

INSPECTION REPORT

ONGAR PLACE INFANT SCHOOL

Addlestone

LEA area: Surrey

Unique reference number: 125042

Headteacher: Mrs G Liddaman

Reporting inspector: Mr J Tyler
20506

Dates of inspection: 6th to 9th June 2000

Inspection number: 192460

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Milton Road Addlestone Surrey
Postcode:	KT15 1NY
Telephone/Fax number:	01932 842785
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr I Griffin
Date of previous inspection:	9/12/96

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
John Tyler	Registered inspector	Science Art Design and technology Music Physical education Special educational needs	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught?
Sue Burgess	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for it's pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Jo Harris	Team inspector	English Geography History Religious education Equality of opportunity	How well is the school led and managed?
Peter McGregor	Team inspector	Information technology.	
Valerie Singleton	Team inspector	Under-fives Mathematics	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

The inspection contractor was:

Qualitas Education Consultants Ltd
Langshaw
Pastens Road
Limpsfield Chart
Oxted
Surrey
RH8 0RE

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Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Ongar Place Infant School is smaller than most primary schools. The 160 pupils are organised into six classes. About seven per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is below the national average. The number of girls and boys is broadly balanced. The proportion of pupils who speak English as an additional language is two per cent, which is slightly greater than in most schools, but all these pupils speak English well. 26 per cent of pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs, giving a proportion that is slightly higher than average. The attainment of pupils on entry is, on balance, above average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a happy, caring school. Pupils attain standards that are above national expectations, though higher attainers could often achieve more. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with particular strengths in the Early Years. The leadership and management of the school, especially that of the headteacher and senior teacher, focus strongly on raising standards. The school is effective and offers sound value for money.

What the school does well

- Children get a very good start to their schooling in the Early Years unit.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because they receive good support.
- Pupils are well behaved and have very positive attitudes to learning.
- The school is a very caring and supportive environment in which moral and social aspects of pupils' learning are successfully developed.
- Strong links with parents lead to effective support for pupils' learning.
- The leadership and management of the recently appointed headteacher and the senior teacher are very good, and they demonstrate a strong commitment to raising standards.

What could be improved

- Standards in science.
- Handwriting, and the use of writing across the curriculum.
- Aspects of teaching in Key Stage 1: the pace of learning and opportunities for pupils to work in creative, investigative and independent ways.
- The structure of the school day.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the school was last inspected, in December 1996, it has made satisfactory improvement. Standards have risen in English and mathematics but not sufficiently in science. The quality of education for the Early Years has improved greatly. The school has maintained its strengths in caring for pupils, providing for their personal development and in working with parents. The amount of satisfactory and good teaching has increased, though there is still significant room for improvement in Key Stage 1. The recent, increased responsibility given to subject leaders has already improved planning for the school's development. The school is well placed to make further improvements.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
Reading	C	C	A	C
Writing	E	C	B	C
Mathematics	C	A	A	B

<i>Key</i>	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

On entry to the Early Years unit, assessments show that most children have levels of language, mathematical and personal skills that are above average. Children make very good progress and broaden their experience so that, by the age of five, their attainment is above national expectations in all areas of learning.

The table shows that, in the 1999 national assessments for seven-year-olds, attainment was well above the national averages for reading and mathematics, and above the national average for writing. Set in the context of schools with a similar socio-economic profile, standards were average in reading and writing, and above average in mathematics. Though standards have varied from one year to the next, the general trend over the last few years has been upward.

Pupils currently in Year 2 are reaching standards that are above national expectations overall. Pupils with special educational needs are achieving well because they receive effective support. The majority of pupils achieve standards appropriate to their capabilities, though higher-attaining pupils are sometimes not challenged enough. Standards are above national expectations in English, particularly in speaking and listening skills and reading, and in mathematics, in which their computational skills are strong. Pupils' handwriting is a weakness.

In science, pupils' knowledge is sound, but their investigative skills are weak and so standards overall are below national expectations. Attainment in information technology is below national expectations, though their current progress and achievements are sound overall. Recent improvements in resources and teaching have not had sufficient time to improve standards. Work seen in other subjects was appropriate for the ages of the pupils, but with strengths in the standard of singing and attainment in physical education.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes are very positive. They collaborate well when required. They are interested in their work and sustain concentration.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is generally very good, both in class and around the school. Previous problems with unacceptable behaviour from a very small minority have been dealt with effectively.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils of all ages take on a range of responsibilities but there is an occasional lack of opportunity in lessons for pupils to show initiative. They are polite and courteous to visitors. Relationships between staff and pupils and between pupils themselves are very good.
Attendance	Attendance is satisfactory although a significant number of parents take their children on holiday in term time, which disrupts their learning.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory, with particular strengths in the Early Years, and some aspects needing improvement in Key Stage 1. In 90 per cent of lessons seen teaching was at least satisfactory. It was good or better in 60 per cent, and very good in 29 per cent. In the Early Years, teaching was good or better in every lesson seen and very good in 60 per cent. Teaching is good for English, satisfactory for mathematics, and unsatisfactory for science. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and this is a significant factor in standards rising since that time.

At the start of many lessons, teachers share with pupils what they are intended to learn. This is often very effective. In some lessons, however, the tasks completed by pupils do not support the learning intentions, or the intentions are too vague to be helpful. This is especially evident in science.

In a significant number of lessons in Key Stage 1, the pace of learning was slow because too much time was planned for what was to be learned. A part of the problem is the structure of the school day, which does not sufficiently encourage teachers to plan lessons with sufficient pace and challenge. In Key Stage 1, teachers too often expect pupils to record work in ways that limit opportunities for creativity, group discussion, investigation and independence in learning. Pupils are not asked to use literacy and numeracy skills enough in other subjects. Teachers work well with learning support assistants and with parents.

