

INSPECTION REPORT

MEDWAY COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Leicester

LEA area: Leicester

Unique reference number: 120108

Headteacher: Geoff Payne

Reporting inspector: Peter Kerr

23583

Dates of inspection: 29 April – 2 May 2002

Inspection number: 195957

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	St Stephen's Road Leicester
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Karey Hunter
Date of previous inspection:	9-12 June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23583	P Kerr	Registered inspector		<p>What sort of school is it?</p> <p>The school's results and pupils' achievements</p> <p>How well are pupils taught?</p> <p>What should the school do to improve further?</p>
11450	L Kuraishi	Lay inspector		<p>Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development</p> <p>How well does the school care for its pupils?</p> <p>How well does the school work in partnership with parents?</p>
21910	Gordon Longton	Team inspector	<p>Science</p> <p>Information and communication technology</p> <p>Equal opportunities</p>	<p>How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?</p>
11901	P Lowe	Team inspector	<p>Foundation stage</p> <p>Music</p> <p>Religious education</p> <p>Design and technology</p>	
20003	Susan Metcalfe	Team Inspector	<p>English as an additional language</p>	

23658	Stephen Parker	Team Inspector	English History Art and Design Special educational needs	
30717	Gordon Tompsett	Team Inspector	Mathematics Geography Physical education	How well is the school led and managed?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is in a deprived area near the centre of Leicester within an 'Education Action Zone'. It is much bigger than other primary schools, with 424 children on roll aged three and a half to 11 years of age. Three quarters of the children speak a language other than English as their first language and most of these are of Asian ethnic origin. Over 150 of these pupils are in the early stages of learning English. The main language spoken is Bengali, but seventeen other languages are represented. Fifteen per cent of the pupils have arrived recently in the area with very little or no English, including ten refugees from a number of countries. Thirty-eight per cent of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, which is an above average figure, but not as high as in many schools in similar areas. There are 83 pupils on the school's register of special educational needs, which is an above average proportion of the school roll, and four pupils have a statement of special educational needs, which is an average proportion. The most significant needs are learning difficulties. There has been a high level of staff absences and turnover in recent years, which has adversely affected some classes. Six supply teachers taught in the school for some or all of the time during the inspection.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides a good quality of education following recent improvements in leadership and management. Standards are well below average in English and below average in mathematics and science, but teaching is good and pupils are making good progress in lessons. Pupils work hard and behave well in class, but are sometimes too boisterous when moving around the school. Provision for the pupils' personal development is good, with very good provision for their moral, social and cultural development. The support for ethnic minority pupils is very good and is very well managed. The headteacher provides very clear leadership and is very well supported by the staff. The parents very much appreciate what the school is doing for their children. The school provides equal opportunities for all pupils and satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Provision for children in the Nursery and Reception classes is of a very high standard.
- Teaching is good, enabling the pupils to make good progress.
- The specialist team for ethnic minority pupils is very well led and provides very effective support.
- Provision for the pupils' personal development is good, with very good provision for their moral, social and cultural development.
- The school's very good links with the local community enrich the pupils' education.
- The headteacher provides very good leadership and is very well supported by staff.

What could be improved

- Standards in spoken and written English are too low.
- Higher priority needs to be given to meeting the needs of ALL pupils for whom English is an additional language.
- There are too many long absences in term time.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in June 1997. Since then, excellent improvements have been made to the way the school is led and managed, leading to the establishment of a collaborative ethos in which all members of staff accept shared responsibility for improving the quality of education and raising standards. The quality of teaching has improved from satisfactory to good. Satisfactory improvements have been made in the areas identified as key issues in the previous report. The quality and range of pupils' writing has improved, higher attaining pupils are doing better, teaching is now monitored and the pupils' work is more rigorously assessed. The outdoor play area for young children is now good. Insufficient progress was made in raising standards in information and communication technology until

the new headteacher was appointed. Rapid improvements have been made since then. There has been only a marginal recent improvement in the rate of attendance.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	E	D	E	C
Mathematics	D	C	E	E
Science	E	C	E	D

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

The table shows an improvement to average standards in mathematics and science in 2000 and a dip in all subjects in 2001. However, a large number of pupils arrived in the school from other countries during the past year, speaking little or no English. The school did well to achieve similar results to other schools in the English tests in these circumstances. The lower results in mathematics and science compared to similar schools were due to the difficulties many pupils with English as an additional language had in understanding test questions. The school has put measures in place to address this problem and has set realistic targets to improve. It is on course to achieve better results in 2002.

The inspection found that standards at the end of Year 6 are well below average in English and below average in mathematics and science. At the end of Year 2, standards are well below average in English and mathematics because of the effect of the large number of pupils with poor speaking and writing skills. Standards in science are in line with expectations at this stage.

Children in the Nursery and Reception classes, including those with English as an additional language, make very good progress, but most children do not achieve the early learning goals before they enter Year1. Pupils make good progress in reading, listening, mathematics, design and technology, geography, information and communication technology music and religious education throughout the school and in science in Years 1 and 2. Progress in speaking and writing is unsatisfactory and standards remain well below average throughout the school. Progress is now good in information and communication technology and standards are above expectations at the end of Reception and average at the end of Year1. They remain below expectations at the end of Year 6. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their individual targets. Girls and boys in all ethnic groups have equal opportunities to make good progress.

