

# INSPECTION REPORT

**Spring Meadow Infant School**  
Ely

LEA area : Cambridgeshire

Unique Reference Number : 110760

Headteacher : Mrs S Harbour

Reporting inspector : Mrs L Moore  
21243

Dates of inspection : 27<sup>th</sup>-30<sup>th</sup> September 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707020

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school : Infant

Type of control : Local Education Authority

Age range of pupils : 3 to 7

Gender of pupils : Mixed

School address : High Barns  
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Cambridgeshire  
CB7 4RB

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Appropriate authority : Governing Body

Name of chair of governors : Dr H Smith

Date of previous inspection : May 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs L Moore, Registered Inspector	Mathematics Information technology Music Special Educational Needs	Attainment & progress Teaching Leadership & management
Mr L. Kuraishi, Lay Inspector		Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Attendance Partnership with Parents and the Community
Mrs J Clayphan	English Design & technology Religious education Equal opportunities	Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
Mrs C Kickham	Science Art Under Fives	Curriculum & assessment
Mr M Heyes	History Geography Physical education	Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Efficiency of the school

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## MAIN FINDINGS

### What the school does well

- The quality of education is good in the early years classes
- Standards in physical education are high
  - Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships are good
  - There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs
  - The school has a good partnership with parents
  - Strong leadership is provided by the headteacher, chair of governors and senior management team
  - Financial control and school administration are good

### Where the school has weaknesses

- I. There are inconsistencies in the school's methods of planning and assessment
- II. Pupils have only limited opportunities for independent learning
- III. There is no homework policy and use of homework is inconsistent
- IV. The school development plan lacks details of costings and ongoing progress towards individual targets is not documented
- V. A small number of statutory requirements have been omitted from some school documentation
- VI. The high standards observed in information technology during the previous inspection are no longer evident.

The weaknesses are outweighed by what the school does well, but they will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which will be sent to all parents or guardians of pupils at the school.

### How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school has overcome most of the weaknesses pointed out in its last inspection of May 1996, and is better than it was. There have been improvements in curriculum and assessment, although these are not yet consistent across the school and their impact upon standards is not yet fully evident. Some subject policies are not yet supported by assessment arrangements. Teachers' confidence and competence have improved, particularly in the early years classes and physical education. The balance of the under fives curriculum has been successfully addressed. High standards of behaviour and discipline are being maintained.

### Standards in subjects

The table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds in 1998 based on the National Curriculum tests:

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools	Key	
			<i>well above average</i>	A
			<i>above average</i>	B
			<i>average</i>	C
			<i>below average</i>	D
			<i>well below average</i>	E
Reading	C	C		
Writing	C	C		
Mathematics	C	C		

The information shows that pupils' results in reading, writing and mathematics are broadly in line with the average for similar schools.

Standards in the under fives classes are above average and they are also high in physical education. However, the high standards observed in information technology during the previous inspection are no longer evident.

### Quality of teaching

Teaching in:	Under 5	5 - 7 years	7 - 11 years
English	Good	Satisfactory	-
Mathematics	Good	Satisfactory	-
Science		Satisfactory	-
Information technology		Satisfactory	-
Religious education		Satisfactory	-
Other subjects	Good	Satisfactory	-

Teaching is at least satisfactory in all lessons. In 45% it is good and 3% of lessons are very good. The majority of teaching in the nursery and reception classes is good.

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

### Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Very good throughout the school.

Attendance	Satisfactory; similar to the national average.
Ethos*	Positive; provides an effective learning environment for the pupils.
Leadership and management	Satisfactory; strong leadership provided by headteacher, chair of governors and senior management team; most curriculum co-ordinators are unable to monitor teaching and learning in their subjects.
Curriculum	Good in nursery and reception; satisfactory in Key Stage One. Planning is good in the early years and satisfactory in Key Stage One.
Pupils with special educational needs	Good provision throughout the school.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Satisfactory provision in spiritual, social and cultural development; provision for pupils' moral development is good.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Satisfactory match of teachers and support staff to the needs of the school; quality and quantity of resources is satisfactory and the accommodation is good.
Value for money	Satisfactory.

\* *Ethos is the climate for learning: attitudes to work, relationships and the commitment to high standards.*

## The parents' views of the school

What most parents like about the school	What some parents are not happy about
<p>VII. The school recognises the importance of a partnership between home and school</p> <p>VIII. Staff work hard to establish good communication with parents</p> <p>IX. The school keeps parents well informed about their children's progress</p> <p>X. It enables their children to achieve a good standard of work</p> <p>XI. Attitudes promoted by the school are very good</p> <p>XII. Pupils with special educational needs are given good support</p> <p>XIII. Pupils like the school and are happy and secure while at the school</p>	<p>XIV. A small number would like further progress, such as individual target setting, with targets</p> <p>XV. A small number are anxious about the</p>

Inspectors' judgements support parents' positive views. The school has recently introduced a structure for monitoring pupils' progress towards targets set for them. Standards in reading indicate that the methods of teaching are appropriate.

## **KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION**

To raise standards and to continue to improve the quality of teaching and learning, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:

- XVI. Ensure that assessment opportunities are included in all curriculum policies and that methods of planning and assessment are implemented consistently throughout the school; (paragraphs 52, 57, 60, 145, 172, 180, 205 and 212)
- XVII. Provide more opportunities for independent learning; (paragraphs 44, 141 and 142)
- XVIII. Put in place a homework policy and ensure a more consistent use of homework; (paragraphs 54, 143, 155 and 179)
- XIX. Include details of costings in the school development plan and develop a structure whereby it is possible to monitor progress towards individual targets; (paragraph 81)

In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the school's post-inspection action plan:

- XX. Ensure that the school prospectus and the governing body's annual report to parents meet statutory requirements in full; (paragraphs 76 and 82)
- XXI. Improve pupils' attainment and curriculum provision in information and communication technology, as already identified in the school development plan. (paragraphs 16, 37, 45 and 167)

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Characteristics of the school**

- 1 Spring Meadow Infant School is situated in an area of mixed housing towards the outskirts of the city of Ely. Pupils come from a variety of backgrounds and enter school with a range of abilities and needs. Most of them have attended the school nursery. The school is bigger than most infant schools, having 291 full-time pupils on roll, aged from 4 years to 7 years, and 96 part-time children aged from 3 years to 4 years in the nursery. Almost all pupils come from homes where English is the first language. Almost 15% of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is less than the national average of 19.9%.
- 2 There are 50 pupils on the school's register of Special Educational Needs, three of whom have a statement of Special Need. This is broadly in line with the national average for similar schools.
- 3 The school has a Special Educational Needs Assessment Unit on site, staffed by a teacher and nursery nurse. There are currently 10 pupils in the unit, who work as a group in the morning and integrate into the reception classes for three afternoons each week.
- 4 The school's main areas of curricular focus, as stated in its aims, are literacy, numeracy and information and communications technology.

## Key Indicators

### Attainment at Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1  
for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1998	59	45	104

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	40	43	45
	Girls	41	43	42
	Total	81	86	87
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	79	84	85
	National	80	81	84

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	39	46	53
	Girls	40	41	44
	Total	79	87	97
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	77	85	95
	National	81	85	86

## Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year

		%
Authorised Absence	School	4.2
	National comparative data	5.7
Unauthorised Absence	School	0.7
	National comparative data	0.5

## Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:

	Number
Fixed period	0
Permanent	0

## Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is :

	%
Very good or better	3
Satisfactory or better	97
Less than satisfactory	0

## **PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

### **EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL**

#### **Attainment and progress**

- 1 Children enter the nursery with varying levels of attainment, but overall attainment is about average. This judgement is supported by the results of the school's methods of baseline assessment which are administered on entry to the reception classes.
- 2 The development of children's language and literacy is good in both the nursery and reception classes. Children in both the nursery and reception classes enjoy recognising and selecting their name card at the beginning of a session, practise their writing in well resourced writing areas and take pleasure in sharing books with each other. Children listen attentively to teacher instructions, explanations and stories and make appropriate responses. Children in reception are able to recognise the beginning sounds to words and demonstrate that they can use a growing vocabulary.
- 3 The provision for children's mathematical development is good overall in the nursery and reception classes. In the nursery, the children sort and match everyday objects into sets and use appropriate mathematical language to describe shape and size. In the reception classes, children insert missing numbers into a number line or work within a wide range of mathematically focused activities such as number puzzles and number lotto.
- 4 Good progress is made in the nursery and reception classes, and attainment at the beginning of statutory education is slightly above average. The pupils in the present Years 1 and 2 have not had the benefit of attending the nursery since its recent improvement. Consequently, the attainment of pupils at the end of Year 2 is in line with national averages in mathematics and science. In English, attainment is above average in speaking and listening, and also in reading, with attainment in writing being about average. The results of national tests for seven year olds indicate an improvement in overall standards in English and mathematics over the last three years.
- 5 Attainment in speaking and listening is above the national standard at the end of Key Stage 1. Throughout the school pupils listen carefully, with concentration and begin to question and contribute effectively to topics under discussion. Their speech is clear and they are confident to express views and describe experiences to the rest of the group. They use an increasingly wide vocabulary.
- 6 Attainment in reading is above the national standard. By the end of the key stage the pupils read with accuracy and understanding, both from their reading books and from unfamiliar texts. The pupils use both context and phonics to decode unfamiliar words. They make reference to the text to explain the story. They understand technical terms such as author and publisher. However there is no evidence that they use the school library regularly for information, and their research skills are underdeveloped.
- 7 Samples of pupils' work indicate that attainment in writing at the end of Key Stage 1 is slightly above the national standard. Pupils' writing shows increasingly clear structure, correct grammar and punctuation. They usually spell words accurately and make sensitive use of vocabulary. They are familiar with a range of forms which include poetry and haiku, stories, reports and book reviews. Handwriting is joined and legible and increasingly consistent in size. Layout is usually clear but standards of neatness vary.
- 8 In mathematics, higher-attaining pupils in Year 2 can add coins to make amounts up to £1, whilst the lower-attainers are able to recognise and match coins of different denominations. Pupils count from zero to 100 in tens, and back again and calculate 20 more or less than a given number using a hundred square.
- 9 Scrutiny of pupils' previous work indicates that, by the end of Year 2 they have a good grasp of addition and subtraction facts to 100, understand the concepts and vocabulary connected with different forms of measurement, including length, weight and time and have a good understanding of shape and pattern.
- 10 Across the key stage, pupils' attainment in mental arithmetic is slightly above average. This may be due to the introduction of the oral/mental element within the numeracy lesson. Standards in number and algebra are higher than in other aspects of mathematics, although the structure of the numeracy lesson is improving standards in using and applying mathematics, as most lessons contain a high practical element.

