

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **PALFREY INFANT SCHOOL**

Walsall, West Midlands

LEA area: Walsall

Unique reference number: 104161

Headteacher: Mrs. Susan Calvert

Reporting inspector: Mr. Brian Aldridge  
17454

Dates of inspection: 15 – 18 May 2000

Inspection number: 190038

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Bescot Street Walsall West Midlands
Postcode:	WS1 4HY
Telephone number:	01922 720713
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr. B. Mavi
Date of previous inspection:	28 <sup>th</sup> October 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Brian Aldridge	Registered inspector	Art	What sort of school is it?
		Music	The school's results and achievements
			How well are pupils taught?
			How well is the school led and managed?
Patricia Willman	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
			How well does the school care for its pupils?
Bernice Magson	Team inspector	English	
		History	
		Religious education	
Janet McPhee	Team inspector	Areas of learning for children under five	
		Equal opportunities	
		English as an additional language	
David White	Team inspector	Special educational needs	
		Mathematics	
		Design and technology	
		Physical education	
John Iles	Team inspector	Science	How good are the curricular and other opportunities?
		Information technology	
		Geography	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Palfrey Infant School provides part-time nursery education for 91 children, full-time reception class education for 79 children and education at Key Stage 1 for 127 infants between five and seven years old. There are four nursery groups in the morning and three in the afternoon and nine classes. Thirty-seven per cent of the pupils have an identified special educational need and 38 per cent have a known entitlement to free school meals, although many families choose not to take up this provision. Both figures are above average. The very large majority of the families the school serves are originally from the Indian sub-continent. Over 90 per cent of the children enter school knowing or using very little English and consequently, of the 315 children on the school roll, the large majority learns English as an additional language. Overall, attainment on entry to statutory education is very low.

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

This is a very effective school. As the large majority children enter the school with little or no English and are, by the time they leave the school able to read at levels just below the national average and to write to standards in line with the national average, they make very good progress. The quality of teaching is a very important part of the provision which encourages these very good rates of progress. The teaching and support staff are dedicated to improving the attainment of pupils. The excellent leadership of the headteacher ensures that teaching is constantly improving in order that attainment continues to rise. The school provides very good value for money.

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

- Pupils make good progress in reading, mathematics and science and very good progress in writing and numeracy skills.
- The quality of teaching is very good.
- The leadership and management skills of the headteacher are excellent and all members of staff with management responsibilities work extremely hard and successfully.
- Pupils have very positive attitudes to school.
- The curriculum and assessment arrangements are very good
- Special educational needs provision and inclusion arrangements are very good.
- The school takes very good care of pupils.
- The quality of work with parents is very good.

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

- Although children make satisfactory progress in the nursery, planning and organisation could be stronger.
- Assemblies have spiritual elements but do not contain an act of collective worship.

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

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

The school has made very good progress since the last inspection in October 1996. Standards of attainment have risen rapidly in English and moderately in mathematics and science. Teaching has improved since the last inspection when it was judged that about one quarter of the lessons observed had not been taught satisfactorily. Now the quality of teaching is very good in about one quarter of the lessons and there were no observations of unsatisfactory teaching. There are very good quality systems to ensure that pupils' progress is tracked and that challenging targets are set and surpassed as the curriculum and teaching arrangements are altered to take account of pupils' needs. The four key issues that were identified during the last inspection have been addressed with rigour and success.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by seven year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
Reading	E	E	E	C
Writing	E	E	D	B
Mathematics	E	E*	E	E

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The school has made good progress in addressing the language needs of pupils. In reading and particularly in writing the school provides pupils with a rich curriculum and very effective teaching methods so that attainment in this area of their work is not much below the national average. In mathematics the rate of progress has been slower; in the current Year 2 attainment is below average. When compared to schools with similar numbers of pupils receiving free school meals, attainment in reading is average and in writing is above average; the large majority of schools with which Palfrey is compared have relatively few pupils with English as an additional language. Pupils achieve well in the under-fives and very well in Years 1 and 2. Problem solving in mathematics is not as good as other aspects of the subject. Year on year the school continues to meet its challenging targets by using very good assessment data to predict exactly what levels pupils should be achieving and working hard to meet these self-imposed goals. The school is adding a great deal to pupils' lives by giving them confidence in their own abilities.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very positive attitudes to school
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour around the school is good.
Personal development and relationships	Very good.
Attendance	Below average.

The school has made great strides in improving the rate of attendance. However, some parents still do not recognise the importance of sending their children to school on a regular basis. There is a total absence of any kind of bullying or unkindness. The way that the school provides for pupils with disabilities is innovative and exemplary and pupils know and understand what it is to care for one another.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

The quality of teaching was very good in 24 per cent of the lessons observed. With almost 46 per cent of the lessons being taught well and 31 per cent satisfactorily this is a considerable improvement on the quality of teaching observed at the last inspection. The quality of teaching in English and mathematics is very good. The skills of literacy and numeracy are taught very well. Teachers have high expectations of pupils. They let their pupils understand what they have to do to learn effectively and they make their lessons fun. They have used the strengths of the literacy and numeracy sessions and moved them to other subjects. The use of homework in this school is exemplary and fulfils a number of very important purposes. The needs of all pupils are met very well and higher attaining pupils and those with special educational needs have extremely good teaching as teachers plan many different levels of work.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Very good.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall with provision for moral, social and cultural development being very good. The provision for spiritual development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very well.

The school's work with parents is very good. The staff have run many imaginative and successful workshops and developed practices that enable it to justifiably claim that the school is serving the needs of its local community very effectively. The school offers the same very high quality of education to all pupils, whatever their need.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The work of the headteacher is excellent and that of the deputy headteacher very good. The senior team and the governing body successfully lend very helpful support.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Excellent
The strategic use of resources	Very good.

Staffing and support staff are very good, accommodation is satisfactory and learning resources are good. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and other managers have a very clear view about how attainment should be raised whilst maintaining a broad curriculum which meets the needs of all pupils. The use of assessment data as a management tool is excellent and leads to the school working in a very focussed way to raise attainment. The school has taken to the principles of best value very well and ensures that the very best use is made of financial resources.

## 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>• Parents said that they and their children are proud of the school.</li> <li>• Children make good progress.</li> <li>• Parents felt happy about approaching the school.</li> <li>• The school is well led.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A very few parents feel that children do not get the right work.</li> <li>• The school does not provide an interesting range of activities.</li> </ul>

The inspection team agrees with the parents' positive views. Pupils do receive interesting educational experiences and the way that teachers plan for the different needs of pupils is very good. Parents have every right to feel proud of their school.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. A very high proportion of the children enter the reception year knowing or speaking very little English and attainment generally at this age is very low. Inspectors found that by the time they leave the school at the age of seven pupils attain standards in speaking, listening and reading that are below the national average. Attainment in writing, number and science is in line with the national average. In the national tests held in 1999 in comparison with all schools, pupils gained standards which were well below average in reading and mathematics and below average in writing. However, in comparison with schools with similar numbers of pupils who receive free school meals, and this includes all those schools in which most pupils speak English as their home language, standards in mathematics remain well below average but in reading are average and in writing are above average. Given pupils' backgrounds, the number of pupils for whom English is a second language and the number of pupils with special educational needs, achievement in the under-fives is good and in Years 1 and 2 is very good.
2. The school sets itself very demanding targets and all teachers and support staff use these targets as a measure of success. Over the past four years the rate of improvement has been impressive. Nationally attainment has risen on average very slightly in reading, writing and mathematics over the past five years. In this school the proportion of pupils achieving the national average has doubled in reading and in writing is now almost four times higher than it was five years ago. The headteacher, senior managers and teachers use these improving standards to indicate what levels each child should reach and then add a significant degree of challenge in order to stretch pupils as far as possible. This is done in an atmosphere of great care and attention and pupils thrive on their work and have great fun learning. There are no differences between the rates of progress that boys and girls make. Pupils who learn English as a second language and those with special educational needs make very good progress in relation to their prior attainment in developing their skills in reading, writing and mathematics. The school has very good procedures for the early identification of pupils with learning difficulties and plans very effective support for them. The co-ordinator and teachers, together with outside agencies where appropriate, devise educational plans that have appropriate and clear targets that address the pupils' difficulties effectively.
3. Children under five years of age attain standards well below average. In the nursery children 'chat' to their nursery nurses, find their name cards and talk about the weather. They become acquainted with the characters from their reading schemes and although the books in the nursery are not always set out, children choose books and happily leaf through the pages. They 'write' and nursery nurses encourage them to write shopping lists. In the mathematics area of learning children count, find numbers on a number line and name common shapes. They make good progress in their social development and are happy and confident. They develop a very good knowledge of the nursery routines and play independently. In their physical development children learn to control their arms and legs and begin to acquire the skills of cutting and sticking, colouring and using other mark-making tools. In their creative work children roll and shape dough, sing nursery rhymes and other singing games and learn to recognise musical instruments from the sounds they make. Discussions are held so that children talk about where they live and make houses from re-cycled materials. Children use a keyboard and control a mouse effectively.
4. In the reception classes language and literacy learning is very good. Teachers use good questioning techniques to encourage children to talk about their ideas and although many do not know the special subject vocabulary they are still able to talk about the work they are doing. Children use letter sounds to help them read. Children write stories, factual accounts and poetry.

They use computers to word process their work. Most children form letters correctly, hold their pencils well and write their names independently. Higher attaining pupils write in sentences and use full stops. Higher attaining children add and subtract numbers to 10 and understand ideas such as more than, less than, longer and shorter. They learn the language of capacity and can sort objects according to given and their own criteria. In the reception classes children's social development is marked by very good relationships between children and adults and a growing confidence in their own skills and abilities. Even very young children are responsible for tidying their work areas and the ends of sessions are marked by a calm and efficient period of clearing workspaces and storing equipment. Children role-play moving house, pack cases and after travelling to their new houses, cook a meal. After looking carefully at a Paul Klee print children completed their own designs using wood blocks, computers and models. Children understand the differences of building materials, construct models and use information and communications technology effectively.

