

## INSPECTION REPORT

### **SAFFRON GREEN PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Borehamwood

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117195

Headteacher: Mrs G Louch

Reporting inspector: Mrs H Ranger

OFSTED number: 22223

Dates of inspection: 21 – 24 May 2001

Inspection number: 192807

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior with nursery

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 - 10

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Nicoll Way  
Borehamwood  
Herts

Postcode: WD6 2PP

Telephone number: 020 8953 3801

Fax number: 020 8905 2656

Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr D Clout

Date of previous inspection: March 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Helen Ranger 22223	Registered inspector	Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage History Music Religious education Equal opportunities English as an additional language	How high are standards? a) The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
Catherine Stormonth 16472	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Jacqueline Cousins 22942	Team inspector	English Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
Paul Nicholson 25406	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Geography Physical education Special educational needs	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Saffron Green Primary is a smaller than average sized community school with 153 full-time pupils aged between four and ten. A further 29 children in the nursery classes attend part-time. The school is in the process of moving from a first school to a full primary school and currently caters for pupils up to Year 5. It is part of the Borehamwood Community Partnership, which receives government funding to support areas of social and economic need. Most pupils come from white United Kingdom backgrounds, but 5 per cent are from various ethnic minority groups and most of these do not speak English at home. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals (26 per cent) is above the national average. A high number of pupils have special educational needs – 36 per cent in the main school, including three pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need. When children enter the nursery, their attainment varies but is below average overall and is often well below average in key aspects of their language and social skills.

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

This is a good school. Pupils of all ages are taught well and make good progress over time, in relation to their attainment on admission, although the oldest pupils do not quite reach the national average standard in their work. The school is led and managed well by staff and governors. It gives good value for money.

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

- Provides good teaching in all age groups, which enables pupils to achieve well.
- Has a staff and governing body who work well as an effective team.
- Has a well respected, inspiring and energetic headteacher.
- Has very effective ways of supporting pupils' moral and social development, which promote very good relationships, good attitudes to school and good behaviour.
- Offers high levels of personal care to its pupils.
- Enables the parents to hold very positive views of the school.
- Enriches the learning opportunities for pupils very well, with clubs, visits and contributions from the wider community.

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

- The standards achieved by pupils in both key stages compared to national averages in English, mathematics and science.
- The standards achieved by pupils in Key Stage 2 in design and technology, geography and religious education.
- Teachers' planning for the most capable pupils in both key stages.
- How the information gained from assessing pupils' achievements is used in teachers' plans.
- How staff monitor their areas of responsibility to raise standards.

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

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

The school was last inspected in March 1997. Since then it has made satisfactory progress in the main areas identified for improvement. Standards are now higher in information and communication technology and history, but the oldest pupils do not yet achieve the expected levels in religious education. The school now meets legal requirements in the curriculum for these three subjects. The quality of teaching for all age groups is better now and it has improved greatly for the oldest pupils in Key Stage 1 in particular. While lesson planning is better, teachers still do not consistently share their aims for lessons with pupils or plan activities to stretch the most capable pupils well enough. Teachers assess pupils' achievements more regularly, but are not yet using the information gained to support their subsequent planning as well as they could. The provision for pupils' cultural development is now good and pupils are offered interesting and varied experiences.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
reading	B	C	E	D
writing	A	A	C	B
mathematics	D	D	E	E

Key	
well above average	AB
above average	
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The school's results in the national tests for seven-year-olds have fluctuated over recent years. They were lower in 2000 owing to the higher than usual proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Overall, standards in writing have been higher than those in reading or mathematics. Teachers' assessments of performance in science showed an average picture in 2000. The school met or exceeded the targets it set for pupil performance in the past two years. It has set appropriate targets for the next few years.

Inspection findings are that pupils achieve well over time in relation to their low attainment on entry to the nursery. By the age of five, they reach the nationally expected levels in their personal, creative and physical development, but below this in language, mathematics and their knowledge and understanding of the world. By the age of seven, the Year 2 group attain average standards in mathematics, but are below average in English and science. The attainment of the oldest pupils now in Year 5 varies considerably but is, overall, below average in English, mathematics and science. Compared with the Key Stage 1 table above, the results of this group are poorer now in English, but this is mainly due to changes in the way that national information is now compiled. Pupils in both key stages reach the levels expected nationally in information and communication technology, where they have shown recent, rapid progress. In all other subjects, pupils in Key Stage 1 reach expected levels but, at the top of Key Stage 2, standards are below those seen in most schools in religious education, design and technology and geography.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy school and are keen to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good behaviour in the classroom, around the school and in the playground.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils form very good relationships. They respect others and take increasing responsibility as they get older.
Attendance	Rates are below the national average. The school works hard to improve this.

Pupils' social skills develop well. They are enthusiastic about learning. They show high levels of courtesy and politeness. A small number behave unacceptably in the playground at times, but are handled well by adults.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	good	good	good

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

All the lessons seen were at least satisfactory. Fifty-eight per cent were good, 22 per cent very good and 2 per cent excellent. Teaching is satisfactory in English and good in mathematics. Teaching has shown recent rapid improvement in information and communication technology since the opening of the computer room. The needs of all pupils are generally met, including those who have special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language. However, at times, teachers' plans do not cater well enough for the most capable pupils or make lesson objectives clear enough. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well and give them interesting and varied work. Pupils enjoy their work and concentrate well.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The required curriculum is in place and is supplemented very well by extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good provision for these pupils, which includes well-targeted individual education plans and effective support in lessons. Consequently, they make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	These pupils are supported well by their teachers and by specialist staff who identify and cater for their needs effectively.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good provision for pupils' moral and social development, and good provision for their spiritual and cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good procedures for pupils' welfare. The procedures to assess pupils' progress are satisfactory, but not yet used sufficiently to inform teachers' plans.

The school provides a caring and welcoming environment for its pupils and works very hard to involve parents in their children's learning. There is a very good range of extra-curricular activities and visits for pupils, which contribute well to their overall development.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good leadership by the headteacher, who is supported well by senior staff. Teachers with extra responsibilities make a sound contribution to the development of the school, but do not monitor the success of their subjects well enough. The school's aims for its pupils are translated very well into practice.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors support the school well. They are active and well informed. They question sensibly what the school does.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school increasingly collects information on how well it is doing. The written development plans successfully communicate detailed initiatives for the short-term and a longer-term strategic vision.
The strategic use of resources	Available funds are directed well to areas of priority and their use is controlled and monitored well.

The senior staff and governors monitor the school's work well and there are plans to improve the monitoring role of subject leaders soon. The school seeks 'best value' well in its spending decisions by questioning what it does and ensuring that money is spent wisely. Levels of staffing, accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory, but some site problems remain from the recent building programme, especially in the outdoor area for the youngest children.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Forty-four parents (24 per cent) responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire. Only eight parents attended the meeting with inspectors.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school is led and managed well.</li> <li>• The teaching is good.</li> <li>• Behaviour is good.</li> <li>• Children enjoy school.</li> <li>• Staff are approachable.</li> <li>• The school expects children to do their best.</li> <li>• Children make good progress.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The homework that is given.</li> <li>• Information about how children are getting on.</li> <li>• The extent to which the school works closely with parents.</li> </ul>

The inspection team broadly agrees with parents' positive views. The number of parents who disagreed with statements in the pre-inspection questionnaire, was low. Inspectors feel that the provision of homework in the school is good compared with that in most schools and that parents are well informed about their children's progress. The school makes considerable efforts to work with parents, but many parents do not yet work closely enough with the teachers to help their children's education.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

##### **i) Children in the Foundation Stage<sup>1</sup>**

1. Most children join the nursery at the age of three and their attainment varies considerably. Overall, the school's assessment of them on admission shows that attainment is well below average. Children's language and social skills are very limited and their knowledge of the world is poor for their age. They make good progress in the Foundation Stage and the children in the reception class are on course to attain the nationally recommended Early Learning Goals by the end of the year in their personal, social and emotional development and their physical and creative development. In spite of good progress, their attainment is below expected levels in communication, language and literacy, mathematics and their knowledge and understanding of the world.

##### **ii) Standards in Key Stages 1 and 2 in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology**

2. The school has not yet had any pupils in Year 6 as it is gradually moving from being a first school to a full primary school. Because of this, the performance of its oldest pupils cannot be compared with the national results for 11-year-olds. Inspection findings are that the oldest pupils, who are currently in Year 5, attain standards that are below average in the 'core' subjects of English, mathematics and science. In English, pupils' attainment in speaking, listening and reading is broadly average, but their writing is below expected levels. These pupils have made sound progress over time, although the most capable could do better if teachers gave them more challenging work. At the end of Key Stage 1 in 1998, a high proportion of this group achieved the expected level for their age (Level 2) in reading and writing. This compared well with schools nationally at the time. However, the school considers that most of this group would not have attained the higher bands within Level 2 that are currently required for schools to do as well in national comparisons. In mathematics now, pupils' number skills are satisfactory, but they do not achieve similar standards in other aspects of mathematics such as shape, space and handling data. In all three subjects, while a considerable number of pupils achieve the expected level for their age in the National Curriculum, fewer than average are working at a higher level than this. However, pupils' achievements over time are satisfactory in relation to their low attainment on admission to school. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make at least sound progress in their time in school. Often progress is good, especially in the early years.
3. In the national tests for its 7-year-olds in 2000, the school's results in relation to national averages were average in writing and well below average in reading and mathematics. When pupils' results are compared with those in schools with similar intakes, they are above average in writing, below average in reading and well below average in mathematics. Teachers' assessments of performance in science showed an average picture in 2000.
4. Over the previous few years, the results in the core subjects for this age group have fluctuated considerably, but writing has consistently been stronger than either reading or

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<sup>1</sup> The Foundation Stage begins when children reach the age of three and the last year of this stage is often described in school as the reception year. During this period, children's learning is based on fostering, nurturing and developing their: personal, social and emotional wellbeing; skills in language and literacy; mathematics development, particularly numeracy; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development and their creative development.

mathematics. This is due to the focus given to writing by the school over several years. The results in 2000 showed a drop since the previous year, which can be accounted for by the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in that group. This was confirmed by inspection observations of the same pupils who are now in Year 3. In both 1999 and 2000, the school met the targets it set for itself in reading and mathematics and exceeded its target for writing. The targets are not challenging when compared with national statistics, but are satisfactory given the low attainment of children on admission to the school. Assessments of the youngest children when they have been admitted to the nursery at the age of three over recent years show that their attainment is well below the local authority average. Attainment is particularly low on entry in children's language development, their general knowledge of the world and in their personal and social skills.