- 11 In science, the work seen in all four attainment targets of experimental and investigative science, life processes and living things, materials and their properties and physical processes is of sound standard and in line with national expectations. Pupils in Year 2 are beginning to identify a range of common materials and know about their properties, they can work collaboratively to search for examples of different materials in their classroom and record their results in a tabular form. They are also able to use the computer to tabulate results of their investigations. They are able to respond to suggestions of how to find things out, they can make their own suggestions and make relevant observations and they have covered a range of science work across all four attainment targets.
- 12 The high standards in information and communication technology which were observed in the last inspection are no longer evident, with attainment throughout the school now in line with national expectations. Attainment in religious education is in line with that expected in the local agreed syllabus. Attainment in the non-core subjects is about average, and standards in physical education are above average.
- 13 The school has started to address the underachievement of boys in English by introducing more non-fiction books and texts which are more interesting to boys. Boys are also being allocated home reading books which they find more interesting than the previous books. At the moment, it is too early to assess the impact of these measures upon standards.
- 14 Lower-attaining pupils are well catered-for, as are those with special educational needs. Higher-attaining pupils are mentioned in most teachers' planning, but the work provided for them is often not sufficiently challenging. Streaming has been introduced in English and this is beginning to have a positive impact upon standards.
- 15 Throughout Key Stage 1, pupils make satisfactory progress in English, mathematics and science.
- 16 In English, pupils make steady progress in speaking and listening. They are articulate when they arrive in Year 1, and their speaking and listening skills are carefully developed further through opportunities to contribute to class discussions. Pupils make steady progress in reading. They consolidate their reading skills through set reading schemes and through the guided reading of the literacy hour. Although pupils make satisfactory progress in their understanding, fluency and experience of a range of texts, their library skills are underdeveloped and opportunities for all pupils to browse, research and sharpen their library skills are extremely limited. Writing improves across the key stage and pupils begin to write in an increasing range of styles and for a wider range of purposes. They satisfactorily develop their knowledge of spelling rules, and of grammar and punctuation. Pupils have satisfactory opportunities to develop their literacy skills in work across the curriculum.
- 17 In mathematics, pupils' progress overall is satisfactory, and in some lessons pupils make good progress. All pupils are learning new facts and skills and most are also consolidating prior learning. However, some pupils extend their knowledge throughout the lesson at a pace and depth which results in good progress being made. This good progress is only observed in lessons where the teaching is also good and is directly linked with high expectations and an appropriate level of challenge for all attainment levels.
- 18 Pupils make satisfactory progress in science throughout the key stage. The younger pupils learn about the properties of a small number of different materials and in Year 2 pupils learn to identify a range of materials and learn about their properties. They learn to work collaboratively on their investigations, to record their results in a tabular form and to use the computer to make useful graphs of their results.
- 19 In all subjects, pupils with special educational needs are well supported by adults. They make at least satisfactory progress and often their progress towards the targets set for them is good.
- 23 **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**
- 20 Children's personal and social development is a strong feature of the nursery and reception classes, both in planned activities and in daily routines. The children settle well into their classes and confidently follow

routines. They demonstrate personal independence by taking responsibility for hanging their coats and bags up and then quickly follow the daily routine. At the end of sessions children help to tidy away sensibly and quickly. Children begin to develop good relationships with each other and there are many opportunities for selecting activities and playing alongside and with each other.

- 21 Throughout Key Stage One, pupil's attitudes to learning are good. They concentrate for appreciable periods and complete their work with enthusiasm and enjoyment. Where pupils are less clear about the purpose of the task and how they are to accomplish it, their attitudes are generally satisfactory, but at times, they fall short of accepted standards and become distracted. This is especially evident where tasks are not matched to the different attainment groups, for example when reception class children are mixed with the children in the assessment unit.
- 22 Pupils' behaviour throughout the school is very good. Pupils understand the need to take turns in whole class lessons and are attentive in listening to the teacher and to each other. They ask for help politely without calling out and wait patiently for support when necessary. Pupils are courteous and polite to visitors and the staff. They often give very good support to each other. An extremely loving gesture was noted during the playtime when a boy offered his friendship to a girl who, for a moment was seen without a playmate. Pupils enjoy opportunities to engage in purposeful conversation during the play and lunchtime. They move about the building in an orderly manner. They show a high level of awareness of the need to be quiet when lining up for assembly and leaving the hall to return to classrooms. Throughout the school pupils frequently display good manners by holding open doors and greeting visitors politely.
- 23 Pupils play well and behave properly with their friends in the playground. There is no evidence of bullying or other unacceptable behaviour and relationships between pupils are very good. There is generally a high level of respect between pupils and adults. There is good racial harmony. There have been no exclusions during the last five years.
- 24 Pupils willingly take on responsibility. They carry out duties seriously and develop a good level of self-esteem. They take dinner registers to the school office and sometimes help teachers to tidy up the class rooms. However there are limited opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own behaviour and learning.
- 25 Parents express satisfaction at the high level of behaviour encouraged by the school and they are happy that the school has maintained good standards and improved the behaviour after school hours. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

## 29 **Attendance**

- 26 Attendance is generally satisfactory and broadly in line with the national average. Unauthorised absences are marginally higher than the national average. Attendance registers are completed correctly and meet statutory requirements. Unexplained absence or irregular patterns of absence are carefully investigated. There are occasional delays in the arrival of pupils who are brought to school by public transport. However, most pupils arrive punctually at the school and both the morning and afternoon sessions start promptly.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

### Teaching

- 27 The quality of teaching is at least satisfactory, with almost half good, and two lessons out of the 78 observed were very good. Most teaching in the nursery and reception classes is good.
- 28 In the early years, teachers have good knowledge and understanding and high expectations of the children's work and behaviour. Stimulating activities are provided and the best teaching takes place when the teacher focuses on one group for some time, introducing teaching points and extending the children's knowledge and vocabulary. Teaching is less successful when the teacher is constantly moving around the room, without spending sufficient time with any one group of children.
- 29 In Key Stage One, teachers manage the pupils well. Where the teaching is good, teachers provide challenging work and give good support to pupils who need this. Teachers usually have secure subject knowledge in most areas, with most teachers displaying both confidence and competence in physical education lessons. The less successful teaching occurs in lessons where the pace is too slow and many pupils are only consolidating previous learning, rather than making good progress acquiring new skills and knowledge.
- 30 In English, teaching in all lessons is satisfactory and in just over half the lessons observed, it was good. Teachers display secure knowledge of the subject, plan lessons carefully and ensure that group work is well targeted to ability. However not all teachers systematically set down specific learning objectives for each group to attain before each session. The Literacy Strategy is being carefully implemented, with good levels of consistency between classes and across the years.
- 31 In mathematics, the quality of teaching is at least satisfactory, with about one third of lessons being good. Teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the subject and most are well aware of their pupils' capabilities. In good lessons, the teachers clearly understand their pupils' needs and provide an appropriate range of activities and carefully support those pupils who are unsure. In less successful lessons, time is wasted because the teacher is less well-organised. The school is implementing the Numeracy Strategy in all classes.
- 32 In science, the quality of teaching is consistently sound. Teachers give clear explanations, classes are well organised and due attention is given to safety issues. Lessons are generally well paced, teachers have sound subject knowledge and appropriate rapport and relationship with pupils.
- 33 There is insufficient teaching of information and communication technology: resulting in lower attainment than was observed during the last inspection.
- 34 In religious education, the quality of teaching is always broadly satisfactory and on occasion it is very good. Teachers show sound knowledge of the topics and make careful outline plans. However opportunities are often missed for pupils to draw inferences with their own lives and so raise the lesson content above the mundane.
- 35 The quality of teaching in all other subjects is satisfactory and it is often good in physical education lessons. Teaching of pupils who attend the assessment unit is also good.

39

### The curriculum and assessment

- 36 The quality of the curriculum overall is satisfactory.
- 37 The previous report in 1996 stated that the school should "provide the balance of the curriculum for children who are under five". The school has addressed this key issue most effectively and the provision for under fives is now a strength of the school. Other strengths include the provision for pupils with Special Educational Needs and the provision for physical education.