Pupils new to English make very good initial progress due to the very effective support from the specialist team. Pupils who have made good initial progress but are not yet fluent now receive less support and therefore make slower progress.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils like school. They want to learn, and take part in activities with enthusiasm.
Behaviour, in and out of	Good in lessons, contributing to good learning. Satisfactory at other

classrooms	times.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships and are good throughout the school, with very good racial harmony. Pupils' personal development is good. They undertake routine responsibilities well, but are not fully involved in contributing to whole school issues such as codes of behaviour.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. Too many extended holidays in term time.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Very good	Good	Good

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

The consistently high quality of teaching in the Nursery and Reception classes is a strength of the school. Excellent team-work, classroom organisation, use of time and resources and management of children make learning very efficient. Children quickly become confident, independent learners. They respond to the staff's very high expectations with very good intellectual and creative effort. Children with English as an additional language make very good progress because of very good support, including very good input by the bilingual staff.

The quality of teaching is good overall in Years 1 to 6. During the inspection, lessons taught by the permanent staff were often very good and sometimes excellent. The main characteristics of the best teaching observed were:

- detailed planning of lessons to meet the needs of all the pupils, including those with English as an additional language and special educational needs;
- explanations that all pupils can understand and interesting activities that challenge them to think and to interact with one another;
- opportunities for pupils to give extended answers and explanations, with good support for them to improve their spoken English, for example in the use of technical language in mathematics, science and history;
- very good collaboration between teachers and teaching assistants, keeping a good pace to the lesson through well-targeted support for individuals and small groups;
- good tracking of the pupils' progress so that lessons build well on previous learning;
- the sharing of realistic but challenging targets with pupils and good reviews of lessons so that pupils are very aware of their own progress;
- good support for pupils' reading and encouragement for them to develop their own ideas in writing.

All pupils learn well in these lessons, putting in great effort and sustaining concentration throughout. Levels of interest are high and very good gains made in knowledge, understanding and skills. The specialist teachers that are employed to raise the attainment of ethnic minority pupils make a very effective contribution to the teaching of English to those pupils new to the language. They work very well in partnership with class teachers to set high expectations and use high quality resources, making good links with other subjects. They encourage the less confident pupils in the class to contribute, especially girls from different ethnic backgrounds. When pupils are withdrawn for teaching in small groups, the teaching is efficient and effective.

The teaching of mathematics, including numeracy, is good throughout the school. In English, teaching is good in Years 1 and 2, with examples of very good direct teaching of basic literacy skills in Year 2. The key area for further improvement is in the teaching of spoken and written English for pupils of all

abilities at all levels of competence in English, especially in Years 3 to 6. Pupils need more opportunities and encouragement to:

- speak at length and improve their grammar and vocabulary;
- check and improve their writing in all subjects.

Marking is not used as well as it should be to show pupils how to improve and the texts used in lessons are not sufficiently exploited to extend pupils' appreciation of the English language and improve their vocabulary.

Examples of good and very good practice were seen in all these aspects of teaching during the inspection, but most are not consistent enough features throughout the school. The pupils most affected are those who have made good initial progress in learning English, but who are not yet fluent. Some teachers do not identify their needs accurately enough, so that they appear to be making progress when in fact they are failing to understand fully what is being taught.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. All required subjects included, with full equality of access. Good enrichment through visits and very good links with the community. Good extra-curricular provision.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Individual educational plans provide good guidance for teachers and teaching assistants. Good progress secured.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Very good provision for pupils who are new to English through the support given by the specialist teachers for ethnic minority pupils. Pupils who have made progress in English but who are not fluent are currently less well supported however.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Very good for moral, social and cultural and good for spiritual development. Very good promotion of varied faiths and cultures represented in school. Limited opportunities for participating in decision-making and learning citizenship.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Parents have very positive views of the school and do much to support their children's learning.

The school works very closely with parents for the benefit of all the children.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher, strongly supported by the deputy headteacher, provides very good leadership. Other senior members of staff play an active and effective role as members of a committed management team.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors are very supportive of the headteacher. Governors are aware of strengths and weaknesses of the school but need to play a more active role in policy development.
The school's evaluation of its performance	An improved aspect of management that is now sound. The school is increasingly aware of how well it is doing compared to similar schools,

	and what it needs to do to improve further.
The strategic use of resources	Sound. Spending is closely linked to educational priorities and the principles of best value are applied well to all purchases.

Staffing levels are now adequate following a period of staff shortages. The accommodation is satisfactory, but the school does not have access to a playing field. There are sufficient resources for all subjects of the National Curriculum.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school, behave well and make good progress. • Teaching is good. • The school is approachable and keeps them well informed about their children's progress. • The school expects the children to work hard and helps them to become mature and responsible. • The school is well led and managed and works closely with them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some parents were not happy with the amount of homework given.

