved.

102. The quality of teaching is consistently very good and has improved considerably since the last inspection where teaching was found to be ‘.... *satisfactory and sometimes good in most lessons, but in a minority it is unsatisfactory*’. Teachers have a very good understanding of how to teach basic literacy skills in an enjoyable and meaningful manner. Planning is very good and lessons move along at a suitable but brisk pace. Group work is well organised to suit pupils of all levels of attainment. An excellent feature in their teaching is the use of questioning to help pupils recall what they have learned and encourage them to think. For example, after a story about ‘The Owl Babies’, pupils were asked if it was a traditional story and then asked if they thought it could become a classic. The school has adopted the National Literacy Strategy programme of work in terms of spellings and phonic work but has adapted the format of the Literacy Hour very effectively to suit the needs of the pupils in the school.

103. The subject manager provides excellent leadership for the subject. She has very good subject knowledge and is well aware of the strengths and areas for improvement within the subject. The subject manager monitors teachers’ planning but, as yet, does not monitor teaching. She has identified the need to develop literacy skills through and within other areas of the curriculum such as history and geography. The assessment manager produces very clear analyses of National Curriculum tests and baseline assessments which are used to make changes to the curriculum provision and teaching if necessary. Resources for English are excellent and are used extremely well by teachers.

## **MATHEMATICS**

104. The last inspection in 1996 judged standards in mathematics to be sound and that a higher than average number of pupils achieved the expected Level 2 or above. The school has maintained these high standards.

105. National data for the years 1996 to 1999, shows the school achieves and sustains high standards in mathematics. Using pupils’ average scores, and comparing them with national averages for these years, shows the percentage of pupils achieving the expected Level 2 or above is well above the national average. Boys and girls do equally well in mathematics, although all pupils do better in reading and writing than in mathematics.

106. Results of 1999 National Curriculum tests show the percentage of pupils achieving the expected Level 2 or above to be above the national average. However, when pupils’ average scores are used, results are found to be well above average; this is because absent pupils are not counted when averaging scores. Compared to similar schools, results are also well above average. Further analysis shows that the whilst nearly all pupils achieve the expected Level 2 or higher, the percentage of pupils achieving the lower grade within the Level 2 is increasing. In 1999 a quarter of the pupils achieved this lower grade; this is proving a challenge for the school.

107. Inspection evidence shows that at the end of Key Stage 1, the majority of pupils are able to solve simple problems such as half of 28 and can recall past work in relation to shape, number patterns and fractions. Pupils are familiar with the properties of shape, and right angles and are able to identify such features in the world around them. Whilst younger pupils can distinguish between longer and shorter items, older pupils are confident in calculating accurately the number of faces and edges and vertices in three dimensional objects. By the end of the key stage, pupils handle money confidently and are aware of its value, can count on and back at different intervals, are familiar with patterns in hundred squares and recognise number patterns associated with multiplication tables. The majority

are becoming familiar and confident with the value of numbers and complete accurate mechanical operations using the four rules of number.

108. Pupils are able to use and apply mathematics to everyday situations, such as counting the days of the week and simple calculations relating to the number of pupils present or absent, though opportunities exist for further consolidation in this area. Mathematical skills are utilised effectively in science when recording heart and pulse rates whilst a story in literacy focused on numbers and subtracting. Although a good range of software is available to teachers, opportunities to develop and practise numeracy skills using computers is limited due to the number of machines available.

109. Nearly all pupils enjoy mathematics and respond well to the structure of the numeracy lessons. They enjoy the mental arithmetic questioning and respond enthusiastically. Teachers throughout the school have developed some very good games and activities to make the oral and mental sessions interesting and varied. Behaviour in lessons is very good. Teachers manage the planned activities very well. Where there is restlessness it is the result of over long exposition and insufficient challenge for pupils. A small number of pupils are hesitant in their work and show a lack of confidence initially, but where teachers model specimen answers and give guidance on the layout of work, pupils are quicker to respond to the tasks required of them. Teachers know their pupils very well, make very good use of praise to motivate them and, generally, meet the needs of pupils of varying levels of attainment through the use of good questioning techniques.