- 38 The nursery and reception classes make good provision overall for the six areas of learning. These recent improvements in the nursery mean that progress at present is good overall. However, the effect of this has not yet begun to have an impact on standards in Key Stage One.
- 39 At Key Stage 1 the school provides a broadly based and appropriately balanced curriculum. Sufficient time is devoted to each subject and the school's 20% discretionary time is appropriately used to support English and Mathematics, which enhances literacy and numeracy development. There is however some curriculum time lost during the school day as a result of some late starts and early endings to lessons. The setting of pupils into attainment groups for English enhances the curriculum for pupils in Year 2 and this is beginning to have a positive impact on standards.
- 40 Although there are limited opportunities for independent learning, the planned curriculum promotes intellectual and personal development effectively and physical development well.
- 41 The curriculum meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. However the high standards in information technology reported in the last inspection are not now evident and there is limited use of control technology and data handling.
- 42 All foundation subjects are covered appropriately within the school's curriculum provision, in accordance with the present arrangements for a more flexible curriculum.
- 43 Sex education is taught by responding to pupils' questions in sensitive and sympathetic ways and pupils will receive health education and drugs awareness through the science scheme of work which has recently been introduced.
- 44 Curriculum planning is satisfactory overall. Sound planning in year groups helps to ensure that pupils have equality of opportunity, access to the full curriculum and take part in all activities. Although high attainers are challenged appropriately in some subjects, for example English where the setting in Year 2 helps to meet their needs, in other subjects such as information technology the more able are insufficiently challenged.
- 45 The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs is good and complies with the recommendations of The Code of Practice. Termly reviews are held to discuss pupils' progress and the Special Needs Register is updated regularly with pupils being placed at the appropriate stage for their needs. Individual education plans are clear with specific short term targets. Special needs pupils are well supported by teachers and support staff and there are no pupils for whom the National Curriculum is disapplied.
- 46 The previous inspection in 1996 noted that "the school should provide guidance for teachers on: more precise learning objectives, consistency in assessment practice and the marking of pupils work".
- 47 The school has responded to these issues and teachers have now had some guidance on learning objectives. New planning systems which focus on learning objectives have recently been introduced. In addition, the school has introduced some useful schemes of work which guide teachers planning, for example, in science, art, physical education and early years.
- 48 The recently introduced planning systems are developing steadily. All staff now plan jointly in year groups using the commonly agreed formats for termly, half termly and weekly planning which place emphasis on learning objectives and the assessment of these. However, the quality and accuracy of the learning objectives remains inconsistent, with some daily planning having incomplete sections.
- 49 The curriculum is enriched by class outings to places of interest which are linked to the current topic. For example the nursery children visit a local farm in the spring term and have good opportunities to learn about young animals and growth and the reception children visit a local field study centre which provides good opportunities for environmental studies work. The pupils at the beginning of Key Stage One visit a butterfly farm and the oldest pupils in the school visit a coastal town to make comparisons between this and their own locality. The school has no extra curricular activities to enhance learning in the classroom.

- 50 Pupils have homework; for example, they take home reading books and associated reading tasks and parents and teachers record elements of progress in the home reading record. However, there is no homework policy and approaches to homework are inconsistent throughout the school.
- 51 The monitoring of the curriculum takes place through regular planning meetings in year groups which are attended by curriculum co-ordinators. This helps ensure that most planning is consistent across each year group and builds on what pupils have learned in previous years.
- 52 Members of the senior management team monitor teaching in their management non-contact time. However, not all curriculum co-ordinators have the opportunity to monitor teaching and learning in their subject. This inconsistency means that some co-ordinators have difficulties in fulfilling an adequate curriculum monitoring and management role.
- 56 **Assessment**
- 53 Statutory requirements in assessment are met and the school is beginning to develop consistency in assessment practice, although at present the implementation is not consistent.
- 54 A range of standard and national assessments is used to help ensure teaching meets the needs of individuals and groups of children, for example, the LEA Baseline Scheme which assesses attainment on entry to statutory schooling, the Middle Infant Screening Test which identifies pupils who need additional support and end of Key Stage tests.
- 55 The school is beginning to analyse data with a view to informing planning and identifying targets for individuals and groups of pupils.
- 56 New systems for the day to day assessment of particular groups of pupils have been recently introduced. However, although these systems are manageable and should help identify the needs of specific groups of pupils, they have not been in place long enough for their impact on pupils' progress to be evaluated. At present, many curriculum policies do not include assessment opportunities.
- 57 The school records the progress of individual pupils in well presented comprehensive pupil record books which contain useful records and portfolio information from nursery to the end of Key Stage One. These records provide useful and relevant information about the development of individual children and include individual termly targets, assessment results and end of year reports. They are held by class teachers and used to inform planning. With the exception of reading records, teachers do not hold information about whole classes or year groups in an easily accessed form and this makes comparisons of progress of individuals and groups time consuming.
- 58 In response to the key issue raised in the 1996 inspection report the school has introduced a concise and clear marking policy which outlines principles and offers guidelines for marking. Although marking generally provides useful feedback to pupils, there is still variability in the marking throughout the school and across subjects.
- 62 **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**
- 59 The school continues to make sound provision for pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development. Provision for their moral development remains good.

- 60 Spiritual development is sound. In religious education lessons pupils gain an understanding and appreciation of some of the beliefs and precepts of major world faiths as well as Christianity. The quality of assemblies is satisfactory and they meet statutory requirements. Visitors such as a local Methodist minister occasionally take them. In one lesson, children in a reception class were amazed at the colours of the spectrum. However, in most of the lessons, assemblies and circle time observed, there was a lack of opportunity provided for pupils to experience wonder or be given enough guided time to reflect in order to deepen their self-knowledge. The presence of all members of staff at each assembly adds to the sense of importance and occasion.
- 61 Provision for moral development continues to be good. Pupils are expected to behave well, and are taught very effectively to know right from wrong, from their entry into the nursery. Adults give timely reminders about thoughtful behaviour and assemblies effectively reinforce moral precepts. Pupils show high levels of respect for everyone in school, and pupils with special educational needs are very well integrated and are shown loving respect by the whole community. Adults provide very good role models.
- 62 The provision for social development is sound. Pupils work well together and support each other when given suitable activities, but opportunities are missed, particularly at Key Stage 1, to encourage independent learning and the development of initiative. All pupils take turns to carry the class registers to the office, and Year 2 pupils are responsible for putting chairs away after assembly and for tidiness around school. They join in the life of the local community through visits at Christmas to a local hospital and a major department store to sing carols. Some of their artwork is also displayed on public hoardings. Last year a Year 2 class submitted some of their poetry to a national children's competition.
- 63 Provision for cultural development is satisfactory overall. There is a wide range of visits in connection with class topics, which include the local museum, the cathedral's exhibition of stained glass, a farm and a field study centre. Drama students come into school to act and to lead drama workshops during Book Week. Pupils review books they have read, listen to storytellers and participate in an annual book week in school. They look at artists' representations of the world in their art sessions. Pupils' experience of other cultures, apart from learning about facets of other religions, is more limited. A steel band visited school last year, Chinese New Year is celebrated annually, and there are some multi-cultural resources in the Early Years home corners. Since there are few representatives of ethnic minorities on roll at present, the school feels enough is being taught about other cultures at this comparatively early age.
- 67 **Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**
- 64 The schools' provision for the support, guidance and pupils' welfare is securely and soundly based throughout the school.
- 65 The Early Years staff place a high emphasis on developing children's self-confidence. Their warm reassuring manner with both children and parents instils confidence and provides a welcoming and supportive introduction to the school and its routines. A "staggered" entry for new children, combined with pre-school visits, enables them to familiarise themselves with school procedures in a gradual way.
- 66 Procedures for monitoring pupils' academic progress are in place and are becoming effective. The senior management team plots pupils' progress regularly and systematically as they move through the school and uses this information to predict pupils' subject levels by the time they leave school. 'Circle time' is used effectively to promote and encourage pupils' personal development as they progress through the school. The good relationships that exist between staff and pupils are built on to ensure that all pupils including those with special educational needs, are able to take full advantages of the educational opportunities offered to them. Pupils are helped to recognise their own potential and they are actively encouraged to achieve it. This helps build pupils' confidence and equip them with the personal skills to cope with everyday life in school.

- 67 The school has effective measures for recording pupils' attendance. All incidents of unacceptable or unexplained absence are routinely followed up. Registers are marked accurately and consistently. There are appropriate systems in place by which the administration staff identify incidents of persistent lateness or absence.
- 68 The school is very effective in promoting good behaviour throughout the school community. The behaviour policy is very clear and is consequently applied fairly around the school by all adults. There were no incidents of bullying or rough play observed during the inspection. The behaviour of pupils is consistently good and contributes effectively to the school's calm and orderly learning environment.
- 69 There are secure child protection procedures in place. Teachers know what they are and what signs to look for in pupils' behaviour. The headteacher and deputy headteacher are the designated persons responsible for dealing with such issues in school. There are secure procedures in place to ensure the health, safety and well-being of pupils. There are equipment safety checks carried out by the deputy headteacher on a half-termly basis, and staff fill out a 'defective' book if any equipment or item is unsafe. The school is well cared for and clean and contributes positively to maintaining the health and safety of pupils and staff within the school.
- 73 **Partnership with parents and the community**
- 70 The quality of the school's partnership with parents is good. Parents are very supportive of the school and value highly the work of the staff. They appreciate the friendly atmosphere and find the teachers and the administration staff welcoming and helpful.
- 71 There are regular newsletters and notices, which give information about school events and dates. Letters advising parents of forthcoming special functions and school visits are sent to parents well in time. There are three parents evenings each year. Parents of those children who have nursery places are invited to a pre-school induction day in the summer term to meet the staff and look around the classrooms. A similar meeting is held for the parents of reception children. These provide useful opportunities for parents and teachers to forge relationships prior to the children starting the nursery classes. The school takes very good care to ensure that parents are well informed about the school before their child starts.
- 72 Annual reports to parents are satisfactory and contain information on pupils' progress and attainment. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Some parents feel that the progress reports should also incorporate information on target setting. The school gives parents of children with special educational needs regular information about their children's progress and provides an opportunity for them to take part in the annual review. The school prospectus and governing body's annual report to parents are written in user-friendly language. However both have some statutory omissions which should be corrected in the next publications.
- 73 Parents support their children's learning in the school. A number of parents assist in class rooms by hearing readers or helping with other activities such as science projects, toy library and accompanying children on school trips. Parents regularly check homework diaries and make positive suggestions for improvement. Parents of children with special education needs advise school through well kept diaries of their children's activities during weekends and holidays time. Parents attend many school functions, for example the quiz night, ready steady cook, parents and children's fun day, Christmas fayre and many other fund raising and social activities.
- 74 The school benefits from the generous support of the local business community both in terms of donations and the provision of free professional services. Links with the local community and neighbouring junior school are well established. Regular curriculum co-ordinators' meetings and a day when Year 2 pupils spend a day with Year 3 teachers in the junior school develop relationships with peer groups. This helps the smooth transfer to the next stage of learning. The school contributes to various charitable appeals and maintains links with the local church. Links with other religious organisations are not sufficiently developed but parents are happy that their children are given adequate opportunity within the school to learn about other faiths at an early stage.