5. By the time they are seven pupils attain standards below average in speaking, listening and reading. Standards in writing are average. In mathematics average standards are attained in number and data handling. Standards in shape, space, measures and using and applying mathematics are below average. Work seen in science, art, design and technology, information and communications technology, music, geography, history and physical education is average. Standards in religious education meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus.
6. As the school has good strategies for teaching pupils English as well as literacy skills, pupils learn how to express their thoughts in a variety of situations. Pupils use their speaking and listening skills to good effect during discussions and higher attaining pupils begin to use imagery when talking. Daily reading practice, regular reading homework and the shared reading of the literacy hour helps pupils to learn letter sounds, words and go on to read stories with fluent skills. Progress in writing is very good throughout the school. From learning to spell simple words to the very good quality stories written in Year 2, teachers cleverly build on the personal interests of pupils and use nursery rhymes to encourage pupils to think beyond the story's end – what did happen to Humpty after the fall?
7. Attainment is below average in mathematics although there are very strong indications that the school's results will improve dramatically over the levels achieved last year. In their mathematics work pupils discuss their work using mathematical vocabulary and use their calculations to tell stories. Using and applying their mathematical knowledge is not practised enough. However, in number work pupils calculate mentally and give very good accounts of how they came to their answers. Teachers carefully question pupils and listen attentively to answers which in turn gives pupils confidence when tackling number problems. Most pupils describe two-dimensional shapes and their properties and measure in centimetres. They use their mathematical knowledge well in science and geography. By the time they are seven pupils know that animals and plants need nutrition and water. Pupils understand that materials have a range of properties and that some changes are reversible. In this subject much of the work is based on investigation. Attainment in information and communications technology has improved since the last inspection and is now average. Pupils are acquainted with input devices such as keyboards, the mouse, concept keyboard and small robots. They save their work and drag icons to clean up their files. All of the strands of the subject are now taught, including the use of the Internet as a research and communications tool. In religious education Year 2 pupils know that people hold different beliefs and worship in different ways. They have studied buildings from a range of faiths and the symbols associated with these faiths.
8. In the other subjects of the curriculum standards in art are average with pupils producing sound quality work in a range of media including drawing, painting, print and collage. In design and technology pupils understand the process they undertake to design, make and evaluate their

models. They begin to see how mechanical processes can be incorporated into their work. By the end of Year 2 pupils name the countries which make up the United Kingdom and develop the practical skills of research and enquiry by studying their locality. These links with the local environment also help pupils develop a sense of history and how their locale has changed over time. A study of a nearby shopping park developed into a study of local Roman names and again the Internet was used to research allotments. Pupils sing well in class music lessons and in larger gatherings. They understand that different cultures have different styles of music and maintain a pulse and accompany themselves on untuned percussion instruments. Physical co-ordination is developed as ball games, swimming and gymnastics. Pupils make good progress in swimming and games and develop confidence and good techniques.

9. The school adds a great deal to the attainment and achievements of each individual child. Careful preparation of the curriculum, teaching methods and the school's organisation ensures that each pupil's progress is tracked and promoted as quickly as possible. The use of 'retrieval groups' where pupils make up lost time, the understanding of the capabilities of pupils gained from a thorough assessment of attainment and the enthusiasm and joy in learning communicated by staff all helps pupils to have fun and make very good rates of progress whatever their learning needs. High attainers are given difficult tasks which make challenging demands, and pupils with special educational needs are similarly challenged to do their best whilst teachers ensure that pupils' self-esteem is always increased.

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

10. Pupils' attitudes to school, their personal development and the relationships they have with each other and with their teachers are very good. Many of the older pupils are keen to talk about their school and can express their opinions about aspects of school life that they particularly enjoy. Their behaviour both in the classrooms, in assemblies and around the school is good. Pupils carry out their responsibilities sensibly and many show kind and caring attitudes towards their friends. These positive features impact very well on pupils' learning and attainment. The quality of these aspects of pupils' development has improved since the last inspection, a view that is strongly supported by parents. During their time in school most pupils develop an awareness of the purpose and value of education and of their place within the school community.
11. The children who are under five in the nursery and reception classes enjoy their time at school and have very good relationships with their teachers and with other adults who work with them. Most arrive at school in good time and settle happily into the day. The children understand the routines of the classroom and what behaviour is expected of them in terms of behaviour.
12. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who learn English as an additional language, take part in all aspects of school life with enthusiasm and interest. The majority of parents who returned the Ofsted questionnaire agree that their children like school and this was confirmed by talking to the pupils. They respond with interest and enthusiasm to their lessons, working hard and becoming involved in what they are learning. Throughout the school pupils' response to the structure and challenge of the literacy and numeracy sessions is very positive and this has a significant impact on the progress they make these subjects. In a numeracy lesson in Year 2, for example, when pupils were practising counting in pairs to 20, they listened carefully to the teacher and were very keen to answer the questions. Pupils find some of their lessons exciting. This was exemplified in the reaction of Year 1 pupils when learning about washdays in Edwardian and Victorian times when they listened intently, watched the demonstrations eagerly and were full of enthusiasm to participate.

13. All pupils behave well in school and in the playground. They respond positively to the school's high expectations of their behaviour and have a clear understanding of what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviour within the school community. All parents who completed the questionnaire consider that behaviour in the school is good. They are motivated well by praise, trying hard to earn certificates for good work and behaviour. Pupils move about the school purposefully and sensibly. There is no evidence of any bullying or harassment and there have been no exclusions.
14. The pupils' personal development and the relationships they have with each other and with their teachers are very good. This makes a significant contribution to the calm and happy atmosphere in the school. They listen carefully to each other and take differing viewpoints into account in their discussions. In a Year 2 religious education lesson about Islamic baptism customs, pupils listened intently to their teacher and to each other and were fascinated by what they were learning. Because of a lack of fluency in English, many of the younger pupils lack confidence in discussion with adults, but they smile readily and hold doors open. They treat each other with respect and are careful with resources. They take care of each other, showing concern whenever anyone is upset and they go out of their way to help their less able friends. They carry out their duties as classroom helpers sensibly and they are proud when their good work is rewarded by recognition in assembly.
15. Attendance at the school is unsatisfactory. Although there has been a very significant improvement in attendance this year, it is still below the national average. Much of the absence is due to pupils taking extended holidays to the Indian sub-continent. There is also a significant number of parents who are not rigorous about bringing their children to school every day and on time. Registration is quick and efficient and lessons start promptly.

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

16. The quality of teaching is very good throughout the school and, without exception, teaching in each year group is of a high quality. In 24 per cent of the lessons observed teaching is very good, it is good in 46 percent and satisfactory in 31 per cent. The quality of teaching has improved considerably since the last inspection when it was judged to be unsatisfactory in one quarter of all lessons. There were no observations of unsatisfactory teaching during this inspection. The key issues identified in the last inspection of encouraged the school to improve teachers' subject knowledge and skills in the foundation subjects, particularly in information technology. Teachers' knowledge across the curriculum and in all stages is now good.
17. This section of the report is mainly concerned with the quality of teaching and how pupils respond to their teachers. However, it is impossible to account for the high quality of the teaching without referring to how well the headteacher leads the improvement in teaching and how the curriculum is managed to provide good learning opportunities. Teachers successfully take on the dual tasks of teaching and assuring pupils learn what is, to most of them, a foreign language. The co-ordinated efforts of working with parents and ensuring that pupils are well-cared for and that the school is well resourced enable teachers to teach effectively in a supportive environment and to succeed so well in their tasks
18. The monitoring of the headteacher and subject co-ordinators has brought about a uniform approach to teaching and in all age groups teachers share many high quality skills, techniques and methods:
  - the teaching of basic skills is very good;
  - plans are very effective;

- teachers have very high expectations of children and pupils;
  - a very good range of teaching methods is used;
  - teachers use time, support staff and resources to very good effect, and
  - the homework that is set is excellent.
19. A key aspect of teachers' skills is the use made of assessment results. Individual pupils are so well known to teachers and support staff, that they plan work which is very carefully tailored to pupils' needs. Class teachers, teachers of pupils who have English as a second language, learning support assistants, bi-lingual assistants and every available adult work together with small groups of pupils formed on the basis of assessment results. These groups change according to the needs of pupils. Different levels of work are set for groups and classes and for such activities as group reading. Pupils have just the right challenge in their work and the correct amount of work to make sure that they work hard, and teachers are at pains to make connections between subjects. For example, in a reception literacy lesson children showed a wide variety of language and special educational needs, yet very good consideration of these needs by the class teacher as she used a story sack to present characters to children ensured that all of them succeeded. As a result very good behaviour and high levels of concentration ensued. This is a very successful strategy used in all classes and leads to pupils learning at the optimum rate. No time is wasted and indeed when sets are used in Year 2 mathematics lessons, a study of how long pupils take to move from room to room is undertaken just to ensure that there are no better ways of organising lessons.
20. The teaching of basic skills is managed very well. It develops in pupils a rising self-esteem, which in turn helps pupils to want to learn more. The headteacher and the school staff generally make no exceptions to the fact that children must learn English and learn how to read and write competently to be able to take full advantage of the National Curriculum. Therefore teachers take great pains to teach the skills of speaking, listening, reading, writing and number. As pupils gain success they move on to more complex work, continually challenged to learn more and more. In a mathematics lesson in Year 1 pupils were presented with lots of challenges and as they finished one piece of work they were quickly moved on to the next task. As planning is very good in all sections of the school the lesson moved quickly and effectively to the next stage of learning. The use of information and communications technology in lessons is well managed and in a science lesson in Year 2 after pupils had conducted their experiments, results were recorded on a computer data base using the spell checker to ensure correctness.
21. Generally classes and groups are organised very well. The setting arrangements in mathematics in Year 2 work very well and results are likely to improve dramatically this year. The use of 'retrieval groups', reading groups and other forms of arrangements make a significant impact on pupils' rates of progress. Classes are neat and tidy, and although the school is open plan, teachers manage pupils' behaviour well and consequently there is very little disturbance to the normal well-oiled running of the school. Organisation in the nursery is not as well managed as in the other parts of the school. At times resources are not displayed to be readily available to children and the distinct learning areas are not as identifiable as they should be.
22. A very good range of methods is used to ensure that all pupils are included in the curriculum. For example, to support a pupil with a visual impairment, teachers have produced a large board and cut characters and objects for each of the storybooks used in the literacy hour. As the teacher reads the story, a teacher from the support service or a learning support assistant hands the tactile pictures to the child and thus ensures the pupil's full participation in the lesson. Careful liaison between the support teacher the class teacher further ensures that appropriate questions are asked of the pupil and understanding is checked. This and other examples are of very high quality and repeat the successful practical application of the school's inclusive education policy.