Teachers are successful in promoting good behaviour and attitudes. When pupils occasionally misbehave, teachers deal with the situation swiftly and firmly, often taking care to help pupils understand how their behaviour has affected others.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum that includes personal, social and health education. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities and all pupils learn to swim. The curriculum for the Early Years is very good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Pupils with special educational needs are appropriately supported so that they achieve well. Some older pupils are withdrawn for a limited period to receive daily help in literacy and are making good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision is good for pupils' moral development and it is very good for their social development. There are opportunities to take on a range of responsibilities around the school and these effectively promote self-confidence and independence. Spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	This is a strength of the school. Staff work well as a team to promote good behaviour and to ensure pupils' welfare. The school works very successfully with parents to promote learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very good leadership, and has clearly identified priorities for school improvement. The senior teacher provides strong, effective support. Subject leaders are enthusiastic and beginning to take more responsibility, though their monitoring role is underdeveloped at present.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body carries out its responsibilities effectively. Established governors understand the strengths of the school and identify some areas for development. Committees work effectively to support the school's identified priorities.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has begun to analyse pupils' performance in national tests and address issues arising. The planned initiative to set individual pupil targets will support this. The monitoring of teaching and learning is not yet rigorously undertaken.
The strategic use of resources	Staffing is sufficient for the needs of the curriculum. The adequate resources and very good accommodation are used well. The timetable of lessons through the school day leads to some inefficient use of time. Teachers work well with learning support assistants, who make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. The allocation of funds is related to priorities in the school development plan, and specific grants are used effectively. Principles of best value are applied appropriately.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♦ They are able to approach the school with questions or concerns. ♦ The school is well managed and led. ♦ Their children like school. ♦ Children are helped to be mature and responsible. ♦ Children are expected to do their best. 	There were no significant concerns about the school as a whole.

The inspection team agrees with the positive views of parents, though higher attainers could sometimes achieve more. Some parents from one class were concerned about unacceptable behaviour from a very few pupils. However, this has now been dealt with very effectively.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. On entry to the Early Years unit, standard assessments show that most children have levels of language, mathematical and personal skills that are above average. Many have had pre-school experience and make a confident and happy start. They enter a warm, welcoming and stimulating environment in which they make very good progress and broaden their experience. By the age of five, their attainment is above national expectations in all areas of learning.
2. In the 1999 national assessments for seven-year-olds, attainment was well above the national averages for reading and mathematics, and above the national average for writing. In all three aspects of learning, the proportion of pupils who reached the expected Level 2 was well above average and a significant proportion reached the higher Level 3 in reading and mathematics. Set in the context of schools with a similar socio-economic profile, standards were average in reading and writing, and above average in mathematics. Though standards have varied from one year to the next, the general trend over the last few years has been upward.
3. Pupils currently in Year 2 are reaching standards that are above national expectations overall. Pupils with special educational needs are achieving well because they receive effective support. The majority of pupils achieve standards appropriate to their capabilities, though higher-attaining pupils are sometimes not challenged enough. Standards are above national expectations in English, particularly in speaking and listening skills and reading, and in mathematics, in which their computational skills are strong. Pupils' handwriting is a weakness.
4. In science, pupils' knowledge is sound, but their investigative skills are weak and so standards overall are below national expectations. Attainment in information technology is below national expectations, though their current progress and achievements are sound overall. Recent improvements in resources and teaching have not had sufficient time to improve standards. Work seen in other subjects was appropriate for the ages of the pupils, but with strengths in the standard of singing and attainment in physical education.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

5. Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning. They are interested in their work and generally sustain their concentration during lessons. Occasionally, however, pupils are uncertain how to react when presented with an exciting learning situation. They are supportive of each other when working in a group. For instance, in circle time, Year 2 pupils listened sympathetically to each other's impressions of their induction day at junior school. Early Years pupils collaborated well to share resources and then put things away at the end of the session. Pupils throughout the school are happy to talk about themselves and their work. They are welcoming and courteous to visitors. Relationships are very good between pupils and staff and between pupils themselves. They applaud the efforts and achievements of others, such as when good work and behaviour is rewarded in the Friday assembly, or when different groups present their work at the end of literacy lessons.
6. High standards of behaviour have been maintained since the last inspection. Behaviour in class, in assemblies and around the school is generally very good. This is also the perception of the great majority of parents who returned the pre-inspection questionnaire. Lunchtimes are relaxed and sociable with orderly queues in the hall. Pupils consider others in their movement around the school, walking in a quiet, sensible way and holding doors open for those following.
7. Pupils play amicably together at break times, with the active encouragement of supervising staff. There have been recent difficulties with the behaviour of a very few children but these have been dealt with very effectively and the absence of poor behaviour is now a feature of the school. Last year, there were three fixed-term exclusions of one pupil for whom alternative educational arrangements have now been made.
8. Attendance, at 93.9 per cent, is satisfactory and broadly in line with the national average. Unauthorised absence is 0.6 per cent, which is above the national average. The attendance rate would be

higher if fewer parents took their children out of school for holidays during term time, which disrupts their learning. Very few pupils are late for school.

9. Personal development is enhanced by the increased responsibility that pupils take as they progress through the school. Parents feel that the school helps their children to become mature and responsible. For instance, even the youngest return the class register to the office and, as far as possible, dress and undress themselves. Older pupils collect up and help put away playground equipment and, by an informal buddy system, look after younger ones at break times. There is, however, sometimes a lack of opportunity within lessons for pupils to show initiative. Pupils' values are extended through good support for chosen charities, for example in filling shoe boxes to send to Romania.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

10. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory, with particular strengths in the Early Years. Some aspects need improvement in Key Stage 1. In 90 per cent of lessons seen teaching was at least satisfactory. It was good or better in 60 per cent, and very good in 29 per cent. In the Early Years, teaching was good or better in every lesson seen and very good in 60 per cent. Teaching is good for English, satisfactory for mathematics, and unsatisfactory for science. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection and this is a significant factor in standards rising since that time.