110. Teaching and learning are very good and pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to all other pupils. All lessons follow a similar format of oral exposition which sometimes involve revision of work previously covered, followed by group activities relating to the well-planned learning objectives. The plenary sessions are extremely good with teachers using further questioning to assess and reinforce learning and to give pupils the opportunity to demonstrate their level of understanding.

111. All teachers are familiar with the requirements of the National Curriculum and the National Numeracy Strategy. They use appropriate mathematical vocabulary and demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of the subject matter. Teachers utilise an excellent range and quality of resources in practical activities and these support pupils' learning very effectively. Mathematics is well taught and is beginning to have a strong impact on pupils' knowledge and understanding. Occasionally the pace of lessons is slow and time is not used to best effect.

112. Daily lesson plans identify clear learning objectives supported by well thought-out activities for different ability groups. Teachers are beginning to provide more challenging work for higher attaining pupils but this is not a consistent practice.

113. Every classroom features attractive mathematical displays and numeracy areas. Number lines fixed to desktops are readily accessible to pupils and are very useful aids to learning. Work is regularly marked and although much of the feedback to pupils is oral, very helpful comments are written to indicate how individuals can develop their mathematical skills further.

114. Assessment information is being extremely well used to guide planning and to determine standards. Comprehensive records are kept which contribute to the setting of personal targets. Very good data analysis is undertaken and the outcomes are used very effectively to identify areas of strength and weakness. A governor has been appointed for numeracy and is fully aware of the school's strategies for raising the high attainment even

further through the setting of challenging targets.

115. The subject manager provides very good leadership and has a very clear understanding of where the school is heading in mathematics. She has good mathematical knowledge and the whole staff's enthusiasm for the subject is evident throughout the school. There are interactive and informative displays highlighting the Maths Year which feature problems designed by pupils for others to solve. Numbers and numerical activity is everywhere for all to see, providing pupils with a rich and stimulating mathematical environment in which to learn.

116. Monitoring of planning takes place regularly and the senior management team monitors the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy. Currently, insufficient emphasis is given to systematic monitoring of the teaching of mathematics throughout the school. Mathematics is a priority in the school development plan and further staff training has been identified, though not fully costed.

## **SCIENCE**

117. Results of the 1999 National Curriculum teacher assessments show the percentage of pupils achieving the expected Level 2 or higher Level 3 to be very high in comparison with the national average and the average for similar schools. These standards are similar to the highest five per cent of schools nationally. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 is well above the national average and the average for similar schools. Compared with the previous inspection, standards have risen from being in line with the national average to very high.

118. Inspection evidence shows that by the end of Key Stage 1, standards achieved in lessons and in other work around the school are well above those expected for the pupils' age. Pupils talk confidently about their work and are keen to show what they understand and can do. A particular strength of pupils' work is their experimental and investigative skills that are strengthened through very well planned practical lessons with clear learning objectives.

119. By age seven, pupils know and understand that we need food, water and air to survive. They also know that we need to eat a balanced diet to stay healthy and may need to take medication. For example, in Year 2 pupils were learning that we need exercise to keep our heart healthy. The lesson was enhanced by an excellent plan of activities. Pupils checked their partner's heart by using a stethoscope and as a link with early scientists, a cardboard tube was used to recreate an early stethoscope. The first activity was a timed jog around the playground and then a test to see what changes there were to the heartbeat. The second activity was another jog and this time to test breathing after they had predicted what they thought would happen. A chart on the board was completed after a series of exercises, with a class decision whether the arms, legs, or whole body benefited from each type of exercise. The reception pupils were working on the topic of food, recording 'food we eat every day' and 'food we eat on some days', including those foods that are their favourite. There was an excellent interactive display with smelling pots. Pupils had to draw what they could smell in each pot. Year 1 classes were working on changing materials and had already looked at which materials could be manipulated by bending and stretching. In this lesson they were learning that by adding water to flour and salt makes a different material. They worked with the materials in a plastic bag and had to make simple observations and comparisons. They had to describe the materials and make a decision on what they were. When coloured water was added they squeezed and squashed the mixture and a good example was observed of "awe and wonder" when they realised they had made

playdough. For the final part of the lesson they created their own models which were left to dry. This link with art highlights the good cross curricular links that are made with subjects such as literacy, mathematics and design and technology. These links reinforce pupils' knowledge and understanding, thus enriching their learning.