23. The work of those teachers who support pupils who learn English as a second language is carefully structured across classes. It is organised according to need and support is given in both heritage language and English. A key feature of support across the school are the 'retrieval' groups which are used to support children who may have been absent from school because of an extended holiday or illness, or are new entrants to the school. The children join a retrieval group every day for thirty minutes for as long as necessary. The group aims to 'catch-up' with specific work missed and in doing so give support and confidence to the children. This feature is highly successful in allowing those pupils who need extra support to catch up quickly by this extra focus on the key skills of English.
24. Teaching across all classes is characterised by partnership between language staff and class teachers. Lessons are planned to take advantage of a wide range of methods. This results in high levels of interest and pupils who are often excited about learning. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is enhanced by the very good quality of the pupils' individual education plans. The co-ordinator and class teacher draw up plans with the learning support assistants and the relevant outside agencies. The teachers and learning support assistants carry out the plans very effectively with regular monitoring and assessment to ensure that the plan is meeting the individual pupil's needs.
25. The homework set for pupils is judged to be excellent for a number of reasons:
- homework reinforces the work set in lessons and ensures that pupils continue to learn at home;
  - the work ensures that parents are informed about the important ideas pupils have learned during the day. For example, in a lesson about long and short, children in a reception class were given a picture of a train which could be folded to be either long or short and thus parents had the opportunity to learn about the concept and the English terms;
  - pupils are given target books which are taken home and which inform parents about the rates of progress made by their children.

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

26. The school provides a curriculum that is broad, balanced and relevant to the ages, needs and interests of the pupils. It includes all subjects of the National Curriculum and complies with all statutory requirements in all subjects with the exception of assembly which does not include an act of collective worship. In the previous report the key issues included raising standards in all subjects, particularly English, mathematics and science by more effectively matching planned activities to the learning objectives. Activities now precisely match learning objectives and this has contributed to raising standards across the curriculum, particularly in the core subjects and in geography and music. The lack of continuity and progression identified in the last inspection report has been dealt with very well by the staff. The curriculum is now very good overall.
27. Curriculum arrangements in the school are very good overall. However, this overall judgement does mask differences between the various phases. In the reception classes and Key Stage 1 the curriculum is very good and every effort is been made to make the curriculum relevant to the pupils. For example, in history pupils study famous people who have made important contributions in other parts of the world. In the nursery the curriculum plans are wide ranging and too broad and do not contain the small steps needed to guide staff in helping children make the same good or very good rates of progress they do in the other parts of the school. Some direct teaching chances are missed and children have too few opportunities to make decisions and choose how their learning experiences. In the remainder of the school the curriculum is fully inclusive with the school making outstanding arrangements for all pupils, including those who are disabled, to benefit from the full range of curricular activities. The agreed format for planning the

curriculum is of a very high standard. Teachers identify the knowledge and skills to be taught and this secures continuity and progression throughout the school, an issue that was identified as needing improvement during the last inspection. Tasks are well matched to pupils' stage of learning and assessment opportunities are clearly identified. The curriculum is rigorously monitored and evaluated by subject coordinators who keep the headteacher fully informed. The headteacher monitors weekly plans. Good use is made of national guidance to steer the curriculum.

28. The emphasis on implementing the national literacy strategy and dedicated daily mathematics lessons is effectively raising the standards of all pupils. The time allocation to literacy is above that of most schools and this helps to raise levels of attainment. Many pupils enter school with little or no knowledge of English and their ability to access their entitlement to a broad curriculum would be severely restricted if the school did not prioritise language development. Literacy and numeracy skills are well linked to other subjects and there are good opportunities for writing to be extended within the context of subjects such as geography and science. Speaking and listening skills are given a high priority and provide an important strategy for learning across the curriculum. Emphasis is placed upon teachers assessing pupils' knowledge through the appropriate use of subject vocabulary. Numeracy makes a good contribution to science, with pupils using bar charts to compare the height and weight of members of the class, and diagrams are used to sort different types of foods.
29. In information and communications technology the curriculum is supported by resources organised in the computer suite and this is enabling the school to develop the national requirements for information and communications technology. The computer suite provides frequent and regular direct teaching of basic skills and the consolidation of those skills within subject areas. Additionally, each class is equipped with a freestanding computer to provide further opportunities for learning. Teacher expertise has improved significantly through very well targeted in service training and this is making a positive impact on pupils' learning.
30. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health development is a strength of the school. Pupils are very well prepared to accept increasing responsibility for their own learning. Time is provided for pupils to discuss how they can contribute to improving society through consideration of how their attitudes, beliefs and actions affect the lives of other people. The governors of the school have selected not to teach sex education although children's questions in this area are answered in a sensitive manner. Appropriate opportunities are created to heighten pupils' awareness to the misuse of medicines and drugs.
31. The policy and procedures for the meeting the needs of pupils with special educational needs are of good quality and fully meets the requirements of the Code of Practice. A register of pupils with special educational needs is reviewed regularly to ensure that all pupils in need of additional support are identified. Support by class teachers, learning support assistants and specialist outside agencies is of a very high standard. Targets for pupils on the special educational needs register are identified in literacy and numeracy. Through ongoing assessment and discussions with pupils adjustments are made to targets to ensure learning opportunities remain focused and appropriate. The school has excellent procedures for the inclusion of all of its pupils and those with special educational needs receive the full curriculum offered by the school. They are provided with very good support through the deployment of additional staff. The relevant staff successfully achieves the requirements of the Code of Practice; the appropriate targets set in individual education plans are monitored and reviewed regularly and new objectives identified as appropriate.
32. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities and events. The school provides good quality music and sports clubs for pupils. Visitors to the school are welcomed and provide additional opportunities to develop pupils' learning experiences. Representatives from religious

organisations are regular and highly valued friends of the school. The school places high value on pupils visiting a range of interesting places to promote learning.

33. The school has been very successful in establishing good quality links with the community. Education Business Partnership links are benefiting the school. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have benefited from work placements and this in turn has benefited the school's curriculum and brought about better learning opportunities for pupils. School management and the pupils derived substantial benefit from these ventures. For example, pupils saw how computer technology is used to monitor customer transactions. Additional information technology resources were funded through the Education Business Partnership. The school has links with the College of Continuing Education, which runs a weekly parents' workshop in the information and communications technology suite. Parents are able to access the Internet through the library computer. Representatives from a national burger chain have visited the school to hear pupils read. This resulted in further contact with the chain to the financial benefit of the school. The school has satisfactory links with the adjacent junior school.
34. Parent workshops are another successful feature of working with parents. A crèche is provided and access to the library each afternoon encourages parents to enjoy books with their children. Parents are given every opportunity to be involved in their child's homework. Homework tasks are written in English and other languages and fixed on the outside class doors for the parents to read. The result of the high profile homework is given is that the return of completed work is very high. Parents make their own contribution to the homework with written comments where appropriate. Teachers acknowledge these.
35. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. Spiritual provision is planned sensitively for the wide variety of religions within the school. Short periods in which to reflect are provided for when the children are assembled together in the hall. A picture, symbol or thematic display provides a visual focus. Candles are lit and children are asked to take time to think about the chosen object. Pupils are given opportunities to talk about their feelings and those of others in circle and apple and milk time. They develop an awareness of different religious festivals from those celebrated in school.
36. Provision for moral development is very good. The school successfully promotes worthy moral values and creates an ethos of respect for one another. This respect is supported by the school's inclusion policy. Pupils work and play with some peers who have special needs. They see that everyone is treated with equal care, affection and attention. This has a very positive impact on the way they perceive the world and treat others. 'Good work' assemblies are a regular weekly feature of school life. Pupils from each class are chosen to show the rest of the school their 'good' work. This does not necessarily have to be of an academic nature. Pupils are chosen for reasons such as helping others in the class, thus providing further examples of caring for each other. Respect for the environment is dealt with by such ideas as recycling appropriate materials into models. Through the routines provided in school pupils develop an understanding of what is expected of them. Consequently pupils develop a sense of right from wrong from the earliest stages.
37. Provisional for social development is very good. Pupils treat each other with kindness; sympathy is shown to peers when they are obviously upset. Social development is taken seriously by the school and is evident in many ways. Pupils are taught that to value each other's work is important and there are planned opportunities throughout the school day. In 'circle time' pupils have an opportunity to talk to each other, taking turns. When appropriate, lesson plans include opportunities for pupils to describe what they have made and how they have made it. Others are expected to listen with attention and interest. Pupils hold doors open for others and many pupils can chat away with ease to visitors in a friendly and sociable way. Lunchtime is a joy as pupils sit

and eat their food in a well-mannered way with no fuss or undue noise. The routine of lunchtime is smooth and calm. Well-planned opportunities to invite visitors into school helps to promote social skills. Social experiences are further broadened by regular planned trips out of school. Praise and encouragement from adults effectively supports learning. The quality of relationships within the school is very good and this undoubtedly has a positive effect on pupils' attitudes to accepted standards of social behaviour.

38. Cultural provision is very good. Pupils are encouraged to see the worth of themselves, their family, religion, belief and culture. The school is full of cultural experiences! Wall displays, books including dual language texts and artefacts from many countries and religions can be found throughout the school. Signs and captions are written in other scripts and languages. Heritage languages are spoken to provide explanations and instructions where appropriate. Subject planning is thoughtful and opportunities such as including famous buildings from other countries such as the Taj Mahal in lessons are taken advantage of. All these things combine to promote in the pupils an interest in their own and others' cultures.