11. Teachers are successful in promoting good behaviour and attitudes. Their enthusiasm is often infectious and was especially noticeable in the Early Years and some English lessons. This is very effective when combined with high expectations of what pupils should learn; the pupils' enthusiasm helps them to persevere through difficulties and therefore make big strides in learning, as well as concentrating their minds firmly on work. When pupils occasionally misbehave, teachers deal with the situation swiftly and firmly, often taking care to help pupils understand how their behaviour has affected others. Teachers use praise effectively to encourage pupils and promote a positive atmosphere in which it is commonplace to hear pupils commending each other. In a few lessons, during class discussions, a small number of pupils talked over the teacher and were not consistently reminded how to behave properly. This slowed the pace of learning for the whole class. In one Year 1 class, the teacher and learning support assistants have been very successful in developing a policy of positive intervention that has led to considerable improvements in behaviour.

12. At the start of many lessons, teachers share with pupils what they are intended to learn. This is often very effective in helping pupils to concentrate on the right issues, especially when the teacher's questions maintain this focus. When some Early Years children were dancing, the constant reminders of their objectives – using space, listening, and thinking about facial and body movements – helped them to make very good progress. In some lessons, the tasks completed by pupils do not support the learning intentions, or the intentions are too vague to be helpful. In a science lesson, for example, the intention to “learn more about mini-beasts” did not encourage pupils to focus on particular aspects of the topic and so they made little progress. A second intention was to “learn how to recognise an insect” and this was very effective because pupils concentrated on specifics, such as the number of legs. One cause of the ineffective focus in some science lessons and parts of information technology lessons is lack of subject knowledge on the part of the teachers. In English and mathematics, where their expertise is greater, the learning intentions are clearer. In these subjects, teachers mark pupils' work thoroughly but do not always give sufficient guidance about how to improve.

13. In a significant number of lessons in Key Stage 1, the pace of learning was slow because too much time was planned for what was to be learned. Some lessons were too long, such as literacy hours that were actually 75 minutes, while science lessons were planned for whole afternoons. In both cases, pupils found it hard to work at pace for such a long time, and so activities took much longer to complete than was needed. Teachers sometimes tried to overcome this by varying the structure of the lesson and this helped but did not entirely succeed. A part of the problem is the structure of the school day, which does not sufficiently encourage teachers to plan lessons with sufficient pace and challenge.

14. In Key Stage 1, teachers too often expect pupils to record work in ways that limit opportunities for creativity, group discussion, investigation and independence in learning. Pupils are not asked to use literacy and numeracy skills enough in other subjects. An excessive use of worksheets, for example, reduces the opportunities for putting into practice the basic skills that have been taught in English

lessons. Science is rarely taught through an investigative approach, and this significantly reduces pupils' achievement. These weaknesses affect how relevant pupils find what they are learning, reduce their understanding of how subjects require common skills, and limit the development of thinking skills.

15. Teachers and learning support assistants work well together. In the Early Years classes, teachers are able to focus on particular groups of pupils, knowing that their assistant will be clearing away, helping pupils to change or supporting their learning. Adults plan together so that all are working to achieve the same objectives, and this contributes significantly to pupils' success. Teachers also work well with parents, who are conscientious in reading with their children and helping them with mathematical investigations. This has a positive impact on standards.

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

16. The very good curriculum for the Early Years is planned through the Early Learning Goals that are due to be introduced nationally in September 2000. It makes very good provision for purposeful play, talk and direct enquiry. Time is used very well and there is a good balance of taught and self-selected activities.

17. The Key Stage 1 curriculum satisfactorily promotes intellectual, physical and personal development. Each subject has a policy statement and teachers plan together so that there is a consistent approach. Subject plans provide the framework for a broad and relevant curriculum. The school has successfully implemented the National Literacy Strategy and is presently developing the National Numeracy Strategy, although this is not yet fully in place. There are too few opportunities to develop literacy and numeracy skills effectively in other subjects. The length of time allocated to some lessons reduces the time available for activities that involve group discussions and decision making, or are practical, creative, and investigative in nature.

18. Teachers are aware of the targets on the individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs and the support given leads to these pupils achieving well. Some older pupils are withdrawn for a limited period to receive daily help in literacy and are making good progress. Pupils who are particularly gifted in a subject are given opportunities to work at higher levels.

19. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities, some of which are organised and run by teachers and some operated commercially. The school has worked hard to obtain support from the local community in order to provide the new library, which is a valuable resource. More use could be made of local resources to support geography and history. There are effective links with the pre-school group who are located within the school grounds, and very good links with the local junior school; Year 6 pupils come to conduct an assembly, Year 2 pupils visit the junior school for a variety of events visits prior to transfer.

20. Provision for pupils' moral development is good. In addition to learning the differences between right and wrong, the school promotes the message that pupils can make choices about their own behaviour and that those choices and their actions have an impact on others. Provision for social development is very good and represents a strength of the school. The new behaviour policy is consistently implemented and pupils respond positively to the rewards system. Pupils devise their own class rules at the beginning of each new year. There are opportunities to take on a range of responsibilities around the school and these effectively promote self-confidence and independence.

21. The school makes satisfactory provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development. Assemblies have a sense of occasion and quiet moments are set aside for reflection. They also reinforce the sense of the school as a community and provide opportunities for celebrating individual and collective achievements. Pupils are enthusiastic in their response to studies of the natural world such as comparing how plants grow in different conditions. There was great excitement in Early Years classes when one of the class tadpoles turned into a frog. In general, however, there are insufficient opportunities for a reflective response during lessons. There have been some improvements in provision for cultural development through the religious education curriculum. There are, however, relatively few opportunities for the development of pupils' appreciation of other cultures. Through aspects of English, geography, history and music, children are introduced to their local and national cultural heritage.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

22. The school is very caring and supportive and this is a major strength. There is a friendly, welcoming atmosphere in the school with very good relationships between pupils and staff and between pupils themselves. Teachers, support staff and governors work well as a team, know the children well and act as good role models.

