

INSPECTION REPORT

Lansdowne Infants' School
Burton Upon Trent

LEA area: East Staffordshire

Unique Reference Number : 124039

Headteacher : Mrs A Barry

Reporting inspector: Mrs M E Parfitt
21660

Dates of inspection: 11th-14th October 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707769

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
Type of control:	LEA
Age range of pupils:	3 - 7 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Linda Thomas
Date of previous inspection:	March 1996

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Mr T Heavey Lay inspector		Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents Staffing, accommodation and learning resources Equal opportunities Curriculum and assessment
Mr M Wainwright	Mathematics	
Mrs S Billington	Information technology Geography History Areas of learning for children under five English Art Design and technology Special educational needs	Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- Makes very good provision for children in the nursery.
- Provides a secure and welcoming environment for pupils which supports their learning.
 - Has good management and effective financial planning.
 - Makes good overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
 - Provides well for pupils with special educational needs.
 - Is welcoming to parents.
 - Successfully promotes good attendance.

Where the school has weaknesses

- Assessment and marking are not being used effectively to help pupils improve their work.
- A significant amount of unsatisfactory teaching in some classes.
 - Standards in reading and religious education do not reach the expected standard for age.

The school has many strengths which outweigh the weaknesses. However, the weaknesses will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which will be sent to all the parents or guardians of the pupils at the school.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school has made sound progress since the previous inspection in tackling the issues raised. There have been mainly steady improvements in the standards attained by pupils in English, mathematics and science. Setting targets for improvement has been carefully addressed as has the under-achievement of boys. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented effectively and literacy is beginning to impact on attainment by helping to raise standards, particularly in the increased number of pupils achieving higher levels. Where appropriate the roles of the co-ordinators have been developed, particularly for English and mathematics. Pupils' reports to parents now meet statutory requirements. The management of the school continues to monitor teaching and learning appropriately. The changes which have been made have helped the school improve and it is soundly placed to improve further.

Standards in subjects

The table shows the standards achieved by 7-year-olds in 1999 based on the National Curriculum tests:

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

Children in the Nursery Unit who come into the school with well below average attainment make good progress in all the areas of learning. By the time they are five a significant majority are below the nationally recommended targets in language and literacy and mathematics, but most reach expected levels in knowledge and understanding of the world and in creative and physical development. In 1999, results of National Curriculum tests show that standards in reading, writing and mathematics were broadly in line with the national

average for all pupils. In science, attainment was above average. When compared with similar schools, results were above average in reading and mathematics and were well above average in writing and science. By comparison, pupils' performance in the 1998 national tests was at least below the national average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. In reading and mathematics it was also at least below the average achieved in schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. In writing and science attainment was broadly in line with that from similar schools. A number of contributory factors were responsible for the fall in attainment. Of the Year 2 pupils who took the 1998 national tests, five had spent several weeks abroad, four had statements of educational need, which is above average. Of the five pupils who joined the Year 2 cohort, one spoke no English and the other four were assessed as below average. These represent nearly a quarter of the pupils in Year 2 and account for the fall in attainment. Prior to 1998, the results in the previous three years' national tests had shown a steady improvement overall and the current year's 1999 tests mainly show a further improvement over those years. There are no significant differences in the performance of boys and girls.

Inspection evidence shows that by the time they leave school, standards in mathematics and science are close to the average, but in English at this early stage in the school year they are below. Progress in mathematics and science, which improves towards the end of the key stage, is often good. It is satisfactory in other subjects including information and control technology. In religious education, most pupils do not reach the levels expected in the Agreed Syllabus. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as a second language receive support, which is mainly well focused and they make good progress.

Quality of teaching

Teaching in:	Under 5	5 - 7 years
English	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Mathematics	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Science		Satisfactory
Information technology		Satisfactory
Religious education		No judgement
Other subjects	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Forty per cent of the teaching is good or better and at least 85 per cent is satisfactory overall. Eighteen per cent is very good. A significant proportion, about 15 per cent, is unsatisfactory and is related to some Reception and Year 1 classes. This represents a change since the previous inspection when two thirds of the teaching was good and none was unsatisfactory. In many classes, the teaching is organised and managed effectively. The main contributory factors to unsatisfactory teaching are insufficient challenge and class management, and assessment and marking, which are not used to influence lessons or help pupils improve. The provision for pupils with special

educational needs is good. Overall, teaching is better in the Nursery, the mixed Reception and Year 1 class and the Year 2 classes, where a significant proportion is very good. These lessons are characterised by a high level of challenge, move at a swift pace and have a beneficial effect on pupils' attainment and progress.

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

Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Satisfactory in lessons and around the school
Attendance	Attendance is good
Ethos*	Positive. Good relationships between staff and pupils. Pupils are happy in school and most are keen to learn. The atmosphere in many classes is purposeful.
Leadership and management	Good. The headteacher is a very effective leader and manager. The school development plan is very well planned and provides good guidance on how to make further improvements.
Curriculum	The curriculum is broad and balanced. Well planned for the children in the nursery. A good emphasis is placed on literacy and numeracy. Assessment procedures and their use are unsatisfactory.
Pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils are well supported within the special educational needs provision. Targets set are well focused to improve progress.
Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Good level of staffing to meet the demands of the curriculum. Accommodation is well maintained and provides a generous amount of space for teaching and learning. Resources are satisfactory.
Value for money	Good. The school makes effective use of resources to raise standards.

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

The parents' views of the school

What most parents like about the school

- Their children like school.
- The head and staff are welcoming and approachable.
- The caring atmosphere in the school.
- The very good quality of the nursery provision.
- The usefulness of the information provided about school matters.

What most parents are not happy about

The inspection team supports the positive views expressed by the parents.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

In order to build on the school's strengths and to raise standards further, the headteacher, governors and staff should:

- Raise standards in reading and religious education by:
 - setting out a clear plan of action which identifies what needs to be done and who needs to take action;
 - providing appropriate guidance and in-service training for teachers to improve competence;
 - using staff with subject knowledge to support colleagues. (paragraphs 77 and 102)

- Improve unsatisfactory aspects of teaching by identifying and sharing good teaching practice throughout the school. (Paragraph 25)

- Streamline and structure the current assessments undertaken in order to:
 - establish a secure and shared understanding of and approach to assessment;
 - make better use of the information to track pupils' progress accurately;
 - improve the quality of marking to include guidance about improvements pupils can make in their work. (paragraph 34)

The school has identified reading and religious education in its school development plan and plans to address it.

In addition to the key issues, the following points should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- Provide more opportunities for pupils to take initiative (Paragraph 22)
- Ensure that no teaching time is lost at the commencement of afternoon school.
(Paragraph 33)

INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school

1. Lansdowne is an average size infant school. There are 189 pupils on roll, made up of 95 boys and 94 girls. There are also 34 children in the Nursery Unit. The school is situated in Burton Upon Trent within its Single Regeneration Budget area and draws many of its pupils from the immediate vicinity. The school serves an urban community, with most families living in private or local authority rented accommodation. About 25 per cent of the pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, which is above average. Around 20 per cent of the pupils in the school and 35 per cent of those in the nursery come from homes where English is not the first language, which is above average. Most of the pupils have received pre-school educational experiences and many of these have attended the nursery. Pupils start school in the September before their fifth birthday. At the time of the inspection 78 children under five were being taught in the nursery and reception classes.
2. The school's baseline testing shows that some 65 per cent of the pupils start in the reception classes with below average attainment, which is above the national average percentage. There are 22 pupils (11 per cent) on the school's register of special educational needs (below average) and one of these has a statement of special educational needs (below average). Since the previous inspection there has been no significant change in the characteristics of the school.
3. The school's aim is to give the children a high standard of education and to provide them with the skills needed to meet the challenges of their future life. The school is committed to promoting personal, social, health, moral and aesthetic education in order to prepare the children to become worthwhile citizens.
4. The school's main targets are to continue to raise pupil achievement particularly in literacy, numeracy and information technology and to continue to strengthen community links.

KEY INDICATORS

Attainment at Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
for latest reporting year:	1999	30	29	59

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils	Boys	23	24	27
at NC Level 2 or	Girls	16	26	23
above	Total	39	50	50

Percentage at NC	School	86(65)	84 (74)	85(79)
Level 2 or above	National	82(80)	83 (81)	86(84)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils	Boys	26	27	29
at NC Level 2 or	Girls	25	24	24
above	Total	51	51	45
Percentage at NC	School	87 (72)	87 (84)	90(75)
Level 2 or above	National	81 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions)			%
missed through absence for the	Authorised	School	5.8
latest complete reporting year:	Absence	National comparative data	5.7
	Unauthorised	School	0.1
	Absence	National comparative data	0.5

Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:		Number
	Fixed period	0
	Permanent	0

Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is :		%
	Very good or better	18

Satisfactory or better	85
Less than satisfactory	15

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

Attainment and progress

5. Results of assessments and other evidence indicate that pupils' attainment on entry to the school is well below the national average. The intake includes very few higher attaining pupils. Other factors, in particular, have seriously adverse effects on children's progress. Twenty per cent are from homes where English is not the first language, which is above average. Some of these children speak no English. Many take extended holidays with their families in their country of origin and on their return may take some time to settle in school. The school makes good provision for these pupils.