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

39. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, are very well cared for at school. Because the school is very effective in monitoring the pupils' academic performance and their personal development, the support and guidance provided for each individual pupil is very good. This effectively ensures that during their time in school the pupils feel confident and happy and are able to concentrate on their learning and make very good progress. The very good relationships between class teachers, support staff and the pupils are an important element in the care provided. The quality of this care has improved since the last inspection.
40. The children who are under five in the nursery and reception classes are well cared for in a calm and happy atmosphere. There are good induction procedures for both children and parents and the children settle quickly and happily into the routines of the classroom. Parents have good opportunities in the mornings to speak informally to staff about any small matters of concern. The children quickly learn what is expected of them and staff consistently reinforce good work and behaviour with praise.
41. Because of the poor level of attendance in previous years, the school has introduced a number of pro-active measures to raise parents' awareness of the importance of their children's regular attendance and the value of the educational opportunities provided. This has resulted in a very significant improvement. Any unexplained absence or persistent lateness is swiftly followed-up and class teachers and the headteacher analyse attendance data and identify pupils with a poor attendance record. Year 1 pupils who are absent over a prolonged period receive extra support to enable them to catch up on what they have missed. Pupils receive awards for good attendance. Registration procedures are quick and efficient and comply with legal requirements. Staff know the pupils very well and monitoring of their personal development is good. The school has good procedures for recording instances of poor behaviour, but these are rarely needed. All staff are consistent in handling any instances of unacceptable behaviour and pupils understand and respect the school rules. They are well motivated by rewards and praise for good work and behaviour and try hard to live up to the school's expectations. There are very good procedures to deal with bullying and harassment, with the emphasis on swift and effective action.
42. The safety and welfare of all the pupils is an important priority for the school. Pupils say that they would feel comfortable in talking to their teacher or the headteacher about any worries they may have, either personal or academic. All adults in the school know the pupils very well and

this ensures a continuity of care throughout the school day. The procedures the school has to govern health and safety are very good. Formal risk assessment is carried out regularly and pupils are taught how to use tools and other resources safely. Fire drill is carried out regularly and provision for first aid is very good. Appropriate records are kept. The headteacher is the designated member of staff for child protection. She has received an appropriate level of training and the school follows very good procedures, which reflect local guidelines. Staff are vigilant in their approach to this aspect of care. The quality of supervision during the mid-day break is good. The mid-day supervisors, are well organised and the pupils respect and like them.

43. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are involved in all aspects of school life and receive a very good level of support, both personal and academic. There are very effective links with outside agencies
44. The quality of assessment within the school is very good and is having a positive impact on raising standards. This is in marked contrast to the last inspection which called attention to the need for the school to address this issue. Assessment procedures in reception and Years 1 and 2 are now of very good quality. Baseline assessment at the age of five identifies children in need of support and those who are more able. There is a wide range of skills and curricular assessment with target setting is well advanced. The school sets suitably challenging targets and monitors progress towards these. Each pupil has an individual book of targets which goes home to parents every half term. These are discussed at termly meetings with parents with staff identifying additional targets where necessary. A range of strategies is used to track pupils' progress in English, mathematics and personal, social and health education, for example, reading tests, national tests and a checklist to monitor pupils' behaviour and involvement in learning beyond the national curriculum. Tracking is to be introduced for science and for attendance. Assessment is built into planning and is used effectively to support learning. The special needs co-ordinator liaises well with outside agencies to ensure that the pupils' statements of special educational needs are implemented. The school has very good procedures to identify and meet the needs of its pupils with special educational needs following the guidance of the Code of Practice.

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

45. The school's provision for working with parents is excellent and, as a result, the overall quality of the partnership with parents is very good. This is reflected in the very positive views about the school expressed by parents prior to the inspection. As a result of the last inspection, the school introduced a large number of wide-ranging and imaginative initiatives designed to give parents opportunities to become more fully involved in school life and in the education of their children. The school is beginning to reap the rewards of improved partnership with parents, for example, better attendance and, for some children, improved attainment as a result of the help they receive at home. The school has addressed the key issue from the last inspection very effectively and the quality of the school's relationship with parents has improved significantly.
46. The information provided for parents about the school is of very good quality. It is practical, comprehensive and informative. As a direct result of informal consultation with parents, the information is supplied in English. Parents expressed the view that, if necessary, they would prefer to ask the school for help with translation, or arrange for a friend to help them. Regular newsletters keep parents informed of visits and events taking place in the school as well as giving a brief outline of what children will be learning. Attendance at consultation evenings has, in the past, been poor. By rigorously following-up those parents who did not attend and offering alternative appointments, the school has achieved much improved attendance. The text in pupils' annual reports give parents good information about what their children have done during the year in each subject of the National Curriculum and reflects a good balance between strengths and

weaknesses. The school has developed a very good new format for the annual reports for the end of the current year specific to each year group. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in the decision making process and are kept well informed about the needs of their children.

47. Involving parents in school life is a high priority for the school. The extensive range of opportunities for parents to become involved in school life is excellent. Many take advantage of these opportunities, attending workshops and helping in classrooms and their impact on the work of the school is very good and has a positive effect on children's literacy and practical skills. The school is very active in encouraging parents into the school and makes them feel very welcome. For example, the popularity of the Parent and Toddler Club is an indication of the long-term commitment, which the school has to communicating with and involving parents. Parents were formally consulted about the content of the home/school agreement, a form of which was already in use, and their response has been very positive. Parents' views are sought informally by the headteacher by means of regular meetings at the beginning of the school day which parents are gently but firmly encouraged to attend.
48. Many parents value the education that the school provides for their children and are eager to help their children at home with their homework. The workshops organised by the school are specifically designed to teach parents the skills to do this in a constructive fashion. Parents gain in confidence as a result of attending these courses and many bring their skills into the classroom on a voluntary basis. This has a very good impact on the progress the children make. The help received at home by a Year 1 pupil whose parent attended a series of workshop sessions, helped him to achieve the class certificate for progress. The school is very aware of the significant number of children who do not receive help with their homework and provides extra support to compensate for this.
49. There are regular meetings to review the progress of pupils with special educational needs. The school is very successful in including all parents in the procedures for the identification and provision for the special educational needs of their children. There are excellent links to inform parents of their child's progress.

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

50. The headteacher provides the school, staff, parents and governors with excellent leadership. She has a very thorough understanding about the need to focus on the quality of teaching as the key element in raising attainment. There are comprehensive systems to review the work of teachers and to encourage all members of staff to have the highest possible expectations of themselves. In order to keep everyone to the mark the headteacher has developed very sophisticated systems so that individual pupils can be tracked and very accurate predictions of attainment can be made. Regular monitoring of teaching quality, excellent communications and the ability to enthuse adults and pupils alike has ensured that over the past four years the school has made very good progress in addressing the issues raised in the last inspection and in the quality of education it offers. The school's motto, 'happy children, aiming high' is evident in all areas of the school's work. It guides the deliberate 'pushing' of standards, pupils' social development and the role of the school within the community which are all evidence of the positive impact this school is expected to make in children's lives. As more and more systems fall under the school's control, for example, the provision for pupils with English as an additional language, the headteacher takes every opportunity to improve the school's provision, add value to children's learning and highlight the school as a centre for family learning.

51. The deputy headteacher, other members of the senior management team and subject co-ordinators are full partners in the enterprise to improve the school's provision. They support the headteacher in an extremely positive and professional manner often bringing their own ideas to bear. Their own skills, for example the deputy headteacher's analysis of data, all add to the school's capacity to succeed. Although teachers and support staff all share the very high levels of commitment, nonetheless they have a full range of authority to develop their areas of responsibilities with the expectation that they will report to the headteacher and governors on a regular basis. The governing body is newly formed and took up its tenure in January of this year. It has made a very good start to its work. They are very knowledgeable about the pupils in their care and have arranged to formally monitor the school. Even in this short time they have developed an extremely sensitive picture of the schools strengths and weaknesses. They participate well in securing improvement and are very capable ambassadors for their school. They have their own ideas about how to improve their work including the need to reach out further and in better ways to the school's community.
52. Over the past four years there have been significant improvements in attainment, the quality of teaching and the leadership skills of the teachers and governors. Of the four issues that were highlighted in the last inspection:
- standards have improved significantly in English, mathematics, science and information and communications technology;
  - teachers' subject knowledge has increased in all subjects of the curriculum;
  - assessment procedures have improved enormously so that now they have a direct and extremely positive impact on curriculum planning and teaching, and
  - the school's work with parents is now excellent and many opportunities are provided by the school for parents and the local community to benefit from the school's resources.
53. The school's arrangements for appraisal and performance management are well advanced. The school has very good procedures to support and provide its entire staff with opportunities for professional development. Its arrangements for the induction of new staff, newly qualified teachers and supply teachers are well developed. All staff have appropriate job descriptions. As recognition of the school's high quality work the school has been awarded Investor in People status.
54. The school is generously staffed and all teaching and non-teaching staff combine very well to provide a very good quality of education for all the pupils in their care. Staff members are appropriately qualified to teach the curriculum and have very good procedures to ensure that all pupils are taught effectively. Support assistants are well trained to carry out their classroom activities and the school uses its additional funding very well to provide high quality support for pupils with special educational needs and for those for whom English is an additional language. Lunchtime supervisors are valued by the school and are particularly effective in their roles having good relationships with the pupils in their care. The entire community is dedicated to raising the standards of attainment achieved by the pupils in the school.
55. The accommodation is adequate for the delivery of the Desirable Learning Outcomes and the National Curriculum, although the school has rightly identified the need to refurbish the nursery and new equipment and resources have been ordered to aid in the reorganisation of the learning areas. The hall is used for whole school assemblies and for physical education. There is an efficiently used information and communications technology room that provides the pupils with excellent opportunities to improve their information technology skills. The library is a focal point of the school, not only for its principal purpose of providing a space for further study for the pupils but also as a meeting place for parent workshops, the Parent and Toddler Club and for parents and children to choose reading materials to take home. Outside there are hard play areas with games painted on the surface. There are attractive arrangements of shrubs and flowers and

picnic tables are arranged around the playground to provide seating for the pupils. Resources provided for the delivery of the curriculum are adequate for the needs of the pupils, are readily to hand and used efficiently.

56. The administration of the school is proficient and ensures that the daily routines of the school run smoothly. The secretary provides valuable support for the teachers in the pursuit of their duties for example, providing support in the organisation of educational visits. The financial control procedures are particularly effective and the budgetary reports provided enable the headteacher and governors to carry out their financial management responsibilities efficiently. The site manager and staff are an integral part of the school's success. As a very capable negotiator of the financial arrangements for services, as a custodian of the school's resources and buildings and as a marketing agent for the school, the site manager works tirelessly to inform the local community of the good work of the school.
57. The headteacher and governing body are fully aware of the principles of best value and apply them effectively. The governing body takes a keen interest in the performance of the school and is keen to promote its values in the community. When considering the school improvement plan, the governors make good use of the school's analysis of its performance to inform the funding arrangements to bring about improved standards. The headteacher requires co-ordinators to justify their budgetary requests for resources when preparing their activities for the school improvement plan. The school is very active in encouraging parents to take part in the life of the school and regularly seeks their views about curriculum matters through the regular parent workshops. The governing body invites formal tenders for building maintenance and, for example, followed precise criteria for selecting the contractors to replace the fascia boards around the school. The bargain struck for this work showed an excellent application of the principles of best value.