The inspection team agrees with the parents' positive views of the school and judges the amount of homework given as satisfactory. The small number of parents at the parents' meeting expressed concern about the lack of a school playing field and the effect this has on their children's health and development. The team agrees that efforts should be made to give the pupils some access to a large grassed area for outdoor games and sports. Parents also expressed concern about supervision and behaviour at lunchtimes. The team agrees that this is an area for improvement.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The school's results in the national tests in reading and writing at the end of Year 2 were well below the national average in 2001. The results in the mathematics tests were below average. These results represented a dip in standards following a steady rate of improvement in the reading and mathematics results between 1997 and 2000, and a slower, but noticeable rise in standards in writing. Among contributory factors in the downturn in the results were:
 - the arrival of a number of pupils to the school with little or no knowledge of English;
 - the extended holidays taken by some families during term time.
2. Compared to schools with a similar proportion of pupils taking up free school meals, the mathematics results in 2001 were above average, which represents good achievement. The reading results were below average and the writing well below average. The school acknowledges that raising standards in writing is a high priority. School assessments show that speaking and listening is also weak at this stage. The high proportion of pupils who are not fluent in English also affected the results of the school's assessments in science, which were also well below average in 2001. Boys and girls performed equally well in the tests and assessments, and there is no evidence to suggest that any particular ethnic groups performed better or worse than others.
3. The school's results in the end of Year 6 tests in English and mathematics and science were well below average in 2001 following a rising trend from 1997 to 2000. A number of factors contributed to the significant dip in 2001. This year group had been particularly badly affected by prolonged but indeterminate staff absences and the difficulties in recruiting reliable supply teachers. In addition, the attainment of this group had been low throughout the school. These factors were exacerbated by the arrival of a number of pupils during Years 3 to 6 with little or no English.
4. The school's results in English, however, represented good achievement. They were as high as those of similar schools. The support given by the very effective specialist team for improving the achievement of ethnic minority groups contributed greatly to this success. In addition, the teachers prepared the pupils very well for the English tests. The school's results in mathematics were well below those of similar schools, mainly because the proportion of pupils attaining the above average Level 5 was very much lower than in English. The school's analysis of the test papers shows that many pupils with English as an additional language had difficulty understanding the wording of mathematical problems. Measures have been put in place to help the pupils tackle these types of questions more successfully. The results in the science tests were very similar to the English results in 2001. However, the comparison with similar schools was below average because nationally, more pupils attain the above average Level 5 in science than in English, whereas in the school the proportion was about the same.
5. Most of the children who enter the Nursery have very low attainment in spoken English. For very many of them, English is an additional language. With the skilled support of the teachers and teaching assistants, including the very effective bilingual staff, all the children make very good progress in learning English and in developing

their language, literacy and communication skills in the Nursery and Reception classes. Nevertheless, at the end of their time in Reception, the children's attainment is still below average in this vital area of learning. The children's mathematical development and their knowledge and understanding of the world are well below average on entry to the Nursery. After making very good progress, they still fall short of achieving the early learning goals in these areas at the end of Reception. They make excellent progress in information and communication technology because of regular access to computers, and very good support and guidance from all the staff. By the end of their time in Reception, the children's attainment in this area is above that expected for their age. The children's attainment in creative and physical development is broadly in line with the levels expected for their age on entering the Nursery. The very good progress they make enables them to reach the early learning goals in these areas before they start Year 1 and maintains the high standards reported by the previous inspection.

6. The inspection found that at the end of Year 2, standards are well below average in English and mathematics. At the end of Year 6, standards are well below average in English and below average in mathematics. Standards are in line with expectations at the end of Year 2 and below expectations at the end of Year 6 in science and information and communication technology. In all other subjects, standards were found to be in line with expectations at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 except that in history, standards are below expectations at the end of Year 2. Pupils achieve well in English, mathematics, science, design and technology, art and design, geography, music and religious education in Years 1 and 2. Achievement is satisfactory in information and communication technology, history and physical education at this stage. Achievement is good in mathematics, design and technology, geography, music and religious education in Years 3 to 6 and satisfactory in English, science, art and design, and physical education at this stage.
7. Pupils make good progress overall in English in Years 1 and 2. Standards at the end of Year 2 are average in listening, below average in reading, and well below average in speaking and writing. The influx of a number of pupils with English as an additional language with very little or no English is the main factor in this. This particular group makes very good initial progress because of the expert support they receive from the very effective specialist team supporting ethnic minority pupils. Despite these gains, the level of attainment of this group is still well below average. In addition, some pupils who have already made good gains in their English, but are not yet fluent, fail to achieve as well as they could. Pupils in this group, although proficient in reading and in their understanding of English, need continued support to make good progress in speaking and writing. Some of the support they would normally receive has been diverted to the more needy pupils, however, because the school does not have any enough funding to cater for both groups effectively. A similar effect is felt in Years 3 to 6, but with more noticeable consequences. During this stage, the attainment of pupils with English as an additional language falls progressively further behind the other pupils in each year group, especially in speaking and writing. As a consequence, progress is only satisfactory overall in this stage. Standards in listening are good, and pupils have good library skills because of systematic teaching in this area. Standards in speaking are below average at the end of Year 6 because pupils are not given sufficient encouragement and support to speak at length and extend their vocabulary. Standards in reading are below average, but much nearer to the expected level than in writing. Pupils have positive attitudes to books because of the very good encouragement they receive in school and at home. Standards in writing are well below average. The pupils have a limited vocabulary, write short sentences and spell many common words incorrectly. This was a key issue at the

previous inspection. Satisfactory progress has been made since then in view of the circumstances described above.