6. In 1999, results of National Curriculum tests show that standards in reading, writing and mathematics were broadly in line with the national average for all pupils. In science, attainment was above average. When compared with similar schools, results were above average in reading and mathematics and were well above average in writing and science. By comparison, pupils' performance in the 1998 national tests was at least below the national average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. In reading and mathematics it was also at least below the average achieved in schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. In writing and science attainment was broadly in line with that from similar schools. A number of contributory factors were responsible for the fall in attainment. Of the Year 2 pupils who took the 1998 national tests, five had spent several weeks abroad, four had statements of educational need, which is above average. Of the five pupils who joined the Year 2 cohort, one spoke no English and the other four were assessed as below average. These represent nearly a quarter of the pupils in Year 2 and account for the fall in attainment. Prior to 1998, the results in the previous three years national tests had shown a steady improvement overall and the current year's 1999 tests mainly show a further improvement over those years. There are no significant differences in the performance of boys and girls.

7. On the evidence of the inspection, which was carried out in the early part of the current school year, pupils' attainment in English is below national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1. Speaking and listening skills are below average in the early years but the majority of pupils make good progress to reach average levels by Year 2. Starting from a low base of limited vocabulary and a restricted range of expression, pupils respond well to questions put by teachers, but the rate of progress varies between classes. It is good where the teachers target improvement and make good use of time. Carefully targeted extra support provided for pupils speaking English as an additional language enables them to contribute to discussion. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils show confidence when talking, although many pupils who speak English as an additional language still struggle to explain their ideas. Standards of reading are below average at the end of Key Stage 1. Many pupils have unsatisfactory reading skills. Most make slow progress in their ability to read with fluency and understanding and very few are able to discuss the main points of the story. Most cannot use reference books confidently. Standards of writing are average by the end of Key Stage 1. The rate of progress for younger pupils varies from unsatisfactory to good, but overall pupils move from mark-making to writing descriptions, letters and poems independently. Most pupils make satisfactory progress in the development of legible, well-formed handwriting and use correctly a range of simple punctuation. Many commonly used words are spelt inaccurately.

8. The rate of progress is expected to improve, particularly for most Year 2 pupils, to become at least good during the year as pupils with English as an additional language extend their range of vocabulary and gain confidence in reading.

9. Across the curriculum, speaking and listening skills are developed satisfactorily in most subjects but opportunities are sometimes missed for the development of writing skills in, for example, history, geography, religious education and science. Practice in using research skills is not provided consistently or frequently enough to help pupils improve.

10. However, the National Literacy Strategy is being successfully implemented. Planning is good in the Nursery and Year 2 classes, and more uneven in other years, varying from satisfactory to unsatisfactory. In most classes, lesson introductions are used well to explain key elements of literacy, and tasks are explained clearly. A few lessons lack a clear focus and some teachers' expectations are too low, which means that some pupils do not make the progress of which they are capable.

11. Standards in mathematics are broadly in line with the national average by the time pupils are seven. Most pupils order numbers and solve simple problems using addition, subtraction and some multiplication. They have average competence in shape and measures and record their findings using simple graphs. Progress in Key Stage 1 is mainly at least satisfactory and much is good, particularly in Year 2. Higher attaining pupils make good progress testing hypotheses. Unsatisfactory progress in some Reception and Year 1 classes reflects low expectation and unsatisfactory challenge from teachers.

12. The school has introduced the numeracy project effectively. Numeracy skills are used in other curriculum areas, for example, time lines in history and graphs supporting investigations in science in Year 2.

13. Attainment in science is broadly in line with national expectations. Pupils in Key Stage 1 develop their observational skills and have a limited understanding of the nature of fair testing. Pupils recognise and name parts of the body and have some familiarity with features of life processes. They have some awareness of the dangers posed by drugs. In spite of the unsatisfactory progress of some younger pupils and a failure to develop investigative skills progressively, the increased rate of progress in Year 2 is satisfactory and is building effectively on an otherwise superficial understanding of scientific skills.

14. In information and communications technology, standards are in line with what is expected nationally. Progress for pupils who receive support provided by the Single Regeneration Budget or funding for pupils with English as an additional language is often good. Most pupils make satisfactory progress in the ongoing development of their information technology skills but have few opportunities to practise these skills in the support of other subjects. In religious education, statutory requirements to teach the Staffordshire Agreed Syllabus are met but progress is unsatisfactory. During the inspection no recorded evidence of pupils' past work was available.

15. In art, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education, progress is satisfactory. Pupils' understanding of history is better developed than in geography but most are learning to make comparisons in both subjects. In all these subjects, which are well supported by carefully planned schemes of work, the rate of progress was noticeably better where the teaching stimulated and challenged pupils, particularly in the Nursery and Year 2 classes. Overall, progress is satisfactory.

16. When children start in the Nursery they show a wide variation in their readiness for school. They differ significantly in their confidence and social development, general knowledge and understanding of the world around them. Attainment is generally low. A broad and balanced curriculum is followed which very successfully addresses all the recommended areas of learning and enables children to make good progress in relation to their prior

attainment in the Nursery class. In spite of this good progress by the age of five, a significant majority of children are below the nationally recommended targets in language and literacy and mathematics. Most reach expected levels in knowledge and understanding of the world and in creative and physical development.

17. Pupils with special educational needs often make good progress, mainly because of the significant level of support in lessons. Individual education plans are well focused and helpful. Funding from the Single Regeneration Budget is used efficiently to provide effective, well targeted support for pupils who are deemed to be below average. A majority of them make good progress. Good support is provided for the pupils with little or no English and there is effective assessment of their needs and monitoring of their progress.

18. Since the last inspection there has been a steady increase in the number of pupils who achieve average levels in the national tests, which represents an improvement in attainment.

Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

19. Pupils' attitudes to learning are satisfactory overall. Since the last inspection good relationships have continued to be a strength of the school. The personal and social development of pupils in the Nursery is good. Most settle readily to tasks and become involved in their activities. The vast majority of parents find that their children like school and those who are under five quickly adapt to school life. Pupils like to voice their contributions to class discussions, but a significant minority of Year 1 pupils have to be reminded to listen to the teacher and to other pupils. Although many of the younger Reception children have short concentration spans and find some difficulty when asked to work on their own, most are capable of sustained interest in a task, which is challenging. Many contribute well during the literacy hour. Year 1 pupils enjoy the challenge set in mental mathematics and related problems in solving work. Many pupils are keen to receive recognition for good work in assembly and try hard to achieve such an award and this contributes effectively to raising standards. As they progress through the school, when the opportunity to work independently is offered, many of the oldest pupils show good capacity to do so. Pupils with special educational needs are interested in their work and sustain concentration for an appropriate length of time.

20. Relationships within the school are good. Pupils mainly have good relationships with their teachers and other adults in school, who all display a high level of pastoral care. Many pupils learn to work well together in pairs and small groups, often helping each other in a kindly manner, as in physical education lessons. Older pupils are very polite and routinely hold doors open for others to pass through. At breaktimes and lunchtimes the older ones play well with younger ones.

21. Pupils' behaviour is satisfactory overall. On formal occasions such as assembly, at play, at clubs and other activities, it is good. Pupils have helped to devise their own 'Golden Rules' for behaviour, which are widely displayed and understood. In spite of this, in some lessons and around the school, a significant majority become silly, needing constant reminders of how to behave appropriately. Pupils from different cultural backgrounds mix happily together and no incidences of bullying were observed during the inspection. Most use equipment responsibly and take particular care of the attractively planted, quiet area in the playground. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language behave well and work hard in lessons.

22. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory. They enjoy being allocated tasks and

carry them out sensibly. There is a rota for even the youngest pupils to undertake duties within the classroom. All have equal opportunities to do them. Within lessons, Year 2 pupils are becoming aware of the needs of the nursery children through aspects of their work in the literacy hour and in science lessons where they work out how best to design warning labels on medicine containers. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to take initiative and develop a fuller sense of responsibility.

Attendance

23. The school has a good attendance record, which at 94.2 per cent is above the national average. Unauthorised absence is below the national average. This good level of attendance makes an effective contribution to the working atmosphere, and to pupils' satisfactory levels of attainment and progress in most subjects. It also demonstrates the effectiveness of the school's partnership with parents. Overall, the number of pupils taking extended holidays abroad has reduced, which means that they benefit from the opportunity to learn continuously at school. The slight fall in attendance from that noted during the previous inspection is accounted for mainly by the lengthy absence of one child, a matter which has now been resolved.

24. Pupils arrive punctually at school and registers are taken appropriately.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

Teaching

25. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Forty per cent of the teaching is good or better and at least 85 per cent is satisfactory overall. Fifteen per cent is very good. A significant proportion, about 15 per cent, is unsatisfactory and is related to some Reception and Year 1 classes. This represents a change since the previous inspection when two thirds of the teaching was good and none was unsatisfactory. In many classes, the teaching is organised and managed effectively. The main contributory factors to unsatisfactory teaching are insufficient challenge and class management, and assessment and marking, which are not used to influence lessons or help pupils improve. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Overall, teaching is better in the Nursery, the mixed Reception and Year 1 and the Year 2 classes, where a significant proportion is very good. These lessons are characterised by a high level of challenge, move at a swift pace and have a beneficial effect on pupils' attainment and progress.