#### **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

58. In order raise the standards of attainment and improve the quality of education, the governors, headteacher and staff should:
  1. improve the quality of education in the nursery by ensuring that:
    - a) medium term plans are broken into small achievable and progressive steps for short term plans;
    - b) planned activities allow more opportunities for exploration and more direct teaching;
    - c) more use is made of assessment opportunities to track children's progress;
    - d) the different areas in which learning takes place are more clearly set out;
    - e) better use is made of available resources;
    - f) teachers evaluate the range and quality of available resources in light of the Early Learning Goals.

*[Paragraphs 21, 27, 55, 59, 75]*

2. ensure that every assembly contains an act of collective worship.  
*[Paragraphs 26, 35]*

#### **Other minor issues the governors should consider for inclusion in the action plan:**

The school should continue its successful efforts to improve attendance and punctuality.  
*[Paragraph 15, 41]*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	69
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	27

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	24	46	31	0	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*

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	45	206
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	83

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

<b>Special educational needs</b>	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	6	70

<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	271

<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	30
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	27

### *Attendance*

#### **Authorised absence**

	%
School data	10.9
National comparative data	5.4

#### **Unauthorised absence**

	%
School data	3.6
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	35	48	83

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	27	28	27
	Girls	36	39	29
	Total	63	67	56
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	77 (67)	83 (68)	68 (58)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	28	29	28
	Girls	36	30	30
	Total	64	59	58
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	77(79)	71 (61)	70 (76)
	National	82 (80)	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	0
Black – other	0
Indian	25
Pakistani	58
Bangladeshi	34
Chinese	0
White	5
Any other minority ethnic group	3

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

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

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage		
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)	13.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	15
Average class size	22

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

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	175

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	90

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	49

Number of pupils per FTE adult	7
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999
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	£
Total income	461630
Total expenditure	461222
Expenditure per pupil	1465
Balance brought forward from previous year	43291
Balance carried forward to next year	43699

**Results of the survey of parents and carers**

**Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	251
Number of questionnaires returned	22

**Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	82	14	5	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	68	27	0	0	5
Behaviour in the school is good.	73	27	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	64	18	0	5	14
The teaching is good.	77	23	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	77	18	0	0	5
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	82	18	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	73	14	0	0	14
The school works closely with parents.	73	23	5	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	91	5	0	0	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	64	23	0	0	14
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	55	14	0	14	18

## **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**

59. Children are admitted to the nursery as three-years olds on a part-time basis. They attend either a morning or afternoon session. The nursery class is an open plan area in the main school building and has its own outside play area. Children in the nursery are organised into four home groups in the morning and three in the afternoon. Each child experiences group time, a planned focussed activity and undirected activities during the course of the morning or afternoon. The space in the nursery class is organised into different activity areas. The facilities include a 'dabble' pool that is covered over when not in use. The reception classes are also housed in an open plan area, organised for whole class and group work. Almost all of the children in reception class have attended the school's nursery. Overall, the provision in the nursery is satisfactory but there is room for improvement in both the planning of the curriculum and the layout. The nursery is an area of focus of the school's development plan and work on refurbishing and reorganising the provision is planned to begin shortly.
60. The majority of children begin in the nursery with little or no spoken English. Their overall attainment in language and literacy is very low on entry to the school. The main curriculum focus is on language and literacy. In the reception classes progress is very good for children who learn English as an additional language and good for children with special educational needs. The nursery plans a range of language and literacy activities for the children. The day begins in home corner with a few minutes of interactive 'chat', pupils find their name card, choosing the correct day and date and talk about the weather. The activities are supported with cards showing different weather conditions. Nursery nurses encourage children to read and books are read to each group. Children are encouraged to relate to the experiences in the stories. When listening to a book about haircuts children were asked questions about the times they had had their own haircut. The characters in the books are used in a variety of ways. For example, a board game has been devised to give opportunities for children to try and match a written name with the correct character. Some children are able to identify 'mum' and 'dad'. Children listen to other stories with attention and interest. There are other books in the nursery for the children to read.
61. When writing most children sit in a comfortable writing position and hold a pencil or crayon with an accepted grip. In their focussed writing activity children sit in a formal way to complete their task. They are encouraged to 'write' and time is spent with the children talking about what they have 'written'. Opportunities for writing occur throughout other activities. For example, children are encouraged to write shopping lists as part of a role-play activity.
62. In reception classes, the teaching and learning in language and literacy is very good. The organisation of this curriculum area is precise. Children have both group reading sessions using the reading scheme and a literacy hour. Individual reading progress is recorded very well in record books. Children engage in a range of fiction, non-fiction, rhymes and poetry within literacy activities. Phonics is taught in an interactive way using a variety of visual 'props' where possible and this results in pupils having a good knowledge of how sounds make up words. Group work in the literacy hour encourages independent learning as a wide range of independent activities is planned. For example, computer word activities are used to consolidate and extend learning. Children sort words into groups and then print a copy for their folder. Word games using magnetic letters, word 'wheels' and picture dominoes are played to very good effect.
63. Children have many opportunities to write and make good progress. Most form letters correctly and hold pencils in an accepted way. The majority of children write their own name independently. Some higher attaining children understand the concept of a sentence and show a

developing understanding of the use of full stops. Interesting activities to encourage and extend writing are given to the children, for example writing in speech bubbles and compiling a little book of different characters with appropriate captions. Teachers make good use of questioning. The plenary session at the end of the literacy hour provides opportunities for informal assessment and consolidation of learning. Overall, by the time children are five their language and literacy skills are well below average.

64. Children's learning in mathematics is good and attainment is satisfactory. Most children are broadly on course to meet average national standards by the age of five and make a smooth transfer to the National Curriculum. Children are familiar with numbers through rhymes, number songs, activities and stories. Teaching methods are interactive and take account of different learning styles.
65. In the nursery children begin by counting how many of their friends are present. Each day it is the turn of the day's 'helper' to go round the circle counting his or her peers. Children find numbers on the number line with the whole group counting to ten forwards and then backwards. This mathematics time is enjoyed by the children and is concluded by rhymes and songs to reinforce the learning that has taken place. Children explore shape and space and build houses out of different shapes, learning the names of the shapes as they work. These themes are continued in homework activities, which again reinforce learning. They write their house number and discuss their work in groups. The 'post box' activity sees children counting the dots drawn on an envelope and then 'posting' it into the correctly numbered box. Differentiation enables groups to play the game with numbers up to three or six. Role-play in the 'shop' allows children to handle money as either a shopkeeper or customer. Free-play activities are made available for children to experiment with games such as pegboards and a 'collecting toy' game. Water play enables children to use measuring equipment such as jugs and other vessels of different sizes.
66. In the reception classes children cover the Desirable Learning Outcomes at an appropriate pace. They co-operate well with each other and their teachers during these lessons and clearly enjoy their work. Higher attaining children are able to add and subtract numbers to ten and understand the concept of 'less than' and 'more than'. Shapes such as circles and triangles are recognised and many children have knowledge of coins up to £1. Children have knowledge of capacity as illustrated by their understanding of full, half full and empty. Objects can be efficiently sorted by given and own criteria. Lower attaining children can recount numbers to ten and sort assorted objects into longer and shorter piles. Work is regularly marked, is supportive and provides assessed evaluation of progress and attainment.
67. Nursery aged children make good progress in the development of their personal and social skills. They are happy and confident when starting the session or day. Good relationships are established between the children, their families and the staff in the nursery. There is mutual respect developed between children and adults. Children develop a very good understanding of classroom routines, putting their coats and bags in the correct places. Children approach adults confidently for help and advice, when required. They work well at group activities and a few are developing a sense of independent work, for example with construction toys or on the computer. The use of praise to raise children's self-esteem contributes to the good learning environment.
68. In the reception classes children are eager to take part in whole-class and group work and they generally show interest in nearly everything they do. Children treat equipment and the classroom environment well, tidying up sensibly after activities, showing levels of maturity much beyond their years.
69. Attainment and progress in physical development in both the nursery and reception classes is satisfactory. The 'dabble pool' is used once a term by nursery and reception for water activities.

The nursery children use a space covered with mats for indoor physical activities and an outside paved area to play with small and large equipment. Equipment is used well and includes tricycles, hoops, balls and large climbing frames, stored in a large outbuilding. Reception children have 'hall' time twice a week, once for creative work including dance and once for physical activities. They make satisfactory progress in these sessions and react with obvious enjoyment.

70. In their creative development children make satisfactory progress in the nursery and good progress in the reception classes. A role-play area in the nursery provides opportunities for children to extend their creative abilities. Children are encouraged and supported in their creativity. Children learn to roll and shape by using dough to make houses. They have sustained opportunities for imaginative play with small toys and games. Children join in singing games and rhymes with enjoyment; one child was able to give a powerful rendition of several nursery rhymes on request! The scrutiny of teachers' records shows that children listen and learn to recognise the sounds different instruments make and by the time they are five their creative skills are in line with the Desirable Learning Outcomes.
71. In the reception classes opportunities for imaginative play are planned into curriculum areas. Children pack a case, climb into a 'car', travel to their new house, unpack and make a meal. The children sustained the role-play for a period of time, the girls being especially imaginative in their language and grasp of the situation. Children express their ideas using a range of art materials. Shown a Paul Klee print, they were encouraged to talk about it and discuss words that might be associated with the print. Groups were then assigned tasks to complete, all of which were connected with the print in some way. The good quality finished work included, wood block prints, computer drawn pictures and three-dimensional models.
72. In the area of knowledge and understanding of the world children are taught and learn with enthusiasm, interest and in some case innovation! By the age of five most children's knowledge and understanding of the world around them is in line with what one would expect for children of this age. In the nursery the teaching of this aspect is satisfactory and in reception very good. Children use computers in a variety of ways. Interactive CD-ROMs are chosen to add another dimension to learning. For example, the story of the Three Little Pigs links to the use of different building materials. In the nursery new programs are first experienced in the computer suite, the same program is then made available on the classroom computer. This makes for more effective use of the computer in the class and enhances independent learning. Some children in the nursery and nearly all in reception can use the mouse to control the cursor and click on the required picture or word.
73. In the nursery children are encouraged to develop an awareness of places in and beyond their immediate environment. Children discuss where they live, a few have an idea of their address and many know the number of their house. Buildings are made from large plastic building blocks and also from large and small cardboard boxes. Well thought out homework assignments reinforce learning.
74. In the reception classes children explore similarities and differences of building materials. The range of learning experiences for topics such as this is carefully chosen. Children construct two and three-dimensional structures following building plan using Lego. They construct rooms in a dolls house and make collages from straw, wood and cardboard squares, representing bricks. Information and communications technology activities include a wide range of programmes. Wonderful role-plays of moving from old to new house complete with different packaging materials and suitcase completes the total experience! Appropriate texts are chosen to introduce and support topics. Time for explaining what they have achieved during lessons is included in planning. Some children are able to do this independently, a few more with teacher support.