120. Pupils of all abilities make very good progress in their lessons. However, as much of the work is whole class based, an area of improvement is the provision of extension work for higher attaining pupils. Pupils are encouraged to learn to use science vocabulary, which they do with confidence. Pupils enjoy working in groups and value each other's contributions.

121. Pupils' attitudes are excellent. They concentrate well and show interest and enthusiasm in their work, especially in practical lessons. They have very good relationships with their teacher and value each other's work.

122. The quality of teaching is excellent. A strength in teaching is the specialist science teacher who teaches all classes from reception to Year 2. Each class teacher remains in the lesson to act as support in the activities, an excellent example of teamwork. The high quality teaching is seen in the specialist knowledge of the subject, high expectations, excellent management of pupils, very good use of questioning to challenge and encourage all pupils. The lessons were very well delivered at a brisk pace, with good timing and very good use of humour. Assessments are undertaken during topics as well as at the end. The specialist teacher and class teacher know pupils well and the very good relationships enhance the quality of teaching and learning.

123. The subject manager provides excellent leadership for the subject. There is an appropriate policy and the subject is very well organised throughout the school. Planning is excellent and closely aligned to a published scheme. Resources are excellent and used most effectively. Although the school has a small wildlife area it does not have a pond. However, there are plans to visit a local open area with a pond. Other plans include having plants growing in planters within the school environment.

## **ART**

124. Pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress in art. By the time they leave the school, the quality of their art is at a level expected for pupils of this age. This quality has been maintained since the last inspection.

125. Pupils make use of opportunities to record their experiences, observations and imaginative thoughts in an artistic way. They learn the skills and techniques needed for simple sewing, printing and weaving work. One Year 1 class were weaving with coloured paper and other materials. The next morning their completed patterns were displayed in the hall for their class assembly. In both year groups, pupils gain suitable experience of close observational work and use a wide range of drawing media, including pencil, pastels, and chalk. For example, in a Year 2 class, pupils were sketching a bowl of fruit using coloured chalks on black paper. Others were printing with a cross section of real fruit. In the reception classes, pupils had completed observational drawings of a kiwi fruit. Good examples in the use of information technology and computer art was seen in Year 2, with their coloured designs of Joseph's coat. Pupils use art to support their work in other subjects, as seen in the mathematical displays throughout the school corridors. For example, in number work a

display hand prints is used for counting in fives and family footprints to describe the longest, shortest and widest feet.

126. Pupils' attitudes to art are good. They express an enjoyment and satisfaction in what they do and look forward to their lessons. Their work is well presented, as indicated by the various displays around the school.

127. Teaching is, overall, satisfactory. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils. Classroom assistants have talents in art and these are used effectively in the lessons. Cross-curricular links are usefully included in the planning of other subjects. Religious education, science and history are often used as a stimulus for art and illustration and is used to enhance work across the curriculum. There is a scheme of work but this is still in draft form with the planning incorporated within topic work. The subject manager provides sound leadership and gathers samples of work, monitors the resources and development of skills and techniques throughout the school. The subject manager is investigating a new published scheme of work, with the intention of replacing the present scheme of work. There are very good quality art resources and works of famous artists are displayed throughout the school. However, pupils knowledge and understanding of the style and techniques of famous artists and their use in their own art work is undeveloped.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

128. Pupils of all abilities make good progress in design and technology. By the time they leave the school the quality of their designing and making is above the level expected for their age. Standards have improved since the last inspection.

129. Evidence was gained by looking at completed work around the school and looking at photographs. Pupils are given opportunities to work with flexible and rigid materials for their constructions. For example, in Year 2, pupils had drawn a sketch design and added a written evaluation of how they made their crane. They were able to use a range of tools to cut wood, drill holes and for joining the material. The most effective designing and making was seen where classes were using a newly published scheme of work. Coloured computer designs of Joseph's coat were designed by pupils. Pupils chose the material for their design, cutting and stitching to make their coloured coat. In Year 1, pupils were making moving pictures. For example, ships moving through waves and aircraft flying through the sky. The reception pupils had made paper chains and tested which was the best way to join paper out of a range of joining materials. Hanging in the corridor, outside the reception classes, were examples of mobiles. There is a strong link between art and design and technology through the school with skills and techniques often crossing over into each curriculum area.