26. The teaching of the literacy hour is usually satisfactory and sometimes good, characterised by well-organised class introductions and group sessions with some examples of effective monitoring and assessment. In a Year 2 class where pupils were organised according to capability, for example, the teacher made good use of a shared writing experience to develop pupils' knowledge of writing instructions. Explanations were thorough and expectations of pupils' response were high, successfully developing their speaking and thinking skills. The lesson was well paced and time well used. Pupils were set to work quickly at their tasks and the teacher's monitoring and ongoing assessment of all groups whilst she worked with one particular group, was good. The class session was well used to reinforce and consolidate learning, with one group asked to explain what they had learnt. There were other examples of well-organised and well-managed lessons, with tasks carefully matched to the attainment of the pupils. These lessons were characterised by a purposeful learning atmosphere and good progress. In another Year 2 physical education lesson, the pace was brisk with demonstrations appropriately involving the pupils, and the sequence of activities of increasing difficulty enabled pupils to make good progress in skills development. Much of the

teaching in the Nursery Unit was very good where there were high expectations of these children and the use of a wide range of imaginative techniques to hold their interest to promote good listening and speaking skills. In a science lesson for Reception and Year 1 pupils, in which the task was an experiment to test the human senses, the teacher engaged the pupils' interest very well with highly challenging questioning and a very wide range of stimulating resources. These opportunities skilfully extended pupils' vocabulary, whilst developing their scientific skills and understanding.

27. Teachers are making good progress in implementing the numeracy strategy and are focusing appropriately on the planned objectives. They are working well in its development with the numeracy co-ordinator and this is helping to secure the ongoing satisfactory progress of most pupils. The staff mainly use the strategies outlined in the literacy project effectively. They provide appropriate challenge for most pupils. The teaching of reading includes appropriate opportunities for pupils to learn to build words from letter sounds and this is particularly successful where the teaching is good.

28. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as a second language, are taught mainly well. Teachers are very aware of the contents of pupils' individual education plans and the needs of those whose command of English is under-developed. Teachers make mainly good use of the bilingual support and classroom assistants are usually well briefed to provide good support throughout the lessons.

29. The main weaknesses of the teaching are lack of clarity in the instructions to pupils of the tasks, a slow pace in some lessons, unsatisfactory management of pupils' behaviour and a lack of assessment of what has been learnt. In a mathematics lesson for a Reception class, the pace was slow and some pupils did not understand how to match colour to number. In a music lesson for Year 1, managed by two teachers, neither intervened to control increasing restlessness and this affected adversely the progress made by the whole group. Teaching is insufficiently focused on the progressive development of knowledge, skills and understanding. This leads to insufficient pressure being put on pupils to finish work and progress in lessons.

30. Teachers' planning overall is satisfactory, particularly in literacy and numeracy where teachers plan closely to the schemes of work in the strategies. The homework set is mainly reading and spelling which develops suitably as pupils progress through the school. It reflects the school's policy arrived at through consultation with the parents. Too often insufficient time is left in lessons to assess what pupils have learnt. Marking is insufficiently helpful to promote improvements in pupils' learning.

The curriculum and assessment

31. The curriculum for children under five is based on the six areas of learning which comprise the recommended curriculum for children of this age. There is a clarity of purpose and consistency of routines. The nursery environment provides a good range of opportunities for children to make some good progress in all areas of development. This provides a good link with the National Curriculum.

32. The school offers a broad and balanced curriculum, providing satisfactorily for all aspects of pupils' development. Subjects are planned according to National Curriculum requirements and religious education is based appropriately on the locally Agreed Syllabus. The school has now fully implemented the strategies for literacy and numeracy and shows good understanding of them. The curriculum within the schemes of work is organised well to take account of progression in both experiences and learning. This is seen in the improved

attainment in the English results of the most recent national tests. However, teachers' short-term planning does not always identify the skills to be learned. Sex education is not taught discretely but reference is made to it, where appropriate, in science lessons. There is a structured and effective programme for pupils' personal, social, health and moral education.

33. Arrangements to ensure equal curriculum access for all pupils are good. The length of the school day is shorter than in most schools and some time is also lost at the commencement of afternoon school. The varying needs of pupils with special educational needs are met well, with individual education plans including clear targets and strategies to promote learning. Good provision is made for all lower-ability pupils in Years 1 and 2 by the funding from the Single Regeneration Budget. There is good provision for extra-curricular activities, both in various clubs and in the range of visits made. Some of these are also funded from the Single Regeneration Budget. Curriculum changes, particularly in English and mathematics, have been implemented successfully. This includes provision for the mixed-age classes, for which teachers usually plan appropriately.

34. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and the use of assessment are unsatisfactory. There is a wide range of procedures in place. Pupils' attainment is noted, for example in mathematics and matched to the learning objectives of the numeracy strategy. Portfolios of work are collected and discussed but the information is not always used consistently. Support staff and sometimes teachers make notes on individual pupils throughout lessons, which enables a good oversight of pupils' progress to be made. Records are maintained for those pupils with specific support such as those with English as an additional language and those receiving additional support from the Single Regeneration Budget. The progress of these pupils and those with special educational needs is being tracked effectively through the school. However, the wealth of information being collected lacks a useful structure. There is no clear, procedural overview, which clarifies what is needed in order to plan the next step for each pupil. Individual targets which are discussed with parents, are set only once termly, which delays the progress of some pupils. Information gathered from the good practice in the Nursery Unit is not used to inform what teachers plan for the Reception classes. This means that work, which is too easy, is given to pupils and results in an unsatisfactory rate of progress for a significant minority of pupils in the Reception and Year 1 classes. Pupils with special educational needs are assessed against individual targets and many make good progress.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

35. The school provides a good range of opportunities for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. Each day commences with a collective act of worship, which prepares pupils well to think about working together and sharing. They contemplate wonders such as the emergence of the butterfly, with rapt attention, and reflect on the natural world in their prayers. In the playground, pupils are able to sit in the garden area and appreciate the attractive plants. Opportunities are made in lessons to appreciate literature, particularly poetry, which raises pupils' awareness of spiritual matters.

36. Provision for moral development is good. Pupils know clearly what behaviour is acceptable. There is an expectation of them to know right from wrong. The 'Golden Rules' are shared agreements between each class and teacher. Pupils are able to discuss them in circle time so that understanding of the need for rules is reinforced. Teachers are included in this. Positive encouragement to abide by the rules is provided by merit awards of which pupils are justly proud. Parents value circle time and the Golden Rules and appreciate the good effect these have on their children.

37. Provision for social development is good. Adults work hard to encourage collaboration. In literacy and numeracy lessons pupils often work with partners. Tasks in class encourage them to take responsibility. At the end of mathematics lessons it is expected that pupils tidy all resources, which they do willingly. The school's attitude towards caring and sharing promotes an effective community spirit. This is extended to outside school when pupils look at the local area in geography lessons and consider what they like about it and how it could be improved. Most pupils act appropriately in school and this impacts on others. They are aware that they are expected to keep the school clean and free from litter. Year 2 pupils clearly agree with this.

38. Provision for cultural development is good. Pupils have opportunities to reflect on their own cultures. They make visits around the locality, including to churches and cultural centres. In geography they hear about life in a village in Pakistan and make comparisons with their own lives. Pupils are encouraged to consider the similarities between English and Pakistani children, and to discuss the work of European artists such as Picasso. In music they learn traditional songs as well as those from other cultures. Artists and musicians visit the school and extend pupils' cultural horizons. In collective worship, pupils' attention is drawn to the music and to the types of instruments being played. These aspects of pupils' development continue to be a strength of the school.

Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

39. The good level of provision for support, guidance and welfare of pupils identified in the previous inspection report has been sustained and consolidated. The children who are under five come to school happily and are well cared for. The good induction procedures ensure that they settle quickly and learn the routines of the classroom well. Parents report that they and their children feel supported by the school and nearly all of those responding to the questionnaire agreed that they would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with their children.

40. Since the last inspection the school has developed a good range of procedures for monitoring progress and personal development. However, the school is aware of the need to streamline these procedures. Children are assessed throughout the years at the school and this enables teachers to set targets and review them each year. There is particularly good provision for pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language. The individual education plans are very clear, and have appropriate targets. Annual reports not only describe what children have achieved, they also set targets for the following year, based on their assessed needs. The school has secured the help of parents in the monitoring process through their comments in the homework and reading diaries. The school's pupil achievement policy reflects the importance that it gives to this area of the pupils' education and fulfilment. Specific staff training initiatives are geared to promoting the children's personal development in circle time, through the behaviour management policy, and by rewarding those children who display a sense of personal responsibility. Pupils who speak English as a second language are well supported by all staff including those who have specific responsibility for this.

41. The school has developed sound procedures for monitoring and promoting discipline and good behaviour, not so much through the imposition of sanctions, but rather through the emphasis on praising and rewarding good behaviour and consideration for others. Throughout the school day children wear a path to the headteacher's office to be presented with their sticker awards, which they wear with obvious pride. These are later photocopied and filed in each pupil's record of achievement folder.

42. The procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are good. There is a detailed attendance policy which describes the part to be played by parents in promoting good attendance, and children are rewarded for regular good attendance. The school's insistence on good attendance is now included in the home and school agreement. The registers are used by the headteacher to monitor attendance. Regular fortnightly meetings are held with the education welfare officer who follows up absences carefully. The success of these procedures improves pupils' access to the curriculum.