75. Teaching in the reception classes is characterised by effective planning and generally high expectations although nursery planning needs to take more account of the small steps needed by children in order to learn effectively. The use made of assessment results is very good in the reception classes. However, in the nursery classes staff do not use their observations and notes to identify the next stage of learning. The organisation of the learning space in the nursery is not always as effective as it could be. The storage of books and resources and the setting of home corners are at times a little disorganised. The joint planning of a 'foundation stage' by the school should help support planning in the nursery. This is occurring in order to meet the issues identified by the school in the nursery curriculum. At times activities do not contain a sufficient range of tasks which are directed by nursery staff nor do they create enough situations in which children can explore and devise their own outcomes. Plans to link more closely the nursery and reception provision and to better organise the nursery learning areas are well made.
76. A key factor of the success of this stage of the school's provision is the links made between home and school. Children take home books on a regular basis together with a home-school record book. The school library is open every afternoon for parents to choose books with their children. Many families take regular advantage of this system, some borrowing books several times a week.

## **ENGLISH**

77. Standards of attainment in English overall are just below the national average for pupils at the age of seven, but are close to those of similar schools in reading, and are above them in writing. Since the last inspection there has been a significant improvement for all pupils in reading, writing and speaking and listening, and there are now more pupils attaining the higher level 3. The national test results have confirmed this acceleration in learning over time for both boys and girls. More significantly the test results for 1999 show a steep rise in scores in both reading and writing, and writing is now close to the national average. The school has recognized the importance of addressing the language needs of its pupils with the result that they make very good progress. Very good provision is also made for the increasing number of pupils in the school with special educational needs ensuring equality of access to the curriculum for all. Attainment in English is now a strength of the school.
78. The quality of teaching in the school is very good. All teaching and support staff are committed to the very good improvement of the subject and they provide a very good range of learning opportunities to make the curriculum effective, and raise standards. Through excellent leadership and vision the subject offers very good breadth and balance and is totally relevant to the needs of the pupils. Monitoring of the subject is excellent and it provides very good opportunities to evaluate each element of the English curriculum, as well as ensuring effective teaching. As a result teachers are confident in their subject knowledge, secure in providing effective teaching methods for all strands of the literacy strategy, and skilled in determining future strategies for improvement. Lessons are exciting. Teachers plan together well. Their work is of very good quality including a very good match to the learning objectives of the National Curriculum and literacy strategy, whilst ensuring short achievable steps for improvement are established for every pupil. This is made possible by using the detailed assessments available for each pupil to track their progress and also match their achievements to National Curriculum levels. Using this information useful targets are agreed for each pupil and are shared with parents each term. Pupils benefit from being the pivotal part of an important partnership.
79. The school has given very good attention to the introduction and management of the literacy strategy. All teachers have undertaken training either in school or locally in conjunction with teachers working in similar schools. This gives good opportunities to share expertise and to

ensure that accurate moderation of standards is maintained. When literacy objectives are developed, teachers consider carefully that lessons should address the needs of all pupils, the majority of whom learn English is a second language. Good use is made of the schools' own resources as well as commercial schemes to ensure an appropriate match of task is provided. The school gives very good attention to the rich cultural heritage of its pupils and introduces a wide range of literature from around the world and especially representing the background of its own pupils. Very good cross curriculum links are also used to give relevance to tasks and to consolidate learning. Through this cross-referencing within subjects pupils have the opportunity to write for a range of audiences using a wide variety of styles. Homework is a particularly valuable resource. Its use is excellent and has a considerable impact on raising standards.

80. Although standards of attainment in speaking and listening are below national averages by the time pupils are seven years of age; pupils show good progress in the infant classes. They enter the National Curriculum with a very limited range of vocabulary in English and have poor listening skills. Although they can make their own needs known and have a developing receptive language, most pupils communicate in single word utterances or phrases. During Years 1 and 2 pupils learn how to express their thoughts and feelings in role-play, circle-time and during the literacy hour. With sensitive support and encouragement pupils develop some appropriate vocabulary to communicate in each subject of the curriculum. By the age of seven, although many pupils are still developing the ability to use extended sentences, most pupils will talk together in English both in lessons and informal occasions. All pupils show good levels of concentration and perseverance as they search to find the correct words to explain their ideas. Many of them are willing to join in class discussions or talk about their work, although speaking to the whole school is still difficult. More able pupils are beginning to use imagery in their speech. Confusions do still exist in understanding, due to the complexities of the English vocabulary, and this is having an impact on standards.
81. In reading pupils make good progress over time. The school has adopted an effective approach where every pupil has the opportunity to read within small groups each day. Alongside this daily reading practice the very valuable support given by parents and families in reading homework each evening ensures the pupils are having several opportunities to read. Shared reading in the literacy hour introduces skill development and helps pupils to learn initial and more difficult reading skills. Pupils enter the Year 1 curriculum for reading with the more pupils able to read a few key words whilst others are only just able to recognize their name. As a result of the very good teaching initiatives, by the end of Year 2 many pupils are able to read a simple story in line with expectations for their age and some can read with good expression and fluency. Some pupils have made particularly good progress, they can read instructions and answers questions without any adult supervision, and are becoming more independent in their learning. All pupils have made good progress in learning phonics, and some use these skills independently of teacher help in their reading. Most pupils enjoy reading books from the school library especially as access to English storybooks in the home is limited. Some pupils have favourite stories usually of traditional tales such as Cinderella. The majority of pupils enjoy nursery rhymes and can recite their favourite verse.
82. Progress in writing is very good throughout the school. In Year 1 pupils learn to write their names. They learn to spell simple words and to write simple sentences often including full stops and capital letters accurately. They are confident writers and recognize the importance of writing, for example writing their own labels or sets of instructions in the role-play areas. In Year 2 this very good progress is maintained so that by the age of seven many pupils can write at length for different audiences. Particularly praiseworthy is their story writing where they show good levels of imagination and are beginning to include good descriptive vocabulary to interest the reader. The teachers cleverly build on the personal interest of the pupils, for example using their interest in nursery rhymes to write stories of Humpty Dumpty after he had fallen off the wall, and in some

stories of his visit to the accident and emergency department in a hospital. Pupils confidently describe their own feelings in writing diaries or poetry, and will copy the style of African and Caribbean rhythms in their verse.

83. The response of pupils to their work in English is very good. They are enthusiastic, concentrate well and are cooperative in discussions. Pupils behave very well and are polite and well mannered. Some pupils are developing good levels of independence although the majority still needs adult intervention in their work. With a high level of adult support and very good quality individual learning programmes for pupils with special educational needs, very good progress is made towards targets in speaking and listening, reading, and writing.

## **MATHEMATICS**

84. Standards of attainment in the previous inspection were well below average when compared with the national average and that for similar schools. In the national tests for 1999 the standards, compared to the national average and the average of similar schools, remain well below average. The percentage of pupils achieving the expected level 2 has risen consistently over the past five years from just over half to almost seven out of ten pupils. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher level of the National Curriculum was well below average when compared with the national average. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls. In the national tests currently being taken by pupils there is strong evidence to suggest that the challenging targets set by the school will be met by a greater proportion of the pupils. Overall, standards in this year's Year 2 are just below average.
85. Pupils are achieving standards that are broadly in line with the age related expectations in numeracy. In Year 2, pupils are familiar with numbers to 100 and enjoy counting to and from 100 in 5s and 10s. They have rapid recall of addition and subtraction facts to 10 with many pupils able to recall number facts to 20. They recognise odd and even number sequences. More able pupils enjoy finding the addition pairs for higher numbers such as 60 and 80. Pupils in Year 1 can count, order, add and subtract numbers when solving problems. They understand 'more than' and 'less than' when using the number lines on their desks. They are able to identify the numbers in between 26 and 30 and they can record their work accurately. They thoroughly enjoy counting to and from 100.
86. Pupils are achieving below average standards in shape, space and measures. In Year 2 most pupils are able to describe the properties of two-dimensional shapes such as squares and triangles. The more able pupils accurately describe the number of sides and corners of two and three-dimensional shapes, recognise right angles and draw lines of reflective symmetry. Pupils can measure in centimetres and many can tell the time in half and quarter past and to the hour.
87. Pupils achieve below average standards in using and applying mathematics. In numeracy lessons they can discuss their work in mathematical language and they enjoy telling mathematical stories about their calculations. Problem solving activities and opportunities for mathematical experiences across the curriculum and through the day-to-day life of the school are not well enough defined. In science, pupils are measuring the growth of beans and are using Venn and Carroll diagrams to sort materials. In geography, they use co-ordinates when mapping their islands.
88. The increased focus on developing numeracy skills has resulted in pupils making very good progress in this aspect of mathematics. As pupils progress in through Years 1 and 2 they become increasingly proficient in mentally calculating numbers. A particular feature of the very good progress is the way in which pupils describe how they have calculated their answers. This is

because of the very good encouragement pupils receive from their teachers to present and explain their calculations orally as well as recording them in their books. Teachers ensure that the questions they ask are well matched to pupils' understanding and that the responses of all pupils are valued. This has a significant impact on the progress of all pupils. The newly introduced structure of the National Numeracy Strategy is being successfully implemented.