5. Inspection findings and the school's unconfirmed test results for this year show that the attainment of the current 7-year-olds in Year 2 is average in reading. There have been improvements as a result of a recent emphasis in this area. Speaking, listening and writing skills are below average. The school has correctly identified a deterioration in pupils' writing skills compared with previous years and has acted to remedy this very recently by providing more opportunities for them to write at length. However, these moves have not yet had time to have the desired impact on the standards in Year 2. Standards in mathematics have recently risen in this year group as a result of improved teaching and are now in line with what is seen in most schools. In science, standards are below average overall. This is because, while most pupils achieve the expected Level 2 by the age of seven, fewer than average are working at the higher Level 3. The proportion of pupils with special needs is high, which accounts for some of this shortfall, but teachers do not always provide work to stretch the most capable pupils enough. These inspection findings for Key Stage 1 represent an improvement in mathematics and reading since the last inspection, while standards in other aspects of the core subjects have been maintained. They represent at least satisfactory progress over time for all pupils compared to their low levels of attainment on admission to the school. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their targets. This is a result of good teaching both in the classroom and in small withdrawal groups. Special educational needs support staff provide effective help in the classroom for pupils with learning and behavioural difficulties. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress in learning basic language skills that equip them to cope with the curriculum. There are no significant differences in the progress made by boys compared with girls or by different ethnic groups.
6. While most pupils make satisfactory gains in the key areas of literacy and numeracy, their lower than average standards mean that they struggle to work efficiently at times in subjects which require the most reading and writing, especially as they reach the top of the school. As a result, their standards in subjects such as religious education and geography are limited by their lack of fluency in English, especially in writing. In both key stages, the most able pupils are capable of doing better and need more challenge in their work.
7. In information and communication technology, pupils have made recent, rapid progress since the opening of the computer suite and attain the levels expected nationally in both key stages. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

### iii) Attainment in the foundation subjects and religious education

8.

Subject	Key Stage 1	Key Stage 2
Art and design	average	average
Design and technology	average	below average
Geography	average	below average
History	average	average
Music	average	average
Physical education	average	average
Religious education	average	below average

9. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils attain the levels seen in most schools in all the foundation subjects and religious education. In Key Stage 2, attainment is satisfactory in art and design, history, music and physical education. In design and technology, while pupils make satisfactory progress from a low baseline, they have only limited skills in design and evaluation. This is because these skills do not receive enough attention in lessons. Their geographical skills and knowledge are low for their age because too few learning opportunities are given in a structured way. In religious education, pupils have not covered sufficient ground to meet the expectations of the local authority's agreed syllabus and have only limited recall of the topics on which they have worked. Too little time has been given to religious education for pupils to make the required progress.
10. These findings represent an improvement in Key Stage 1 in all subjects since the last inspection, when standards in Year 2 were low. In Key Stage 2, standards have been maintained in most areas, have improved in history, but have fallen in geography. There have been recent improvements in religious education, but these have yet to make a full impact on pupils' attainment.

### Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Good attitudes and behaviour were a strength of the school at the time of the last inspection and remain so. Pupils' personal development is good as they develop greater independence in their learning, are able to take on responsibility and form good relationships with their teachers and other pupils. These good traits make an important contribution to the pupils' learning and the quality of school life.
12. Children in the Foundation Stage have positive attitudes to school. The younger afternoon nursery group are still at the early stages of developing the confidence to use the resources effectively and some rely on the teacher for help with personal hygiene. When children have very short concentration spans, lack self-control and find it hard to sit still and listen to a story, their progress is impeded. The morning group of older nursery children are developing good social skills which enhance learning. Children play well together, share ideas and resources and show enjoyment in the success of others. They also show respect and consideration for adults and peers alike. They can sit in their registration circle on the mat for up to twenty minutes for their 'sing song' start to the day. They also enjoy stories, becoming absorbed and paying good attention. Reception children's attitudes are very good. They are able to concentrate and persevere with tasks, try hard to do their best and are eager to please their teacher with their good efforts. This was seen in an outstanding information and communication technology lesson when children were completely focused on designing their flower on their computer screen.
13. Pupils elsewhere have good attitudes to learning. In Year 4, however, a small number of pupils do not always behave well in lessons. Pupils enjoy a challenge, are keen to learn, have good concentration levels, listen well and answer questions eagerly. Very often the

teacher's question results in a sea of hands going up. Pupils handle artefacts carefully. Pupils willingly follow lesson routines, learn from one another and enjoy each other's successes. This was seen in a music lesson in Year 5 when pupils played recorders, were keen to practise and improve and gave each other helpful advice. Pupils enjoy practical activities. They are motivated by involvement and the opportunity to respond individually, as seen in art and physical education. In Year 5, pupils showed great interest, were polite and worked well co-operatively when they debated in history whether 60s music was better than that of the 90s, by comparing the work of John Lennon and Ronan Keating.

14. Good self-discipline is evident in assemblies and pupils behave well and show reverence during reflection and prayer time. There is also some good self-discipline in Circle Time<sup>2</sup> when pupils keep to the rules well. Behaviour in the school building and in most lessons is good. In the dining room, it is very good and lunchtimes are happy, sociable times. The behaviour of younger pupils in the playground is good and there is plenty for pupils to do to amuse themselves. The behaviour of older pupils in the playground is generally good, but there are a very small number who have very challenging behaviour and cause a nuisance. There is evidence of some bullying, but when it is reported it is dealt with very well and is simply not tolerated. There is good racial harmony and there have been no recent exclusions.
15. Pupils' personal development is good and they are friendly, courteous, helpful, and welcoming to visitors. They are polite to adults and their peers. They listen to each other carefully and are aware of each other's feelings and values. As pupils move up through the school, they become more responsible and independent, and develop greater maturity and growing confidence. Pupils learn much about healthy lifestyles in their personal, social and health education programme. Circle Times give pupils a good opportunity to explore feelings and get specific advice on how to deal with issues they sometimes find hard, like keeping friends and respecting differences. Pupils are eager to be actively involved in daily routines and they carry out their duties very well. Pupils enjoyed making their class rules and when they misbehave there is peer pressure to stop doing so. The School Council allows pupils to use their initiative well to contribute their views on issues they want to change. Topics covered have included the 'Friendship Stop', equipment in the playground, the quiet play area in the school hall where younger pupils are looked after by Year 5 pupils and the tuck shop. Pupils raised the money for playtime playground equipment by having two stalls at the Christmas Bazaar. The 'Friendship Stop' was seen working when a younger girl who was feeling lonely was befriended by older girls who looked after her well and made her smile again. The rewards system helps to boost pupils' confidence and encourages them to try harder. Pupils are given awards, including 'Simply the Best' award at the celebration assembly. The Groundwork Trust Project has helped pupils to design the new, quiet play area of the playground. All pupils designed their own stepping stone as their contribution and they behaved responsibly and have developed some imaginative ideas.
16. Attendance is below the national average and has decreased since the last inspection. This is partly because traveller children who have been admitted on a short-term basis, move on without informing the school. The high level of authorised absences is attributable to the taking of more term-time holidays, some genuine illness and a small number of poor attenders. The rate of unauthorised absence is below the national level and this reflects the school's efficient following up of all absences. Punctuality is satisfactory and the school works hard to encourage better timekeeping in the very small number who are regularly late.

## HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

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<sup>2</sup> During Circle Time pupils discuss a wide range of personal and general issues. It is agreed by all pupils that no interruptions should occur and only one person at a time will speak. Respect for other pupils' views will occur at all times and therefore pupils feel confident that they can talk with ease and free from any form of interference or interruption from other children.

17. The quality of teaching is good in all age groups. Many of the pupils in the school, particularly those with significant special educational needs, need skilful teaching to enable them to make satisfactory progress in relation to their starting points on admission. They receive this at Saffron Green. As a result, their learning is at least sound over time in both key stages and is often good. Learning is particularly good in the Foundation Stage, where the children make rapid gains in their personal, social and emotional development and in aspects of their language development.
18. In the 50 lessons seen during the inspection, most aspects of teaching were good and no lessons were unsatisfactory. Eighteen per cent of lessons were judged satisfactory, 58 per cent good, 22 per cent very good and 2 per cent excellent. Teaching was much improved since the last inspection. Additional evidence was gained from looking at pupils' previous work and from talking to them and their teachers about what they have done in the past.
19. The quality of teaching in the areas of learning for the Foundation Stage and the subjects of the National Curriculum based on the lessons seen and other supporting evidence is as follows:

Area of learning	Quality of teaching
Personal, social and emotional development	Very good
Communication, language and literacy	Good
Mathematical development	Good
Knowledge and understanding of the world	Good
Creative development	Good
Physical development	Good

National Curriculum subject	Quality of teaching Key Stage 1	Quality of teaching Key Stage 2
English	Good	Satisfactory
Mathematics	Good	Good
Science	Good	Good
Art and design	Good	Good
Design and technology	Good	Satisfactory
Geography	(Insufficient evidence)	(Insufficient evidence)
History	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Information and communication technology	Good	Good
Music	Very good in the lessons seen	Very good in the lessons seen
Physical education	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Religious education	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

20. The teaching of the children in the Foundation Stage is consistently good. A caring and secure atmosphere is provided in the nursery and reception classes. Good relationships are promoted with children and their parents. A high priority is rightly given to the early development of children's language and social skills, which are often weak on admission. The school also gives these young children many exciting and interesting activities to stimulate their knowledge and understanding of the world. Children learn well in these areas. The quality of planning in the Foundation Stage is good and ensures a smooth transition from reception into Key Stage 1 for pupils. Teachers have clear aims for their lessons, which are translated into varied activities for each area of learning.

21. Pupils with special educational needs, and those who need support with literacy beyond that available in class lessons, receive effective help during the day. Class teachers, together with committed support staff, who are fully aware of their pupils' needs and abilities, provide this help. This good support ensures that these pupils make good progress in their learning.
22. Teaching and learning for pupils with English as an additional language are good. The teachers are aware of the needs of these pupils and involve them well in discussions or give them additional help. Good support is provided by a part-time specialist teacher from the local authority. She tracks pupils' progress well and provides well-focused activities that link well to the general work of the classroom. Classroom support staff also help these pupils to learn well.
23. Throughout the school, teachers' subject knowledge is secure. Several teachers have particular interests and skills in certain subjects and these are exploited well, for example during lessons in music and religious education, when classes are sometimes taken by someone other than the class teacher. Teachers' understanding of the curriculum in information and communication technology is improving rapidly through recent training.
24. The school gives a high priority to teaching the basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. There has been a successful initiative to improve teaching and learning in reading, and there have been recent improvements in mathematics and rapid improvements in information and communication technology with the opening of the computer suite. Teachers have rightly identified the need to provide better opportunities for pupils to learn to write independently and at length if the school is to maintain its former strength in writing. These opportunities have been provided, but have not yet had a full impact on pupils' attainment.
25. Teachers' planning is good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. Most teachers have clear objectives for their lessons and often share these profitably with the pupils. In the best lessons, the objectives are referred to during the course of the lesson and used at the end to determine how much progress has been made. In Key Stage 2, some lesson objectives are too broad, too complex or expressed in language that pupils struggle to understand. In most lessons, the planned activities cater for the full range of attainments. However, learning is not always as good as it could be because the needs of potential higher attainers are not always addressed. Activities do not challenge these pupils enough and they are too often asked to do routine tasks which do not extend their learning. This is the case in all three core subjects in Key Stage 2 and in science in Key Stage 1 and may account for why few pupils achieve above the level expected for their age. Teachers' expectations in these areas need to be higher.
26. Teachers' methods are good. They give clear explanations and engage pupils' attention. There is good attention to the specialist vocabulary needed for each subject. Teachers use question and answer sessions well in many lessons. This helps to develop pupils' skills in listening and speaking and often enables them to extend their answers to questions. Teachers share particularly good examples of pupils' achievements with the rest of the class. Individuals often demonstrate their skills to their classmates and these are used to show others what to aim for and how they could improve.
27. There are high expectations of how pupils will behave and classes are managed well. Adults provide consistent, patient guidance and this encourages the good behaviour seen in lessons. The management of the small number with behaviour difficulties is effective. Good relationships prevail and there is a pleasant atmosphere for learning in all classes. As a result, pupils learn to be polite, develop confidence and show respect for others.