43. The school makes good provision for the promotion of pupils' wellbeing, health and safety, resulting in a warm and welcoming atmosphere, conducive to learning. There is a clear and detailed health and safety policy which is supported by termly risk assessments and the implementation of health and safety regulations. There are effective procedures for reporting hazards and accidents, and the school has nominated and trained a first aider, supported by a trained nurse. Fire drills are conducted at least termly and alarms are tested weekly. Appropriate records are kept. The headteacher, who is the designated child protection person, has provided all teachers with copies of the local authority handbook on child protection, including forms to be used for reporting any concerns or suspicions of abuse.

Partnership with parents and the community

44. The school has maintained and extended the good quality of partnerships with parents and the community since the previous inspection.

45. The quality of information provided for parents is good. Since the last inspection the school has achieved full compliance with regard to the requirements in its annual reports to parent, which now include detailed information about pupils' progress. They also include the setting of appropriate targets for the following year. Parents also add their own comments to the report. Nursery children benefit from good, twice yearly reports. A substantial majority of parents say that the school keeps them well informed about their children's progress and they also comment favourably on the informative monthly newsletter. Nursery children benefit well from a home visit prior to being accepted for a nursery place, and the home and school advisory group, including parents, maintains good liaison and consultation channels between parents and school.

46. There is a high level of parental involvement in the school, making a significant contribution to their children's education. Most parents say that the school encourages them to play an active part in school life. This is achieved formally through automatic membership of the Lansdowne Supporters Club, which raises considerable sums of money for the purchase of school equipment. The most recent purchase is the curtains in the main hall, which create a warm and stimulating atmosphere. Several parents are regularly involved in each classroom, and the school provides training specifically for parents' helpers at a local college. The school has organised literacy and numeracy evenings for parents which provided much useful information for those who attended. At a less formal level parents are encouraged to come into the school each day during the first ten minutes of school to discuss their concerns with teachers. Parents have recently signed a home and school agreement, and regularly use the helpful homework and reading diaries to communicate effectively with the school about their children's progress. A more lasting and useful record of each pupil's work is kept in their records of achievement. Parents are well represented on the school's governing body.

47. The good links with the community are strengthened by considerable use of the school's community hall, which is used for activities such as language classes for parents,

crafts, Tai Chi, and an out-of-school club held jointly with the junior school. There are good links with the receiver school, Eton Park Junior. The formal transition arrangements include days spent at the school which help to promote pupils' confidence effectively. Pupils link up with the wider community in the maypole walk, Nativity services and the harvest festival held in the local church. The fruits of this latter are distributed among the local elderly. Each year the pupils select one or two charities for which they raise money. Such activities contribute to the personal and social development of the pupils.

48. Although acknowledging the potential for some further development, the school has forged helpful links with local companies such as Nestles, Morrisons and Pizza Hut, whose sponsorship provides useful equipment for school activities. This supports pupils' learning well.

THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

Leadership and management

49. The leadership and management of the school are good and make an effective contribution towards raising levels of attainment and promoting pupils' consistent progress. The headteacher provides very strong leadership and has developed an effective team who work well together. She makes a significant contribution to the leadership of the school and is very well respected by staff, parents and governors. Newly appointed governors since the last inspection have become well involved in the management of the school. The governing body take an active part in curriculum development, school improvement and financial development. They are well informed about the school's work and have a good understanding of strategic planning. The school has made a good response to the issues in the previous inspection report. The governing body has developed effective strategies for the regular monitoring of teaching and learning. It carefully monitors the progress made in meeting the school's targets for raising standards.

50. The school's aims are set out in the prospectus. They have been carefully formulated and are well supported by the staff and governors. The ethos of the school is good. Pupils are happy in school and are keen to learn and the atmosphere in many classes is purposeful. The school is committed to providing equal opportunities and has addressed the issue of under-achievement by boys through careful planning. Attendance is well managed. The provision for children under four is managed effectively. There are effective links between the Nursery and Reception classes, which result in a smooth transition between them. The school meets statutory requirements regarding the teaching of the National Curriculum and religious education.

51. The provision for and management of pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language is good. The governor with responsibility for this aspect of the school's provision works well with the co-ordinator. The register of pupils with special educational needs is kept up-to-date; statutory requirements regarding reviews are met. There is a good policy in place which outlines the stages in the national Code of Practice. The school is successful consistently in its bids to acquire funding from the Single Regeneration Budget scheme and for pupils with English as an additional language. This enhances the provision for those pupils who need extra help and whose improving progress is carefully monitored by the headteacher.

52. The staff has nominal job descriptions but the main thrust of the activities of the co-ordinator, and particularly those with responsibility for English and mathematics, is clearly defined in the school development plan. The staff has worked hard to review and revise schemes of work to take account of the newly created mixed-age classes and in this it has succeeded. The headteacher and staff set targets for improvement, which they agree with the governing body. The headteacher monitors to measure the rate of progress that the school is making towards meeting its targets.

53. The governors meet regularly and there is an effective structure of committees. They have been well involved in supporting the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy and

National Numeracy Project. The school's arrangements for teaching literacy and numeracy have been managed well and an appropriate balance of time has been achieved between these and other subjects.

54. The management of staff development and appraisal is good. Effective targets are set and professional development is linked carefully to the needs of the staff and is well matched to the initiatives laid down in the school development plan. This development plan is formulated very systematically and is a very good document. It includes details of the school's achievements and sharply focused objectives for improvements. The plan, which is costed very effectively, includes time-scales and responsibilities and is monitored very carefully. Good attention is paid to long-term planning.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

55. The school makes good provision overall for staffing, accommodation and learning resources. There is a sufficient number of qualified staff to teach the areas of learning for children under five and they have a satisfactory impact on the children's attainment and progress overall. They have attended quality courses to extend their knowledge and understanding of how young children learn. At Key Stage 1, there is a good match of number, experience and qualification of teachers to the National Curriculum. The good number of very able support staff considerably enhances the learning experience of all the pupils. The support, which includes bilingual assistance for pupils with special needs and those for whom English is a second language, is good. The provision of detailed individual education plans and achievable targets ensures the effective tracking of pupils' progress.

56. The good arrangements for the professional development of staff, especially relating to literacy and numeracy, as well as the personal social health and moral education training, has a beneficial impact on standards, which have risen overall. Teachers have been properly appraised in accordance with national requirements. There is an adequate level of support within school for newly qualified teachers, which assists their professional development.

57. The accommodation is well suited to the needs of the children throughout the school. It is also adequate to teach most elements of the National Curriculum. The available interior and exterior spaces and the imaginative way in which they are exploited has a positive impact on learning. Classrooms are warm, bright and tidy, with stimulating displays. The communal areas too boast attractive displays, many of which were seen to capture the imagination of pupils as they passed them. The school has worked hard to make the playground attractive and stimulating, and has succeeded in making the quiet area a particularly inviting feature.

58. Learning resources are adequate overall for the effective delivery of the curriculum. There is a good supply of computers and books, particularly for the literacy hour, though some material used for reading schemes is outdated and well-worn.

The efficiency of the school

59. Financial planning is very good. The headteacher and governing body are clear about priorities and allocate funds in accordance with the school's development plan. Particular care is taken over the setting of the budget, with alternative strategies being presented and discussed. Outline budgets are also prepared for the following two years. No specific criteria are set down for evaluating the effectiveness of spending decisions. However, there is a clear awareness of the impact of any large sums spent. For example, money spent on developing the nursery is seen, quite rightly, as having had a positive impact.

60. Income for specific groups of pupils, such as that from the Single Regeneration Budget, is spent most effectively. Very capable support staff are provided and over 50 lower-attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2 benefit from additional support, with close monitoring of their progress. The impact of this has been an overall improvement in the National Curriculum test results in English, mathematics and science. Funding for the professional development of teachers has been focused recently on training for literacy and numeracy and on information technology. The value of this is shown by teachers' understanding of the literacy and numeracy strategies and by their confident work with computers when they are in use.

61. Teaching staff are used well, with teachers placed where it is felt they are most effective, and this is seen in practice. Support staff are also deployed sensibly. However, there is some variation in their effectiveness as in some lessons, insufficient thought is given to their role. In a few literacy and numeracy lessons some time is wasted as classroom assistants are not always involved sufficiently in the introductions to lessons. Pupils with English as an additional language are supported well. Good use is made of the accommodation including the outside play area. The many learning resources are used well, which makes a positive impact on pupils' progress, for example in mathematics. Insufficient use is made of computers throughout the school but this is mainly attributable to ongoing technical problems that have been restricting their effective use.

62. Financial control and school administration are very good. The finance committee maintains a regular and close view of spending, making amendments to budget areas as necessary. A most experienced administrative assistant provides strong support to the headteacher in maintaining clear records and smooth operation. The school's booklet on administrative and financial procedures is very thorough and explicit. Matters raised in the last audit have been addressed.

63. Bearing in mind the school's high overall income, the pupils' below average attainment on admission, the improving attainment and progress of pupils in Year 2 and the good use of available funds and effective use of resources, the school gives good value for money.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

64. At the time of the inspection children in the Reception classes had been in school for six weeks and almost all were aged under five. Younger children, aged from three years four months, had just started to attend the nursery on a part-time basis. The majority of children in the Reception year have attended the nursery for a year before transferring to the infant school. Judgements on children's attainment at five are based on the school's own records, samples of work and baseline assessments.

65. Children make good progress in all areas of learning in the nursery. In the Reception classes, progress is satisfactory overall but insufficient use is made of information from assessment to ensure that children make progress at a sustained and consistent rate. By the age of five, few children reach the targets set as Desirable Learning Outcomes in language and literacy and mathematics. The majority reach expected levels in knowledge and understanding of the world and in creative and physical development.