89. Pupils make good progress in other aspects of mathematics in relation to the very low levels of attainment on entry to school. Curriculum planning supports progression well, for example, in developing the pupils' data handling skills, an area previously identified as a weakness by the school, and using specific language to describe two-dimensional shapes. Progress is faster in numeracy than in other aspects of mathematics because of the priority placed on developing this aspect of learning. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress as a result of the detailed programmes of work contained in their individual education plans and the very good quality of adult support they receive.
90. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. They are eager to take on new challenges, listen to their teacher and have very positive attitudes for mathematics. They are keen to answer questions and can explain their answers with understanding. Pupils respond well to the very good praise and encouragement they receive. They use number lines and simple apparatus to help with their calculations and to check their answers. They work at a good pace and co-operate well with their friends. They successfully reflect the whole school's commitment to learning.
91. The quality of teaching is very good. Almost one half of lessons were very good and a similar quantity were good. This is a significant improvement from the previous inspection. These high standards are the result of detailed planning that reflects the procedures enclosed in the National Numeracy Strategy. The teachers' confidence, enthusiasm and excellent questioning skills are characteristics of successful teaching. For example, in Year 1 a teacher gave clear directions and made very good use of specific language, ensuring that pupils use the appropriate language when reporting their addition and subtraction answers. Pace and rigour are constant features in all lessons. All teachers know their pupils and their needs very well. They focus their questions on the specific learning objectives of the lesson and value the contributions the pupils make to those lessons. The support staff is very effective through their own commitment and the very good briefing they receive from by the teachers. They are fully involved in teaching groups of pupils and make a significant contribution to the progress the pupils make. Teachers have high expectations of their pupils, regularly assess pupils' work and use this information well to plan future work and targets. Homework is used well to support the pupils' learning. All these qualities are reflected in the high level of pupils' achievement.
92. The management of mathematics is very good. For example, the school has introduced the structures of the National Numeracy Strategy with efficient success. There is a very clear understanding of the future development of the subject to continue the rise of mathematical standards. The school uses its procedures for monitoring and evaluation, data analysis and self-review by the subject co-ordinator to identify the priorities and set targets for its improvement plans for mathematics. This has enabled the teachers to provide a consistent and well-focused approach to the teaching of mathematics. Appropriate and readily available resources are used efficiently.

## **SCIENCE**

93. In 1999 National Curriculum teacher assessments showed standards of attainment were well below the national average across all aspects of the subject. The school also performed well below average in relation to similar schools. The proportion of pupils who achieved the higher

levels was below the national average. When compared with similar schools the proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels was also below the national average. Evidence from the lessons observed during the inspection, discussion with pupils and staff, and scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' records indicate that attainment currently matches national averages. Discussions with pupils clearly indicate that understanding in science is average and higher than the standards reflected in notebooks. This is a marked improvement on standards at the previous inspection when they were described as being well below the national average. The improving quality of teaching, the use of assessment results and the very good quality curriculum experiences have made a large contribution to improvement in standards.

94. In Year 1 pupils know that certain materials keep ice cool and that other materials help to maintain heat in solids and liquids. They plant seeds and are able to talk about the different stages in the development of a flower from a bulb and can sort things into living and non-living categories. The pupils accurately describe the five senses and know how they relate to the human body. They are aware of changes that take place when people grow older. In Year 2 pupils know that living things need food and water and that humans need to eat a variety of foods to provide them with a healthy diet. They are aware that different materials have a range of properties and that they can be classified as solids, liquids and gases. Pupils know that some changes are irreversible when materials are mixed or heated. There is sound coverage of scientific knowledge and understanding in materials and life processes. Appropriate emphasis is given to the planned development of the important skills involved in investigative science.
95. The quality of teaching is good with no unsatisfactory teaching observed during the inspection. Lessons begin at a brisk pace with teachers reviewing previous knowledge. Learning objectives are clearly indicated to the class and this puts the lesson in context and keeps pupils focused and ready to make gains in their knowledge and understanding. The quality and sensitivity of using appropriate language with the pupils, most of whom are being taught in their second language, is an essential requirement for learning to take place and gains in progress to be made. This requirement is evident in the high quality questioning employed by teachers. Great efforts are made to separate understanding through good knowledge from an apparent lack of understanding caused through insufficiently developed language. Questions that have been painstakingly framed to promote understanding are often rewarded with very good responses. For example, a pupil in Year 1 who was asked the meaning of waterproof replied that "it is when the water can't go through the clothes, it runs down the clothes." Teachers are quick to seek opportunities for praising pupils. Relationships are very good and this has a powerful impact on the quality and rate of learning. Teachers prioritise practical science and much of the learning is targeted through investigative strategies. Pupils enjoy experimenting and excited talk accompanies enthusiastic activity as pupils collect evidence from their observations. They share their findings and compare results. Teachers stress the importance of fair testing to pupils and work hard to develop a systematic approach to investigative work. A minor weakness in the quality of teaching is insufficient planned use of information technology as a tool for collecting and structuring information. There is an emphasis on providing all pupils with equal opportunities to participate fully in investigative work and make good gains in progress. For example, a severely disabled pupil played a full part in an experiment to discover that some changes cannot be reversed. Ingredients for making a cake were mixed with pupils taking turns to ensure that the cake mixture was thoroughly stirred. The teacher ensured that the disabled pupil was included and took a full part in the lesson.
96. The coordinator is enthusiastic, knowledgeable and keen to monitor and influence provision throughout the school. A high profile is given to improving teacher knowledge and confidence through in-service training and this is having a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning

## **ART**

97. No observations of art lessons in Year 2 were made but a scrutiny of displays and photographic evidence shows that by the end of Year 2 attainment in art is average. Rates of progress have been maintained since the last inspection and pupils undertake a satisfactory range of experiences using a variety of methods and techniques. The strengths of the subject lie in the two-dimensional work and a slight weakness exists in the number of opportunities pupils have to work in three dimensions. Teachers use a good range of resources to plan work in paint, drawing, collage and printmaking. In Year 1 pupils use a variety of tools, techniques and colours to create a design. This was sound work and the lesson finished with pupils making good quality evaluations of their work. The lesson began by the teacher telling pupils clearly what they would learn and what tools they could use to complete their task. Clear demonstrations of the techniques of printing, including the use of rollers, helped pupils learn effectively.
98. Work from Year 2 includes the use of a range of techniques including spray, spatter and brush work. Paintings, pastels and the use of charcoal in the style of Cézanne highlight the variety of work. The pattern making of William Morris has been studied to good effect and pupils have produced their own craft designs based on the Victorian artist's work. Colour investigations and three-dimensional representations of religious buildings results in work of a satisfactory quality. The use of other cultures as exemplars is a significant part of the art curriculum. African and Asian designs are used to encourage pupils to experiment with pattern and colour.
99. Pupils are enthusiastic about their art work. Their teachers plan lessons well with a good mixture of teaching new skills and allowing pupils the freedom to make choices and create their own versions using the skills and techniques that they learn. They concentrate well and have been trained well in clearing their own workspaces and tools independently from an early age.
100. Teaching in the two lessons observed was satisfactory. Plans and resources were well prepared and teachers ensured that pupils learned the correct vocabulary to describe the techniques and equipment that they used. The co-ordinator has a thorough understanding of the needs of the subject although she has only been responsible for the subject for a year. The development plan and priorities are an accurate reflection of the needs of the subject. The use of visiting artists is a key part of the school's curriculum. The enrichment that this brings reinforces the cultural and aesthetic development of pupils.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

101. Although there were limited opportunities to observe lessons, the scrutiny of work and interviews with pupils and teachers indicate that by the age of seven all pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve a satisfactory standard. This is an improvement on the standards achieved in the previous inspection.
102. All pupils show an ability to plan, design and make their models and are able to offer an oral evaluation of their efforts. In Year 2, pupils choose materials and show skills in using scissors and glue in constructing their binoculars and robots. Those pupils decorating their boxes were able to fold paper into cylinders and prisms as well as use scissors carefully to curl strips of paper. Pupils in Year 1 have constructed boxes with winding gear to allow 'incy wincy spider' to climb up and down. Their plans for construction were displayed with their models. Pupils have also constructed model swings and made fantasy animals using a variety of materials and methods.

103. Pupils have very positive attitudes to design and technology. They take care and have a pride in their work. They are keen to talk about their models and the processes they carried out in their construction. They are beginning to evaluate their work and identify ways of improving it. This is an improvement from the previous inspection.
104. The teaching observed was satisfactory with good subject knowledge and understanding. Teachers' planning has improved since the previous inspection. There are clear learning objectives that, with continuous and identified assessment, build on prior attainment. Good quality guidance, support and questions by teachers enable pupils to achieve improvements. The co-ordinator provides quality support for her colleagues through monitoring planning and providing advice. Regular reports are prepared for the headteacher. There are adequate resources that are used efficiently by teachers and pupils. There were good quality displays in many classrooms and corridors.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

105. A very small number of geography lessons were observed during the inspection. Geography is taught in a block arrangement with classes alternating the teaching of history and geography during the term. No geography was taught in Year 1 during the period of the inspection. Judgements about standards have been made through the additional sampling of teachers' planning, discussion with pupils and examination of pupils' work. By the age of seven standards are broadly average and are an improvement on those described at the time of the previous inspection.
106. Pupils in Year 1 describe their favourite places in their locality. Using photographs they compare the school grounds at the time when the school was built with the present day. Good links with the community enable pupils to visit a modern football stadium where they saw the playing area and training facilities. Pupils enjoy finding out about people in the community who help them, for example, the policeman. In Year 2 pupils know the names of the countries that make up the United Kingdom. An enquiry approach through practical work promotes geographical skills. Field trips within the local environment are planned and these help to put in context the physical nature of the subject. They make comparisons between residential, commercial and industrial environments. Pupils talk with interest and enthusiasm when they compare several maps of Palfrey dating from 1886 to the present day. They draw maps of imaginary islands and include symbols to identify important features. They locate these places using a grid.
107. In the two lessons of geography which were observed the quality of teaching was very good overall. Learning objectives are clearly displayed and understood by pupils. Lessons begin with teachers reviewing previous learning and this provides a platform for further gains to be made. The subject makes an important contribution to language development through speaking and listening activities and encouraging pupils to use precise geographical language, where appropriate, to describe their work. Pupils in Year 2 are encouraged to frame questions about locating features in map work in a variety of different ways to make the work more interesting for their partners. Pupils enjoy being challenged by their teachers and answer questions with enthusiasm. Well-focused questions make important contributions to learning. This is especially effective during good quality plenary sessions when teachers employ this strategy to assess how effectively pupils have met their learning objectives.
108. Teachers in year groups are responsible for assessment after the completion of each block of work. This information is used to contribute to pupils' reports at the end of the year. A start has been made to compile a school portfolio, which will include moderated, levelled work to enable teachers to make better informed judgements about the standard of work in geography. The

headteacher monitors the quality of teaching and the curriculum coordinator advises about teaching and learning objectives. The school uses national guidance to support the teaching of geography.