## **THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL**

### **78 Leadership and management**

- 1 The headteacher, chair of governors and senior management team work well together to provide strong leadership for the school. They have a clear vision of the school's needs and provide positive educational direction for the work of the school.
- 2 Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and members of the senior management team share the monitoring of their colleagues' teaching and planning with the headteacher. Examples of classroom observations provided by the school give descriptions of what happens in the lesson, but many do not clearly indicate what will be done to improve the teaching and learning in the future. Curriculum co-ordinators without a management responsibility are unable to monitor the quality of teaching in their subject as they are not given any non-contact time. However, all co-ordinators work hard to support their colleagues and monitor planning and pupils' work. Although the special educational needs co-ordinator was absent during the inspection, available evidence indicates that this area is managed well and there are positive links with the staff in the assessment unit, resulting in good support for all pupils with special needs throughout the school.
- 3 The school development plan contains clear priorities for development and gives an outline of the lead personnel, timescale and source of funding. However, it does not give details about costings and how the school development plan links with the school budget; also, there are no means by which the governing body can monitor progress towards the targets set, as the lead personnel do not keep written records of their individual areas for development. The document is, therefore, not as useful as it could be to help the school move forward.
- 4 The governing body has drawn up a clear and useful governors' development plan, which helps governors to plan ahead and ensure that all their duties are carried out. At present, this is not linked to the school development plan and so the two cannot support each other. Under the positive leadership of the chair of governors, the governing body has begun to develop its strategic role. Each governor is linked with a teacher and curriculum area. This is a useful arrangement, as it ensures that the governing body is able to build up the knowledge necessary to help support developments within the school. The governing body meets its statutory responsibilities, with the exception of a small number of omissions within some documentation.
- 5 There is a positive ethos, which is reflected in the good attitudes and very good behaviour and relationships throughout the school. This provides an effective learning environment for its pupils.
- 6 The school is now in a position where a combination of the leadership provided by the senior management team, an increased involvement of subject co-ordinators and the recent improvement of the governing body now provides it with the ability to effect further improvements and continue to raise standards.

### **84 Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

- 7 The provision of staffing, accommodation and learning resources continues to be satisfactory.
- 8 The school has a sufficient number of teachers who are suitably trained and experienced to teach early years and the subjects of the National Curriculum. The quality of staffing for pupils with special educational needs is good. This all has a positive impact on the curriculum that is provided and the standards that are reached. The judicious redeployment of the deputy head teacher to the Nursery two years ago, has helped to start to raise standards. There is an even distribution of subject responsibility, and staff fulfil their roles with commitment. There is good co-operation between staff teaching within the same year group. There is a good level of experienced support staff who, together with valued voluntary helpers, contribute much to the pupils' standards of attainment and good behaviour. The school is also fortunate in the excellent quality of the secretarial staff. The lunchtime assistants and cleaners take deep personal interest in the pupils' welfare and in addition to their designated roles, support the school wholeheartedly in many other ways.

- 9 There are helpful arrangements in place for the induction of new staff, and effective mentoring for newly qualified teachers. Current arrangements for the professional development of staff are satisfactory. The appraisal process is carried out by a system of annual review, and provides a useful input to staff development. It allows the training needs of individuals to be identified and linked with the priorities of the school development plan.
- 10 The overall adequacy of the accommodation is good. Classrooms are of good size and the available space is satisfactorily used except for the school library area which is neglected for most of each day. Storage and cloakroom facilities are good. Attractive displays enhance the corridors, but in the classrooms there is a preponderance of teacher-generated material. The hall is a generous size for gymnastic activities. The Early Years playground has been much improved lately and is now of a high standard. Both school and playgrounds are clean and acceptably tidy throughout the day. All of these factors contribute positively to good standards for learning.
- 11 Resource provision is satisfactory overall, with some good features. Resources are effectively maintained by co-ordinators. New resources have been introduced to support the Literacy Strategy, and these are satisfactory in quantity and good in quality. There is a sufficient range of non-fiction books to promote effective learning. Resources to support the teaching of mathematics are satisfactory. Resources are carefully stored, but some are in a building separate from the main school and therefore not easily accessible. Good use is made of resources beyond the school to enhance learning, while educational visits make a valuable contribution to several curriculum areas.

89 **The efficiency of the school**

- 12 The overall efficiency of the school is good. The efficiency of the school administration is a particular strength of the school. This ensures that the school runs very smoothly and the efficient day-to-day organisation and administration procedures, including school finance matters, make a positive contribution to the school's good ethos.
- 13 All major educational developments are supported through careful financial planning. Funds are used appropriately for staffing, curriculum development, particularly in literacy and literacy resources, and the school premises, although these are not costed in the school development plan. The amount spent on support staff is higher than average, but this has had a positive impact upon the efficiency of the administrative systems and the quality of classroom support, particularly for pupils with special educational needs.
- 14 The governors monitor and evaluate the impact their expenditure has on standards in the school. The finance sub-committee meets once a term and more frequently when the budget is being set. In recent years, the school's budget has been given some degree of protection by the local authority, to cover a fall in pupil numbers. Consequently, the governing body has set cautious budgets, in order to ensure that the school did not carry forward any deficit into the 2000/2001 financial year, when the protection ceases. Although there is at present approximately 10 per cent of the budget carried forward to the next financial year, this is balanced by a similar amount brought forward from the previous year, reflecting an actual expenditure of almost 100 per cent of the budget. This indicates prudent financial planning by the governing body. The school makes good use of charities, school funds and the PSA for major items of expenditure. There has been no audit taken within the last six years.
- 15 Financial control and school administration are good, and contribute to the smooth and effective running of the school. Finances are kept in good order. School administration is good and the two administrative staff ensure that the headteacher and the governing body are kept up to date with the financial situation within school.

- 16 The school makes effective use of all staff and particularly its support staff. Volunteers also make a valuable contribution to the effectiveness of the learning environment provided in school. Accommodation and learning resources are used effectively to deliver the curriculum. Money allocated for pupils with special educational needs is used well within school, and in accordance with statutory requirements. The unit cost per pupil is higher than that of similar schools nationally. In terms of the educational standards and progress achieved by the pupils and the quality of education provided by the school in relation to its context and income, the school provides sound value for money.

## **PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE**

- 1 The previous report in 1996 stated that the school should “provide the balance of the curriculum for children who are under five”.
- 2 The school has addressed this issue most effectively and the provision for under fives is now a strength of the school.
- 3 Children’s attainment on entry to the nursery is just about average for their age. By the time they have reached five the achievements of most children are above national expectations. This is confirmed by the local authority assessments when children enter reception.
- 4 The nursery and reception classes make good provision overall for the six areas of learning. Teaching is always sound and usually good and the children respond well. Most are likely to achieve the desirable outcomes on entering compulsory education and some will exceed this level. These recent improvements in the nursery mean that progress at present is good overall, although the effect of this has not yet begun to have an impact on standards in Key Stage One.

#### **98 Personal and Social Development**

- 5 Children’s personal and social development is a strong feature of the nursery and reception classes, both in planned activities and in daily routines. The children settle well into their classes and confidently follow routines. For example, at the beginning of the day nursery and reception children come into class in a relaxed and confident manner. They demonstrate personal independence by taking responsibility for hanging their coats and bags up and then quickly follow the daily routine. At the end of sessions children help to tidy away sensibly and quickly.
- 6 Both the nursery and reception classes provide a good range of planned play opportunities which are clearly linked to and support the achievement of the desirable outcomes including those related to personal and social development. For example, planned outdoor play has a clear focus for each day of the week and includes small apparatus, “ride-on” toys, imaginative play and play which focuses on knowledge and understanding of the world.
- 7 Children are encouraged to develop good relationships with each other and there are many opportunities for selecting activities and playing alongside and with each other. For example, children play happily alongside each other in the water tray as they make and observe large bubbles using well chosen bubble frames. Nursery children are encouraged to choose when to eat their snack, they join the snack table sensibly and eat their snacks politely and sociably.
- 8 The quality of teaching and provision to promote personal and social development is good. The Early Years staff place a high emphasis on developing children’s self confidence and their warm reassuring manner with both children and parents instils confidence. Children are encouraged to respect each other, for example, through the birthday assembly and circle time routines when they take turns and share news such as the birth of a sister. In some of the reception classes there are opportunities to find out about other cultures, for example, through attractive book displays and artefacts. However there are fewer such opportunities in the nursery and this is a weakness of the provision.
- 9 Most children are in line to achieve the desirable outcomes in personal and social development and many are likely to exceed these by the age of five.