8. Standards in mathematics are well below average at the end of Year 2. Although many pupils know a lot of the number and shape facts expected of the average attaining pupils of this age, few have above average attainment. In addition, many pupils are not able to write down what they know because of their poor understanding of mathematical language. Standards are below average at the end of Year 6. The pupils' understanding of mathematical language has not kept up with their number skills, so that they have difficulty deciding what mathematics they need to solve problems. However, because of the support now being given in this area, pupils are beginning to make more rapid progress in Years 3 to 6, with increasing signs of rising attainment. The school has set suitably ambitious but achievable targets to raise attainment in English and mathematics over the next two years and is on course to achieve this aim.
9. Standards in many subjects are affected to some degree by the impact of the large proportion of pupils for whom English is an additional language. For example, pupils who are not yet fluent in English find scientific language spoken in English very difficult to understand. This reduces their ability to understand lessons, give correct answers to questions and record their work. Standards in experimental science are in line with expectations, however, at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 because of the emphasis teachers place on this aspect of science in lessons. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a good understanding of how to test their ideas scientifically, record their experiments accurately and draw sensible conclusions from their results. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection, which reported weak experimental and investigative skills.
10. Standards in information and communication technology, which were a key issue at the previous inspection, are improving rapidly following the provision of many more computers over the past year. Up until then, progress in addressing this issue had been unsatisfactory. Currently, standards are in line with expectations at the end of Year 2, which represents good achievement. Standards are still below average at the end of Year 6 because the pupils have not had time to cover all the ground they missed in previous years. Prospects for continuing improvement are good because of the imminent completion of the computer suite. Raising standards in geography and history at the end of Year 2 was a key issue at the previous inspection. In this inspection, standards in geography at the end of Year 2 were found to be in line with expectations, but standards in history were found to be below expectations because of poor writing skills.
11. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well. Their needs are identified as early as possible after entry to the school and they are given appropriate individual education plans. Targets in these plans are clear, specific and suitably challenging for their academic and personal development. Careful monitoring of progress and regular adjustment of targets mean that pupils sustain a good quality of learning. Few pupils require a statement of special needs, and the level of need of many is reduced as they progress through the school. The school has recently begun to identify pupils who are gifted or talented and is discussing ways of providing for the needs of these pupils. Higher attaining pupils achieve well overall, which is an improvement in a key issue from the previous inspection. However, there is room for further improvement in the use of research skills to challenge older pupils with high attainment to extend their reading and writing skills in all subjects.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. Pupils have good attitudes to learning. Their behaviour in lessons and relationships with everyone in the school are good. This has a very positive effect on their learning and personal development, which are good. Parents overwhelmingly feel that their children like school and that they behave well in lessons. Some parents expressed reservations about behaviour at lunchtime, which the inspection found was not as good as in lessons. Overall, there has been satisfactory improvement in this aspect since the previous inspection.
13. Children's attitudes and behaviour in the Nursery and Reception classes are very good. They show good levels of concentration, initiative and independence for their age in response to the high quality support and guidance they receive from the dedicated staff. Children share resources and work together as friends. In a mathematics lesson, for example, groups and pairs of children worked very well together, sharing resources and helping one another to count.
14. Pupils in Years 2 to 6 behave well and make good progress in lessons, especially when teachers enthuse them with exciting teaching methods. When they are provided with clear guidance and interesting activities, their concentration is good and in some lessons it is very good. In good lessons observed in the infant classes, for example, the pupils sat sensibly together on the carpet and concentrated on the teachers' demonstrations. In mathematics, they followed the stages of a calculation closely in order to identify where the teacher made a deliberate mistake. The teachers have high expectations of pupils to take part in class activities, to appreciate each other's ideas and to pay attention when others are speaking. The pupils respond positively. They are confident when trying out new activities and willingly volunteer for tasks, such as writing answers on the 'whiteboard'¹ during the lessons. They like to be chosen to answer the teacher's questions. Occasionally, especially during lengthy whole class sessions, some pupils start to fidget and do not listen to teachers with sufficient care. Also, noisy chatter prevents teachers from hearing pupils' answers at times. This happens more in lessons taken by temporary teachers than by permanent staff. Most pupils respond positively to reprimands from staff, however, and seek to improve their efforts for the rest of the lesson.
15. Pupils generally share ideas and resources, co-operate with others and take turn sensibly in joint tasks. In a Year 1 science lesson, for example, pupils followed the bilingual learning support assistant's instructions and produced good quality drawings using appropriate colours for a sunflower. Pupils' attitudes to their school in general are also good. Nearly all parents state that their children like school. Pupils talk positively about their friends and respect their teachers. They show an enthusiastic interest in school life, and are eager to take part in the extra-curricular activities provided, such as football, dance and drama.
16. Pupils' behaviour around the school is generally satisfactory but less positive than it was at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils are cheerful and enjoy "letting off steam" during playtime. They are usually tolerant of one another and often wait for those whose movement is slower. However, when they are excited, they forget that some prefer quieter activities. Several boys, in particular, run about at high speed and are quite boisterous. They are usually careful to avoid collision, but in the cramped playground, occasional bumping and pushing does occur. This some times intimidates a few of the less confident pupils. No deliberate bullying was seen during

¹ A washable whiteboard is often used in classrooms nowadays in place of a blackboard and chalk.

the inspection, however, and there is no evidence of racial harassment or sexist behaviour. Some teachers make good use of methods of encouraging good behaviour that they learnt through behaviour management courses, but other staff have not yet received this training. There was one temporary exclusion during the past year for inappropriate behaviour. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, reflecting the school's new determination to fully include all pupils wherever possible.

17. The personal development of pupils is good. From the time that they enter the school, the pupils respond very positively to the care and respect with which all members of staff treat them. Children in the Nursery classes quickly learn to be independent and take responsibility. They get out equipment and tidy up after themselves, locate their nameplates and writing implements, and show their writing to their parents. This builds their confidence and enables them to settle down quickly and prepare for learning. In 'circle times'² and assemblies, pupils gain in confidence to speak in front of other pupils and adults. Pupils respond well to the responsibilities that are provided within the school, such as taking dinner register to the school office, and take the initiative well when they have the opportunity. Older pupils take their door monitor duties seriously. For example, they ensure that all pupils wash their hands prior to entering the dining hall. The pupils do not gain experience in taking part in discussions and decision-making on whole-school and community issues because there are currently no arrangements for them to do so.
18. Relationships throughout the school are good. All members of staff set a good example, which the pupils follow. This is central to the teachers' success in managing pupils' behaviour, and has a positive effect on their learning. The pupils know that other pupils and staff will value their efforts for behaving sensibly. Pupils have a good understanding that other people's beliefs may be different from their own. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds and from troubled parts of the world are fully accepted and work and play happily alongside other pupils. Relationships between boys and girls are generally good.
19. The school has not been successful in addressing the issue of unsatisfactory attendance since the last inspection. There has been some improvement in rates of attendance recently, but overall it remains very low in comparison with other schools nationally. This is mainly because some families take extended holidays in term time to visit relatives in other countries. The school recognises the difficulties that some families have in getting their children to school and takes satisfactory steps to provide extra support through the education welfare officer. More rigorous application of the rules for authorising absences has increased the rate of unauthorised absence, which is now above the national rate. Some children arrive late on a regular basis, but most arrive punctually, and both morning and afternoon sessions start promptly.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