130. Overall, pupils enjoy design and technology and are keen to talk about their own ideas and show their finished work. The subject manager who also co-ordinates science attends design and technology subject manager meetings and arranges courses for staff to attend. There is a policy for design and technology and topics from a published scheme of work support the subject. Resources are of high quality and classes are equipped with a tool board. In the corridor outside Year 2 there is a well stocked technology unit and a mobile cooker.

131. It was not possible to observe any lessons and therefore no judgement can be given on the quality of teaching. However, a judgement on pupils' learning was made after a scrutiny of work, looking at finished products, photographs of previous topics and talking to teachers and pupils.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

132. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils achieve standards well above those expected for their age. In Year 2 pupils use plans, maps and globes and interpret them appropriately. Pupils use a range of geographical vocabulary and terminology competently. They locate major cities on a map of England and the majority of pupils know the four constituent countries which make up the United Kingdom.

133. Pupils describe physical features of other countries such as famous American landmarks arising from their study of the travels of Barnaby Bear. Parents are involved in the sharing of information relating to the study of Ghana in Africa and this successfully links with the acquisition of literacy skills based on matching the initial letters to countries such as 'A' to Africa. Scrutiny of Year 2 pupils' work indicates pupils are acquiring a good range of enquiry skills and an ability to compare and contrast geographical features in town and village locations. Pupils in reception were able to undertake a challenging sorting exercise based on countries located on a map of the world. Teachers make very good use of stories told in literacy sessions to develop pupils' understanding of how climate influences the type of fruit that can be grown in a country. For example, pupils know that pineapples need a great deal of sun and grow well in African countries.

134. Pupils shows good map work skills through drawing their own village and town with appropriate features and they make very good use of information technology in designing and planning a route. This successfully builds on fieldwork undertaken in the school and in the locality. Pupils demonstrate a good understanding of the reasons for the existence of features in specific locations such as factories and schools. Their skills in identifying similarities and differences are developing well. They have a very good appreciation of environmental issues associated with a town, such as large population, traffic and noise levels and the facilities appreciated by the resident population. They can successfully identify and explain symbols and geographical features they represent. For example they can identify roads, trees, hills, churches and other buildings and successfully incorporate these on a map of their own.

135. Pupils have a very good attitude to geography. They listen well, respond to questions, offer suggestions and answer with confidence. They settle easily to written tasks and co-operate very well on collaborative activities. They work at a good pace producing results of a high standard.

136. Geography is taught well and teachers' knowledge of the subject is good. Pupils learn very well. The good quality scheme of work helps ensure that the teaching of appropriate skills and knowledge is systematic. Lessons are planned to take account of the range of ability within the class and relevant tasks are set to meet the needs of all. Speaking and listening skills are used effectively, especially at the end of a lesson, when pupils explain their findings. The work pupils produce is well presented and their learning is directed by annotation and supportive marking.

137. Management of the subject is very good and the monitoring of planning is effectively carried out by the subject manager who offers advice and support to colleagues. There is a very good system for monitoring pupils' work to ensure that pupils in the same year group complete similar work. However, there has been little monitoring of the teaching of geography.

138. The school is extremely well resourced, although further copies of maps and plans would allow for greater pupil enquiry. Information technology is used well to support the teaching of directions by engaging the pupils in a treasure hunt. Colourful and attractive displays of pupils' work provide geographical information and raise pupils' awareness of the position of countries on a world map.

139. Since the last inspection the school has made very good improvement. A good scheme of work is in place, learning objectives are more clearly identified and professional development opportunities have been utilised to improve teachers' subject knowledge.

## **HISTORY**

140. Only one lesson was observed during inspection. However, evidence gathered from the scrutiny of pupils' work, displays of a historical nature, teachers' planning and records of assessment and discussions with pupils, indicates that pupils achieve standards above those expected for their age.

141. History is studied through topic work which is often cross curricular. At the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of historical events, have developed a good sense of chronology and can sequence simple events from their lifetime. They gain a good understanding of change through studying how their bodies have changed since their birth. Their developing knowledge of how people lived and what they did in times gone by is enhanced through the careful study of jelly moulds, wash boards and other artefacts from homes of the past.