28. Time is generally used well, although, in a few lessons, introductory sessions with the whole class gathered on the carpet are too long. Support staff are generally used efficiently and liaise well with teachers. They help small groups and individuals to make good progress. Their time is sometimes not used well in the introduction to literacy and numeracy sessions, although very good use of this was seen in Year 1 where the classroom assistant used this time to assess individuals. Practical resources are used well in all classes and help to support learning. Teachers make effective use of attractive displays to celebrate pupils' work and stimulate interest in topics. A wide range of equipment, books, software and artefacts help to bring lessons to life.
29. In the Foundation Stage, teachers and support staff assess pupils' ongoing progress very well. They use daily notes of progress in key activities to record successes and to inform future planning for areas that need to be revised. Assessment is generally good in Key Stage 1 where pupils are given clear, oral feedback on their work and lessons are planned on the basis of information from previous sessions. Good examples of individual target setting are used in this key stage. Target setting in English and mathematics is also being established in Key Stage 2, but is generally at an early stage of development in the school. Assessment in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory and pupils are told what they have done well and not so well. Teachers regularly mark pupils' work and give praise and encouragement. However, teachers do not consistently provide a guide through their marking to what was particularly pleasing about a piece of work or write comments that help pupils to understand what it is they are to improve.
30. Homework is good in both key stages. The school has consistent expectations about what pupils will do at home, which it communicates well to pupils and their parents. Many homework tasks involve parents well in practical activities to support their children's learning in subjects across the curriculum. At the same time, regular practice in literacy and numeracy supports pupils' progress well in these basic skills.

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

31. The quality of the school's curriculum is good and meets statutory requirements. It is sufficiently broad and balanced, with all subjects represented on a regular basis, including personal, health and social provision. The main focus this year has been on developing information and communication technology with the use of a new suite. The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented satisfactorily and there are improvements in the development of mental and oral arithmetic. The school now meets its statutory requirements for information and communication technology, religious education and history, which was not the case at the time of the last inspection. The National Literacy Strategy has been satisfactorily implemented and there are many activities targeted to pupils' particular needs in reading. In other subjects, national schemes of work are used satisfactorily alongside the school's own agreed guidance. However, these national schemes have not yet been adapted to meet the particular needs of the school. These planning arrangements are satisfactory overall and represent an improvement since the last inspection, when many termly plans did not make reference to what pupils should learn. The scheme of work for the Foundation Stage is well organised and incorporates recent national changes. Religious education is increasingly based on the new county scheme of work, which is being implemented satisfactorily. There is no overall scheme of work for personal, health and social education, but the school has used 'Circle Time' sessions well for some time to promote this area. Recently reviewed policies are in place for all subjects of the curriculum and for many aspects of school provision.
32. The curriculum for pupils with special educational needs is appropriate and gives them access to the full curriculum. The individual education plans for these pupils provide clear

and appropriate targets. Well-structured programmes of work help them to make good progress, particularly in literacy. Effective systems of encouragement, including achievement books, help to motivate pupils. The use of 'link books' provides good communication between the class teachers and support staff and ensures that pupils' progress is regularly monitored. Pupils who have English as an additional language also receive an appropriate curriculum that caters for their language needs.

33. Extra-curricular provision is very good. Pupils enjoy sewing, recorder, games, choir, netball, gym, football, athletics, breakfast and after-school clubs. There are a number of visitors who enrich the curriculum. Special events are planned such as history and numeracy days. Visitors from religious communities come into the school to talk about Christianity and Sikhism. School visits linked to curriculum studies take pupils to a variety of places, for example London Zoo. School journeys go to the Isle of Wight and Cuffley Camp. Pupils take part in football and netball tournaments. Book Week included many fun activities linked to storybooks.
34. Links with the local community are very good and they enrich the curriculum. The school has developed links with local businesses; for instance, a local building company is supporting a garden project with materials. Elderly people of the area attend harvest, Christmas and summer concerts. Visits are made to neighbouring environmental areas and plants are studied. Pupils in Years 3 and 5 have e-mailed schools in this country and Year 5 have also established links in Venezuela. The fire brigade and police service are regular visitors to the school. Close ties have been made with the playgroup, and links have been established with the secondary school to which most pupils will transfer when they reach the end of Year 6.
35. Pupils' personal, social and health education is well catered for. There are detailed and useful assessment sheets to record their achievements. Citizenship is satisfactorily developed when pupils' harvest gifts are given to the local mission. 'Circle Time' sessions enable pupils to discuss issues linked to citizenship. The school assists effectively with the teaching of sex education, and pupils also learn about the use and misuse of drugs.
36. The provision for pupils' personal development is very good and is a strength of the school. This aspect considerably enhances their overall progress and provides a rich and exciting background for learning. This is a big improvement since the last inspection and a reflection of the school's determination to make much better provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
37. The spiritual dimensions are well developed through assemblies and religious education, and at other times when pupils experience awe and wonder in their learning. Assemblies comply fully with the statutory requirements for collective worship. There is usually a strong, moral message delivered to interest and involve pupils. Together with music, a prayer, time for reflection and a hymn, the spiritual aspects are well catered for. Pupils have other spiritually uplifting learning experiences, for example when children in the reception class wander through the school meadow and observe daisies, bluebells and buttercups and create their own delightful meadow in a colourful display in artwork. Year 3 pupils listen to music from Peer Gynt and paint the emotions they feel. The results are an impressive array of feelings of sadness and sorrow depicted in dramatic colours and styles.
38. Moral provision is very good and there is constant reinforcement of the difference between right and wrong. This is implicit throughout the school day and forms an important part of the school's ethos. Each class has its own rules and there are class targets, many of which are connected to good attitudes, behaviour and work habits. Pupils have high expectations of themselves and there is very good use of rewards to

encourage improvement and good effort. Circle Times and assembly themes help to raise moral issues and instil good values such as fairness, kindness, sharing and happiness. Year 1 pupils put their kindness pledges on the leaves of their kindness tree. The reception class 'police station' home corner provides many chances for pupils to consider moral questions.

39. Social provision is very good and high priority is given to developing social skills. In the nursery, as an important part of their introduction to school, children are guided on how to conform to daily routines, how to be independent and the rules for sharing, taking turns and working co-operatively. All classes have job rotas, and pupils are actively involved in routines that help them to take on greater responsibility as they move up through the school. The residential trip for older pupils gave them some amazing opportunities for personal development. Pupils went to the Isle of Wight to a multi-activity centre and some said it was one of the best experiences in their lives. The school encourages good citizenship by involvement in local community and school initiatives such as the Groundwork Trust Project, the Ridgehill Housing Association road redevelopment plan, the Borehamwood Carnival and the school's town centre 'pot of plants' recently dedicated by the mayor. Pupils lead in assemblies, are involved in school productions and take part in charity drives that extend social development further. The School Council gives pupils a 'voice' in the school and they can raise issues they feel strongly about. The Breakfast Club provides an excellent opportunity for pupils and parents to be sociable and have an enjoyable breakfast before school.
40. Cultural provision is good and has improved significantly since the last inspection. It is planned for in art, music, religious education, history and geography, in some impressive displays and a good range of multi-cultural resources. The school makes good use of opportunities to celebrate the cultures represented in the school community. Diwali traditions and foods were shared by younger pupils. Pupils have learned about life in India and Mexico. They finished their Mexican work with a fiesta of songs, dance, costumes and food. Sikhism and Judaism were studied during the inspection week in religious education. A Sikh visitor enthralled class 4 pupils with first-hand experiences of Sikh traditions and very good use of artefacts to enliven learning. The school is preparing pupils well for living in a multi-cultural society. There is good provision for cultural development when work is inspired by classical works of art, literature and music. During the inspection, a John Lennon impersonator helped pupils to share in the life and work of John Lennon. There is strong evidence of many visitors who share their musical and literary talents with pupils and provide rich learning experiences.

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

41. The care and support that the school provides are still a strong and notable feature, and this helps to improve the effectiveness of the curriculum. Teachers know their pupils well. Pupils are confident enough to approach their teachers and other adults in the school, and this helps them to feel safe and secure. The school gives high priority to good attendance, behaviour and work habits, and has a very good range of procedures in place to achieve this.
42. The monitoring of personal development is very good. There is a whole-school system for addressing parents' concerns ranging from consultation evenings, setting targets for pupils with parents for the term ahead, and recording all progress in personal development across the following areas: attitudes; self esteem; relationships and perseverance. These progress checks form part of pupils' ongoing record of achievement as they move up through the school. They help staff to recognise weaknesses and to support pupils' personal development very well. The school provides a successful and well-supported Breakfast Club. Parents appreciate this and many pupils are able to have an enjoyable breakfast and

a good start to the school day. School lunches are cooked on the premises and provide some good, healthy nutritious meals in a pleasant atmosphere.

43. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are very good. Registers are consistently maintained and absences are followed up rigorously to minimise unauthorised absence levels. The education welfare officer visits monthly, looking at absence levels and ensuring that the school takes all reasonable steps to improve attendance. At times, the school goes beyond normal bounds to improve the attendance of those few pupils whose attitudes to school and attendance are faltering.
44. The procedures for managing behaviour are very good. Pupils are familiar with their own class rules, the school rules and their teachers' expectations for behaviour. They usually behave well. The school works closely with parents of pupils who have behavioural difficulties. These pupils are well known and there is a range of strategies for managing their behaviour to reduce lesson disruption. This small minority, however, does misbehave in the playground and the new lunchtime supervisors do not exert enough control to stop them harassing others. When bullying is reported, the headteacher investigates the incident, contacts parents very quickly, and takes effective action to eliminate it.
45. The arrangements for child protection are excellent and meet all the statutory requirements. The headteacher is the 'designated person' and has frequent contact with external agencies. Staff are fully aware of the local child protection systems and their responsibilities. Pupils' injuries are checked carefully. When they are sick or injured they receive a high level of care and attention and all their medical conditions are catered for well. The school has some good systems for carrying out all the routine health and safety checking. There are, however, several issues that remain, mostly related to the recent building work:
- the location of the cess pit in the reception and nursery playground. Staff complained about the stench in the playground and toilets. The temporary sealing up of manhole covers to contain the smell is an inadequate response to this problem;
  - the unsuitable door-closing mechanism for the nursery. The door closes very quickly and cannot be opened from the outside;
  - the nursery playground at the side and front of the school building cannot be supervised with fewer than three adults because visibility is poor. The use of a temporary barrier during lessons is insufficient;
  - the paving outside the reception classroom is inadequate and has big spaces between slabs that have very sharp edges. This is potentially dangerous and the school is not able to use the reception classroom external door;
  - the nursery has poor acoustics when all windows and doors are closed. Sounds reverberate and echo and staff find it hard to work properly. Noises are amplified and children put their hands over their ears when noisy activities are going on, like playing with musical instruments such as tambourines and drums;
  - external security lights are not working and the approach to the school in the dark, down steep steps, is dangerous. This reduces the security of the school.