Language and Literacy

66. The majority of children enter nursery with very limited language skills. They have difficulty in following simple instructions and their responses to questions and in discussions are generally single words or short phrases. Children make very good progress as a result of the carefully planned focus on extending their vocabulary and understanding. By the age of five, the majority can express their ideas, talk about their activities and participate in group discussions, although their contributions still generally take the form of short sentences or questions. Most listen attentively and respond appropriately to questions.

67. In the Nursery Unit, children learn to listen to and retell favourite stories; they participate in role play and learn to act out a variety of scenarios such as dressing and feeding a baby. By the age of five, the majority have learned to handle books appropriately, recognise the cover, turn the pages and re-tell the story from the pictures. Many know that the print tells the story and they recognise their names; some also read a few words and know several sounds. Most children 'write' a message using symbols or isolated letters; only a few write their names. Although progress is satisfactory, children's base of skills in literacy is nevertheless limited and only a few have made a start on reading simple books independently. Children in the Reception classes are taught language and literacy through the literacy strategy. At this early stage of the year they are only just beginning to benefit from this systematic structure for learning to develop their language skills and knowledge.

Mathematics

68. Children have a good range of mathematical experiences in the nursery where the strong emphasis on promoting vocabulary and an understanding of order, pattern and relationships through practical experiences provides a good base for later learning. By the age of five, the majority of children count and match objects from one to five and are beginning to recognise digits to ten. Many can add one more to a group of objects and calculate the total, but few are ready to record number stories. Children sort and match objects in a variety of ways, including colour, shape and size. They recognise and continue simple patterns and recognise shapes when completing puzzles. Many use correct terms in comparing objects by size and order.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

69. Children benefit from the strong emphasis on extending their understanding through a wide range of experiences within school and on local visits. By the age of five, many have a good awareness of the environment and recognise features of the local area and the function of shops and supermarkets. They describe relationships within their families and are aware that adults pursue a variety of occupations. The majority know the difference between past and present and know how they have changed since they were babies. Using construction equipment, they recreate environments such as the zoo and a road network. Although restricted language sometimes inhibits children's abilities to describe their observations in detail, they demonstrate good understanding in a practical or play situation.

70. Children learn to use a variety of materials and tools for cutting and joining in making models and collages. Under adult guidance, they paint and make play dough faces with appropriate features. They begin to explore the functions of the computer and many learn basic functions of the keyboard and the mouse in simulations, but some become frustrated in situations where they need to read or create text as they rarely have the necessary skills for this.

Physical development

71. Nursery children learn to use a range of large play equipment and develop confidence in moving in a variety of ways, such as running, jumping and balancing on different body parts. By the age of five, most children move around a large area such as the hall showing awareness of others. They readily change direction and type of movement, for example, first jumping with both feet together and then hopping a good distance. Children use a variety of tools including pencils, brushes, glue spreaders and scissors with confidence, although many have problems with hand control and, for example, have difficulty in following a line when cutting out.

Creative development

72. Many children develop confidence in expressing their ideas using crayons, paint and print. Nursery children explore colour as they match their paintings of Buster with the illustrations in the story and Reception children make good use of tissue paper and textured material in creating colour collages. By the age of five, many children show good understanding of colour, form and line, as they showed in their portraits of friends and observational drawings of buildings in the area.

73. Children enjoy singing and responding to music. Almost all sing and perform actions for several songs from memory. Many sing in tune and their words are clear. The majority respond to rhythms and can clap simple phrases. In dance, children move their bodies gracefully to imitate leaves fluttering and moving in the wind.

Personal and social development

74. There is good provision for this area of learning. The personal and social development of children in the nursery is good. They learn to make choices about their activities and begin to co-operate with others in, for example, constructing a train track and sharing equipment as they make collage faces. By the age of five, the majority of children take turns and help each other with their activities, for example, as two children used an art program on the computer one showed the other how to delete using an icon. Children mainly treat equipment and books with care and are responsible for organising activities and tidying away when they have

completed tasks. Many are sensitive to the needs of others, although a minority find difficulty in recognising their responsibilities to others in a group.

75. Teaching in the nursery is very good and at times it is excellent. Staff work well as a team, planning is very thorough and activities are well organised and imaginatively resourced to engage children's interest and promote their learning. Staff make very good use of demonstration and explanation to extend children's understanding. In all activities, staff use key vocabulary well and there is a strong emphasis on increasing children's language skills. In Reception classes, teaching is satisfactory overall, but there is a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching, particularly of language and literacy and some which is very good. In the very good lessons work is carefully planned and provides effective challenge for all pupils. In these lessons pupils make good progress. In the unsatisfactory lessons, at times too much is attempted and teaching lacks focus. Teachers use resources such as 'big books' effectively, but do not always ensure that children can see the text and at times there are problems with class control, which result in teaching time being lost. On occasion not enough account is taken of what children already know and can do and activities are often not well matched to children's capabilities. This results in them often struggling with inappropriate recording or moving off task because they are confused or lose interest in the work set. The staff provide a satisfactory balance between directed and free choice activities so that children can use and develop their imagination freely.

ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

English

76. Results of National Curriculum tests in reading and writing at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1998 were broadly in line with national averages. Pupils' performance in reading was above that of schools with a similar intake. In writing, results were well above the average when compared to similar schools. Over the three years from 1996-1998, results in reading have been well below the national average; writing has been close to the national average. Girls have consistently performed better than boys in both reading and writing. Results of tests in 1999 show a good overall improvement in both reading and writing with an increased proportion of pupils reaching expected levels. The performance of boys in both reading and writing has improved, although the majority of boys are still achieving results at the lower end of the spectrum. Inspection findings are that levels of attainment overall are below average but are improving as a result of the structured approach to teaching based on the national literacy framework and the school's own work in setting targets to raise standards.

77. Progress is satisfactory overall, but the rate of progress is slower for some Reception and Year 1 pupils than for most of those in the Year 2 classes. As pupils move through the school, they make at least satisfactory progress in speaking and listening and in writing; progress in reading is less secure and it is sometimes too slow. Many pupils make good progress in lessons in Year 2 as a result of purposeful and clearly focused teaching. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make good progress. Clear targets in individual education plans help to focus teaching and they benefit from a good level of support in small group activities.

78. In speaking and listening, younger pupils make good gains in their vocabulary and ability to express their ideas and understanding in practical activities. Children speaking English as a second language benefit from carefully targeted support from staff who speak their mother tongue, which enables them to understand and to contribute to group and class discussions. As pupils move through the school they gain confidence in explaining their ideas clearly in more extended sentences and become aware of the conventions of discussion.

Most listen carefully to adults and to each other in class 'circle time'. A minority is confident in exploring and communicating ideas and able to extrapolate the main points in a discussion. Many pupils speaking English as an additional language continue to demonstrate confusions in grammatical structure and although their understanding is often good, they still struggle to explain their ideas.

79. In reading, younger pupils quickly learn the conventions of books and understand that the print carries the message and that the pictures help to tell a story. In the early stages of Key Stage 1, they move slowly through the stages of a structured reading scheme and learn to read simple books accurately, but many lack understanding of what they read. Progress improves in Year 2, but a significant minority of pupils are hesitant and reading is stilted; fluency is sometimes impeded by finger-pointing. Most pupils use a range of strategies to tackle unknown words and generally look for meaning in the text. However, in this early part of the school year, very few are able to discuss the main points of a story or to express an opinion of what they read. Teachers expect progress to improve before pupils in Year 2 leave the school. Library skills are very limited, but the school recognises this and is putting in place a structured programme to ensure that pupils have more experience of researching and locating information in texts.

80. Pupils learn to record their ideas and observations in a variety of forms, moving from mark-making to writing simple sentences and short accounts of their activities. By the end of the key stage, the majority of pupils write competently in a variety of forms such as descriptions, letters, poems and retelling simple stories. They make effective use of their skills across the curriculum, for example, in labelling diagrams in science and planning designs in technology. Most pupils use accurately a range of simple punctuation; handwriting is legible and letters are usually of a consistent size, although rarely joined. Many pupils continue to misspell some commonly used words when they are otherwise reasonably competent writers.

81. Pupils' responses to work in English are mainly good, but there are variations. The majority show a good degree of interest in the introductory session, for example, in participating in reading a big book or suggesting additions to a list of rhyming words. They are usually eager to respond to questions and to contribute to discussions, but some occasionally call out inappropriately as others are speaking. Most pupils sustain concentration well in group tasks provided these are suitably matched to their levels of understanding. Occasionally pupils are confused or cannot cope with the activity and then attention wanders. The majority of pupils behave well, but at times the inappropriate behaviour of a few distracts others and results in teaching time being lost. Almost all pupils handle books and resources with care.

82. Teaching is at least satisfactory and much is good. It is generally better in Year 2 where pupils derive additional benefit from working in smaller groups organised according to capability than in Year 1. Training for the literacy hour and good use of the planning materials from the literacy framework ensure that teachers have good subject knowledge. Most lessons are carefully planned and teaching is focused on clear objectives for learning. In the best lessons, expectations of work and behaviour are high and made explicit to the pupils. Praise is used well to reinforce pupils' efforts and successes. Most teachers use introductory sessions well to demonstrate and explain key aspects of literacy. At times, however, too many disparate elements are introduced and the session lacks a clear focus. The most effective lessons have a clear and cohesive structure. Group tasks link with the introduction and plenary sessions are used to reinforce teaching points. Resources are used well and in good lessons every opportunity is taken to draw pupils' attention to print and to reinforce their understanding through good use of texts, visual 'prompts' and teachers drawing attention to key vocabulary. These literacy strategies are often used well in other subjects when the

teaching is good. Time is usually used well, but occasionally the pace of lessons is too slow, pupils' attention is not fully engaged and too little is achieved in the time available.