20. The quality of teaching is good overall, enabling the pupils to learn effectively and make good progress. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, when teaching was judged satisfactory. During the inspection, three classes were being taught by temporary supply teachers who had only been in the school for a few weeks. These teachers were covering for long-term staff absences, which have been very disruptive to particular year groups because they have lasted a very long

² 'Circle time' is when pupils sit quietly, usually in a circle, and take turns one-by one to say what they feel and think about the issues under discussion, which are often personal and important to them.

time without any proposed date of resolution. A further class was taught by different supply teachers on three of the four days of the inspection because of an unexpected staff absence. The quality of teaching provided by the supply teachers was satisfactory. The following observations on strengths and areas for improvement in teaching are based on observations of the permanent teaching staff.

21. The quality of teaching in the Nursery and Reception classes is of a consistently high standard. All of the lessons seen in this stage (the Foundation Stage) were very good. The teachers and teaching assistants work very closely and effectively together as a team. They use the available teaching time very efficiently, through excellent organisation of the classrooms and the use of a wide range of resources to prepare stimulating and challenging activities. The children respond very positively. They quickly become used to the class routines and very independent and responsible in their choice and use of equipment and materials. They relate to each other and to the staff very confidently. Learning is very good because of the high level of involvement of the children and the constant interactions between them and the staff and other children. The teachers are very knowledgeable about the Foundation Stage requirements, and make very good links between all the six areas of learning, so that pupils make rapid progress on a wide front. The bilingual members of staff give very good support to children for whom English is an additional language. This, together with the excellent overall provision, leads to rapid learning of personal, social, language and communication skills for all the children. The staff are very aware of pupils' individual strengths and weaknesses, and give very good support to children with special educational needs. High expectations are set, to which the children respond with great physical, creative and mental effort and achieve well in all six areas of learning for children of this age.
22. Teaching in Years 1 to 6 is good overall. This judgement is based on evidence from the pupils' books and the progress they have made over time, as well as on the lessons observed. Twenty-five lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2, of which 11 were very good, seven good and seven satisfactory. In Years 3 to 6, 41 lessons were observed, of which two were excellent, nine very good, 14 good, 14 satisfactory and one unsatisfactory. The quality of the teaching observed was therefore higher in Years 1 and 2 than in Years 3 to 6. However, the impact of staff absences and supply cover was greater in Years 3 to 6 than in Years 1 and 2.
23. The main features of effective teaching in the best lessons seen were:
 - very good use by teachers of their assessments of the pupils' prior learning to plan lessons that carry their learning forward. The teachers discuss in detail with the pupils what is to be learned. This gives a clear picture of how the lesson is to progress and involves the pupils fully in their learning;
 - excellent match of content and methods to the needs of all the pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. The methods include opportunities for pupils to talk to one another about their work, to ask and answer questions and to share what they have learned with the class. As a result, the pupils make very clear gains in their understanding and knowledge, which they are fully aware of;
 - support for individual pupils to fully articulate what they want to say, enabling them to make good progress in their spoken language as well as in their subject knowledge and understanding;
 - excellent management of pupils - calm, but clear expectations of good behaviour, attention and effort, which the pupils respond to because they know the lesson will be interesting and worthwhile.

24. In an excellent science lesson in Year 6, for example, the teacher kept all the pupils fully occupied in purposeful investigative work. This was achieved through fully involving the pupils in making their own predictions about evaporation and the ways in which they could test them. The pupils demonstrated the different energy levels and movement of molecules in solids, liquids and gases by co-operating in groups to act out the movements. This was an excellent way of making the pupils' learning stimulating and memorable. The pupils made very good gains in experimental skills and spoken language as well as scientific knowledge and understanding in this lesson. Role-play also contributes to an excellent history lesson in Year 4, in which pupils were challenged to think about crime and punishment in Tudor society. The momentum of this lesson was maintained through brisk, brief explanations and questions that all the class could understand, including pupils at all stages of learning English. Higher attaining pupils were well catered for in both lessons because of the opportunities for them to put forward and discuss their own ideas.
25. Teachers and teaching assistants collaborate very effectively in preparing and delivering lessons, and in reviewing progress. In the very good lessons, pupils' language needs are well catered for. Points are explained and questions are asked in different ways to ensure that pupils at all levels of English acquisition are fully catered for in the lesson. Very good direct teaching and consistent use of technical language is also a feature of the best lessons, for example in mathematics and science. Not all teachers, however, are sufficiently aware of the needs of pupils at the various stages of learning English. The school recognises that there is a need to update staff training in this area. In particular, teachers need guidance in how best to provide for pupils who are not at the initial stages of learning English, but are not yet fluent. Teachers' knowledge of the National Curriculum and religious education syllabus is good, enabling them to plan full coverage of all the subjects. Class teachers know their pupils well, and keep good records of their progress. This information is not always passed on as the pupils change classes, however, to help the next teacher in planning the appropriate next step. The school is aware that this oversight needs addressing so that the good teaching in each year group is effective in promoting the best possible progress through the school as a whole.
26. The teaching of English is good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. The National Literacy Strategy has been fully and successfully implemented. Lessons have a good, clear structure, with a good mix of whole-class, group and individual work. Teachers use the time well. They generally leave sufficient time at the end of lessons for a meaningful whole class discussion of what has been learned, but this does not happen in all lessons. In the most effective lessons, whole-class sessions include opportunities for pupils to speak at length when giving answers or asking questions. Getting pupils to speak at length - at least in full sentences - in lessons and in other situations is an area for improvement in the school's strategy for promoting literacy skills. In the best literacy lessons, teachers make full use of the texts in the books they use to draw out the richness of the language and teach specific points. In less effective lessons, these opportunities are not made the most of. The use of marking to promote accurate spelling and grammar and to extend self-expression in writing is also an area in need of improvement. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to draft, correct, improve and extend their writing. There are examples of good practice, but this is not a consistent feature of provision across the school.
27. The quality of teaching in mathematics lessons is good throughout the school, and teachers use opportunities for pupils to practise and apply their mathematical skills in other subjects. The teachers use the structure of the National Numeracy Strategy well to provide a balance between mental mathematics, direct instruction and group