## 103 **Language and Literacy**

- 10 The development of children's language and literacy is good in both the nursery and reception classes.
- 11 There are many good learning experiences and routines which foster children's language and literacy skills. For example, children in both the nursery and reception classes enjoy recognising and selecting their name card at the beginning of a session. They practise their writing in well resourced writing areas and take pleasure in sharing books with each other as they sit in pairs in the book corner.
- 12 Children listen attentively to teacher instructions, explanations and stories and make appropriate responses. For example, when being introduced to the letter S reception children are keen to help correct deliberate "mistakes" and respect each other's contributions. Children in reception are able to recognise the beginning sounds to words and demonstrate that they can use a growing vocabulary. They are able to use and enjoy books, know that pictures and words have meaning and are able to handle books appropriately and respectfully. Nursery children are beginning to use emergent writing for real purposes. For example, they make birthday cards in the Birthday Party role play area. Their home-made cards are valued by staff and quickly displayed. Children make good progress in both nursery and reception. They are likely to achieve the desirable outcomes for children's learning in language and literacy and some are likely to exceed these.

## 106 **Mathematical Development**

- 13 The provision for children's mathematical development is good overall in the nursery and reception classes.
- 14 In the nursery, the children have well planned opportunities to sort and match everyday objects into sets and to use appropriate mathematical language to describe shape and size. For example, children sort food cartons into sets of big and little and find matching boxes, shapes and colours. They recognise and create mathematical patterns; for example, they make patterns with beads.
- 15 There are good opportunities for children to recognise and use numbers; for example, in a reception class activity where children insert missing numbers into a number line, or when children work independently or alongside each other with good support from adults in a wide range of mathematically focused activities such as number puzzles and number lotto.
- 16 Children enjoy recording numbers in a variety of ways and through well planned practical activities such as making groups of three vegetable prints. They are well supported in this activity by effective teacher interventions and questions which encourage problem solving.
- 17 Appropriate play situations such as the fruit and vegetable shop and the birthday party offer relevant and engaging mathematical experiences and support children's mathematical development. There are good displays of children's work in mathematics; for example, paintings of the number two and collages made from mathematical shapes such as squares and circles.
- 18 Children make good progress in mathematical development. They are likely to attain the desirable outcomes by the age of five and some are likely to exceed this standard.

## 112 **Knowledge and Understanding of the World**

- 19 The provision to develop children's knowledge and understanding of the world is good throughout the nursery and reception classes. The early years staff provide a well planned, carefully thought-out programme of learning experiences to support this area of the curriculum.

- 20 A strength of the provision is the regular planned outdoor play which focuses on knowledge and understanding. A good range of attractive activities such as gardening, construction materials, train sets, tool shop, musical instruments and ride-on toys is available outside and children take great delight in choosing their focus and learning about the world around them. Through this planned outdoor play which is well supported by adults, children learn about the features of their natural world such as soil and worms, and the weather and its effect on their lives; for example, they discuss the impact the weather will have on their play.
- 21 A good range of appropriate indoor activities in both the nursery and reception classes promote children's knowledge and understanding of the world. These include computer programs such as a phonic program used most effectively by a pair of children who learn to recognise letters of the alphabet by shape and sound, tape recorders which are used by children to support their listening skills and a range of construction materials and tools such as screwdrivers which children use to make simple models.
- 22 Children make good progress in knowledge and understanding of the world; they are likely to achieve the desirable outcomes by the age of five and many are likely to exceed these.

### 116 **Creative Development**

- 23 Creative work throughout the nursery is good and children make good progress in this area. Children participate in a wide range of well planned and enjoyable activities which promote their creative development.
- 24 There are good opportunities to explore sound both indoors and outside. For example, a trio of reception children enjoy exploring the sounds made by a range of musical instruments. Nursery children participate enthusiastically in singing and clapping and take turns to accompany their singing with musical instruments as they participate in circle time at the end of the day.
- 25 Children have good opportunities to explore colour, texture, shape, space and form in two and three dimensions. For example, children in a reception class make, paint and varnish lifelike clay models of apples and they enjoy constructing three-dimensional junk models of vehicles.
- 26 There are many examples of children's paintings and drawings and creative work throughout the nursery and reception classes; for example, self-portraits in paints, observational drawings in pencil and collage pictures.
- 27 Children enjoy participating in imaginative play, for example in the role play areas in each classroom. However, although children use these areas imaginatively the range of clothes is limited in some rooms and there is a lack of role play equipment and clothes reflecting other cultures. There is also a lack of print in some of the role play areas in the nursery, as the nursery policy is to add print as the term progresses. However, this results in a lack of an appropriate stimulus in the early part of the academic year.
- 28 Overall the nursery and reception classes promote children's creative development well. They are likely to achieve the desirable outcomes in creative development and some are likely to exceed these.

### **Physical Development**

- 29 The nursery and reception unit promote children's physical development well with a carefully planned programme of relevant activities and children make good progress in this area.
- 30 The staff make good use of the outdoor play area and children use a good range of high quality trikes, push-along toys and scooters.

- 31 Children take delight in using these toys and they move confidently and imaginatively with increasing control and co-ordination. They make good use of the available space, co-operate well and show respect for each other. Children handle appropriate tools such as screwdrivers, they use malleable materials such as playdough with increasing control to create shapes and numbers and use a range of construction equipment to create models.
- 32 Physical education lessons indoors are well managed. Teachers have a good knowledge of gymnastics and ensure that children use different parts of their bodies to travel in different ways around the hall with increasing control.
- 33 The provision for physical education is good and children are likely to achieve the desirable outcomes on reaching the age of five.

#### 127 **Teaching and Assessment**

- 34 All staff have a secure knowledge of the desirable outcomes which they use to plan an effective programme that meets the needs of the children. Planning is thorough with appropriate priority given to personal and social development, language and literacy and mathematical development.
- 35 Staff are effectively deployed for most of the time, and work in a range of appropriate groupings, for example with individual children and the whole class. Teaching is most effective when staff devote some time to each group and less so when they constantly move around the classroom without any obvious focus.
- 36 Assessment is thorough. Useful anecdotal records of individual children are kept and regularly updated and the nursery system provides a comprehensive record of pupil development. The nursery entry profile and baseline assessment are used to ensure teaching meets the needs of children.
- 37 Staff make good use of learning resources to promote the desirable outcomes. However in some of the role play areas there are limited resources to reflect other cultures.

#### 131 **Partnership with Parents and Carers**

- 38 The school promotes good relationships with parents and carers.
- 39 Parents are given helpful information about the educational provision through useful information booklets, induction evenings and clear notice boards. They are welcomed into school at the beginning and end of the day and help in classes. For example one parent manages the toy library and other parents work with groups of individuals. The school has a well thought-out induction programme which ensures that children settle in quickly and parents feel valued.

## 133 English

- 40 When compared to schools nationally and to schools of similar type, the percentage of pupils achieving level 2 or above in the 1998 National Curriculum assessment tests is close to the national average at the end of Key Stage 1. Performance in 1999 has not yet been analysed nationally, but results suggest that broadly standards have been maintained. Over the past three years the performance in reading has been close to the national average, and in writing it has been a little below. Taking all three years into account the performance of pupils in English is close to the national average. There are no significant differences between the performances of boys and girls. Higher attainers have one lesson a week during which they are challenged at appropriately higher levels, and pupils with special educational needs make good progress. The standards observed in the previous report have been maintained, and skills in speaking and listening, and in reading have improved, while standards in writing are rising.
- 41 Attainment in speaking and listening is above the national standard at the end of Key Stage 1. Throughout the school pupils listen carefully, with concentration and begin to question and contribute effectively to topics under discussion. Their speech is clear and they are confident to express views and describe experiences to the rest of the group. They use an increasingly wide vocabulary.
- 42 Attainment in reading is above the national standard. By the end of the key stage pupils read with accuracy and understanding, both from their reading books and from unfamiliar texts. Pupils use both context and phonics to decode unfamiliar words. They make reference to the text to explain the story. They understand technical terms such as author and publisher. However there is no evidence that they use the school library regularly for information, and their research skills are underdeveloped.
- 43 Samples of pupils' work indicate that attainment in writing at the end of Key Stage 1 is slightly above the national standard. Pupils' writing shows increasingly clear structure, correct grammar and punctuation. They usually spell words accurately and make sensitive use of vocabulary. They are familiar with a range of forms which include poetry and haiku, stories, reports and book reviews. Handwriting is joined and legible and increasingly consistent in size. Layout is usually clear but standards of neatness vary.
- 44 From a scrutiny of written work, talking to pupils and observing all classes at work, the judgement of the team is that standards in listening and speaking and in reading are above national expectations and that standards in writing, although in line with national expectations at the start of the key stage, are slightly above national expectations by the end of Year 2.
- 45 Pupils come into school at present with above average skills in speaking and listening and in reading, and average skills in writing. They make sound progress through the key stage in all skills, and some pupils make good progress. This is supported by the scrutiny of last year's written work which shows that pupils make steady progress at the start of the key stage and that where there is good teaching, progress in writing accelerates towards the top of the key stage.
- 46 Pupils make steady progress in speaking and listening. They are articulate when they arrive in Year 1, and their speaking and listening skills are carefully developed further through opportunities to contribute to class discussions. For example, in Year 2 pupils discuss different publishing styles seen in books within the classroom. Pupils make steady progress in reading. They consolidate their reading skills through set reading schemes and through the guided reading of the literacy hour. Older pupils maintain book reviews of the fiction books they have read. Pupils' progress is enhanced by the use of the guided reading time and they have opportunities to use synonyms to heighten their awareness of the meaning of text in class sessions. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their understanding, fluency and experience of a range of texts, but their library skills are underdeveloped. Opportunities for all pupils to browse, research and sharpen their library skills are extremely limited at present. Apart from one class looking at fiction books towards the end of a literacy session, neither fiction nor reference books were in use during the inspection, and pupils said they had not used the libraries since the start of the Autumn term. When questioned, pupils revealed a lack of knowledge of how to use a reference library.