83. The subject is well managed and the co-ordinator has worked hard to ensure the successful implementation of the literacy hour. The school recognises the need for continued review of provision, for example, of the use of the reading scheme, in order to further improve standards. Assessment procedures which are carried out are clear but their consistent application is unsatisfactory. Progress is not systematically tracked as children move through the school. This has a particular impact on reading standards attained, for example, by a less able cohort where records note only progress through stages in a scheme but not children's acquisition of strategies. Homework is now used more systematically and effectively to develop pupils' reading skills.

Mathematics

84. The National Curriculum test results for 1999 show that at the end of the Key Stage 1, standards achieved were broadly in line with the national average. Compared with similar schools attainment is above average. There has been no significant variation in these results for three years. Boys' performance is higher than that of girls'. However, the results for 1999 show an improvement in attainment.

85. The inspection evidence shows that by the end of the key stage pupils' attainment is broadly in line with the national average. Pupils have the confidence to calculate mentally, some with pairs of two-digit numbers. They are sure in ordering number to at least one 100 and can count in twos, fives and tens. Pupils measure accurately with ten centimetre strips and with rulers, and draw lines to given lengths. Pupils learn about three-dimensional shapes, examining them for properties such as the number of faces. They draw simple graphs and divide both plane shapes and money into halves and quarters. They discuss their work, using a developing mathematical vocabulary. Higher-attaining pupils investigate problems and test hypotheses. For example, they test to find out whether all the multiples of four are even numbers and write confirmation of their findings.

86. Progress through the key stage is satisfactory. Number skills develop progressively in both the size of numbers dealt with and in the operations involved. Year 1 pupils learn to recognise and understand the mathematical signs for addition and subtraction, applying them to simple computations. They are learning to add pairs of numbers up to ten and count, together, in twos and fives. Pupils further apply their skills to calculating money. Year 2 pupils' skill in computation is extended well, so that higher-attaining pupils calculate, correctly, problems such as 79 divided by 11, showing the remainder. They extend their knowledge of measurement beyond time and money, to include length as well as weighing in grams and kilograms. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is a second language make good progress. They are supported by appropriate tasks and, usually, effective additional support. Whilst progress overall is satisfactory, it accelerates in Year 2, where more challenge is presented.

87. Pupils' response in lessons is good. It does, however, vary greatly from unsatisfactory to very good and is dependent on the quality of the teaching. In most classes pupils enjoy the mental activities and remain attentive when the pace is maintained. They are confident and all join in when they count in chorus. When provided with tasks which have been explained clearly and provide a challenge, pupils apply themselves well and behaviour is good, sometimes very good. A Year 2 pupil was heard to comment, "That was fun". In some Reception and Year 1 classes this is not the case and pupils lack consistent application, and although behaviour overall is satisfactory, too many pupils stray off-task.

88. Teaching is satisfactory overall. However, there is good and some very good teaching in Year 2, which enables pupils to make good progress. All teachers understand and follow the lesson pattern of the recently-implemented National Numeracy Strategy. They focus initially on developing pupils' mental strategies and agility, plan tasks for different levels of ability and then review what has been learned. In the best lessons there is an air of urgency about the teaching that is transmitted to the pupils. These teachers have high expectations of their pupils and challenge them very well, with tasks well-matched to their ability. When they assess that pupils are successful they move them on quickly so that pupils make better progress. Less satisfactory aspects of some lessons for younger pupils are a slow pace so that some pupils become restless and tasks presented did not always present sufficient challenge to all pupils. All teachers introduce and use correct mathematical vocabulary and sometimes display it so that they can point pupils' attention to it. Plenary sessions vary. Opportunities in a few, rather brief, sessions to encourage pupils to explain their understanding were missed.

89. The school has introduced the national numeracy strategy effectively in a short time. It is led well by a teacher whose understanding of it is reflected in the quality of her own teaching. Assessments made in conjunction with the requirements of the numeracy strategy to check pupils' attainment and progress are mainly satisfactory. Literacy is appropriately supported by the introduction and constant use of mathematical vocabulary. Numeracy skills are applied and reinforced in history, for example, in the use of timelines. The funding provided by the Single Regeneration Budget is used effectively to support and promote the progress of lower-attaining pupils. Good use is made of information technology in this programme. Generally, insufficient use is made of information technology to support mathematics.

Science

90. The results of the 1999 teachers' assessments show that standards of attainment were broadly average in comparison with all schools. The school's results were above the national average in comparison with similar schools. Nearly all pupils gained the expected level and a few achieved higher than expected levels. This represents an improvement over the previous year's results when attainment was well below the national average.

91. The evidence of the inspection shows that by the time pupils are seven, attainment is broadly in line with the national average. The oldest pupils at Key Stage 1 have a satisfactory knowledge of some life processes and living things. Most name accurately major organs such as the heart, lungs and brain. They are learning to link the effects of exercise on their bodies in physical education lessons, for example, by measuring increases in their heart beat and temperature. This is recorded effectively on a class chart. Many pupils show a satisfactory understanding of the need to eat a range of different foods and during discussions were able to name them. They use information technology to produce a chart confirming their favourite foods. So far, pupils have not had opportunities to carry out investigations using, for example, fair tests. In discussions they were unsure what an investigation is and attainment is in this aspect below average.

92. Progress is satisfactory overall. The rate of progress varies between Year 1 classes. Younger Year 1 pupils made good progress in a well prepared 'finding out' lesson when ideas are built up gradually, for example, during a sequence of work about the senses. The experiences gained help them to understand the function and value of senses in their everyday lives. In another Year 1 class, where progress was unsatisfactory, a similar topic was treated at great length, resulting in insufficient opportunities for pupils to investigate and make systematic observations in order to build up scientific ideas in a secure way. Pupils with

special educational needs and those for whom English is a second language receive mainly good support and make satisfactory progress. Progress in the Year 2 classes is satisfactory where pupils learn to appreciate the benefits of exercise and the dangers posed by harmful drugs.

93. Pupils' attitudes to science are satisfactory. Generally they are interested and attentive and work enthusiastically on their tasks. The younger Year 1 pupils are keen to handle equipment and take part in practical activities. However, when work provided does not hold the attention of older Year 1 pupils, they lose concentration and behaviour is less good. Presentation of work in Year 2 is good. The writing, diagrams and charts of these pupils show they take ongoing care to present their work neatly.

94. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Most teachers show an appropriate understanding of science. Teachers mainly explain tasks clearly and give pupils, including those with limited vocabulary, time to respond and express their ideas. In a very good lesson for Reception and Year 1 pupils, the teacher's lively and enthusiastic approach and varied use of questioning helped pupils to consolidate their understanding and extend their scientific vocabulary. Teachers mainly collaborate well with support assistants to ensure pupils receive a high level of adult support. In many lessons, expectations are at least satisfactory and tasks are appropriately matched to pupils' learning requirements and teachers know the strengths and weaknesses of their pupils well. However, in one unsatisfactory lesson for a Year 1 class, the introduction went on for too long so that pupils were left with insufficient time to carry out an investigation satisfactorily. Teachers plan together in year groups. This is particularly effective for the parallel Year 2 classes whose teachers ensure that pupils follow an identical curriculum. Teachers mainly collaborate well with support assistants and where appropriate ensure pupils receive a high level of adult support. The marking of pupils' work is inconsistent; only rarely does it suggest how work might be improved.

95. The scheme of work provides sufficiently detailed guidance for teachers on how to match activities to clear objectives and make use of investigational work. The lack of opportunity to monitor what is achieved means that there is limited input into how, in particular, teachers deliver this aspect of the curriculum, which is weaker than the others. The reorganisation of classes within the school has meant that planning has been very carefully and successfully reorganised to take account of some mixed-age classes. Assessment procedures are unsatisfactory. They do not provide sufficient opportunities or guidance on how to use information to improve pupils' progress.

OTHER SUBJECTS

Information technology

96. By the end of the key stage pupils attain standards which are in line with what is expected nationally.

97. The school had recently experienced operating difficulties with new equipment. Consequently, prior to the inspection it was uncertain if it would be fully operational. Few opportunities were available to see pupils at work on computers as part of the whole-school scheme or in support of other subjects. However, many pupils use computers as part of their learning programmes provided by the Single Regeneration Budget or as support for those with English as an additional language. These pupils show confidence in their use of the mouse and keyboard when using their own specific programs. By the end of the key stage all pupils have a knowledge of the functions of the basic keys. Mouse control is good, with pupils able to move and select quickly. They control a programmable toy to follow specific

instructions and devise and record a series of moves. Pupils use computers individually by following a series of instructions on the screen. They are aware of the use of technology in the world, such as how household equipment can respond to signals through sensors.

98. Progress is sound. The scheme of work provides a graduated series of skills which pupils are taught in regular weekly lessons. They have opportunities to practise these skills. Gradually they acquire a knowledge of the main function keys and in Year 1 as they carry out word-processing tasks. Pupils learn to use capital letters and how to move to the next line. On occasion they use these information skills to support other subjects such as in art, as when Year 2 pupils made good progress using 'Colour Magic' to produce examples of shades of colour.