and individual work. There is a need for further training for staff, however, in how to help pupils with English as an additional language to understand mathematical vocabulary so that they can use their skills and knowledge to solve problems and record their work properly. In the best lessons, this obstacle is overcome through clear explanations, opportunities for pupils to show how they solve problems in different ways and direct coaching on how to record their methods. In less effective lessons, this does not happen and some pupils are therefore working at a lower mathematical level than they need to because of their language difficulties. Good use is made of discussions at the end of some lessons to draw out the main points, but this is not a consistent feature of teaching in mathematics.

28. Pupils for whom English is an additional language receive good teaching when they are withdrawn for specialist tuition in small groups. The teachers use a variety of resources and methods to ensure that these pupils cover the same ground and learn the same vocabulary as the rest of the class. They make full use of the available time, but also ensure that the pupils return promptly to lessons or other activities at the end of lessons, so that they are not missing out on anything. Pupils in the early stages of learning English also receive very good support from the specialist teachers working in conjunction with the class teachers.
29. Pupils with special needs are not withdrawn for specific help unless they are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language. In class lessons, they work with other pupils at a similar level and are given additional support wherever possible. Teachers and classroom assistants carefully monitor their progress and make regular adjustments to their individual education plans so that future lessons meet their needs. The only gifted and talented pupils identified by the school are those with a particular talent in mathematics. These pupils are well provided for and make good progress. Teaching is good in mathematics, science, information and communication technology, design and technology, geography, music and religious education throughout the school and in English in Years 1 and 2. It is satisfactory in English in Years 3 to 6 and in art and design, history and physical education throughout the school.

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

30. The curriculum is good overall and meets legal requirements. It promotes pupils' intellectual, physical, social and personal development and prepares them well for the next stage of their education. The curriculum in the Nursery and Reception classes is very good. It is very well planned and organised so that children make rapid progress in all the areas of learning and are very well prepared for the National Curriculum by the end of Reception.
31. The curriculum was unsatisfactory at the time of the previous inspection. This gave rise to a number of key issues for improvement. Since the appointment of the present headteacher, many of these have been tackled with a high degree of success. For example, the curriculum for information and communication technology has been very much improved. More resources have been provided, staff have received training from the local education authority and plans have been made for all staff to attend the National Training Scheme in the autumn term. A computer suite is to be provided in the very near future.
32. The previous report identified a need to provide policies and schemes of work (planning guidelines) for all subjects. This has now been accomplished. Teachers are provided with good guidelines in all subjects to help them plan a series of lessons. These lay out clearly and concisely what is to be taught in each lesson. Most teachers now share this information with the pupils, making lessons more successful.
33. The school has effective strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy skills. All teachers take good account of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. These are having a positive impact on standards. Teachers' weekly and daily planning for literacy and numeracy contains good detail and makes a strong contribution to the quality of teaching in English and mathematics.
34. A good range of extra-curricular activities is provided. The provision includes clubs for computers, football, swimming, hockey, French, art, choir, country and Indian dancing, reading, pen friends and a homework club. Students from the local university also provide activities for the pupils after school. The registers for these clubs show that they are well attended. They encourage good behaviour and personal development and responsibility as well as giving pupils opportunities to enjoy a range of interesting activities.
35. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good. The approved policy for sex education is incorporated effectively into teaching and learning. A satisfactory programme to teach the pupils about the dangers of drugs, led by the school nurse, is in place. Through discussions in lessons and assemblies, pupils are introduced to a variety of ideas about how to deal with issues that arise in their young lives. Teachers also use 'circle time' very effectively to help pupils face up to and manage their problems.
36. The school ensures a high degree of equality of access for all pupils to the curriculum and other learning opportunities. The inclusion of all pupils, particularly those with special educational needs and with English as an additional language has a high priority in the school. This contributes significantly to pupils' learning and social development. The recent arrival of a large number of pupils, including refugees, with little or no English has diverted some support away from other pupils with English as

an additional language however. All pupils and staff value people whatever their race, colour or creed.