- 47 Writing improves across the key stage as teachers give pupils opportunities to write in an increasing range of styles and for a wider range of purposes. Pupils satisfactorily develop their knowledge of spelling rules, and of grammar and punctuation. They are not systematically given opportunities to use word banks or dictionaries when needing to spell unfamiliar words. Their skills of writing are further developed through extended writing times when attention is given in greater detail either to a theme such as considering how to write poetry, or to use writing for a practical purpose as when pupils write about the Great Fire of London. This further enhances the pupils' perceptions of varying forms and purposes of writing, throughout the key stage. They have satisfactory opportunities to develop their literacy skills in work across the curriculum.
- 48 Pupils have a positive attitude to their work. They organise themselves quickly and settle well to tasks. They listen carefully to each other's contributions and show good levels of respect for others' opinions and ideas. They work with sustained concentration and motivation on given tasks, but have limited opportunities to do independent research, for example in extended writing times. Relationships are good between pupils and between them and their teachers, but pupils had no opportunities to work collaboratively during the inspection.
- 49 Teaching in all lessons is satisfactory and was good in just over half the lessons observed. Teachers display secure knowledge of the subject. They plan lessons carefully, ensuring that they have a sound structure, and that group work is well targeted to ability. However not all teachers systematically set down specific learning objectives for each group to attain before each session. There are high expectations of good behaviour. Sessions generally proceed at a good pace, although in a few instances initial expositions are overlong and impinge on what pupils can practically achieve in a lesson. Teachers often make good use of questions to check on their pupils' knowledge and further their thinking. A tendency was observed during the inspection to provide too much information for the pupils which limited opportunities for the development of independent habits of research. The Literacy Strategy is being carefully implemented, with good levels of consistency between classes and across the years.
- 50 There is no written policy for homework. Pupils take their reading books home regularly, and in one class there was mention of learning spellings for homework.
- 51 Under the co-ordinator's enthusiastic and knowledgeable leadership, the Literacy Strategy is enhancing already satisfactory practice. Curriculum planning is based on the Literacy Strategy with weekly opportunities for extension work during the English session and also in extended writing sessions when literacy is applied to other subjects of the curriculum. Most pupils with special educational needs remain in their classes during the literacy hour and are well supported by additional staff and helpers. There is a comprehensive scheme of work for each facet of English, and outline medium term and detailed weekly plans identify what pupils should learn. Teachers plan effectively in year groups led by each year's co-ordinator. The subject co-ordinator has regular opportunity to monitor planning, classroom teaching and outcomes, which is having a positive effect on standards.
- 52 Assessment is in the process of being developed, and systems at present are inadequate. Individual reading age test results and reading records are kept. However records of individual attainment in writing skills have yet to be implemented, and the effect on forward planning of the new general lesson assessment will not be monitored until half term.
- 53 Each classroom has a satisfactory selection of fiction books in addition to a selection in the school library and there is a good range of reference books in the non-fiction library. There is also a good range of material to support the Literacy Strategy, and it is well used.
- 54 Literacy is developing well across the curriculum with instances of good quality writing in different situations. For example in history, writing for the varied purposes of account and report is well exploited.

## Mathematics

- 1 By the end of Key Stage One, pupils' attainment is in line with national averages. This picture is generally reflected in the results of the national tests and tasks undertaken in 1998, although indications are that the 1999 results are slightly higher than the previous year. Higher-attaining pupils in Year 2 can add coins to make amounts up to £1, whilst the lower-attainers are able to recognise and match coins of different denominations. Pupils count from zero to 100 in tens, and back again and calculate 20 more or less than a given number using a hundred square.
- 2 Scrutiny of pupils' previous work indicates that, by the end of Year 2 they have a good grasp of addition and subtraction facts to 100, understand the concepts and vocabulary connected with different forms of measurement, including length, weight and time and have a good understanding of shape and pattern.
- 3 Across the key stage, pupils' attainment in mental arithmetic is slightly above average. This may be due to the introduction of the oral/mental element within the numeracy lesson. Standards in number and algebra are higher than in other aspects of mathematics, although the structure of the numeracy lesson is improving standards in using and applying mathematics, as most lessons contain a high practical element.

- 4 Pupils' progress overall is satisfactory, and in some lessons pupils make good progress. All pupils are learning new facts and skills and most are also consolidating prior learning. Some pupils extend their knowledge throughout the lesson at a pace and depth which results in good progress being made. This good progress is only observed in lessons where the teaching is also good and is directly linked with high expectations and an appropriate level of challenge for all attainment levels.
- 5 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. This is directly linked to the good support which they receive and also reflects the suitability of the work which is given to them.
- 6 Pupils enjoy their lessons, and are particularly enthusiastic during the oral/mental part of their numeracy sessions. They listen attentively, respond positively when teachers have high expectations, work well alone or in groups and behave well. A small number of pupils have difficulty concentrating during the group work. This is usually because the work is not matched to their attainment level or that they have not been sufficiently involved in the introductory session to have grasped the concept or skill being taught.
- 7 The quality of teaching is at least satisfactory and about one third of lessons is good. Teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the subject and most are well aware of their pupils' capabilities. Those teachers who clearly understand their pupils' needs provide an appropriate range of activities and carefully support those pupils who are unsure. Some teachers are also sufficiently confident to adapt the guidelines in the Numeracy Strategy to suit the speed of learning within their class. Good teaching enhances the pupils' learning when teachers are well-prepared and resources are easily available and well-organised. The pace of lessons and quality of learning suffer when resources, for example coins, are mixed together and pupils need to spend time sorting them out.
- 8 The curriculum is well-balanced and is based upon the National Numeracy Strategy. It satisfactorily covers all attainment targets and provides appropriate progression of skills through the age range. Teachers' planning is satisfactory and in most cases is well-organised, showing a logical progression and including appropriate learning objectives and evaluations. There are satisfactory procedures for assessing and recording pupils' progress. Pupils' work is marked appropriately, with some teachers also making good use of stamps and useful comments to encourage pupils. However, very little homework is given and there is no homework policy.
- 9 The mathematics co-ordinator was absent during the inspection and no management file or notes were available to describe her role. However, indications are that the subject is managed satisfactorily and appropriately resourced. As the co-ordinator is a member of the senior management team, she is able to use some of her management release time for monitoring and supporting teachers in the classroom. However, there is no evidence available of the impact of this upon standards. There are sufficient resources to support teaching and learning in the subject and they are used appropriately.

## 156 Science

- 10 The results of teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage One in 1998 indicated that the percentage of pupils reaching level two or above is above national averages and the percentage of pupils reaching level three or above is below national average. Evidence gathered during the inspection indicates that the attainment of pupils is broadly in line with the national averages at the end of Key Stage One.
- 11 The scrutiny of pupils' books, the observations of lessons and interviews with pupils indicate that the work seen in all four attainment targets of experimental and investigative science, life processes and living things, materials and their properties and physical processes is of sound standard and in line with national expectations.

- 12 Pupils in Year 2 are beginning to identify a range of common materials and know about their properties, they can work collaboratively to search for examples of different materials in their classroom and record their results in a tabular form. They are also able to use the computer to tabulate results of their investigations. Discussions with pupils and scrutiny of their work indicates that by Year 2 pupils are able to respond to suggestions of how to find things out, they can make their own suggestions and make relevant observations and they have covered a range of science work across all four attainment targets. The handwriting in science books is accurately formed and consistent in size and presentation is sound.
- 13 Pupils make sound progress in science throughout the key stage. The younger pupils learn about the properties of a small number of different materials; they learn to describe simple features of the objects they observe, to divide them into a small number of categories and to communicate their findings in simple ways through pictures, text and talking. The oldest pupils learn to identify the properties of a range of materials and learn about their properties. They learn to work collaboratively on their investigations, to record their results in a tabular form and to use the computer to make useful graphs of their results. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by adults and make satisfactory progress.
- 14 Pupils' attitudes to science are satisfactory. They listen attentively to their teacher and answer questions sensibly and confidently. Pupils show interest in the subject and are keen to discuss their work. They respect each other's contributions and often engage with tasks industriously. At times, however, for example towards the end of a lengthy teacher introduction to a lesson, some children become restless.
- 15 The quality of teaching in science is consistently sound. Teachers give clear explanations, for example about what a material is and they make effective use of resources, for example they have a big book about materials to illustrate the range of everyday materials. Classes are well organised with resources readily to hand and due attention is given to safety issues, for example pupils are reminded about how to use scissors safely. Lessons are generally well paced although at times the pace slows up. Teachers have sound subject knowledge and appropriate rapport and relationship with pupils.
- 16 The curriculum is effectively organised. The science policy, which was written in 1994, gives brief details of the aims of the subject, its objectives, the resources available in school, the organisation of science and cross curricular links. It is now out of date and about to be re-written by the co-ordinator who is currently on a county science course. The school has very recently adopted the county scheme of work which provides a comprehensive science programme. This scheme provides teachers with a clear framework and gives suggestions of appropriate activities to deliver national curriculum programmes of study. It is likely to ensure good coverage of all the attainment targets and will support the subject well. Science makes a satisfactory contribution towards supporting literacy and numeracy.
- 17 Planning across year groups is effective in ensuring equality of access and opportunity and teachers and support staff provide good support for the less able pupils. Assessment in science is developing and through their weekly planning systems teachers are beginning to identify groups of pupils who will be assessed.
- 18 There are sufficient resources of an appropriate quality available to support the subject. Most resources are based in classrooms and some specialised items are stored centrally.
- 19 The local authority has provided useful early years science in-service training for the staff. There is at present no monitoring of teaching in the subject by the science co-ordinator.