99. Pupils work on the computers with diligence and concentration. They appear interested in their tasks and treat the equipment with respect. In the two lessons seen, behaviour was satisfactory overall, although, at times, some of the younger pupils called out and interrupted others.

100. Teaching is at least satisfactory. A strength of the teaching is the confidence shown. Teachers are well prepared to teach planned lessons in the subject and are also able to cope with new learning and pupils' queries. Explanations are thorough and demonstrations clear. At best, challenge is presented. When using the programmable toy in one lesson, the teacher moved on quickly with different degrees of turn. She also took the opportunity to ask what half of 360 was, and received the correct answer. Pupils were also asked to predict moves to arrive at a specific point. Teachers use the technical language of the subject well and are aware of the need to link it with other subjects. The teacher in a Year 1 and 2 class made a satisfactory link with the topic about toys by asking pupils about their own controllable toys.

101. The co-ordinator provides good support for colleagues and has led some useful in-service training, which has raised levels of expertise. However, teachers do not always use the computers effectively when they are available. The subject has a good supply of hardware. Use of it remains restricted by long-term problems relating to internet links. Planning does not always take into account the best use of resources so that pupils have maximum opportunities to use the equipment. Overall, insufficient use is made of information technology to support other curriculum subjects.

Religious education

102. A very small number of lessons was seen during the inspection. Standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 are below the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, make unsatisfactory progress. On occasion, progress is good when pupils are well motivated as, for example, in a Year 2 class where pupils displayed a good recall and secure knowledge of the giving of the ten commandments to Moses. They were able to relate these rules to the school rules and many were successful in thinking of equivalent guidance for the world today. Year 1 pupils are developing an awareness of the requirements of friendship. For example, in one lesson a few pupils were sufficiently confident to talk about their own experiences of loneliness. In discussions with pupils it was clear that most had little knowledge of Christianity, Judaism or Islam. They were unable to remember any religious festivals, customs or symbols, for example, suggesting that Christmas was a celebration of Jesus' death.

103. The attitudes of most pupils in the lessons seen was satisfactory overall. In one good lesson, Year 2 pupils were attentive and became very involved in discussions about rules; consequently behaviour was good. In another lesson there were instances of challenging or restless behaviour, which was clearly associated with teaching, which did not hold pupils'

attention well.

104. Too few lessons were seen to make a reliable judgement about the quality of teaching overall. Planning is satisfactory and the subject is generally taught through discussion. The success of this is entirely dependent on the quality of the teaching. There appear to be few opportunities provided for pupils to consolidate gains in knowledge and understanding through recorded work and none was available for scrutiny.

105. The management of the subject is underpinned by appropriate medium-term planning, which includes relevant expectations for pupils' learning. The school supports pupils' learning effectively during assemblies and by visits to places of worship locally. While these add appropriately to pupils' understanding through, for example, exploration of God's creation of a wonderful world, they do not extend sufficiently knowledge of other major world religions.

105. Art and design and technology

106. A very small amount of teaching of these subjects was seen. Scrutiny of work on display and samples of work from last year, together with discussions with the co-ordinator and information from planning, show that most pupils make satisfactory progress in gaining knowledge and a range of skills in art and design and technology. As they move through the school, pupils gain confidence in using a variety of media and techniques including drawing, painting and printing. Art is used well to record pupils' responses to experiences across the curriculum as, for example, in studies based on Rossetti's poem 'Colour'.

107. Year 2 pupils make good use of their skills across the curriculum. Teachers show pupils the correct way to paint a colour wash. This helps them to develop good techniques when painting and improves progress as, for example, when this was used effectively in evocative depictions of the Crimean War. Depictions of emotion on a 'feelings' tree show careful use of line and shade. Specialist knowledge brought by visiting artists gives pupils effective opportunities to be involved in creating, for example, colourful mosaics to enhance the playground. They also experience a variety of art forms on visits, for example, in making sculptures from natural materials at the Rosliston Forestry Centre, which impacts well on pupils' progress.

108. Much of the work in design and technology is linked appropriately with art. Pupils develop a good understanding of the finishing techniques that can be used on a variety of products, for example in using collage to decorate hanging toys. Year 2 pupils convey design ideas in drawing, as in planning a healthy snack for nursery children. Throughout the school, children learn to join and combine materials in making models from recyclable materials and using joints, axles and wheels in construction equipment. They have good opportunities to collaborate in small groups, for example in making 'Cuthman's cart' using Big Builder. They learn to evaluate and modify their models in order to improve the product.

109. The teaching seen was mainly of small groups of pupils. This, together with evidence of planning and teachers satisfactory expectations as seen in pupils' completed work, shows that teaching is sound overall. There is helpful guidance for teaching both subjects and plans to implement revised schemes of work that take account of new National Curriculum requirements. The school recognises that there is scope to introduce a more structured approach to the teaching of skills, for example in drawing, and to extend the range of three-dimensional work in art.

Geography and history

110. Standards in both geography and history are similar to that expected of pupils of this age and most make satisfactory progress.

111. History lessons were seen only in Year 1. In these, pupils made satisfactory progress in their understanding of differences between the past and the present in relation to toys. They discriminate between those from long ago and their own toys by the type of materials used, classifying them into three different eras. Year 2 pupils compare the life of Florence Nightingale with that of a modern nurse. They refer to the timeline to give some indication of when she lived. Pupils know that historical evidence can be gathered from books, pictures and old buildings.

112. In geography, some of the youngest pupils name features of the local area marked on a map. They are beginning to answer questions about the area based on their observations. Some can match features seen on an aerial photograph with what they know of their area. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils made good progress when they talked about their environment and the ways in which people abused it. This was due to the good quality of the discussion led by the teacher. When they learn about a village in Pakistan, often firsthand from pupils in the school, they are able to make comparisons with their own lives.

113. Pupils' response to history and geography is good. In lessons it varies from satisfactory to very good. Pupils talk with enthusiasm, particularly about history. They show a great deal of interest in artefacts, which stimulate thinking and discussion. Application to recording tasks is not always good, sometimes relating to the lack of challenge in teaching. Younger pupils in a geography lesson applied themselves very well, with good support from the classroom assistant. Behaviour in this lesson was very good.

114. Teaching is satisfactory. Good oral work and use of resources is not sustained by degree of challenge seen in some recording tasks. Teachers are secure in subject knowledge and are aware of the need to constantly emphasise comparisons. There is a lack of sparkle to some lessons, with opportunities missed to grasp pupils' basic enjoyment of the subjects.

115. The subjects are managed satisfactorily. Both geography and history are well supported by a good range of visits to local museums and churches where pupils have opportunities for first-hand experience. Good use is made of aerial photographs and maps in lessons. Mathematics and information technology skills are used to produce graphs. History displays support pupils' learning well, with good use of timelines. Geography has a lower profile in the school.

Music

116. The progress made by the majority of pupils is satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as a second language make progress which is similar to that of other pupils. The youngest Reception pupils make slow progress in learning the words and melody of a new song. The rate of progress increases in another class so that the oldest pupils in a Reception class make a good start in learning to sing in time, varying how loudly or softly they sing.

117. Unsatisfactory progress is made by the majority of pupils in the Year 1 classes in the development of a satisfactory awareness of pulse and expression. This is due mainly to the teaching which lacks focus and fails to promote pupils' interest and enthusiasm. In Year 2, the rate of progress improves so that pupils learn how to control the speed at which they sing successive verses of a song. This success followed a careful explanation and demonstration

by the teacher. Pupils learn to play percussion instruments with a satisfactory awareness of pulse and expression.

118. Pupils' attitudes and response are satisfactory overall. The oldest pupils listen carefully and co-operate well with teachers when managing instruments and take the performing activities seriously. The youngest pupils in Year 1 are caught up in enthusiasm and their behaviour is excellent. Overall, a significant number enjoy the opportunity to make music at first, but as lessons for some Reception and Year 1 classes progress, restlessness becomes evident and behaviour deteriorates. This is mainly due to a lack of challenge from the teachers and a slow pace.

119. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, but some is very good and some unsatisfactory. In a very good lesson, clear learning objectives, which included challenging tasks, gave good opportunities for the pupils to think about the music. As a result of this, most became very interested in a new action song and were fully and enthusiastically involved in the range of musical activities. By contrast, the unsatisfactory lessons failed to arouse pupils' interest because of unsatisfactory planning, an insufficient range of tasks and low expectations of pupils' performance. A visiting accompanist provided good support during many of the lessons. There are satisfactory opportunities for pupils to take part in musical activities such as, for example, the choir and recorder groups and school concerts.

Physical education

120. Progress in physical education is satisfactory. Evidence during the inspection was limited to gymnastics and dance.

121. Pupils in Year 2 use a range of skills satisfactorily, including co-ordinating the use of different parts of their body and show poise and balance on the floor and apparatus. Most pupils are familiar with warming-up and are aware of the effect of exercise on their bodies. Pupils in Year 1 demonstrate that they use space and movement satisfactorily, twisting, jumping and moving on the spot. A few are developing a good sense of style using arm and leg movements. Many pupils with special educational needs, make some good progress in learning to listen and concentrate hard when responding to a variety of stimuli.