The school continues its efforts to ensure that these outstanding problems are resolved.

46. In the last inspection, it was found that the assessment information was not effectively or consistently gathered throughout the school and that there was little formal use of assessment information for older pupils, to guide teachers' planning. The headteacher and staff have taken steps to address this issue and procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress have improved. A number of assessment systems are now in place, which together provide a detailed bank of data on pupils' progress. The systems

include a local education authority assessment on entry to the Foundation Stage, national assessments at the end of Year 2 and optional assessments in English and mathematics at the end of Years 3, 4 and 5. In addition, the school operates spelling and reading tests for all pupils from Year 1. The headteacher has started to analyse the attainment of children on admission to project their future potential and set targets for their attainment. This makes a good contribution to the school's drive for higher standards. Teachers also maintain informal assessment systems, which they satisfactorily use to fine-tune their daily planning to meet the needs of individual pupils. Teacher assessments in subjects such as mathematics do not accurately reflect the pupils' attainment. However, recently introduced National Curriculum assessment books are providing teachers with a clearer picture of what pupils have achieved in at least the core subjects of English, mathematics and science.

47. The current system of recording test data in the 'class files' does not provide teachers with a clear overall picture of the standards achieved. There is insufficient analysis and use of the information to identify areas of strength and weakness or to track trends over time. Consequently, adjustments to the curriculum, to address weaknesses in pupils' learning and target setting are not as effective as they might be.

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

48. The school continues to have an effective partnership with parents. Parents are supportive and the vast majority who contributed their views to the inspection, are highly satisfied with standards achieved and other aspects of the school. The school tries hard to work closely with parents, who feel welcome and are kept closely informed about the day-to-day life of the school.
49. Just over a quarter of parents responded to the questionnaire and only eight came to the parents' meeting. During the inspection, however, many more parents were spoken to and were able to contribute to the parental views of the school in this way. Another survey was conducted recently by the school and the results present a very positive picture of parental satisfaction with the school. Parents particularly like the approachability of the headteacher and the welcoming and caring environment she has established in the school. Parents had slight misgivings about the amount of homework, not being kept well informed about how their children are getting on and the school not working closely with the parents. The inspection team investigated this low-level disagreement and found that the arrangements for homework are good. Parents are supplied with a homework book that lays out the whole-school homework timetable and a range of ways that parents can support their children's learning at home. Homework is given regularly and complies with national guidelines, and the school is so keen that homework is done that pupils are detained at lunchtimes to complete it. The quality of information parents receive about their children's progress is very good. Parents have termly, formal consultation opportunities to discuss their children's work and set new targets for learning. Commendably, staff are also available at the end of each day to discuss any issues informally. The quality of school reports is very good. Parents are provided with a great deal of good information about their children's performance over the past year. New targets are set and parents are given some very specific individualised advice on how they can help their children at home. The only real weaknesses are the poor attendance of some parents at consultation evenings and a lack of response to school reports. In this regard, the school goes out of its way to let non-attending parents know how their children are getting on. The school tries to work closely with parents and is always keen to explore ways to improve this. However, it cannot have fully effective links with parents if some do not respond.

50. The partnership with parents is forged when nursery staff make home visits and get to know families before children start at school. In this way, induction arrangements are very good and children are able to settle quickly. Parents are given very good information, including a booklet about the Foundation Stage 'Early Learning Goals' (which set out national expectations for young children's attainment) and how these are implemented in the nursery. Many parents come into school each day and help to settle their children. Class and school newsletters are very good, let parents know what their children will be learning and keep them in touch with all the news and other information. Parents have opportunities to comment in pupils' reading records and homework diaries if they want to have a dialogue with staff, and many do. Parents' views are represented by the Saffron Green Forum, which is a working party mainly of parents, for raising issues and helping to develop school policies and projects. The Saffron Green Forum commendably developed the home/school agreement and the homework policy in this way. Parents of pupils with special educational needs feel very well supported, well informed and really involved in their children's education and welfare.
51. The impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school is satisfactory and has strengths and weaknesses. There is a dedicated nucleus of parents who do a great deal. They volunteer to help in school and 20 of them regularly help each week, are deployed well and help to support learning. The Friends of Saffron Green school are a very active group, raising funds and providing the school with a social life. Funds pay for luxuries like the attractive window blinds and curtaining, and staging equipment, and presently are helping to pay part of the Friendship Stop quiet playground area. They are getting ready for the big sports day and Summer Fayre with an evening disco and barbecue. There are many invitations to parents to come to school for assemblies, productions and special events. The weakness is that, despite the school's best efforts to invite parents to school, many do not come. The 'at home' coffee mornings invite parents to come and see their children working in the classroom, but many choose not to attend. The latest annual meeting was attended by only seven parents, even though the choir gave a concert. Most parents brought their children to this but did not attend the meeting.

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

52. As at the time of the last inspection, the school is led and managed well. The headteacher provides inspiring leadership and is well respected by staff, governors, parents and pupils. She has worked energetically to establish a secure climate for learning and a shared commitment to improvement in all aspects of school life. She has recently led the school successfully through the upheaval of reorganisation and rebuilding. The staff work well as a team under her leadership. Their agreed aims and values underpin the school's policies and actions and are having a positive impact on raising standards.
53. The headteacher is supported well by her deputy and, increasingly, by the staff. They are given appropriate training and support in developing their areas of responsibility. Subject leaders are in place for all areas. The senior management team and teaching staff have carried out systematic monitoring of lessons and of pupils' work in the core subjects and in areas that have been recent priorities for the school. This has led to improvements in teaching and learning. Pupils' results in tests and other assessments are evaluated and the information is used to establish targets and initiatives for improvement. These are focused well on the areas of greatest need. To date, subject leaders have not all had the opportunity to monitor their areas of responsibility at first-hand in the classroom. However, the school has appropriate plans for this to take place next term and a part-time teacher has been secured to enable other teachers to be released from their classes to raise standards in their subjects.

54. The co-ordinator for special educational needs provides satisfactory leadership in this area, though she receives insufficient time to carry out her duties. This situation will be eased by the appointment of the new teacher who will support her. She is well supported by the part-time special educational needs teacher. The school has an appropriate policy for special needs, which satisfactorily guides the provision and is based on the nationally recognised Code of Practice.<sup>3</sup>
55. The governing body contributes well to the management of the school. Governors are active, supportive and led well by the Chair and by chairs of committees. Governors have a good grasp of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and how improvements can be secured. They visit the school regularly and monitor its work in action. They question sensibly what the school does and offer constructive criticism. Governors ensure that the school complies well with legal requirements.
56. Staff, governors, parents and pupils are all appropriately involved in how the school plans for its continuing development. Parents' and pupils' views are sought through avenues such as questionnaires and the School Council. The school's written development plans are detailed and reflect both current initiatives and the longer-term strategy. They clearly indicate the action to be taken, outline costings and state how success will be judged.
57. The governing body has established good procedures for financial planning and management, working mainly through its finance committee, which includes the chairs of all other committees. Finances are linked effectively to the school improvement plan. Financial controls are good and ensure that any specific grants are used for their designated purpose. Governors monitor the budget carefully through regular and detailed information provided by the headteacher and the finance assistant. Procedures to evaluate the cost effectiveness of spending decisions are increasingly well established. The governing body and the headteacher apply the principles of best value to all their expenditure, to questioning what the school does and assessing how well it performs. The school's work is supported by its satisfactory use of information technology.
58. There are sufficient suitably qualified staff employed in the school. There are enough learning support staff to help support pupils with special educational needs, pupils who are highly mobile and those for whom English is an additional language. The arrangements for inducting new staff are good and the teacher who joined the school in the last year felt well supported as he settled into his new post. The performance management arrangements are good and well on course to meet national requirements. Staff are undertaking training aligned to their own and the school's development plans. Office and caretaking staff are efficient and make a good contribution to the smooth running of the school.
59. The accommodation is generally good and the recent improvements provide a bright, spacious and attractive place for learning. The whole-school condition survey was thorough and indicated which areas needed urgent attention in the school reorganisation building programme. The computer suite is already making a big improvement in learning in information and communication technology. Pupils are particularly delighted with their refurbished toilets and are rightly proud of them. Display is a strong feature celebrating pupils' work and providing colour and further learning stimulation. The indoor accommodation is clean, well maintained and a credit to the school.
60. The outdoor accommodation of the main school building is showing signs of age. The metal doors and windows have warped over time and many are in a poor condition and do

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<sup>3</sup> Code of Practice – this gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act.

not fit well, causing draughts and high, heating costs. The large school site provides some good outdoor environmental areas for learning and sport. The nursery outdoor play area, however, has several weaknesses; it is difficult to supervise and the space is too restricted compared with what could be made available. There is also no soft surface to the playground underneath large play equipment.

61. The shortages in resources identified at the last inspection have been addressed except in geography, which still lacks a range of large maps for older pupils. Resources are good in art, information and communication technology, English, the Foundation Stage and music. Resources are at least satisfactory in all other subjects. The Foundation Stage does not have sufficient large outdoor equipment, but there is insufficient space for this and no soft surface on which to place the equipment. The school is planning well to cater for its new Year 6 group next year.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

62. To build on the school's strengths and raise standards further, the headteacher, staff and the governing body should:

- raise standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science by:
  - raising teachers' expectations of pupils' attainment, especially in Key Stage 2;
  - ensuring that teachers' objectives for all lessons are clear and precise for the full range of attainment in the class and, where appropriate, are shared with pupils;
  - ensuring that the needs of the most capable pupils are met by activities that challenge and extend them;
  - building on the existing good practice in the assessment of pupils' progress to plan more efficiently and to set targets for individuals and groups of pupils.

*(paragraphs 2 – 7, 24 – 25, 29, 46 – 47 and 75 – 101)*

- raise standards in Key Stage 2 in design and technology, geography and religious education by:
  - ensuring that the designing and evaluating components of design and technology are fully covered in the curriculum;
  - ensuring that enough time is spent on geography and religious education for the Programmes of Study to be covered and the end-of-key stage expectations met;
  - ensuring that the geography curriculum includes enough attention to the systematic development of pupils' skills;
  - linking the plans to improve writing in the school to these subjects so that they support, and are supported by, pupils' progress in literacy.

*(paragraphs 8 – 10, 107 – 116 and 137 – 140)*

- improve the effectiveness of the co-ordinators and thereby raise pupils' attainment, by:
  - ensuring that the planned programme of monitoring subjects takes place;
  - training and supporting co-ordinators to make this monitoring effective in raising standards.

*(paragraphs 53 – 54, 93 and 140)*

Other issues which should be considered by the school:

- continuing the efforts to ensure that remaining defects from the recent building programme are remedied;

*(paragraphs 45, 60 and 72)*

- continuing the rigorous programme to encourage better attendance.

*(paragraphs 16 and 43)*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	50
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	37

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
2	22	58	18	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y5
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	15	153
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	n/a	40

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y5
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	6	55

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	7

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	21
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.9
National comparative data	5.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

### **Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1**

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	16	15	31

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	13	14
	Girls	12	12	13
	Total	25	25	27
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	81 (85)	81 (88)	87 (92)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	14	14
	Girls	12	13	14
	Total	25	27	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	81 (88)	87 (96)	90 (100)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

### **Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2**

The school has not yet had pupils in Year 6.