166 **OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES**

166 **Information technology**

- 20 No teaching of information and communication technology (ICT) took place during the inspection. However, observations of the use of ICT in other lessons, combined with scrutiny of previous work indicate that standards are about average. They are not as good as those observed in the last inspection and the use of ICT is not as widespread across the curriculum as it was then. The school has, however, identified this subject as a priority in its development plan.
- 21 Most pupils can use a mouse to move objects around the screen and older pupils are beginning to understand rudimentary word processing. Examples of work from the last academic year indicate that, by the end of the key stage, most pupils have a basic understanding of word processing and have had access to a small amount of data handling and control technology. However, the lack of sufficient access to ICT across the curriculum in the last two years has resulted in a lowering of standards of attainment since the last inspection.
- 22 Progress is satisfactory overall. However, as some elements such as control technology are only included in the curriculum at particular times of the year and the use of ICT as a whole is often not included in the planning of other subjects, pupils do not have regular access to the full range of resources. This may be a factor which has resulted in a lowering of standards since the previous inspection. Consequently, progress across the past three years has probably become less than satisfactory from time to time. Pupils with special educational needs make generally satisfactory progress. Their use of ICT is often carefully planned by teachers and they usually have adult support when using computers, which has a positive effect upon their progress.
- 23 Pupils enjoy using ICT. They try hard when using the computers and are sensible and careful when using other technology, such as tape recorders and the remote-controlled model. Most pupils share resources sensibly, although there are occasions where, when two or three pupils are directed to work at a computer or use a remote-controlled car, one pupil is allowed to monopolise the equipment, resulting in inequality of access. Some teachers are unaware of this issue and do not monitor what is happening sufficiently closely.
- 24 Most teachers attempt to include use of the class computer in their lessons although it is most often used for word processing, as an alternative to writing by hand. During the inspection, ICT was used in about half of the lessons observed. There is very little evidence that computers are used regularly for data handling or research and other technology is only used periodically.
- 25 The curriculum is satisfactory overall, although some elements are only taught at certain times of the year, resulting in a rather sporadic approach to learning. No assessment takes place at present, although the co-ordinator has recently developed a pro-forma for recording certain basic computing skills, such as use of the keyboard, mouse etc.
- 26 The co-ordinator works hard to update her own skills and tries hard to support her colleagues. She has no opportunity to monitor teaching and learning in the subject.
- 27 Most of the computers are quite old and the school is experiencing regular problems with breakdown of hardware and lack of appropriate software, despite a recent large purchase of software by the co-ordinator. There are not enough computers with a CD-ROM to provide all pupils with an adequate opportunity to undertake research work. This situation is resulting in a lack of enthusiasm on the part of staff, which is reflected in the under-use of the resources.

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## Religious education

- 28 At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment is in line with the requirements of the Cambridgeshire Agreed Syllabus. Year 2 pupils know the main difference between the Old and New Testaments, and discuss well known stories from both, such as Daniel in the Lion's Den and the Good Samaritan. In Year 1 pupils learn to compare the Christian festival of Harvest with the Jewish Sukkoth and understand that both are celebrations of thanksgiving. During the key stage, pupils visit the local church and learn about ceremonies such as christenings and weddings. Assemblies and circle times provide satisfactory opportunities for developing pupils' moral, social and cultural awareness.
- 29 Progress across the key stage is sound and occasionally it is very good in response to a very well delivered lesson. Pupils in Year 1 learn and understand first about events with which they are generally familiar such as well known festivals, and gradually progress to less personal concepts in Year 2 such as learning about different holy books and the lives of well known people. Progress in learning about Christianity is satisfactory and by the end of the key stage pupils understand that there are other ways of worshipping God, and begin to compare some of the ceremonies and celebrations of other major faiths with Christian ones. Progress for pupils with special educational needs is sound, and higher attainers have the opportunity to write more fully in the follow-up activity time which provides satisfactory opportunity to practise literacy skills.
- 30 Pupils respond well to the stories and enjoy sharing their knowledge. There are high standards of behaviour and concentration levels are good. Pupils are confident to ask pertinent questions, such as, "How did they get Daniel safely out of the lions' den?" No opportunities were observed for pupils to develop their skills of independent learning.
- 31 The quality of teaching is always broadly satisfactory and on occasion it is very good. Teachers show sound knowledge of the topics and make careful outline plans. However opportunities are often missed for pupils to draw inferences with their own lives and so raise the lesson content above the mundane. The pace of lessons is sound and teachers have high expectations of appropriate behaviour. Very good standards of teaching are characterised by the high quality of information for pupils, by asking pupils how they would feel and react in a given situation, and by impromptu dramatisation and the lively telling, rather than the reading, of stories which bring the situations to life and keep the pupils totally engrossed.
- 32 There is no written policy for homework and none is set in this subject.
- 33 The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and committed. She has adapted the scheme of work to conform to the Cambridgeshire Agreed Syllabus. There is satisfactory breadth and balance, and continuity and progression have been carefully planned. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory, since most teaching takes the form of stories and information illustrated by appropriate artefacts and resources. There is no provision for assessment, which at present is entirely informal. However she has no time at present to monitor standards during lessons. Resources are adequate except when more than one class in the same year group is having a lesson at the same time.

## 180 Art

- 34 Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is in line with expectations for their age.
- 35 In Year 2 pupils continue to demonstrate their art skills and knowledge. They can record their ideas, for example for representing the sun, and are able to choose resources such as threads for weaving and buttons to represent eyes. They are able to use these resources for their visual and tactile qualities and can develop ideas for their woven and batik images of the sun.

- 36 Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress and build on their skills and learning appropriately. For example in Year 1 pupils learn to mix autumn colours and make good progress in learning how to mix colours and intensify shades; in Year 2 pupils work systematically towards completing a range of art work based on a sun theme which includes, woven sun models, batik sun prints, painted sun pictures and hessian collages. The art portfolio provides examples of a good range of work which includes lifelike paintings of birds, detailed self portraits and attractive appliqué work.
- 37 Pupils have positive attitudes in their art lessons, for example, the oldest pupils are very attentive in their art lessons, they clearly engage with the work, take pride in it and are keen to explain how they have selected their materials. They are able to get on with their work independently. In the best lessons the pupils maintain good levels of concentration, they look closely and think carefully before beginning to paint. In another lesson, where the teacher's class control is less successful, most pupils keep busy and enjoy their tasks, but a small group need constant refocusing.

- 38 The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. In the best lessons work is well matched to pupils' ability and the class is very well organised with pupils divided into manageable groups, with good use of adult support for most groups. For example in one lesson well-briefed adult helpers work with four of the five groups. A good range of resources is used in these lessons; for example good quality hessian, attractive threads and sequins and well-made batik. In the satisfactory lessons resources are ready and available for pupils, there is a steady pace to the lessons and good interactions with pupils. Pupils are given clear instructions, but there are some missed opportunities for encouraging co-operation. Teachers' expectations do not always challenge pupils to think for themselves.
- 39 Teachers provide a balanced curriculum in art and a range of practical experiences including textiles and three-dimensional work. Some examples on display include clay models of fruit and clay tiles, twig and wool mobiles and modrock animal figures. Art provides a satisfactory avenue in which literacy, numeracy and pupils' expressive needs are met.
- 40 There are opportunities for pupils to appreciate the work of famous artists such as Van Gogh, Sisley, Cezanne, Turner and Pissaro and pupils have produced art work in the style of Pointillism.
- 41 Teaching and learning are supported well by the co-ordinator who joins yearly planning meetings and offers advice to colleagues. This ensures equality of access to the curriculum for pupils in the same year group who are in different classes. The co-ordinator is well qualified and has recently developed a well thought out art policy with the support of the local authority adviser, which has been adopted by staff. A useful scheme of work which gives clear guidance on progression is in place. The co-ordinator scrutinises pupils' work but does not monitor the teaching of art.

## 188 **Design and technology**

- 42 Pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is appropriate for their age and they make sound progress.
- 43 Pupils have a clear understanding of the processes for design and making. They produce sketches of their plans and with adult help consider the materials they will require and the order in which they will proceed to make their product. There is no evidence at present that they systematically evaluate the finished article. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress.
- 44 Throughout the key stage pupils make generally satisfactory progress. They successfully develop their skills of joining and creating moving parts from reclaimed materials in the construction of fire engines and ambulances. They become aware of structure through experiences such as making Tudor houses, and when constructing bridges.
- 45 Pupils' response to the challenge of designing and making is good in the lessons observed. They are well motivated and concentrate well on their tasks showing deep pride in what they achieve, as when they assemble a series of cogs to make a roundabout in a Year 1 class. Standards of behaviour are high and pupils show positive interest in each others' achievements.
- 46 Too few lessons were observed to make a judgement on the quality of teaching, but standards were good in the lessons seen. Short-term planning is brief, but teachers impart knowledge well and ask well formulated questions to develop pupils' thinking. The pace of lessons is good, as are relationships within the class.
- 47 The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and has rewritten the scheme of work recently to ensure that pupils have maximum experience of both design and making, taking account of the reduced time available for the subject. She has devised a comprehensive sheet for pupils to use which covers both planning and evaluating aspects of the subject. At present monitoring is restricted to reviewing finished work as there is no release time available during school hours. Resources are sound and are well used and carefully handled by the pupils.