23. There are effective arrangements in place to ensure pupils' wellbeing. Break and lunchtimes are well supervised and midday supervisors, in accordance with a new policy, take an active role in helping children to enjoy their break. When practical help is necessary, such as when pupils are unwell or need first aid, it is given calmly and quickly. There are efficient procedures for giving routine medication when needed. Child protection procedures are very well organised and staff are appropriately trained, with further training planned.

24. With new behaviour and anti-bullying policies in place, the school has very effective measures to promote good behaviour. All staff are consistent in their expectations and work successfully as a team to promote high standards. Some parents have been very concerned about the poor behaviour of a very small minority of pupils. With the support of external agencies, the head teacher and other relevant adults have taken action so that the problems have been dealt with effectively.

25. Pupils' personal development is monitored closely and very effectively both formally and informally. They value the stickers and certificates that are awarded for good effort, work and behaviour. Those pupils who have personal behavioural targets are reminded of them as necessary during lessons. Midday supervisors also monitor behaviour at lunchtimes and nominate children for awards.

26. There are effective procedures for the monitoring and promoting of attendance, with efficient systems in place to identify any trends in absence or punctuality. Parents are regularly reminded that taking their children on holiday in term time can adversely affect their attainment and progress. However, not all teachers reinforce this message with their class when the opportunity arises.

27. Some good procedures have been introduced recently to monitor pupils' academic performance, but they have not been in place long enough to have a noticeable impact on standards. Reading, writing and mathematical tasks for each pupil are set, marked and matched to National Curriculum levels half way through the year and then targets set for the end of year. This has effectively raised teachers' expectations of attainment. Results are also used well to analyse any evident strengths and weaknesses in learning, and then to address planning and inform parents. There is a helpful self-evaluation form that has recently been introduced for information technology. Pupils' recognition of key words and phonic knowledge is regularly checked, but there are at present too few procedures for identifying reading and writing skills in order to determine the next steps in learning. The school has recognised this and is in the process of introducing a good system for tracking pupils' progress.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

28. The continued strength of the school's partnership with parents since the last inspection makes a considerable contribution to the quality of pupils' education. Parents are very supportive and appreciative of the work of the school. The great majority of those who returned the pre-inspection questionnaire feel that they are well informed about their children's progress and that the school works closely with them. Almost all would feel comfortable about approaching the school with a question or problem.

29. Several parents regularly help in classrooms with reading, cookery, art or in other practical ways. Most parents help their children with reading at home. It is, however, often difficult to find enough volunteers to help with dressing and drying pupils after swimming. The very active parent-teacher association organises a range of social and fund-raising events such as Christmas and May fairs, a quiz night and Bunny Bounce. These enabled over £5000 to be donated to the school last year, to be put towards such items as a new swimming pool dome, extra classroom equipment and the refurbishment of the library. There is very good support from parents for school productions, consultations with teachers and curriculum evenings. Many families also enjoy an opportunity on a specific day each term to have lunch with the children.

30. Both the quality and quantity of information for parents is very good. There are efficient and well-established arrangements for the induction of Early Years children, with home visits by teachers arranged if requested. Prospective parents are invited to an open evening in October. The school brochure is presented in an easily accessible and attractive format. The school has also produced specific guidance for parents about numeracy.

31. Each year group has a curriculum information evening in the autumn term and consultation evenings for parents to discuss progress with their child's teacher in the spring and summer term. Annual written reports clearly describe pupils' attainment and progress and identify targets for future improvement. The frequent newsletters are friendly and informative. Much information is also exchanged informally at the beginning and end of the day.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

32. The headteacher, who has been in post for nearly a year, is providing very good leadership and giving clear direction for the school's improvement. Following various monitoring activities, she is fully aware of the school's strengths and areas requiring improvement and is approaching these in a sensitive yet focused manner. Her strongly held vision, to raise expectations for all, is reflected in the newly defined mission statement – learning and achieving together. Strong, effective support is provided by the senior teacher, who works in close partnership with the headteacher. She successfully carries out a number of additional responsibilities such as staff development and being mentor to a newly qualified teacher.

33. Effective delegation by the headteacher to subject leaders is proving successful. They are beginning to take on more responsibilities in their management roles, such as drawing up an annual action plan and managing small budgets. They are enthusiastic and providing effective leadership in many cases. While they are monitoring colleagues' planning, they have not yet undertaken more formal monitoring of learning through, for example, focused scrutiny of pupils' work.

34. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties. The committee structure is well established and teachers inform the curriculum committee about developments in the subjects they lead. Currently there are several new governors, some of whom have already attended an induction programme. Some governors visit the school during the day, though there is no formally agreed protocol for these visits, which would be useful. The more experienced governors are well aware of the strengths of the school, and some perceive an area for further development as improving provision for the higher-attaining pupils. Governors have taken a lead in shaping the development of the school. For example, when appointing the new headteacher, they drew up a person specification that matched the needs of the school. The governing body is appropriately involved in formulating the school development plan.

35. The format of the new school development plan is very helpful, with detailed action plans to address priorities. There are insufficient means of measuring the impact of the initiatives and some success criteria lack detail. The priorities are well supported through financial planning and specific grants are used effectively. The principles of best value are followed and the school provides sound value for money. Systems for financial administration are very efficient. The most recent audit report did not identify any significant recommendations and commended the high standards of financial records.

36. Procedures for staff development are very good. Training is planned to match the school's priorities and respond to the needs of individuals following discussions with the headteacher. Staff always inform colleagues of any salient points learned from in-service training at the next staff meeting, ensuring that both good and ineffective training is reviewed. A focus on understanding the role of subject leadership has been particularly successful, as tasks have changed from resource management, to improving the curriculum and the quality of teaching and learning. Induction procedures for new staff are good. Each person new to the school has a mentor and staff have found support to be particularly helpful.