122. Pupils enjoy physical education. Many of the older pupils are impatient to get started, tackling lessons with vigorous enthusiasm. They watch demonstrations carefully and are keen to perfect their own performance. The youngest pupils enjoy working with partners and responding to music through their movements. A small number of Year 1 pupils show no real interest in the activities and perform without enthusiasm. The behaviour of most pupils is good. Most change for lessons without adult help.

123. The quality of teaching is sound. The good lessons are characterised by good subject knowledge and planning, which incorporates a smooth sequence of activities which increase in difficulty, lively pace and good organisation. For example, in one Year 2 lesson, pupils were encouraged successfully to try making imaginative shapes when practising balancing using an increasing number of points of the body. Weaker teaching aspects include insufficient emphasis on improving, for example, poise and style, and there is not enough pace to ensure all the planned activities are completed. Teachers are aware of health and safety issues and ensure that pupils pay careful attention when setting out apparatus. Most assess pupils' progress well throughout lessons.

124. The school provides satisfactory opportunities for pupils to join a football club and learn to be effective in a team. An annual sports week gives pupils a range of opportunities

for practising the skills learnt during the preceding year.

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

125. The inspection was carried out by a team of four inspectors, including a lay inspector. A total of 12.5 inspection days was spent in the school gathering evidence. The inspection activities included:

- holding a meeting for parents prior to the inspection attended by 16 parents, and analysing 82 completed questionnaires;
- inspecting 58 lessons or parts of lessons, adding up to a total of 45 hours;
- hearing a representative sample of 12 per cent of pupils read, from all year groups;
- scrutinising a representative sample of current and past work of pupils in each year group;
- interviewing all members of staff with areas of responsibility;
- discussion with the chair and other members of the governing body;
- observing pupils during break times;
- discussing work with pupils during lessons, and at other times, to gain evidence of standards and progress;
- discussing aspects of school life with selected groups of pupils;
- attending registrations and acts of collective worship;
- scrutiny of all the documentation for special educational needs; and
- examination of a broad range of the school's documents and records, including the minutes of governors' meetings, school policy statements, the prospectus, the annual report, curriculum and development plans and financial statements.

DATA AND INDICATORS

Pupil data

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
Nursery Unit and School	206	1	22	58

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers (YR-Y2)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	8.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.2

Education support staff (YR-Y2)

Total number of education support staff	12
Total aggregate hours worked each week	197

Qualified teachers (Nursery school, classes or unit)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	0.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	0.0

Education support staff (Nursery school, classes or unit)

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked each week	70
Average class size:	17.0

Financial data

Financial year: 1998/1999

	£
Total Income	331,233
Total Expenditure	328,694
Expenditure per pupil	1,522

Balance brought forward from previous year	17,280
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Balance carried forward to next year	19,818
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PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out: 248
 Number of questionnaires returned: 58

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	34	50	14	0	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	48	41	10	0	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	22	47	22	3	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	33	45	16	5	2
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	34	47	14	3	2
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	34	52	10	2	2
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	19	53	22	3	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	29	48	19	3	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	34	52	12	2	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	40	43	16	0	2
My child(ren) like(s) school	53	33	10	2	2

A number of parents felt unable to answer some of the questions, as their children were new to the school. This means that the total for some responses does not add up to one hundred per cent.

Other issues raised by parents

- The parents expressed very positive views about the school.
 - Parents spoke highly of the work of the Nursery Unit.
- A few parents expressed concern about the way reading is taught and why mistakes in written work are not always corrected by the teacher.

SUMMARY OF THE INSPECTION REPORT

LANSDOWNE INFANTS' SCHOOL

Burton Upon Trent

Headteacher: Mrs A I Barry

Date of inspection: 11th October 1999

Previous inspection: March 1996

The school was inspected by 4 inspectors, led by Mrs. M. Parfitt. **This document summarises the full inspection report, which is available from the school.**

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Number of full-time pupils:	18%
Pupils with English as an additional language:	20%
Pupils entitled to free school meals:	30%
Pupils on register of special educational needs:	22
Average class size:	27

Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is above average.

What the school does well

- .Makes very good provision for children in the nursery.
- . Provides a secure and welcoming environment for pupils which supports their learning.
- .Has good management and effective financial planning.
- .Makes good overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- .Provides well for pupils with special educational needs.
- .Is welcoming to parents.
- .Successfully promotes good attendance.

Where the school has weaknesses

- . Assessment and marking are not being used effectively to help pupils improve their work.
- . A significant amount of unsatisfactory teaching in some classes.
- .Standards in reading and religious education do not reach the expected standard for age.

The school has many strengths which outweigh the weaknesses. However, the weaknesses will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which will be sent to all the parents or guardians of the pupils at the school.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school has made sound progress since the previous inspection in tackling the issues raised.

There have been mainly steady improvements in the standards attained by pupils in English, mathematics and science. Setting targets for improvement has been carefully addressed as has the under-achievement of boys. The national literacy and numeracy strategies have been implemented effectively and literacy is beginning to impact on attainment by helping to raise standards, particularly in the increased number of pupils achieving higher levels. Where appropriate the roles of the co-ordinators have been developed, particularly for English and mathematics. Pupils' reports to parents now meet statutory requirements. The management of the school continues to monitor teaching and learning appropriately. The changes which have

been made have helped the school improve and it is soundly placed to improve further.

Standards in subjects

The table shows the standards achieved by 7-year-olds in 1999 based on the National Curriculum tests:

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

Children in the Nursery Unit who come into the school with well below average attainment make good progress in all the areas of learning. By the time they are five a significant majority are below the nationally recommended targets in language and literacy and mathematics, but most reach expected levels in knowledge and understanding of the world and in creative and physical development. In 1999, results of National Curriculum tests show that standards in reading, writing and mathematics were broadly in line with the national average for all pupils. In science, attainment was above average. When compared with similar schools, results were above average in reading and mathematics and were well above average in writing and science. By comparison, pupils' performance in the 1998 national tests was at least below the national average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. In reading and mathematics it was also at least below the average achieved in schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. In writing and science attainment was broadly in line with that from similar schools. A number of contributory factors were responsible for the fall in attainment. Of the Year 2 pupils who took the 1998 national tests, five had spent several weeks abroad, four had statements of educational need, which is above average. Of the five pupils who joined the Year 2 cohort, one spoke no English and the other four were assessed as below average. These represent nearly a quarter of the pupils in Year 2 and account for the fall in attainment. Prior to 1998, the results in the previous three years national tests had shown a steady improvement overall and the current year's 1999 tests mainly show a further improvement over those years. There are no significant differences in the performance of boys and girls.

Inspection evidence shows that by the time they leave school, standards in mathematics and science are close to the average, but in English at this early stage in the school year they are below. Progress in mathematics and science, which improves towards the end of the key stage, is often good. It is satisfactory in other subjects including information and control technology. In religious education, most pupils do not reach the levels expected in the Agreed Syllabus. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as a second language receive support, which is mainly well focused and they make good progress.

Quality of teaching

Teaching in:	Under 5	5 - 7 years
English	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Mathematics	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Science		Satisfactory
Information technology		Satisfactory
Religious education		No judgement
Other subjects	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Forty per cent of the teaching is good or better and at least 85% is satisfactory overall. Eighteen per cent is very good. A significant proportion, about 15 per cent, is unsatisfactory and is related to some Reception and Year 1 classes. This represents a change since the previous inspection when two thirds of the teaching was good and none was unsatisfactory. In many classes, the teaching is organised and managed effectively. The main contributory factors to unsatisfactory teaching are insufficient challenge and class management, and assessment and marking, which are not used to influence lessons or help pupils improve. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Overall, teaching is better in the Nursery, the mixed Reception and Year 1 class and the Year 2 classes, where a significant proportion is very good. These lessons are characterised by a high level of challenge, move at a swift pace and have a beneficial effect on pupils' attainment and progress.

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

Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Satisfactory in lessons and around the school
Attendance	Attendance is good
Ethos*	Positive. Good relationships between staff and pupils. Pupils are happy in school and most are keen to learn. The atmosphere in many classes is purposeful.
Leadership and management	Good. The headteacher is a very effective leader and manager. The school development plan is very well planned and provides good guidance on how to make further improvements.
Curriculum	The curriculum is broad and balanced. Well planned for the children in the nursery. A good emphasis is placed on literacy and numeracy. Assessment procedures and their use are unsatisfactory
Pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils are well supported within the special educational needs provision. Targets set are well focused to improve progress.
Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Good level of staffing to meet the demands of the curriculum. Accommodation is well maintained and provides a generous amount of space for teaching and learning. Resources are satisfactory.
Value for money	Good. The school makes effective use of resources to raise standards.

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

The parents' views of the school

What most parents like about the school

- Their children like school.
- The head and staff are welcoming and approachable.
- The caring atmosphere in the school.
- The very good quality of the nursery provision.
- The usefulness of the information provided about school matters.

What most parents are not happy about

The inspection team supports the positive views expressed by the parents. It agrees that a significant many pupils make unsatisfactory progress when learning to read before they reach Year 2, and that some marking is unsatisfactory.

OTHER INFORMATION

The contractor appointed by OFSTED for this inspection was Power House Inspections Grasshoppers, 1 Anglesey Close, Chasetown, Burntwood, Staffordshire WS7 8XA.

Any comments, concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be made to the inspection contractor. Complaints which are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to The Registrar, The Office for Standards in Education, Alexandra House, 33 Kingsway, London, WC2B 6SE.

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Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year