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	2
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	131
Any other minority ethnic group	3

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It includes information volunteered to the school by parents and does not cover all pupils.*

### ***Teachers and classes***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y5**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20
Average class size	26

#### **Education support staff: YR– Y5**

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	158

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	15

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	25

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

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

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
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.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	337,967
Total expenditure	337,394
Expenditure per pupil	2,096
Balance brought forward from previous year	18,491
Balance carried forward to next year	19,064

*These figures do not represent a typical financial year because they include the costs associated with the move from a first school to a primary.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 24.2%

Number of questionnaires sent out	182
Number of questionnaires returned	44

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	57	36	7	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	59	34	7	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	41	55	2	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home. 97%	43	39	11	2	2
The teaching is good.	73	25	2	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	70	18	11	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	84	16	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	66	32	2	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	57	30	14	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	73	27	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible. 95%	48	45	2	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	50	39	5	2	5

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

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

63. Children enter the nursery at the age of three and attend part-time for up to two years. For 3-year-olds, the afternoon class is small and, whilst given activities for all aspects of their learning, the main focus is on language, personal and social skills. As 4-year-olds, they join a slightly larger group and attend in the morning. On joining the reception class, they attend full-time and their work becomes more structured, preparing them to enter Key Stage 1. The nursery teacher is supported well by a skilled nursery nurse. Both staff liaise well with the reception teacher who co-ordinates the work of the Foundation Stage efficiently. Staff plan well together and the organisation of both the nursery and reception has many common features and a similar approach. The school provides its youngest children with a secure start. Staff are caring and establish good relationships with children and their parents. Planning procedures are thorough and assessment is used well for each child to keep track of progress and ensure that activities match the children's needs.
64. Attainment on entry to the nursery varies considerably but, overall, is well below average. Children often have limited skills in language and personal and social development. They have a restricted knowledge and understanding of the world. Progress across the Foundation Stage is good because the teaching meets individual needs well.

#### Personal, social and emotional development

65. By the end of their reception year, children are on course to meet the expectations of the Early Learning Goals. This is as a result of very good teaching in this area of their learning. The youngest children in the nursery are often immature, unused to mixing with other children and unable to take care of their personal needs, for example in washing or going to the toilet. Adults encourage children to mix well, to learn about other people and take responsibility at a suitable level for their age. They organise activities that encourage independence, socialisation and concentration.
66. The children are interested in activities and keen to learn. In the nursery, they become absorbed in activities such as collage, where several spent up to 20 minutes selecting, placing and sticking their choice of paper shapes on their picture. In reception, children concentrate well, sitting for up to half an hour in a literacy lesson. This prepares them well to cope with their work in the literacy hour in Key Stage 1. Whereas in the nursery, children are often shy and reluctant to speak, by reception they are confident in talking about their work and relate well to other children and adults. They work well as part of a group and take turns when needed. Children of all ages take part in planning some of their daily activities. Staff ensure that they choose from a wide range, but encourage their independence in how they carry out tasks. Children are handled sensitively if they are upset and clear guidance is given about expected behaviour. As they move through the Foundation Stage, the standard of children's behaviour improves significantly as a result and is usually very good in reception.

#### Communication, language and literacy

67. By reception, children have made good progress in language development but do not quite reach the nationally expected levels. They listen well to stories and responded confidently to 'The Gingerbread Man' during the inspection. Most speak clearly and in sentences but a significant minority have poor speech. They are starting to identify and use the sounds made by letters to help them to read simple texts and they handle books well. Most write at least their first name without help and copy or compose simple sentences, usually with adult

help. However, their vocabulary and comprehension are often below expected levels. In the nursery, children develop an enjoyment of books, often choosing to 'read' when they have some free time. Many lack confidence in speaking or have poor articulation and the youngest need considerable encouragement to listen effectively. In both the nursery and reception, teaching is good. Adults provide a good model for speaking and plan activities that frequently revise and extend basic language skills. They cater well for the needs of all individuals by careful use of their regular assessments of children's progress. They plan well for the needs of children whose first language is not English, giving regular adult support and clear guidance on vocabulary and basic speech patterns.

### **Mathematical development**

68. Reception children count confidently to 10 and beyond. They begin to solve simple addition and subtraction sums, for example in dice games. They are less secure when faced with practical problems involving mathematics and in using the correct language for their work, so that, overall they do not reach the nationally expected levels. For example, some struggle to recall the names of shapes. In the nursery, the children begin to count small numbers and use terms such as 'long' and 'short' correctly. They begin to learn about quantity in the sand and water activities and are encouraged to use terms such as 'more than' and 'less than'. Teaching is good. Adults ensure that children encounter mathematical experiences regularly and exploit all opportunities to practise basic counting, for example during the registration period. The reception teacher encourages an integrated approach to mathematics in practical situations, but also gives more structured lessons, which are gradually preparing children for the format and content of the numeracy lessons they will meet in Key Stage 1.

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

69. Children in both the nursery and reception make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world as a result of good teaching, but their attainment is likely to be below the expected levels by the end of the Foundation Stage. This is because a significant number of them have limited experiences outside school to draw on and to support their development of appropriate vocabulary and language structures. In all three age groups, the children learn about living things. They plant seeds and watch them grow. The nursery children have fun making sandwiches with the cress they have grown and the reception children find out more about their plants from reference books. The teachers provide well-equipped role-play areas. The 'police station' in reception enables the children to learn about this aspect of life, take messages, keep track of vehicles and produce 'Wanted' posters. Teachers maintain regular contact with the real police and fire services who visit and children talk knowledgeably about the work of these officers.
70. Children in reception develop early technology skills, for example when making a model boat and bridge for 'The Gingerbread Man'. They share materials and tools amicably and enjoy their work. However, their cutting skills are below average. They learn science alongside this by testing which materials float when deciding how to make the boat. These typify the exciting and valuable activities that the teachers plan in this area of learning. All children are also given regular opportunities to use computers and they show well developed skills for their age.

### **Physical development**

71. The children in reception are broadly on course to meet the Early Learning Goals in their physical development. They use the playground sensibly with awareness of their own and other's safety. They run and jump with appropriate control. They move around their classroom sensibly and manipulate most equipment at a suitable level for their age. In

the nursery, the youngest children have limited physical control and need a great deal of adult support to take part in simple, playground games. They enjoy outdoor play and teachers give daily opportunities for both free and structured sessions.

72. The outdoor area has been redesigned as part of the recent building programme. However, the available space has not been used well in this redevelopment. The amount of secure space available is limited and places constraints on the equipment that can be used. The hard play area is difficult to supervise as it winds around three sides of the building and the paved area is unsafe for children to use at present. The teachers have identified how best this unsatisfactory situation can be improved and are currently having discussions with the builders and local authority.

### **Creative development**

73. Children attain expected levels in their creative development by the end of the reception year. They use a range of media and techniques, painting frequently and creating collages with materials such as paper and sand. They print using vegetable blocks. In the nursery they begin to experiment with paint colours and make vegetable prints with adult help. All the children learn a range of rhymes and songs and regularly play percussion instruments. They play well in the role play areas and at outdoor activities. They frequently express imaginative ideas by dressing up and recreating situations linked to their work, mealtimes or family outings.
74. In this area of learning, teaching is good. Adults provide frequent, varied opportunities for children's development. They balance independent activities well with those that need adult support.

### **ENGLISH**

75. Standards in English are below average overall. Standards in reading have improved so that they are now average in Year 2, due to the effective teaching that has taken place. The school's reading tests for this year confirm this. However, results in the 2000 national tests for 7-year-olds in reading, were well below the national average and were below average when compared to similar schools.
76. Inspection findings agree with the school's unconfirmed test results for this year - that writing standards for the present 7-year-old class are below average. This is due to insufficient opportunities being planned within the curriculum for extended writing, to the low levels of pupils' attainment on admission and to a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Last year, test results for 7-year-olds in writing were in line with the national average and well above average compared to similar schools. There is no significant difference in the achievements of boys and girls over time. Test results are difficult to compare with the time of the previous inspection, as the way that the scores have been calculated has been altered in Key Stage 1.
77. When pupils enter the school, they have very limited speaking and listening skills. The school provides many opportunities to develop pupils' vocabulary. Although their skills increase steadily, they are below average at seven years of age, but are average by the time they reach Year 5. Year 2 pupils can explain the basic plot of books they have read and say why they like particular characters. Pupils in Year 5 enjoy working with partners. For example, they discuss how the author uses persuasive devices in newspaper articles about 'Couch Potatoes'.
78. The literacy hour has been used well to develop phonic skills and word recognition. Throughout the school, pupils make effective achievements in learning to read. Average

pupils have a satisfactory grasp of phonics and they use them to sound out unknown words. Year 1 pupils keenly answered questions about words from the 'Big Book' that described ways of doodling. The reading skills of more able pupils in Key Stage 1 enable them to scan index and contents pages quickly, which is an improvement since the last inspection when these skills were found to be lacking. The reading skills of those with special educational needs are weak, but they are making good progress with their recall of common words. They are well supported by additional literacy support teaching. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are quickly assessed and catered for well. The oldest pupils know how to use a contents and index page. However, they do not use the school library enough to develop their knowledge of the reference systems, as there is no written guidance available to help them to find books. Comprehension skills are well developed and pupils often record their answers to questions about texts, such as when they found out about the Loch Ness Monster. Pupils' research skills have been developed since the last inspection and they now use these to produce interesting projects, such as those about World War II in Year 4.

79. According to records, the present Year 2 pupils had very weak pencil control when they entered the school. Even so, standards in writing are not sufficiently high. They are below average in Year 2. The school has not planned enough writing lessons for pupils to practise and develop their skills across both key stages. Weekly writing sessions have only been added to the curriculum since September 2000 and have not yet had sufficient impact on results. Extended writing opportunities in other subjects such as geography, design and technology and science are underused. There are too many pupils in Year 2 who cannot write simple stories or factual accounts. Average and below average pupils can order words to make complete sentences, for example when given words about snails. More able pupils in Year 2 can use reference books and write about snails and their special features. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, identify words that describe weather conditions and can create sentences with them on the computer.
80. Writing standards in Year 5 (the oldest pupils) are below average. The more able pupils in Key Stage 2 are not achieving higher standards due to the lack of specific challenges set by teachers. Average Year 4 pupils write satisfactorily about how they would resolve moral dilemmas. A strength of the Year 4 writing was found in their ability to write a letter with considerable empathy about being an evacuated child during World War II. Less able pupils can only write a few sentences explaining their opinion on school uniforms. Older pupils' work has a limited use of vocabulary, commas and paragraphs. However, there are examples of interesting newspaper reports such as this piece written by a Year 5 pupil:

The Loch Ness Monster is Back.

'Yesterday at around 2:30 waves filled Loch Ness,' says Nathan aged 9 from Borehamwood. 'Suddenly a head burst out of the loch it was green then as its neck came out you could see an elephant grey head. I ran from the side and into my house. I grabbed a camera and was out just in time to see the Amazing Monster body diving into the water. It was amazing.'