37. Accommodation is very good. The school swimming pool, new library and Early Years outside areas are particular strengths. They provide facilities that are very well used for the benefit of the pupils. New learning bays will shortly be built in corridors to provide areas where group teaching can take place. The Early Years facilities show great improvement since the last inspection. Classrooms generally have stimulating displays. The library is being developed very successfully as a learning centre with computers and books. It is a very attractive room with good quality furniture and modern, interesting books, many

donated by parents. However, there are not yet sufficient books available and parents and the school are trying to increase the number rapidly. Resources are good or very good for several areas, including Early Years and English, although sound for mathematics and science, and barely adequate for information technology. Overall, the quality and quantity of resources is sound, but good use is made of much that is available.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

38. The school should now:

- raise standards in science by improving teachers' expertise and the scheme of work, and by teaching through an investigative approach; (see paragraphs 61-63)
- improve the quality of writing by:
 - adopting a common style of handwriting and practising it regularly;
 - planning more opportunities to use writing skills in other subjects; (see paragraph 53)
- improve teaching in Key Stage 1 by:
 - increasing the pace of lessons;
 - planning more opportunities for pupils to undertake creative, investigative and independent work; (see paragraphs 10-14)
- adapt the structure of the school day so that time is used more effectively. (see paragraphs 13, 17)

39. Other issues that the governors may wish to address in their action plan are:

- the range of opportunities for developing pupils' multi-cultural awareness; (see paragraph 21)
- the consistency with which staff remind pupils and parents of the importance of good attendance; (see paragraph 26)
- the monitoring role of subject leaders; (see paragraph 33)
- the continuing development of the library and information technology resources. (see paragraph 37)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	33
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	34

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
6	23	32	30	9	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	160
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	14

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	43

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	13

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.1
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.6
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	1999	36	12	48

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	33	34	36
	Girls	12	11	11
	Total	45	45	47
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94	94	98
	National	82	83	71

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	31	35	34
	Girls	11	11	11
	Total	42	46	45
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88	96	94
	National	82	86	87

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	107
Any other minority ethnic group	2

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	00
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	3	1
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.9
Average class size	26.7

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	80

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/00
	£
Total income	316,869
Total expenditure	303,671
Expenditure per pupil	1,887
Balance brought forward from previous year	17,449
Balance carried forward to next year	30,647

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	160
Number of questionnaires returned	77

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	69	25	0	5	1
My child is making good progress in school.	55	40	3	1	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	43	44	9	1	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	45	42	12	0	1
The teaching is good.	64	34	1	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	48	42	10	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	70	23	6	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	56	40	4	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	48	42	10	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	62	32	4	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	60	35	3	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	39	45	10	0	5

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

40. During the inspection it was not possible to see enough lessons taught in every subject to be able to make valid judgements about all aspects of learning and provision.

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

41. On entry to the Early Years unit, assessments show that most children have levels of language, mathematical and personal skills that are above average. Many have had pre-school experience and, following several well-planned preliminary visits to the school, they make a confident and happy start. They enter a warm, welcoming and stimulating environment in which they make very good progress and broaden their experience. By the age of five their attainment is above national expectations in all areas of learning. The provision for the Early Years is a strength of the school.

42. The staff plan and work closely together, ensuring everyone is fully aware of all the learning objectives for each activity, and involved in teaching throughout the day. Excellent use is made of the outside areas, where great improvements have been made since the previous inspection, when this aspect was criticised. Now, each class has an outside classroom that is used throughout the day. Good quality resources are well set out with relevant activities and are effective in motivating children and promoting good progress. A particular strength is that teachers have already started planning to the Early Learning Goals, although these are not formally in place until September 2000.

43. Children make very good progress in developing their personal and social skills. Adults act as very good role models and set high expectations of behaviour and thoughtfulness so that children quickly learn to know right from wrong, and to be responsible and kind. When a child shared some successful learning with the others, another child spontaneously suggested that he should be rewarded for his efforts. Children respond very positively when given opportunities to make choices to work independently or with others. One class confidently and maturely performed several songs and poems in front of the school.

44. Language skills develop well because children are given many opportunities to practise and extend them. Children answered challenging questions about rhyming words, explained to the class about the mini-beasts they had found and identified, and used appropriate language in the role play area. All children write their own name using upper and lower case letters and associate the correct sound with letters. The majority of children read accurately, blending sounds to work out unknown words. Higher attainers used a dictionary to find words containing digraphs, and wrote a story in simple, well-constructed sentences.

45. Children count to twenty and back to zero, and in twos to a chosen number up to fifty. In one lesson, they enjoyed learning how to count in tens to a hundred through singing rhymes. They match numbers, order and sequence them correctly. In another lesson, they made rapid progress learning to “hold the larger of two numbers in the head” and accurately adding another. The higher-attaining children added numbers in this way to 20. Children name shapes and understand ideas such as heavier and lighter, taller and shorter. Their knowledge and understanding of these concepts is often reinforced effectively through activities in other areas of learning.

46. The children have many good experiences to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world. They thoughtfully designed and made a crab pot, planning each element to match the need. They use the computer independently, handling the mouse accurately and choosing games that reinforce language or mathematical skills. By growing bean shoots, children learn the main parts of a plant and know how they grow. In some lessons, children observed a range of shells, asked questions, and looked in factual books to learn about creatures that inhabit the sea.

47. Physical skills are developed very effectively through regular access to a range of apparatus and wheeled vehicles outdoors. Children show a good awareness of space and each other. This skill is reinforced very well through dance and drama lessons in the hall. Children climb, jump, run and cycle confidently. They handle tools, pencils and glue-sticks well. There has been considerable improvement in this area of learning since the last inspection.

48. Creative skills are developed very successfully through daily activities that are linked to a theme or project. For instance, the children created all the props they required for a class assembly, such as mini-beast hats made from a selection of materials, symmetrical butterflies and brightly painted socks. Children created rainbow fish from clay, using a range of recycled objects to add interesting textures and shapes. In one lesson, they blew bubbles through paint to create the background for their mermaid pictures. They sing a wide range of songs with actions and expression, and maintaining the melody very well.