**Geography**

- 48 During the week of the inspection only one lesson was observed. No judgement can be made, therefore about the quality of teaching.
- 49 Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress as they move through the key stage. By the time the pupils leave school they can compare and contrast Ely with Hunstanton, a town on the Norfolk coast. They know that the behaviour of human beings impacts on the landscape and environment by the building of homes, roads and bridges. They know that London is the capital of England, and that there are different countries and oceans around the world. Their mapping skills are soundly developed, and they can draw a map of their route from home to school. They indicate the main physical and human features on their maps. Pupils also develop their geographical vocabulary as they progress through school.
- 50 The subject is well led by the co-ordinator. Curriculum provision is satisfactory and there are useful links with literacy and numeracy. Pupils are assessed in small groups to judge their progress over the academic year and to inform parents and provide details for the next teacher or school. The school is well-resourced in sets of atlases, maps and pictures to teach the subject.

197 **History**

- 51 Due to timetable restrictions, only four history lessons were seen during the inspection. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress as they move through the school. By the time they leave pupils have an appropriate understanding of the passage of time, and can identify and distinguish between the past and present. They can identify which toys are suitable for a particular age-range to develop their sense of chronology. Pupils in Year 2 know the main causes and sequences related to the Great Fire of London in 1666. They understand that it was recorded by someone present at the event, and this is used as a source for researching and finding out more information about a particular historical event.
- 52 The quality of teaching is sound or better. Teachers ask relevant questions which make pupils think and spark their imagination about history, as was observed in a Year 2 class. They use historical resources effectively to make learning more relevant to the pupils and to stimulate and maintain pupils' interest. Their appropriately detailed planning, secure subject knowledge and effective class control helps to create a calm working environment within the classroom which promotes good behaviour and positive attitudes to work. Teachers focus appropriately on the correct historical content of pupils writing as was observed in a Year 2 class in which pupils wrote accounts of The Great Fire of London as a diarist. On the whole, pupils have good attitudes towards history and enjoy it. They are generally self-motivated in lessons and share their ideas and thoughts with each other, as was observed in a Year 1 class. They listen well to each other and are keen to know about, for example the reason why a toy would be suitable for a baby instead of a five-to-six year old. Their behaviour and relationships are usually good and this helps their contribution in lesson.
- 53 The subject is well led by the co-ordinator, and the school is well resourced with a 'History Suitcase' which offers a variety of artefacts to teach the subject. Pupils are assessed in small groups which builds up a picture of progress over the academic year for reporting back to parents and passing information on to the next teacher or key stage. The policy and scheme of work are to be changed and updated this year, which will offer teachers more effective guidance in their planning of lessons.

200 **Music**

- 54 The previous inspection report indicated that music was a strength of the school. Standards observed during this current inspection are now satisfactory, with the quality of singing being good and still a strength across the school. Pupils at the end of the key stage can clap in time with recorded music, play untuned percussion instruments accurately and recognise different music styles. Tape recordings and examples of previous work indicate that some pupils are able to compose, record their compositions using different forms of notation and perform to a good level. Pupils have appropriate opportunities to listen and respond to music, both in lessons and at the start and finish of collective worship. They have numerous opportunities to sing, in classes, year groups and in collective worship and these occasions are enhanced by the large number of talented staff available to accompany the songs on the piano.
- 55 Progress is generally satisfactory, with some good progress being made within Year 2 classes. Pupils consolidate their knowledge and understanding of different musical instruments and pulse and develop this further by learning to control the playing of their instruments in time to taped music. Earlier in the key stage, pupils are mainly consolidating their knowledge and understanding of sounds and instruments. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress.
- 56 Pupils enjoy their lessons. They listen attentively and participate with enthusiasm. They concentrate particularly well when trying to maintain a steady beat in time to recorded music. Pupils participate well, sharing instruments and behaving well.
- 57 The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, although there is some good teaching in Year 2. Teachers usually have secure subject knowledge, are well-prepared and use appropriate resources. Most teachers use correct names for instruments and demonstrate how to play them properly. Teachers organise the lessons well and encourage all pupils to participate. Good use is made of recorded music to provide a reverent atmosphere in collective worship.
- 58 The music policy has recently been reviewed and does not yet contain any element of assessment, although the co-ordinator has devised a pro-forma for recording class coverage of the curriculum. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and works hard to support her colleagues. She leads the "Singing Worship" each week, but does not have any opportunity to monitor teaching and learning across the school.
- 59 Resources are generally satisfactory, although there are not enough multi-cultural instruments and insufficient suitable electronic keyboards to provide more flexibility for the use of the numerous pianists on the staff. Good use is made of the available staff, accommodation and resources throughout the school.

206 **Physical education**

- 60 During the inspection, the physical education lessons observed were gymnastics and games activities. The school provides an appropriately balanced curriculum. Pupils learn to develop and play games, participate in gymnastics activities and respond to music through dance.
- 61 Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. As they move through the school, pupils develop their skills in all aspects of physical education, and perform with increasing competence. They have a clear understanding of the effects of exercise on the body. Pupils can plan sequences of movements in either gymnastics or games, which is an improvement noted in the last report. In all lessons observed pupils were asked to feel their pulse or heart after sustained exercise. Attainment is at least in line and often exceeds the expectations for the age range.
- 62 Pupils acquire a good range of skills in catching and passing with different sized balls. Year 2 pupils were observed using different parts of the school building and surfaces of the playground, to improve their passing and receiving skills with a small ball. They understand that practice would help improve and develop their performance and skill. Year 1 pupils plan a sequence of movements to travel over a skipping rope in different directions.

- 63 Pupils' attitudes to physical education are good. Behaviour whilst pupils are preparing for and participating in physical education is also good. Pupils listen carefully to instructions and suggestions to improve their technique. In all lessons pupils are enthusiastic and eager participants and make good use of the opportunities offered to them, for example working in pairs to improve their passing and control with a small ball. They co-operate well in groups as was observed in a Year 2 class which was playing a game involving hitting a target in the middle of a circle. The subject makes a positive contribution to the pupils' social development.
- 64 The quality of all teaching is good. All lessons begin and end in an orderly manner and contain appropriate warm up and cool down activities for the pupils. Lessons are clearly well planned, structured and organised to offer pupils progression and a safe working environment. Appropriate tasks are set by teachers, who provide clear instructions, prompts and challenges to encourage pupils to develop their skills and performance in the subject. Lessons are well timed and usually have a lively pace. Management of pupils and class control are consistently good. Teachers are secure in their knowledge and understanding of the subject. Questioning and demonstration are used effectively and pupils are actively encouraged to improve their performance, for example in gymnastics. All staff act as good role models, dressing appropriately and showing enthusiasm for physical education which is reflected in the pupils' attitudes.
- 65 There are no formal assessment systems in place, although teachers do provide clear feedback and encouragement during lessons. Annual reports to parents include comments on pupils' progress in the subject.
- 66 The subject is well led by an enthusiastic co-ordinator who has recently rewritten and updated the policy and scheme of work. This offers staff guidance and ideas for lesson planning in all elements of the subject. The subject is well resourced with a wide range of large and small apparatus, including a large spacious hall and large playground for games and outdoor activities.

## **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

### **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

- 1 The inspection of Spring Meadow Infants School was undertaken by a team of five inspectors, including a lay inspector. Members of the team spent between two and four days in school, during the week beginning Monday 27<sup>th</sup> September 1999, completing a total of sixteen inspector days.
- 2 For most of the time in school, inspectors visited classes, talked with individuals and groups of children and evaluated the work they had done. A total of 50 hours was spent on these activities.
- 3 In addition, pupils were heard reading and they were questioned about their knowledge and understanding of books in general. Samples of pupils' work covering the full ability range were scrutinised, including work retained by the school from the previous academic year.
- 4 Furthermore:
  - inspectors joined pupils for registration, assemblies, playtimes and lunchtimes;
  - the policy documents and the school development plan were analysed;
  - the school accommodation and resources were inspected;
  - attendance registers, the records kept on the pupils and teachers' planning documents were scrutinised;
  - the budget figures were analysed.
- 5 A further 18.6 hours was spent interviewing staff, governors and parents and gathering other types of evidence. In total, inspectors spent 68.6 hours collecting information about the work of the school.

## DATA AND INDICATORS

### Pupil data

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR - Y2	291	3	50	43
Nursery Unit/School	48	0	2	0

### Teachers and classes

#### Qualified teachers (YR - Y2)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	12
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24:1

#### Education support staff (YR - Y2)

Total number of education support staff	14
Total aggregate hours worked each week	195.5

[Where applicable]

#### Qualified teachers (Nursery school, classes or unit)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24:1

[Where applicable]

#### Education support staff (Nursery school, classes or unit)

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked each week	90

Average class size:	26
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## Financial data

Financial year:

98/99
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	£
Total Income	600,968
	600,851
Expenditure per pupil	2,338
Balance brought forward from previous year	63,246
Balance carried forward to next year	63,363

**PARENTAL SURVEY**

Number of questionnaires sent out:

291

Number of questionnaires returned:

103  
(35.4%)

**Responses (percentage of answers in each category):**

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	39	55	6	2	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	50	50	1	2	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	17	49	25	5	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	35	58	9	1	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	30	54	12	6	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	28	70	3	0	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	17	58	19	5	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	23	57	15	5	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	31	61	9	0	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	25	66	10	1	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	53	46	2	1	0

NB: Percentages of responses are rounded to nearest integer, sum may not = 100%  
Percentages given are in relation to total number of returns, EXCLUDING nil replies.

**Other issues raised by parents**

- A small number would like further improvements to the structures for measuring pupils' progress, such as individual target setting, with targets being monitored and reported to parents
- A small number are anxious about the way reading is taught during Literacy Hour.