81. Handwriting standards are satisfactory. Younger pupils regularly practise forming their letters correctly; in Year 1; for example, they learn how to write double 'o's'. Older pupils in Year 4 and 5 are not independently using joined up writing in their work. Spelling is satisfactory and the recent extra emphasis on phonics is helping pupils to learn to spell phonetically. The average and more able pupils in Year 5 are learning spelling rules such as adding the suffixes 'ness' and 'ment'. Pupils with special educational needs and

English as an additional language, regularly practise spelling high frequency words with classroom assistants and specialist teachers.

82. The teaching of literacy is good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. There was no unsatisfactory teaching in lessons and one excellent lesson was seen in Year 1. Teachers throughout the school have a good understanding of how to promote reading skills, but are less secure with the development of writing. Teachers' weekly planning sets clear learning objectives, but specific challenges for the more able are not present. The best teaching incorporates many of the following characteristics:
- learning objectives are shared with the class at the beginning and end of the lesson;
  - good use of resources, such as when Year 4 pupils highlight the connectives found in a piece of text;
  - open-ended questioning is used to make pupils think carefully about what is fact and opinion in particular pieces of writing;
  - the last part of the lesson is used to develop speaking and listening skills;
  - good behaviour management focuses on positive reinforcement and ensures that pupils concentrate on tasks carefully.
83. Teachers do not use marking particularly well. They do not record the strengths or development areas of pupils clearly. As a result, pupils are not informed of what they are doing well or how they could improve. Teachers' termly assessments of pupils' attainment are not consistently used and are not based on examples of pupils' work that has been graded to National Curriculum levels. In some classes, classroom assistants carry out useful assessments during lesson introductions but this practice is not widespread. Pupils with special educational needs have specific and measurable targets, which are followed carefully and regularly monitored by the teachers and the special needs co-ordinator. This ensures that these pupils have good provision and make progress in learning to read and write accurately. Overall, the literacy hour has been satisfactorily implemented. Information and communication technology is satisfactorily used to teach aspects of literacy. Most pupils enjoy reading and are enthusiastic enough to volunteer their own ideas. Some pupils regularly read to their families at home, returning their books to school daily, but others do not have this support from home.
84. The management of English is very good and there is an appropriate action plan for further development. The co-ordinator sets an excellent example by the high quality of her teaching of reading and writing. The promotion of reading, speaking and listening in the school has been particularly effective.

## **MATHEMATICS**

85. At the time of the last inspection, standards were below national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 but broadly in line with expected levels by the end of Year 4. Currently, the situation is reversed with standards by the age of seven being average but by the age of 10 they are below average. This is due to the relatively low proportion of pupils who achieved higher than the level expected nationally for their age when compared with most schools. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of effective individual education plans and the good support they receive in the classroom. There is no significant difference between the performance of girls and boys.
86. In the National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1 since 1997, the school's performance has been below or well below the national average. In 2000, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard, Level 2, was below the national average. The proportion achieving the higher standard, Level 3, was well below the national average. In comparison with similar schools these results were also well below average. The

standards achieved by pupils were nearly two terms behind those of average 7-year-olds. Inspection evidence indicates an improvement in the current Year 2. The proportion of pupils achieving both the expected standard and higher standard are broadly similar to that found nationally. This represents a good level of achievement for the pupils, who entered the key stage with below average attainment. This improvement since the last inspection is the result of an improvement in the quality of teaching at Key Stage 1.

87. By the age of seven, most pupils have a sound knowledge of place value to 100. However, very few pupils solve problems involving numbers to 1,000. They recognise simple fractions, such as a half and a quarter, and understand the difference between odd and even numbers. Pupils successfully double and halve numbers to 20. They know some of the properties of common two-dimensional shapes and use data collected on a tally chart to produce bar charts. However, pupils understanding of mathematical language is limited and they find it difficult to develop different ways of solving problems.
88. Inspection evidence indicates that standards by the age of 10 are below average. While the majority of pupils achieve standards appropriate for their age, a smaller proportion of pupils than is found nationally achieves a higher standard. A small number of the most capable pupils in each year group are not achieving as well as they might. However, most pupils gain a satisfactory level of achievement. This represents sound progress for most pupils because they entered the key stage with below average standards.
89. In Key Stage 2, pupils make satisfactory progress in their understanding of number. By Year 5, pupils write and order numbers to 10,000 but their understanding of decimal numbers and negative numbers is limited. They accurately use mental recall of the multiplication tables up to 5x5 but are less secure on the higher 6x7 and 8x9 tables. Most pupils recognise simple equivalent fractions, understand the 24-hour clock and use standard metric units, for example when measuring the perimeters of simple shapes. They know the names of common two- and three-dimensional shapes but find it difficult to describe their mathematical properties. Pupils have not yet developed appropriate strategies for solving problems.
90. Overall, standards of teaching and learning are good as teachers carefully consolidate pupils' learning. Teachers' questioning skills are good and they give clear explanations. This ensures all pupils, including those who speak English as an additional language, make at least sound progress. Teachers have clear expectations of behaviour, manage the pupils well and encourage pupils with high levels of praise. Consequently, pupils behave well and show interest in their work. The introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy is having a positive impact upon the quality of teaching and learning. Lessons include satisfactory sessions on mental mathematics, during which pupils gain much needed consolidation of both number work, such as multiplication tables, and mathematical language, for example when discussing right-angled turns. However, the pace of these sessions is not always brisk and strategies to improve pupils' understanding are not always discussed.
91. Teachers plan the weekly activities thoroughly. In the best lessons, their planning ensures that there are appropriate group activities for the different ability groups within each class. This is particularly well done in Key Stage 1 where, for example, in a lesson on shape the teacher planned a variety of activities all clearly aimed at developing pupils understanding and mathematical language. These included practical tasks, mathematical games and the use of a programmable toy robot. Consequently, pupils of all abilities made good progress. In lessons that are satisfactory rather than good, all pupils complete the same tasks and there is little to challenge the more able pupils. Occasionally, insufficient use is made of practical resources to support pupils'

understanding. For example, in a lesson on capacity, pupils found it difficult to visualise millilitres and litres without the actual use of liquid and measuring jugs.

92. Until recently, the school has made little use of information and communication technology to develop pupils' mathematical learning. Following the opening of the new computer suite, this situation has improved. For example, during the inspection, pupils in Year 3 entered a series of commands to control the movements of an object on the screen. In Year 5, pupils used a data-handling program to produce bar charts. To date the positive impact of this new resource on pupils' learning is limited but its potential is great. Only limited use is made of numeracy skills in other subjects and this restricts pupils' opportunities to apply their mathematical knowledge.
93. The co-ordinator provides sound leadership for the subject. She satisfactorily monitors teachers' planning, though the monitoring of classroom teaching is limited. Appropriate assessment procedures are in place and teachers track pupils' progress through the school. Teachers set individual pupil targets for improvement, though the frequency and effectiveness of these is inconsistent across the school. The school is not yet making effective use of performance data gathered from. For example, national and optional tests to identify strengths and weaknesses in the school's overall performance in order to adapt future planning.

## SCIENCE

94. At the time of the last inspection, standards were below national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and in line with national expectations by the end of Year 4. Teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 in 2000, showed standards to be close to the national average. Currently, overall standards at the age of 7 and 10 years are below average. This represents an apparent decline in standards observed in Key Stage 2 since the last inspection because few pupils achieve at a high standard than is seen in most schools. The decline at age seven since 2000, is a reflection of the slightly higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the current Year 2. There is no significant difference between the performance of girls and boys.
95. A significant majority of pupils across the school achieve an appropriate standard for their age. However, the overall performance of the school is below average because too few pupils achieve both the expected standard and the higher standard when compared with other schools nationally. For example, in the current Year 2, more than three-quarters of the pupils are working at the expected standard, Level 2. A small number of pupils are working at the higher standard, Level 3. However, these are smaller proportions than those found nationally working at both the expected level and the higher level. The picture is similar in Key Stage 2 with the majority of pupils by Year 5 achieving an appropriate standard for their age but with fewer than expected achieving this expected standard and the higher standard.
96. Given the pupils' below average attainment on entry and the high proportion of special educational needs identified, this below average performance represents a satisfactory level of achievement for most pupils. However, a small number of the most capable pupils in each year group are not achieving as well as they might.
97. Pupils in Key Stage 1 make good progress in their learning and gain a satisfactory understanding of life processes and materials. In Year 1, pupils satisfactorily name the external parts of the body, such as 'head', 'hand' and 'knee'. They know plants need water to grow. They sort materials using terms such as 'hard', 'soft', 'rough' and 'smooth'. By Year 2, pupils know that food is important for strong bones and energy, and exercise is needed for our muscles to develop. They understand that heating and cooling changes

some materials. For example, they know that the ingredients for a cake alter when the mixture is baked in an oven and that water turns to ice when it is put in the freezer. Pupils understand that many of their toys move when they push or pull them. They know that they can make a bulb light up using a battery and wires and that it will remain alight if they add a metal spoon to the circuit but not if they add a plastic straw. However, pupils' understanding of the physical processes of sound and light is more limited. More able pupils do not fully develop their experimental and investigative skills, such as by putting forward their own ideas, making simple predictions or recording their observations in a variety of ways.

98. Pupils at the beginning of Key Stage 2 make satisfactory progress in their learning. In Year 3, pupils consolidate their understanding of plants through observing bean seeds they have planted in pots as they quickly grow in the classroom. The pupils use basic vocabulary, such as 'stem', 'leaf' and 'roots' to identify the parts of a plant. By Year 4, pupils understand that our bodies are supported by a skeleton. They develop their understanding of electricity by the use of symbols to draw simple electrical circuits. Pupils in Year 5 make good progress in the development of their experimental and investigative skills. They understand the need for fair tests and make predictions, for example when investigating how to muffle the sound made by an alarm clock. The pupils' rate of progress, and therefore their attainment, is often reduced by their lack of vocabulary. For example, pupils understand that a material may be a solid, liquid or gas and that ice, water and steam are examples of how a material may change from one state to another. However, they have difficulty in explaining the differences between these states of matter or giving other examples.
99. Overall, the quality of teaching and the learning it promotes is good; it ranges from satisfactory to very good. In all lessons, there is effective teamwork between teachers and classroom assistants. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support and therefore make similar progress to their classmates. There are good relationships between staff and pupils and teachers manage the pupils well. Pupils' behaviour in lessons is therefore good and they are attentive. Pupils are keen to participate in practical activities. For example, pupils were very keen to observe and measure their bean plants in a Year 3 lesson. The pupils' attitudes contribute positively to their learning. Occasionally pupils become restless when teachers' introductions to lessons or explanations are too long. Teachers make very good use of questioning to consolidate pupils' previous learning. They carefully stress key vocabulary within lessons and effective use is made of word charts and lists. However, the vocabulary teachers use is not always challenging enough to develop pupils' understanding. For example, they use the same simple terminology in both key stages to describe the parts of a plant.
100. In the best lessons, teachers plan with a clear focus and use effective strategies to improve pupils' learning. For example, a teacher created great interest amongst the pupils when investigating how plants absorb water by using a stick of celery and coloured dye. The lesson included a good balance between talk, observation and recording. In lessons where the learning objective is not clear, the teaching is less effective in developing pupils' understanding. Teachers do not always develop tasks to extend the more able pupils. Often there is insufficient focus on how pupils are to record their findings. Teachers often miss opportunities to develop pupils' literacy skills by using different forms of writing. While pupils occasionally use measurements in their practical work, as when recording the height of their plants, they make insufficient use of graphs and tables. Currently, little use is made of information and communication technology to enhance and enrich the curriculum.
101. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' social development. Pupils are encouraged to study and reflect on plants and the environment and this makes a positive

contribution to their spiritual development. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to work together and share ideas and this enhances their social development. There are satisfactory procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress, but the use of assessment information for setting class and individual targets is not so strong.