142. Overall, pupils of all attainment levels make very good progress in their learning. They have a good awareness of the past and are able to compare the past and the present, through looking at Victorian classrooms and those of the present day.

143. Pupils speak enthusiastically about their history topics. They demonstrate a good sense of enquiry and through careful study of the Saints and the life of the church they are gaining a good understanding of the lives and importance of people from the past. The pupils are well aware of historical events such as the Gunpowder Plot.

144. Teachers organise the groups well, paying particular attention to setting appropriate tasks for those with special needs and higher attaining pupils. Pupils respond well when their teacher poses interesting questions and introduces activities which encourages them to make suggestions about what a toy from years ago was used for and by whom.

145. The quality of teaching is very good. Teaching has been aided by the adoption of national guidelines with careful selection of elements to meet the needs of pupils and to ensure consistency in developing skills and knowledge. Planning is of good quality and the knowledge, understanding and enthusiasm of the teachers aids learning. Intervention at appropriate moments moves pupils' learning forward well. Good advice is being given to pupils through marking and oral comments on how they might further improve their work. Assessment opportunities are identified, planned for and examples of levelled work with good annotations are maintained.

146. The last report stated that standards in history were satisfactory to good and this level has been improved upon. The school has developed a good scheme of work, learning objectives are more clearly identified and professional development opportunities have been utilised to improve teachers' subject knowledge. The subject manager provides very good leadership and good quality guidance on teaching methods. The school is building up



a very good range of quality resources. Whilst regular reviews of pupils' work takes place there is little evidence to suggest that regular monitoring of teaching is taking place.

147. The environment in which learning takes place is attractive and colourful. Very good use continues to be made of display on corridors and in classrooms to stimulate the pupils and further their historical understanding.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

148. In the last inspection of 1996, standards were judged to be in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1; this remains the case. The last inspection report noted that the machines were old. These have now been replaced by more modern machines with a very good range of suitable software to support nearly all subject areas.

149. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils use a range of software programs with confidence. They have good mouse control skills and are confident with the use of several tool bar options such as 'save' and 'print'. Year 2 pupils make good use of a geography program to find out about life in various continents, showing good understanding of how the program works; for example, they know move 'forwards' or 'backwards' in the program to retrieve or compare information. Year 1 pupils show a suitable understanding of how to program their 'pixie' to move in set directions. Higher attaining pupils program in a sequence of commands to make the 'pixie' complete a complex course through their 'farmyard'. Year 1 pupils use a geography program very well to draw town maps for their geography topic. Reception class pupils show good mouse control when they use a program to dress a teddy. They also enter data, such as the class's favourite fruit, into a prepared data file and present this data using a graph. Nearly all can interpret the information shown in the graph to answer questions such as, 'Which is the favourite?'. Very good use is made of concept key boards to write and publish books about various topic themes. All classes have 'listening centres' where pupils make very good use of tape recorders and earphones to listen to stories.

150. Pupils make very good progress in their learning when they are actually using information technology equipment but overall, progress is satisfactory. The main reasons for this are the very good scheme of work which guides teachers' planning so that skills are taught systematically and cumulatively. Currently the school has one computer in each classroom and this restricts the opportunities pupils have to practise their skills.

151. Pupils of all ages have very good attitudes towards information technology. They are confident and enjoy exploring the possibilities of the various programs they use. They persevere with tasks set them and work together co-operatively. They treat equipment with respect.

152. Overall, teaching is very good. Teachers teach whole class lessons when they introduce a new software program. They teach just the right amount of 'new' skills to be learned, so that pupils can remember and apply them when it is their turn to use the computer. Teachers have worked hard to increase their knowledge of the newer software programs so that can help pupils rectify their mistakes quickly. Planning is good and ensures progression in pupils' learning as they move through the school. Assessment is very good and closely related to the scheme of work.

153. The subject manager provides excellent leadership and knowledgeable support for her colleagues. She monitors planning throughout the school and monitors teaching informally when she helps in classrooms. Resources for the subject are adequate but the ratio of computers to pupils is lower than in most schools.

## **MUSIC**

154. Pupils make satisfactory progress in music in the key stage. By the time they leave the school the quality of their knowledge and skills development is at a level expected for pupils of this age. This quality is at a level below that achieved at the last inspection.