49. Teaching seen in the Early Years classes was always at least good and much of it was very good. The teachers are hugely enthusiastic, which infects the children and promotes very good attitudes to learning. They are skilled in planning to meet learning objectives and matching work to the children's differing needs. Children respond positively to teachers' clear expectations of behaviour and work and through the recognition of their achievements. Adults know the children well and there are satisfactory procedures for recording progress, with relevant comments written in children's books. A very good system is being introduced in which individual targets are set, so that it will be possible to keep a regular check on progress towards the Early Learning Goals.

ENGLISH

50. The results of the 1999 national assessments were well above the national average for reading and above the average for writing. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 was above average for reading and close to the average for writing. There were no significant differences in the results of boys and girls. When compared with similar schools, overall reading and writing results were in line with the average, though Level 3 writing results were below. The results have improved over the past three years. The overall attainment of pupils currently in Year 2 is above average and they are achieving appropriate standards, except in aspects of writing

51. Standards of speaking and listening are above average. Pupils usually listen very attentively in lessons and most speak confidently and articulately, using a wide vocabulary to express their ideas. The literacy hour presents many opportunities for pupils to share ideas orally. Appropriate subject vocabulary is well taught, and many Year 2 pupils understand such terms as alliteration, simile, verse, compound word and synonym. Technical vocabulary in other subjects increases pupils' knowledge. In science, for instance, Year 1 pupils learning about electricity used words such as battery, circuit and crocodile clip. Opportunities for paired work were seen during the inspection, but there are too few opportunities for group discussions and decision-making. There is insufficient ongoing assessment of pupils' attainment in speaking and listening.

52. Pupils enjoy reading and standards are above average. Higher-attaining pupils read fluently, though some are not confident in identifying favourite books and authors. The range of literature for confident readers is rather narrow, both for group and individual reading. Less able readers are supported in a small group daily and this is helping them make good progress. They use a variety of strategies to read unfamiliar words, including splitting the word into syllables. Pupils read regularly at home with parental support and this has a very positive impact on standards. Pupils in both years use non-fiction for research. The superb, newly established library has already greatly improved provision in this aspect of literacy. Each class has a book area, but some are insufficiently stimulating to interest the pupils. Reading records kept by the teachers vary and some do not show how well the pupil has read and what might be improved. New books for both higher and lower attainers and big books for use in the literacy hour are proving very beneficial and motivating.

53. By the end of the key stage, attainment in writing is average overall. Higher-attaining pupils use language imaginatively and sustain a story line as they write at length, which is an improvement since the last inspection. However, opportunities to develop and practise writing through other subjects are limited as teachers rely too much on the use of worksheets. The range and quality of writing in Year 1 varies between the two classes. Some pupils have successfully made their own books called Quiet in the Library, in which they identify themselves as author and illustrator. In Year 2, the range includes imaginative stories, letters, poems and descriptions. Punctuation varies in quality with some higher-attaining pupils still not fully secure with basic sentence punctuation, while others are using speech marks and question marks confidently. Similarly, the standard of spelling varies. The quality of

handwriting and presentation of work is a weakness, as noted in the previous inspection report. There is no overall style in use through the school and insufficient opportunities to practise regularly. A few pupils write in a neat, joined style, but many do not and this spoils written work in all subjects. Teachers mark pupils' written work but rarely refer to the specific objective or suggest ways to improve.

54. In the lessons seen, the quality of teaching was good overall, which is an improvement since the last inspection. In one lesson, Year 2 pupils were caught up by the teacher's enthusiasm when discussing different techniques used by the poet Judith Nicholls. Very effective questioning, a brisk pace, high expectations and appropriate group activities enabled all the pupils to make excellent progress. Higher attainers studied a new poem and wrote letters to the poet telling her why they had selected a particular favourite. Lower attainers selected favourite lines, saying why they liked them, and searched for rhyming words. Some Year 1 pupils enjoyed creating character profiles of different pirates, having first read *Pirate Adventure* together. The teacher's lively approach, well prepared resources and sustained pace helped pupils to concentrate hard. As well as focusing on precisely what new ideas should be learned in this lesson, the teacher also referred to previous learning so that pupils effectively reinforced their knowledge and skills. In some lessons, the effectiveness of teaching strengths was reduced by a lack of pace. Some literacy lessons, for example, carried on for much longer than the intended hour. In a few lessons, pupils were not clear exactly what they were meant to achieve and higher-attaining pupils were not challenged enough. All teachers have mounted very useful displays in their classrooms to support pupils' literacy development, but there are relatively few displays of pupils' writing.

55. Pupils enjoy their literacy lessons and are enthusiastic learners. They concentrate and participate well during class sessions and work industriously during the independent time. The National Literacy Strategy is well established in the school, The subject is well managed by a knowledgeable subject leader who has led staff training to implement the strategy and acquired many new, valuable resources. The subject development plan demonstrates a clear commitment to raising standards and sets out how to achieve this. The monitoring role of the subject leader is beginning to develop, though there have been no opportunities for her to observe the literacy hour in practice.

MATHEMATICS

56. In the 1999 national assessments for seven-year-olds, results were well above the national average and also better than the average for similar schools. The trend over the past four years is upward, in line with the national trend. Boys achieve slightly better than girls, though the inspection was unable to identify why.

57. In the present Year 2 there are fewer pupils than last year who are working securely within the higher Level 3, though almost all have attained the expected Level 2. There is a heavy emphasis on practising computational skills, which offers particularly good support to pupils of average ability. However, pupils are often asked to record work in ways that discourage them from thinking for themselves. There are too few opportunities to use and apply their knowledge in a variety of situations. Higher-attaining pupils in particular do not achieve as much as they could. The introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy is having a positive effect on the development of mental strategies, although older pupils still have some difficulties in solving problems in this way. Year 1 pupils are making better progress in this area.

58. There are relatively few examples where numeracy skills are well promoted through other subjects. Pupils seldom estimate, measure and compare masses or capacities and show they can suggest suitable units for specific tasks. Although they often record science data in tables and charts, these are normally at a very simple level and there is little use of graphs to interpret and communicate their findings. Work with measures is rarely linked to real life or used for a practical purpose. In part of a lesson when pupils found the right money to purchase a toy of given cost they were more highly motivated than when filling in the following worksheet.