## ART AND DESIGN

102. Although pupils enter the school with little experience of art, their attainment as 7 and 10-year-olds is average as a result of effective teaching. Standards in Key Stage 1 have improved since the last inspection when they were below average. The school is filled with beautiful displays, which demonstrate the pupils' considerable skills in drawing, sketching, painting and modelling with clay and other materials. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language are well integrated into all lessons and make good progress.
103. Pupils use their observational sketching skills to good effect, when they make beautiful pictures of shoes and musical instruments in Year 4, using pencil to add depth. The use of pencils and crayon has improved since the last inspection when it was weak. Pupils now use colouring pencils to plan their designs for group collages telling the story of Greek Myths such as Theseus and the Minotaur. There are attractive and brightly coloured animal masks made by Year 2 inspired by Mexican masks. Mouldable materials are effectively used to create bowls. Collage is used imaginatively, for example when natural materials are combined to make landscapes of favourite places. Paint and collage are combined well when pupils create beach and sea scenes in Year 5.
104. Examples of famous artists' work are used well within the school to develop pupils' drawing and painting skills. They paint in the style of Paul Cezanne when they create delightful pictures of still life. Pastels are rarely used to add colour to pupils' creations. There are sketchbooks for pupils to record their initial ideas. Pupils do not write evaluations of their own or other's work at present. Information and communication technology is used to support this subject. Pupils draw pictures of flowers well using paint programs on computers.
105. The teaching of this subject is good throughout the school. The best teaching incorporates many the following features:
- well-planned lessons with specific learning objectives, which are shared with pupils;
  - teachers' good organisational skills, for example when pupils create their own printing block and use it to print borders;
  - high expectations of behaviour ensure pupils' attitudes to art are good, as seen when pupils made clay tiles;
  - the effective management skills of teachers mean that the pupils concentrate well and share tools fairly;
  - a wide variety of resources are available for pupils to use when they select their own materials, for example when they produce scenes that tell a story from the Greek myths, using a fabric and other materials.
106. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of how to develop the basic skills of art make a significant impact on pupils' learning and achievement. There have been many improvements in this subject and the co-ordinator has worked hard with the staff to achieve this.

## DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

107. Standards meet expectations for pupils aged seven, and result from good teaching. This is an improvement since the last inspection when standards were below average in Key Stage 1. However, while pupils in Key Stage 2 receive a satisfactory level of teaching, standards are below average, due to the very weak skills with which these pupils entered school. All pupils are given access to the curriculum. Those with special educational needs and English as an additional language achieve satisfactory standards in Key Stage 1. In Year 1, the teaching promotes effective designing skills. This was evident from the designs for an

adventure playground, which were well organised in a design and technology book. Year 2 pupils compile detailed lists of materials for their work. However, pupils' planning is not recorded in design and technology books in Key Stage 2. Year 5 pupils draw labelled diagrams of the new school garden. Evidence of step by step planning was very limited in Key Stage 2.

108. There has been improvement in coverage of the curriculum since the last inspection when it was judged insufficient. Pupils now receive a rich curriculum in Key Stage 1. The final products made by Year 2 are of an average standard and demonstrate that basic skills are well taught. Accurate measuring, cutting and joining skills are used in their working model vehicles. A strength of their work is the beautifully sewn patches that are combined to make a wonderful 'Joseph's Coat of Many Colours'. Effective teaching methods are evident when mechanisms are used by Year 2 to make pop-up characters in cards. Working musical instruments made by Year 5, incorporate cardboard, string, paper and paint but they demonstrate a limited variety of methods for joining materials. Pupils have also made peppermint creams and the packaging to hold them, but wood and fabric are rarely used in Key Stage 2 to make products. As a result, pupils do not have experience of working with a good range of materials.
109. The evaluation of pupils' products is a prominent part of their work in Key Stage 1. There is evidence of pupils writing detailed evaluations of products, for example:  
'I like my model because it is big and stable. It is nice and works. The part I found easy was sticking the sellotape. The part I found difficult was when I was sticking straws on it. They would not stick properly. Next time I would use glue and pipe cleaners because then it might be even more strong.'  
There is no evidence of pupils developing their writing skills to produce similar evaluations in Key Stage 2.
110. No teaching of design and technology took place during the inspection week, but the quality of pupils' designing and their finished products indicate that the quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is good. Teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 2 and pupils' limited experiences partly result from the reduced curriculum that has been in effect for the last two years. Pupils enjoy the practical activities in this subject. They talk about how they worked together to make pencil holders. Information and communication technology has been used to support pupils in this subject; for instance, they design door signs for the new computer suite.
111. Since the previous inspection, the school has adopted the national scheme of work, but it is not yet being used to create a rich curriculum in Key Stage 2. The creation of yearly plans of topics linked to fabric, electricity and food means pupils have an opportunity to develop skills appropriately throughout the school in the future.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

112. At the time of the last inspection, standards at the end of Key Stage 1 and by Year 4 were in line with national expectations. Since then, the standards at Key Stage 1 have been maintained, but they are below average in the current Year 5. This is because their learning opportunities lack depth and regular attention to the development of skills.
113. By the age of seven, pupils have a sound knowledge of both physical and human features of places. Through their own observations, pupils recognise that our weather changes daily. Teachers satisfactorily develop pupils' knowledge of local places through, for example, a survey of traffic parked on local roads. Pupils know that there are different forms of transport and different ways of crossing a road, including zebra crossings, bridges and subways. They learn about other parts of the world, for example when

studying life in a Mexican village. Pupils understand that Mexico is a long way from here and that they 'could go there by boat or plane'. They know Mexico has jungle and a volcano. Pupils develop simple mapping skills, for example when using simple symbols to show the position of a shop, the post office and a castle on a sketch map of an island.

114. In Key Stage 2, pupils are aware that different places experience different weather conditions, for example when investigating holiday resorts across the world. They show an appropriate understanding of life in an Indian village and make relevant comparisons between their own lives and those of the Indian families. They further develop their knowledge of their own locality by completing a survey of local shops and discussing changes to the local environment. However, by Year 5, pupils' knowledge and geographical skills are below that expected for their age.
115. The below average standards are a result of activities often lacking depth in the geographical aspects of the topics covered. Geographical skills, particularly the development of appropriate geographical vocabulary and the use of maps, are also not developed progressively or sufficiently. For example, while pupils have a basic understanding of the water cycle, few understand terms such as 'evaporation' and 'condensation'. Pupils' knowledge of the major features of the British Isles, including rivers, mountains and cities, is very limited. Teachers have not progressively developed pupils' knowledge and use of maps. Most pupils understand the use of a key and know the eight points of a compass. However, their understanding of scale, knowledge of different types of map and the use of four-figure co-ordinates have not been sufficiently well developed for their age. The range of maps available to support this development is limited.
116. In the one lesson observed during the inspection, the teaching was good. The teacher created good levels of interest because of his secure subject knowledge and enthusiastic approach. The effective use of questioning, photographs and information cards result in good learning. In general, teachers' planning for the subject is satisfactory. They make good links to other subjects. For example, pupils made good quality masks in art as part of their work on Mexico. However, in the planning of some topics, the geographical content does not have a sufficiently high focus. In work on Venezuela, a high focus was given to the writing of letters to pen pals at a school in Caracas. This provided useful opportunities for developing pupils' literacy skills but did not develop their knowledge of physical and human features in this contrasting South American location. The school has recently introduced national guidelines for the teaching of the subject. The co-ordinator and teachers have not yet fully adapted this guidance to ensure a clear progression in the teaching of the skills necessary to improve pupils' learning. This has had a negative impact on pupils' attainment and progress.

## **HISTORY**

117. Pupils aged 7 and 10 achieve the expected standards in history. This is an improvement since the last inspection when pupils' attainment and progress were unsatisfactory. Standards have improved because teachers' planning is now more systematic and gives appropriate attention to the development of skills and understanding as well as the acquisition of facts. Pupils with special educational needs are given the support they require to make sound progress.
118. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils begin to place events from the past in order, knowing, for instance, that the Great Fire of London happened before the first moon landing. They describe how people's lives have changed in areas such as medical care, which they have learned about through the story of Florence Nightingale. They start to use various sources of historical evidence to find out about the past such as reference books, museums and

'first-hand' accounts of actors who visit the school in the role of a historical character. By the age of 10, pupils have satisfactorily extended their knowledge and understanding. They have a sound grasp of life in ancient times through their study of Ancient Greece this year and a range of periods studied in previous classes. Their knowledge extends to the most recent history that they have studied through the life and times of John Lennon. They can recount significant events from the 1960s and 1990s and have used a wide range of reference sources, from talking to older relatives to researching via the Internet. They are beginning to produce structured written work, combining information from these various sources.

119. Only three lessons were seen. Further evidence was gained from examining pupils' previous work. This indicates that teaching and learning are satisfactory in both key stages. Two of the lessons seen were taught very well and enabled pupils to make rapid progress. Both lessons were very well organised and made effective use of interesting resources or artefacts. Both teachers questioned pupils very well to check their understanding and extend their thinking. Explanations were clear and good use was made of available extra adult support. The activities were lively and interesting and motivated pupils to learn. Pupils have positive attitudes to their work and behave well in lessons. In Year 1, artefacts from Victorian and Edwardian homes were used to give pupils a real sense of domestic life in the past. In Year 5, a lively game assessed well the class's recall of their previous work on events since the 1960s. An activity comparing the music of John Lennon and Ronan Keating engaged the pupils' attention and led to a productive debate. Pupils in both key stages are given frequent opportunities for exciting activities and show good levels of attainment orally in lessons. The work recorded in their books is not at such a high level because a considerable number do not have sufficiently developed writing skills to record their work speedily or accurately. Teachers are aware of this and use literacy-based projects regularly to encourage pupils to use their reading and writing skills in this subject. Information and communication technology is used increasingly in lessons. It was used well in a lesson in Year 3 where pupils referred to a computerised encyclopaedia and a suitable website in their research into Vikings.
120. The subject is managed soundly. The co-ordinator has led the staff successfully in implementing recent national changes to the curriculum. Good use is made of visits to places of interest and the co-ordinator has established productive links with a nearby museum and local history group. The frequent visits by members of a theatre group enhance pupils' learning, for example in a workshop about evacuees and in 'personal appearances' from Florence Nightingale and John Lennon. Stocks of resources have been improved since the last inspection and good use is made of local artefact loan schemes. Assessment procedures are mostly informal but, in a few classes, teachers assess pupils' progress by closer reference to National Curriculum levels and attainment targets and this gives them useful information about how best to plan subsequent lessons for their pupils.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

121. Standards in information and communication technology are average at the age of 7 and 10 years. This is an improvement since the last inspection when standards were below average in both key stages. Due to the new information and communication technology suite, all pupils are suitably included in lessons, making good progress and achieving well even though they enter the school with very limited knowledge of computer skills.
122. In Key Stage 1, the standards are average. Information and communication technology books record pupils' work effectively in this key stage. Most pupils can word process and save their work, for example their description of the weather. The majority of pupils can draw a picture and use the 'spray' function. Pupils use a grid, 'flood fill' and paint in the style of Piet Mondrian. Year 2 pupils have made menus for their café changing font sizes in their

design. Year 1 pupils have created graphs to represent different types of vehicles. They have ordered pictures using the mouse to show the life cycle of a butterfly. However, they have not explored an adventure programme to enable them to fulfil this aspect of the National Curriculum.