## **HISTORY**

109. Standards in history are satisfactory at seven. During Years 1 and 2 all pupils make good progress, including those with special educational needs. In the previous inspection report no judgement was made about standards or progress but findings recorded a lack of teacher understanding about National Curriculum requirements. The school has addressed this and teachers now have good knowledge and understanding.
110. In Year 1 pupils begin to distinguish between aspects of their own everyday lives and those of people in the past. During a good topic on Edwardian England pupils have studied differences at home and school using first and secondary sources to gain information. They have participated in history workshops using artefacts of the period, interviewed senior citizens, watched videos and read books. They have identified ways in which the past is represented and learnt how to read a time-line and family tree. Good extension tasks have included making a family tree and time-line for themselves. In Year 2 history work is extended to involve the study of the local environment to learn about the past. A very good topic on a local shopping park has encouraged pupils to learn about the Roman origin of their street name, as well as discovering previous uses of the area as allotments and a football stadium. The work has included an introduction to old manuscripts and maps and contrasted with information on allotments accessed through the Internet. Through this work the school has now built strong partnership business links with the Macdonald restaurant chain, the present owners of the land. As many pupils have difficulty recording their findings in a second language they have learnt to use pie charts, block graphs, photographs and drawings to support their written work. All written recording is of a good standard.
111. The quality of teaching in history is mostly good and the good quality plans and records show that in some lessons very good teaching takes place. The teachers introduce many new experiences to help pupils to understand about chronology. They make good links between subjects to consolidate learning, for example in work on Saint David in religious education they reinforced learning about time-lines to plot the development of his life. Teachers have high expectations of pupils with special educational needs. Lessons have a good balance between individual and group work encouraging pupils to develop independent learning skills.
112. Most pupils are enthusiastic about history. They are positive in their learning and show good skills of logical reasoning as they consider the effect of improvements in everyday life. Pupils work consistently well in groups or independently. They show good levels of perseverance and pride in their work.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

113. Pupils achieve average standards by the age of seven. This is an improvement on standards at the previous inspection when they were described as well below the national average. Since the previous inspection a new coordinator for the subject has been appointed who is very enthusiastic and has very good subject knowledge. The level of teachers' subject level and skills was an issue in the previous inspection. This has been fully addressed. There have been many opportunities for staff training and this has boosted the confidence and competence of staff. Further training is due to begin later this year. The quality and provision of computers in the school have been improved and a school computer club has been received very well by the pupils. Very good links

with industry have helped the school to acquire additional computers and the provision of Internet facilities in every classroom. These improvements have influenced the quality of teaching which has made a significant contribution to improving standards.

114. An information and communications technology suite provides an excellent resource for teaching skills. Additionally, each class has at least one computer where skills can be applied across the curriculum. Good assessment procedures using target sheets keep teachers well informed about the levels of pupils' knowledge and understanding in information technology. The school uses the most recent national guidance in information and communications technology although the long-term aim is for the school to develop its own scheme of work to address its needs more precisely. Good quality planning, which is monitored by the curriculum coordinator, is a curriculum strength. The headteacher supports the application of information technology in all aspects of the curriculum and this, too, is having a positive impact on improving standards.
115. In Year 1 pupils add text to pictures using word processing tools. Words are chosen from a list and this gives pupils further experience in improving their skills organising information in alphabetical order. Pupils know that the backspace and arrow key can be used to correct mistakes. Most pupils can use the mouse to access and exit programs. Many pupils know the function of the recycle bin. In Year 2 pupils know how to program small robot to move forward and make 90 degree turns. They predict the distance the robot is required to cover to reach a cardboard tower and enter a sequence of instructions to test their predictions. By the age of seven pupils write using the keyboard and save work on to a disk. Pupils are introduced to logging on and off the Internet. They are aware that the Internet is an important source of information. All aspects of work in information and communications technology receives appropriate coverage.
116. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and often good. Pupils are aware of learning objectives and teachers very carefully review previous learning to remind pupils of procedures and techniques. Rapid question and answer sessions prepare pupils for further learning. Teachers have high expectations and work is well matched to pupils' abilities. Good use is made of subject specific language and pupils are given many opportunities to practise oral questioning in plenary sessions which evaluate what has been learned and the next stage of learning. Teachers review the effectiveness of their teaching and its impact on pupils' learning.
117. Pupils enjoy developing their information and communications technology skills. They are keen to improve, listen carefully to their teachers and look after equipment. They work cooperatively, take turns and help each other sensibly. The school shares its information technology facilities to develop skills within the community. Parents use the library computer which is linked to the Internet. The parent and toddler group also uses this computer to access talking books and for more general work using the Internet.

## **MUSIC**

118. Attainment in music is average and the school has maintained the satisfactory rate of progress identified in the last inspection. In Year 1 pupils echo their teacher's clapped rhythms and show good levels of concentration as their teacher asked them to identify the instruments played to accompany their song. They show good levels of concentration as their teacher captured their imagination by using a range of vocal cues, questions and comments to keep pupils on their toes. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 learn new songs quickly. They sing tunefully and the simple repetitive lyrics of the songs used help to reinforce English idioms as well as aiding simple accompaniment on untuned percussion instruments. Pupils maintain a pulse; beat four beat to the bar and have fun while learning. In Year 2 singing develops so that a two part song with one group of pupils providing a nonsense response is handled well. The teaching in both lessons was carefully

structured to allow pupils to learn the songs thoroughly and by the end of both observations the words of the songs had been learned and diction had improved.

119. Enthusiasm is shown by the way pupils bounce and weave to the rhythms of the music. In assemblies pupils listened carefully to a Schubert string quartet, and music from a range of cultures is used by teachers to enhance the curriculum. Pupils concentrate well in lessons and when choral singing in the school hall. They work hard and there is often much applause for others and at times for themselves. On these occasions songs are challenging and carefully chosen to reinforce language development. Learning support assistants and class teachers work well together, producing useful sessions that add to pupils' musical and linguistic development.
120. Teaching is never less than satisfactory and at times good. Good lessons are marked by a more thorough knowledge of music and in particular those aspects which encourage pupils to make their own music. Graphical notation is used well to help pupils understand the dynamics of music and a good range of methods is used so that learning about instruments is reinforced regularly. For example, even the youngest pupils remember the names of instruments such as claves and tambourines. As space is so tight in the school the library is used for music lessons. This works well when the kitchen is not needed but at other times people moving from the kitchen to other parts of the school disturbs pupils' concentration.
121. The curriculum is based on a published scheme and as such covers all of the aspects of the National Curriculum. The co-ordinator is a knowledgeable and influential teacher and is a good ambassador for the subject within the school. The plans for the development of the subject are appropriate.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

122. At the age of seven, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve standards that are broadly in line with the level expected of their age nationally with good progress being made in games activities and swimming. This reflects standards reported in the previous report but there was no evidence on this occasion of pupils underachieving through lack of challenge. Pupils make satisfactory gains in the acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding in physical education and in their body co-ordination and control in particular. All pupils understand the need for warming up at the beginning of the lesson and cooling down at its end. In Year 2, all pupils are gaining in confidence in the water, using floats and armbands to move through the water. Some boys are able to swim using armbands. In games, Year 1 pupils practice hard to improve their ball controlling skills using tennis racquets, cricket bats and hockey sticks. They are able to evaluate their performance in controlling balls of different sizes. In Year 2, pupils practice hard to improve their sending and receiving skills using large and small balls.
123. Pupils respond well to their lessons. They work with enthusiasm and put a great deal of energy into their activities. They are keenly involved in their lessons. They appreciate the efforts of their peers when they are demonstrating their good practice. The pupils have good attitudes to physical education. The pupils, with very few exceptions, behave well, listen carefully and have regard for others. Many pupils enjoy taking part in the gymnastics club during lunchtime.
124. The quality of teaching is good with three out of five lessons being good or very good, the remainder being satisfactory. Teachers' planning is good with clear learning objectives and lessons are developed logically and challenge the pupils' learning. The lessons have a brisk pace, supported by clear expositions and active coaching. The teachers make good use of praise and encouragement of pupils to evaluate and therefore improve their performance. The plenary session plays a significant role in this process. They have high expectations of their pupils.

125. The school provides the full range of the curriculum for its pupils, including swimming. The co-ordinator, working with her colleagues, has begun the introduction of the TOPS scheme into the school to develop further the pupils' skills and to provide greater challenge. This is being achieved through support and training. The school has a wide range of good equipment that it uses efficiently.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

126. Standards in religious education are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for pupils to the age of seven, and have been maintained since the last inspection. The findings of the previous report regarding progression in the curriculum framework have been addressed and there is now a good curriculum balance between the study of Christianity and the Islamic faith.

127. By the end of Year 2 pupils know that people hold different beliefs and understand and that they worship in different ways and in different places. They have visited the local mosque and Christian church and have questioned the religious leaders about values and beliefs associated with worship and prayer for children of their age. They have studied some religious buildings, and looked in detail at religious symbols, recognizing their significance and the customs surrounding their use. For example, younger pupils looked at and made drawings of the outside of religious churches and mosques, whilst older pupils in Year 2 compared the importance of the Qu'ran and the Bible. They studied the sayings about the care of plants and animals both by the Prophet Mohammed and in the Bible. Pupils have talked about special places and special people and reflected on the reasons why these places and people are important in our lives. Some pupils understand that Christians believe in one God and that Jesus is His son. They know the principles of Islam and the importance of fasting at Ramadan before the celebrations of Eid-ul-Fitr. The pupils have enjoyed studying weddings using role-play to dress in different wedding dresses. Particularly useful has been the work on ceremonies of welcome for a new baby as it encouraged pupils to undertake some further good research work on their own birth ceremonies. As part of this study local parents came to school to describe the ceremonies of welcome and baptism for a Christian and Muslim baby, providing good first-hand experiences that encouraged the pupils to show a lively interest in this topic.

128. Pupils' attitudes to learning in this subject are good. They listen attentively when new work is explained and mostly respond readily to questions by the teacher. They are eager to learn about the differences in religious beliefs by visits out of school and by welcoming visitors. Pupils work well together when they share resources and in role-play. They give good attention to homework and complete it conscientiously.

129. Teaching in religious education is good. Teachers prepare their work thoroughly and this sustains the pupils' interest well. Pupils are captivated in their learning by the stories and activities, and as a result they listen and work well. Valuable links are made to other subjects of the curriculum such as English and art and with the moral and cultural development of pupils. Excellent use is made of homework to consolidate learning in school and provides good opportunities for personal research.

130. Assessment is not well developed and there is no monitoring in class by the co-ordinator. However, in a climate of sharing and support teachers plan well together and evaluate results effectively. The school has built up a good selection of resources, which enhance the curriculum.