59. Teaching in the lessons seen was unsatisfactory overall, but previously completed work and pupils' rate of progress over the year indicates that teaching is generally sound. Lessons were generally well planned and teachers shared the learning objectives with pupils. When this was done very clearly it helped pupils to concentrate on what they were trying to achieve. There is good reinforcement of previous learning and effective use of resources to help pupils. Too often, questioning is limited to checking knowledge rather than understanding and does not encourage the exploration of ideas and strategies. In

one lesson, pupils offered strategies for adding four numbers and for calculating change from 50 pence. However, the most effective strategy was not identified and practised, and so pupils found it hard to complete the activities that followed. Tasks are generally appropriate to meet lesson objectives, but are not always well chosen to match the pupils' capabilities. For example, some Year 1 pupils of average ability were asked to sort solid shapes by using pictures on a worksheet rather than actual solids. Lessons are sometimes too long and this results in a lack of pace and rigour. Work is marked regularly, but there are few comments to help pupils improve their work or to help teachers' on-going assessment. Homework is set regularly and includes some useful investigations. This supports pupils' learning effectively and informs parents.

60. The subject leader has worked hard to implement the school's numeracy strategy this year and has ensured a consistent approach to planning and that adequate resources are available. She is now monitoring plans and introducing suitable assessment procedures that match pupils' achievements to National Curriculum levels. There is insufficient monitoring of learning in order to identify how the curriculum and teaching could be improved.

SCIENCE

61. Standards in science are below national expectations. The teacher assessments for 1999 suggested that standards were above the national average, but taking into account this year's assessments, it is likely that they were over-optimistic in respect to investigative science. Although present Year 2 pupils have satisfactory knowledge, their skills in investigative science are limited. Pupils' knowledge develops systematically because teachers follow the carefully designed scheme of work when planning lessons. However, teachers do not fully understand how to teach knowledge through investigations, and the scheme of work does not have sufficient detail to support them in this approach. A high proportion of work does not actively involve pupils. Year 2 pupils, for example, were asked to carry out simple classification of mini-beasts using pictures on a worksheet rather than their own observational drawings from the previous lesson. Teachers' over-reliance on factual worksheets limits the opportunities for pupils to record and communicate findings mathematically and in their own writing.

62. In the lessons seen, the quality of teaching was satisfactory. However, evidence from previously completed work shows that it is unsatisfactory overall. The main reason is the weakness in teachers' subject knowledge, not only because of the lack of understanding of an investigative approach, but there are also occasions when pupils are factually misled. For example, some pupils were taught that the moon is a planet. Another weakness is that teachers plan very long science lessons in which the pace is too slow, with learning intentions that would often be better suited to lessons half the length. The amount of recorded work for this year does not reflect the teaching-time allocated for science. Both these weaknesses were evident in observed lessons, but were outweighed by strengths that enabled pupils to make satisfactory progress. Year 1 pupils, for example, were given a very clear understanding of cause and effect when learning how to make an electric circuit, and were taught to label their drawings. Teachers lead discussions well, using the pupils' natural inquisitiveness, revising previous work and encouraging the use of correct vocabulary. They are successful in supporting pupils' spiritual, moral and social development. For instance, older pupils clearly understand the need to care for creatures and return them to the habitat in which they were found.

63. The subject leader has drawn up a sound plan for the development of the subject, and this recognises the need for introducing better procedures for assessing and recording pupils' attainment. Teachers' planning is monitored and teachers plan together so that pupils in different classes within the same year group learn the same things. The issue of teacher's subject knowledge has not been sufficiently addressed, partly because standards are not monitored and so weaknesses have not been identified. Although standards have not improved sufficiently since the last inspection there is now the capacity for success, especially because of developments in the role of the subject leader.

ART

64. The art seen during the inspection matched expectations for the ages of the pupils. Year 1 pupils used a range of techniques to create scenes depicting different weather: charcoal, chalk, paint and collage. This work included good links with geography, increasing pupils understanding of different ways to record their observations. Decorated clay tiles, some of which are painted, are of a very high standard. Pupils'

skills are developed in Year 2, with pupils mixing colours well and studying the works of well-known artists. Pupils made particularly good progress in using shape and mixing colour when painting scenes in the style of L S Lowry. Three-dimensional work also develops as pupils make clay thumb pots and decorate them with bold colours.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

65. In the work seen, standards in design and technology were appropriate for the ages of the pupils. However, as is usual for pupils of this age, most work is taken home and so was not available to inspectors. Design and technology is planned closely with art and also provides useful links with other subjects, such as science through cooking. At Easter, pupils make pop-up cards that increase their understanding of joints and develop skills of cutting and folding. Throughout the school, pupils use construction kits to make models, some of which increase their knowledge of how cogs and gears work.

GEOGRAPHY

66. Standards in the work seen were in line with those expected for the pupils' ages. Pupils enjoy map work and by the end of the key stage, understand how landmarks can be represented by symbols, the use of a key and simple co-ordinates. Younger pupils have discussed how the climate differs in various parts of the world and understand the need for appropriate clothing. While considering their environment, Year 1 pupils identified aspects they liked and what could be improved in the school playground. The local environment is sometimes used well for practical fieldwork. Although much of the work is on worksheets, younger pupils developed their writing skills successfully when they wrote a postcard from an imaginary holiday resort. The new subject leader is enthusiastic and knowledgeable and is beginning to prepare useful schemes of work, which is an improvement since the last inspection. There is little assessment of pupils' attainment and progress and no monitoring of teaching and learning as yet.