155. It was not possible to hear the whole school singing. However, an excellent Year 1 class assembly was seen during the week of the inspection. The overall performance was outstanding. Pupils' singing was very well pitched and in tune with an exceptionally warm vocal tone from such young children. Their diction was also very good with all words to the songs clearly heard. The whole school and the many parents attending the assembly thoroughly enjoyed their performance. Music features strongly in assemblies and pupils have many opportunities for listening and appraising music throughout their school day. However, opportunities for composing their own music are not well developed. Pupils learn the recorder and play tuned and untuned percussion in their lessons. They enjoy action songs and in the lessons observed pupils' sense of rhythm and timing is good.

156. Pupils' attitudes to learning are generally very good and the overall behaviour is good. However, in lessons where pupils sit too long and not enough opportunities are given for them to join in playing musical instruments, understandably, they become bored, leading to a subsequent deterioration in behaviour. Community links are strong with pupils performing in an Area Music Festival each year. They also sing to patients in hospital and to elderly people at day centre at Christmas.

157. The school has recently appointed a new music specialist who teaches music to each of the classes. At the recent Christmas Nativity the subject manager rehearsed the music composed by herself. This performance was praised by the headteacher for its musical originality. Parents comment favourably on the high standards of musical productions. Pupils are given opportunities to play tuned and untuned percussion as well as the groups of pupils who are learning the recorder. However, there are missed opportunities for pupils to use these instruments to create their own musical compositions. At the present time the role of the new music subject manager is under-developed in terms of teaching music to young pupils in a manner that harnesses their enthusiasm and desire to be involved. Year 2 classes have two music lessons per week, the other classes have one lesson. All Year 1 and Year 2 pupils join together for a weekly hymn practice, taken by the headteacher.

158. In the sample of lessons seen the quality of teaching was judged to be sound overall. However, teaching ranged from unsatisfactory to good with some examples of excellence when music was taught by class teachers. The quality of teaching is not monitored. The school has a suitable policy for music and there is a good scheme of work that meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Music resources are satisfactory and are stored in the school hall.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

159. At the end of Key Stage 1, standards of work seen in physical education are well above that expected for the pupils' age. The development and use of appropriate schemes of work and the provision of professional development opportunities for the teaching staff is an improvement on the previous inspection report.

160. Examples of very good teaching were seen and progress in the lessons was very good. Teachers set very high expectations for pupils' performance and make very good use of pupils' performances to raise teaching points for all to benefit from and improve. For pupils with special educational needs, learning is also very good. Pupils have regular experiences of dance, gymnastics, movement, and games and there is the opportunity for pupils to regularly enjoy climbing and traversing playground equipment during break and lunchtime periods.

161. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have appropriate co-ordination skills and an awareness of space. They follow teachers' instructions extremely well, move with control and they show very good spatial awareness. Pupils travel across the floor and balance using different parts of their body. They move around the well equipped hall with confidence and learn to complete a circle roll skilfully in a short space of time. They change direction with ease and plan and perform simple sequences at floor and apparatus level.

162. Pupils are well aware of the effects of movement and exercise on their bodies and this successfully links with work on health through science lessons. From a very early age pupils develop good routines in the subject. They enter and leave the hall quietly, change appropriately for lessons and show an appreciation of the performance of others. Through clear instruction pupils are taught to be aware of the safety aspects of physical education.

163. The attitudes and behaviour of the pupils are very good in all the lessons and they sustain energetic activity. Pupils enjoy the subject and are encouraged to do so by very good teaching and high levels of motivation. The careful selection of different pupils to demonstrate good performance contributes to their personal development

164. Overall, teaching is very good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and lessons are planned to a consistent structure offering good pace and challenge. Lessons have suitable warm up activities, a key teaching input, time to practise skills and a cooling down time. Good plenary sessions, giving an outline of forthcoming activities, enthuse and inspire pupils. In lessons seen, the teachers' enthusiasm for the subject transmits positive encouragement to the pupils. Good demonstrations of the correct techniques help pupils to develop key skills well and give them the confidence to make further progress. Teachers highlight good presentation, sensitively intervene to improve the performance of individuals and groups and have high expectations to which the pupils respond.

165. There is no subject manager for physical education and little monitoring of teaching. The schemes of work give sufficient guidance to teachers in planning the development of skills. Resources for the subject are very good.