37. The special needs co-ordinator works with class teachers and external consultants to design individual education programmes to meet the needs of each pupil on the special educational needs register. These plans set out targets to guide the pupils' development, particularly in the areas of language, mathematics and behaviour. They generally contain a series of small, well-focused steps, with an outline of how each target is to be met. This gives teachers and teaching assistants good guidance in planning suitable tasks within lessons to guide pupils' progress over time. It is a strength of provision that Individual educational programmes are working documents, which are clearly understood and acted on by class teachers and teaching assistants alike. A small number of pupils have been identified as more able and have been provided with special work to meet their needs. Generally though, planning for the needs of gifted, talented and potentially higher attaining pupils is in the early stages of development.
38. The school makes good use of educational visits to enhance the curriculum. For example, during the week of the inspection, one of the Reception classes visited 'Conkers' wildlife centre in Derbyshire to enrich the children's learning about 'minibeasts'³. Older pupils visit a range of interesting venues such as the New Walk museum in Leicester. The school also arranges three residential visits that provide opportunities for pupils to learn about different localities and experience a range of outdoor pursuits.
39. The school has very good links with the wider community, which has a positive impact on the learning of pupils. This is a strength of the school. Many visitors come to the school to add interest to lessons. The school has forged good links with other local organisations through the local 'mini' Education Action Zone.
40. The provision for pupils' personal development, including spiritual, moral and social development, is good. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. Provision for their moral, social and cultural development is very good. This maintains the position at the last inspection.
41. Provision for pupils' personal development is good. There are some opportunities for pupils to show initiative and independence, such as controlling the overhead projector in assemblies. All pupils are given the opportunity to carry out small tasks within the classroom and throughout the school, commensurate with their stage of development. However, there are limited opportunities for pupils' to develop independence and a sense of citizenship, for example, through a School Council, or through consultation on whole-school issues such as behaviour rules.
42. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. It is promoted well through assemblies and religious education and music lessons. Assemblies provide good quality acts of worship and usually provide a time for pupils to reflect quietly on the theme of the day. They also encourage the appreciation of the spiritual elements of different religious festivals. Religious education lessons enable pupils to reflect on their own beliefs and those of others. They learn about the customs observed by different religious groups and their importance to those observing them. The pupils' studies are enriched by visits to places of worship connected with different religions. These include Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism and Islam, ensuring that the pupils

³ 'Minibeasts' is the term used in schools for small animals and insects.

develop an appreciation of the wide range of beliefs held within their own community. For example, pupils in Year 1 visited the local Church of England church during their study of 'special places'. In music lessons, pupils are encouraged to use their imagination in a reflective way as they listen to all types of music.

43. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. Adults provide good examples of how to behave and work together. Respect for oneself and each other underpins the good relationships that prevail in the school. Pupils are taught the difference between right and wrong and to understand how their actions affect others. This helps to minimise oppressive behaviour, bullying, sexism and racism. Moral issues are raised and discussed in many ways in lessons. For example, in a Year 6 geography lesson, a group of pupils spoke of their concerns about the effect of the destruction of the rainforests on wildlife and people's livelihoods. In a particularly well conducted personal, social and health education lesson, Year 6 pupils focused on why it is wrong to steal. They considered the problem from the point of view of the victim, the perpetrator and the community. In English lessons, stories from a range of cultures are used to make pupils think about moral issues from different perspectives. The increasing emphasis on praise and rewards for good attitudes and behaviour, especially in lessons, helps the pupils to develop positive and therefore more secure reasons for acting in a morally correct way.
44. Provision for pupils' social development is very good. The school aims to promote social inclusion in every aspect of school life, including the welcoming of new arrivals. The Nursery and Reception classes encourage the children's social development very effectively. For example, 'snack time' enables them to take on the responsibility for giving out fruit and milk and reinforces good manners. Pupils throughout the school are encouraged to show consideration towards others and to work co-operatively in pairs and groups. Pupils in Year 4, for example, worked particularly well in pairs at a computer in a geography lesson, putting information about India on to a spreadsheet. Pupils are encouraged to show respect for the feelings of others and listen to the contribution of other pupils in class discussions, which most of them do. Day and residential visits enhance all the pupils' social development and lunchtime and after school activities provide good optional extra opportunities in this regard. There are also opportunities for pupils to socialise with adults when they meet with visitors to the school, join in social and fund-raising activities and community projects, and participate in events at the Medway Bangladeshi Centre.
45. Provision for pupils' cultural development is very good. Pupils are taught to respect their own and other people's cultures and traditions. The school celebrates and embraces the rich cultural diversity of the school and the local and national community. The books and objects on display and in use in lessons reflect the multicultural nature of society, though this aspect of provision could be improved. For example, the range of pupils' original art on display, and examples of art from non-western cultures is rather limited. Music and dance from other countries, such as India, is a feature of music lessons and school clubs. Live performances from the Leicester Orchestra enrich the curriculum and there are plans for professional artists to work in the school. Pupils enjoy multicultural cooking and indoor board games, such as 'Carrom', an Asian board game. A 'Mela', a traditional Asian Fair, is to be held later in the year. Pupils are being prepared very well for life in multicultural and multiethnic Britain.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