123. The standards of pupils aged 10 years are average. Year 3 pupils know how to program a floor robot to move along a particular path. They can draw a flowering plant using the mouse and label it with scientific names. They design a packaging label using a drawing programme and print the result. Year 4 pupils explore changing font sizes when they save and print out their code of behaviour. This demonstrates improvements since the last inspection when pupils could not load or print their work. The pupils in Year 5 word-process and add pictures to text to create eye-catching posters on the qualities of good leaders. They can cut and paste titles moving them to where they want them on a poster. However, few pupils have drawn graphs and are only starting to use spreadsheets.
124. The quality of teaching is good at both key stages. Teachers have established effective teaching methods to develop basic skills by using the computer suite to introduce pupils to programmes for at least one hour a week. Effective learning methods are used when Year 5 pupils learn how to send e-mails using the spell checker. Year 3 pupils can add pictorial attachments to their e-mails. Basic skills are taught well when pupils use a spell checker and correct a piece of text using drop down menus. Support staff assist pupils to work quickly. One teacher assesses pupils' work in their National Curriculum record books accurately. Teachers do not yet have the expertise they need to use all the programmes that the school has at present but are receiving training. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language receive good opportunities to develop their skills, so that they achieve well in this subject. Pupils enjoy using the computers. They work sensibly and independently on them, overcoming problems for themselves due to the high expectations and management skills of the teachers. Teachers' weekly planning is satisfactory, but there is no specific challenge for the more able pupils and learning objectives need to be more specific to raise standards.
125. The subject is managed well. The co-ordinator has a good vision for its further development in her action plan and is supporting the planned programme of staff training. Her role in monitoring the subject at first hand has been limited.

## **MUSIC**

126. Pupils aged 7 and 10 reach the standards expected for their age in music. The school has maintained the standards identified at the time of the last inspection. Teachers plan lessons that show a progressive development across the school. The school makes good use of the teachers who have a specialist knowledge of music, to play a wider role with classes other than their own. There has been a particular focus on the development of singing skills this year and this has had a positive impact and led to improving standards.
127. In Key Stage 1, pupils sing well, showing good control of pitch and rhythm. It was not possible to see a lesson with Year 2, but pupils in Year 1 showed an appropriate understanding for their age of variations in pitch in a sequence of notes. They listened and responded very well to the teacher's example and sang simple patterns accurately, unaccompanied. They read a simple score correctly. By Year 5, pupils sing tunefully and can maintain their own part in a song well. Almost all have made a good start in learning to play the recorder and are starting to read conventional notation. They comment on how their work can be improved. Pupils of all ages have regular opportunities to listen to and comment on a range of music from various styles and traditions, for example in assemblies. They learn about the work of professional musicians through visits, such as

the recent one from a woodwind group. Weekly whole-school singing sessions enable pupils in both key stages to develop this aspect of their skills satisfactorily.

128. In the lessons seen, teaching and learning were very good. The teachers have a secure knowledge of their subject, which they communicate well. The main elements of the music curriculum are covered well in lessons. There are frequent opportunities for performing and composing, both with the voice and instruments, appraising pupils' own work and the work of famous composers, and for listening to how music is structured and created. Pupils enjoy their work and behave well. They are keen to improve. They show respect for the efforts of others and offer constructive criticism in a sensitive way. Teachers show enthusiasm for music and this is infectious, serving to motivate pupils well. This was seen in a lesson about Peer Gynt in Year 3 where the teacher inspired pupils to imagine the story from the music. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well and organise lessons efficiently. Good use is made of practical resources and of the hall, to provide an extended working space when needed. Activities promote pupils' understanding of other cultures well, as was seen when a skilful lesson with pupils in Year 4 incorporated both flamenco and Indian music well. At the end of this lesson, pupils commented sensibly on the contrasting styles of these traditions and how they were achieved.
129. The subject is led well by an experienced and able co-ordinator who has recently been appointed. He has appropriate plans for further development in carefully targeted areas, such as instrumental tuition. A choir gives pupils an extra outlet for their musical interests and all pupils in Years 4 and 5 have been provided with recorders that they use regularly. Recent national revisions to the curriculum have been integrated into the school's existing scheme of work successfully. Good use is made of a commercial scheme to support lessons where appropriate. Assessment procedures are mainly informal but the co-ordinator has sensible plans to extend manageable systems more widely than at present.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

130. Pupils aged 7 and 10 achieve the expected standards for their age. This indicates an improvement since the last inspection when standards for 7-year-olds were below national expectations. This is a result of better teaching, which is now at least satisfactory throughout the school. Pupils with special educational needs receive satisfactory levels of support and this enables them to make sound progress.
131. Pupils in Year 1 develop appropriate co-ordination for their age, for example when throwing and catching a small ball or a beanbag. They develop their striking skills by using their hand to hit the ball or beanbag into a hoop on the ground. However, pupils do not show good levels of skill; few consistently catch cleanly or throw and strike accurately. In dance, pupils in Year 2 satisfactorily perform movements to illustrate a story. They form strong shapes to indicate mountains and move with appropriate control when showing the motion of a river. Throughout Key Stage 1, pupils satisfactorily control their bodies and have an appropriate awareness of safety and the space around them.
132. In Key Stage 2, pupils achieve satisfactory levels of attainment in games, gymnastics, and swimming. Pupils in Year 3 demonstrate co-ordination satisfactorily in the use of a bat and small ball. Many pupils are beginning to show precision, control and some fluency when striking a ball, though the majority find it difficult to hit a ball that their partners have thrown to them. In Year 4, pupils demonstrate typical co-ordination for their age in hopping and in two-foot jumps. They are aware that physical exercise affects their bodies and that their heartbeat rises during lessons.

133. The school operates an adequate programme for the teaching of swimming through lessons at a local pool. During a year, pupils in Years 4 and 5 attend once a week for the equivalent of half the year whilst pupils in Years 1 to 3 attend for the equivalent of one term. Pupils develop their confidence in water and learn a range of swimming strokes on the front and the back. About half the current Year 5 can swim 25 metres or more, which is the national expectation for pupils by the age of 11 years. The school makes effective use of certificates to encourage and reward pupils' success in swimming.
134. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory and occasionally good and learning was satisfactory in the lessons observed. Teachers show an awareness for pupils' safety. They begin lessons with an appropriate warm-up that gently stretches pupils' muscles and raises their heartbeat, and end lessons with a cooling-down activity. Consequently, pupils are aware of the changes that happen to their bodies during exercise. In most lessons, teachers have high expectations of behaviour and they manage the pupils well. This results in good levels of behaviour in lessons. Occasionally, teachers do not ensure that all pupils are attentive and they allow the fussy behaviour of some to continue unchallenged. This results in pupils being easily distracted, the standard of behaviour dropping and pupils not achieving their best physical and creative work. Teachers make good use of praise, for example when encouraging pupils who have devised their own simple throwing and catching game.
135. There are good relationships between pupils and teachers. Teachers display sound subject knowledge and are enthusiastic. Consequently, pupils have positive attitudes and most show good levels of concentration and work hard during lessons. Pupils with special educational needs are often given additional encouragement, which ensures that they make sound progress. Teachers' plans include appropriate activities within lessons but they often lack a clear focus on the specific skills pupils are to learn. For example, in a lesson on jumping, there was a high level of physical activity, but the teacher did not emphasise what was required to improve the pupils' performance in individual jumps. In a dance lesson, too many objectives reduced pupils' progress in the main objective of creating strong shapes. Where teachers' lesson objectives reflect their longer-term plans rather than what it is they want the pupils to develop in the lesson, teaching is not as effective as it could be. Consequently, pupils are physically active, but not improving their physical skills as well as they might.
136. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development. In lessons, pupils are encouraged to work co-operatively in pairs and small groups. After school there is a very good range of extra-curricular activities including a keep-fit club and inter-school football and netball matches. In dance lessons, effective use is made of stories from other cultures, such as *Pan Gu*, a Chinese story about the creation of the world. The subject co-ordinator has sound subject knowledge. There is an adequate policy for the subject and sufficient guidelines to ensure all appropriate activities are taught throughout the school. The co-ordinator recognises that the area of outdoor adventurous activities requires further development and she plans to introduce orienteering into the curriculum. Overall, resources are adequate for the teaching of most activities. There is a shortage of good quality games equipment, including a range of small balls and racquets, but the school is aware of this and is supplementing its existing stocks.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

137. The standards attained by pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 are in line with the expectations of the local authority's agreed syllabus and reflect improvements since the time of the last inspection. There have also been improvements in the range and structure of learning opportunities in Key Stage 2, but these are yet to have a full impact on the standards attained by 10-year-olds, which remain below average. This is because,

while pupils generally understand what they do in individual lessons, they are too often confused about the various religions they have studied and their relatively low standards in writing mean that they struggle to record their work easily and in sufficient quantity to cover the curriculum efficiently.

138. By the age of 7 years, pupils have developed a satisfactory understanding of a range of major religions and how these contribute to people's lives. They recall stories from the *Bible* and the major Christian festivals. They compare how people worship. They understand, for example, that, in Judaism, worship takes place in a synagogue and is led by a rabbi. They contrast this with the places of worship and religious leaders in Christianity, Hinduism, Islam and Sikhism. By the age of 10 years, pupils have extended their work in these faiths. They recall information about significant figures such as Moses and Guru Nanak and the festivals of Hannukah and Passover but are unclear about the faiths with which these are connected. They have considered topics linked to people's feelings and actions, such as exploring sadness and why societies have rules. However, their work is not recorded in writing to a sufficiently high standard.
139. Evidence from pupils' previous work indicates that teaching and learning are sound in both key stages, including for pupils with special educational needs. In the lessons seen during the inspection, teaching was good. Strengths in the lessons seen included:
- secure subject knowledge that ensures that pupils are given correct information, for example when pupils in Year 1 were taught about the Torah;
  - an appropriate emphasis on correct terminology, for example for places of worship and religious artefacts;
  - good management of pupils' behaviour and the promotion of good working relationships;
  - effective use of resources such as books, pictures and artefacts to interest pupils and encourage research skills, and of visitors such as the Sikh representative seen in Year 4;
  - clear explanations and well focused questioning to ensure that pupils understand their work and are assessed and extended in their thinking.
140. The subject is led by a well informed co-ordinator who has contributed to the satisfactory levels of improvement since the last inspection. However, she is currently carrying a heavy load of subject responsibilities and is unable to monitor and develop religious education as much as she would wish. The school has plans to rectify this situation soon. A good start has been made in incorporating the recently updated local scheme of work into the school's planning, but there are no agreed procedures for assessing or recording pupils' progress over time. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' spiritual development and is supported by a programme of good quality assemblies.