HISTORY

67. In the work seen in history, standards were similar to those expected for the pupils' ages. Year 1 pupils enjoyed their visit to Chertsey Museum and recognise differences between old and new toys. Older pupils are enthusiastic and have a good understanding of changes over time. One topic, enhanced by a very worthwhile visit to Brooklands Museum, led to time lines showing the development of different forms of transport. Pupils understand how houses and kitchen utensils have developed over time, recognising similarities and differences. Throughout the key stage, most recorded work is in the form of worksheets and so opportunities to develop pupils' independent writing skills are missed. The sheets are stored in such a way that it is difficult for teachers to identify progress and for pupils to build a complete picture of their studies. The newly appointed subject leader has started to prepare helpful schemes of work, addressing the weakness identified in the previous inspection report.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

68. Pupils' attainment at the age of seven is below national expectations, but their current progress and achievements are sound overall. All pupils in Years 1 and 2 are effectively timetabled each week so that small groups use a new network of four multi-media computers. This results in each pupil developing a range of information technology skills, such as learning to select appropriate font styles, colours and sizes for headings and text. Higher attainers use icons to select work to print and save, and know how to highlight important points. Lower attainers, working in pairs or individually, learn to use a mouse to control actions on the screen. All pupils effectively learn the power and value of information technology when controlling programmable vehicles, handling data and discovering the broader aspects of technology in society, such as video technology and e-mail. A very popular information technology club takes place after school.

69. The quality of teaching observed was sound. Pupils were well motivated, co-operative and keen, and developed their abilities in working independently and following instructions. Teaching strengths included thorough lesson planning and the setting of clear learning intentions for the pupils. Some capable pupils were asked to demonstrate the key strokes needed to change the appearance of text and this, together with the teacher's explanations gave pupils confidence to try new ideas. At the beginning of a successful Year 2 lesson, the teacher skilfully identified what the pupils already knew and then ensured that each had appropriate tasks. In some lessons, however, too long was spent explaining what was to be carried out

without finding out what each pupil understood, and pupils were not actively involved. Pupils' behaviour was usually good, but one or two did not listen well and needed several reminders. At the ends of lessons, pupils were sometimes told rather than questioned about what they had learned. While waiting to use computers, some pupils were asked to complete undemanding worksheets that were not sufficiently focused on what pupils were intended to learn. In another lesson, pupils waiting for computer time used the library and made significant progress in carrying out research for other subjects.

70. The network of computers has only recently been installed and so Year 2 pupils' knowledge is not as secure as it should be. The small number of computers available results in sharing and restrictions on time for each pupil, and this is limiting their progress. Some computers in classrooms are old and have insufficient software to enable them to support work in a range of subjects. Pupils have few opportunities to use computers in lessons and this is restricting the progress being made. Curriculum planning sets out how skills should develop over time. At present, however, much of the work for both Years 1 and 2 is similar because the small network is a recent acquisition and computer resources before their arrival were inadequate. A new, very good self-assessment procedure is being introduced in which pupils record their own successes and attitudes to work.

71. The staff appreciates the provision of ongoing training that is increasing their own skills and hence improving the quality of learning for pupils. The dynamic leadership of the subject is effectively building on current successes. Planning for future development is good. There has been satisfactory improvement overall since the last inspection. Although resources have clearly been improved, this has not been as rapid as in many schools.

MUSIC

72. The standard of singing is above that normally heard from pupils in Key Stage 1. In assemblies, pupils sing in tune and with good rhythm. They listen carefully to the accompaniment, enter accurately at the beginning of a verse and hold longer notes appropriately. They make good use of dynamics, thinking about how volume should alter to match the meaning of the words. Pupils' singing is helped in assemblies by the clear piano accompaniment. There is a good range of instruments, some of which have been obtained through parents collecting vouchers. The school has recently adopted a published scheme of work that sets out clearly how skills should develop over time. Music makes less contribution than it could to pupils' awareness of other cultures, though a good range of Western music is listened to in assemblies and lessons.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

73. During the physical education lessons observed, attainment was above expectations for the ages of the pupils. Year 1 pupils are agile, well balanced and show good co-ordination when throwing and catching. A particular strength is the standard of swimming. Most pupils are confident in the water and many of them swim well. The swimming instructor organises lessons very effectively, with a range of activities that keep pupils enthusiastic and involved. There is a strong focus on improving skills and pupils enjoy the high level of challenge. During lunch playtime, pupils are encouraged to use a range of equipment in their play, such as hoops and skipping ropes. This contributes significantly to their physical development. The school makes good use of opportunities for pupils to take part in larger events such as country dancing displays and the sports day at the linked junior school.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

74. The previous inspection report found that insufficient attention was given to the teaching of religions other than Christianity. This has improved considerably as pupils are now taught about aspects of Judaism and Islam as well as Christianity. By the end of the key stage, pupils have good understanding of the special places used for worship in these religions. The visit to a local mosque was a highlight for Year 2 pupils, who talked enthusiastically and knowledgeably about the features of the mosque and associated customs, such as removing shoes and the covering of heads. The subject contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

75. Through the key stage, pupils' understanding of Christianity develops soundly. They know the main features of a church, the importance of the Bible to Christians and the difference between the Old and New Testaments. The local vicar visits school to talk with the pupils and enhances their understanding.

The study of the Old Testament account of Moses leads to work on the Jewish faith. The Rabbi's visit to talk with Year 2 pupils about aspects of Judaism was very successful. They understand that Jews worship in a synagogue, that the Torah scroll contains the special holy writings, and some of the customs associated with home life, such as the Shabbat meal. Overall, standards in religious education are in line with those identified in the Local Agreed Syllabus.

76. Pupils sometimes use literacy skills, for example, when writing about Moses as a baby being hidden in the reeds. However, much of the limited amount of recorded work is on worksheets, kept in a pocket file with papers from three other subjects. Neither pupils' understanding in this subject, nor the relationships between subjects are fostered through this method of recording work.

77. The subject development plan recognises that the scheme of work needs reviewing because it does not set out clearly enough how knowledge and skills should develop over time. Recently acquired artefacts and books are appropriate and many are well displayed in the hall, reinforcing the pupils' understanding of the three faiths.