46. Care for all pupils is implicit in the daily life of the school. This includes younger children, refugees, pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language or from ethnic minorities. The school is very supportive of all its pupils.
47. The school has satisfactory provision for pupils' educational and personal support and guidance, and has established a secure environment for pupils' welfare. All members of staff know the children well, recognise their needs and respond well to them. The school is successful in creating a caring atmosphere for work and play in which pupils build self-esteem and become confident and mature. As a result, most pupils establish happy and trusting relationships with adults and with each other. There are good procedures for settling children in the Nursery and Reception classes. Parents attend a meeting prior to admission and receive a starter pack, which contains useful information on typical class activities to practise with their children. Parents and carers are welcomed into the classes so children have a chance to show them their work. New pupils to school, including those with English as additional language and asylum seekers, settle quickly into school routines because there are helpful programs and bilingual staff available to support them in their new environment.
48. The school uses the locally agreed Child Protection procedures, which teachers, teaching assistants and supervisory staff are familiar with. Some staff have received informal in-service training on Child Protection procedures and know what action to take if the need arises, but this needs updating.
49. There are satisfactory arrangements for first aid, and staff know what to do in case of an emergency or if a pupil becomes ill while at school. The school makes satisfactory arrangements for sick children awaiting collection by their parents. Parents feel that their children are safe and secure in the school.
50. The school's operates satisfactory health and safety procedures, but policies on health and safety and risk assessment are not in place. The site manager tries to ensure that the buildings, equipment and school grounds are free from health and safety hazards. However, while members of staff are generally alert to safety matters, they have not received formal training, and risk assessments are not routinely undertaken by the school. In lessons, teachers and support staff promote health and safety effectively as part of the curriculum and there is generally good attention to hygiene matters in the school. Procedures are also in place to ensure that pupils are protected from harmful material on the Internet. Fire evacuation drills are carried out on a regular basis, but formal written records are not maintained.
51. The school's recent initiatives to improve attendance are having positive effects. Teachers complete the attendance registers satisfactorily. The secretary ensures their safekeeping and the bursar monitors them. The school Education Welfare Officer visits the school every two weeks to check attendance registers and provides good support and advice on legal matters. She also carries out assessments and home visits as required. However, the school is too dependent on this support. Its own procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are unsatisfactory. For example: there are no rigorous procedures for recording late arrival times; there is no system for contacting parents on the first day of unexplained absence, and there is no attendance policy. However, the school is planning to introduce more formalised procedures to promote good attendance and punctuality.

52. The management of behaviour is an area in which the school has made very good improvements since the appointment of the present headteacher. The emphasis is now much more on praising pupils for positive attitudes and good behaviour rather than on sanctions for poor behaviour. This has greatly reduced the numbers of pupils being excluded from lessons and from school. However, all staff have not yet received adequate training in dealing with unacceptable behaviour. The delay in providing this training contributes to there being a noticeable difference in pupils' behaviour around the school and in lessons taken by supply teachers compared to that in lessons taken by most of the permanent teaching staff. The behaviour policy is in draft form, as it is being modified to reflect the improvements in practice. The school does not have separate bullying and racial harassment policies, which it should have to be in line with best practice. However, procedures for monitoring and eliminating such behaviour are good.
53. Teachers' monitoring of pupils' personal development is informal and largely based upon their knowledge of pupils' individual circumstances. The school maintains records of pupils' personal achievement in most aspects of the curriculum, and parents are provided with regular reports on their children's personal development. Pupils' records are passed on appropriately as they move from one year-group to the next.
54. The school provides a good standard of care for pupils who have special educational needs. Teachers and teaching assistants give these pupils strong encouragement to promote their self-esteem, and they play a full part in all aspects of school life. There are appropriate assessment procedures to identify and monitor their needs, and the information is used well to identify the necessary support from within school and from outside agencies. However, the form used for individual education plans does not have space for comments on the pupils' progress towards their targets. This reduces its usefulness in evaluating the impact of its provision and amending pupils' targets as their needs change.
55. The new headteacher quickly identified assessment as an area needing attention and has begun a programme of improvements. Assessment in English and mathematics is now good. The results of the statutory national tests are analysed and the information used to identify areas for improvement. However, there is no systematic monitoring of progress by the different ethnic groups in the school. Assessment in all other subjects is under-developed. The headteacher is tackling this issue by rearranging staff responsibilities to give higher priority to assessment and providing relevant training. A new system of recording assessments and using them to help inform future plans is also being developed using information and communication technology. This will eventually link with other schools including secondary schools in the area. Assessment procedures in the Nursery and Reception classes are very good and are used very effectively to inform teachers' planning.
56. Good support is provided for pupils who have English as an additional language. They are assessed using local authority guidelines in order to establish the stage they are at in acquiring English. The degree and type of support they are given is determined by these assessments. The local authority provides a range of data relating pupils' ethnicity and language capability to their attainment. The specialist team makes good use of this data to guide its work in supporting ethnic minority pupils, enabling them to make very good progress in learning English over their first years within the school. However, the data is not used as effectively by the school to support teaching and learning in classes for pupils at more advanced stages of learning English.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

57. Many parents and carers expressed their views in various ways and some generously gave their time to meet the inspectors. This was much appreciated by the team. Nearly all parents said that their children like to come to school. The majority of parents are satisfied with the quality of teaching and the standards achieved by the school.
58. Almost all the parents who responded to the questionnaire indicated they are well informed about how their children are getting on in the school. All parents, who expressed their opinions, either in writing or orally, confirmed that they appreciate the support received from very helpful bilingual staff in the school. This was observed during the inspection when the bilingual home-link worker provided reassurance to a family returning after extended holidays in Bangladesh. All parents agree that the school is well led and managed and that it works hard to include all parents as active partners in their children's learning. However some parents expressed some dissatisfaction with the information they receive about their children's homework and changes to the staffing arrangements. A significant minority of parents who responded to the questionnaire - 22 percent - indicated that their children do not receive the right amount of homework and some said that the homework is not regularly marked. Some parents at the meeting expressed concerns about the effect of the lack of a playing field on their children's health and about supervision and behaviour during lunchtime play.
59. Evidence was gathered during the inspection through examination of the school practices and meeting with parents and in the school and in the community centre. This confirms that the children get adequate homework, suitable for their age. Some children do not hand in their homework for marking on a regular basis, however. Teachers constantly remind these children and would appreciate more robust support from parents. Most parents who spoke to the inspectors felt comfortable about approaching the school, but would appreciate easier access to the bilingual staff. The headteacher and staff welcome parents to the school and provide them with reassurance about the welfare of their children. The school provides suitable learning materials for pupils whose families take extended holidays in term time and parents are satisfied with their children's re-integration into school life after these holidays. However, these prolonged absences adversely affect the children's progress, and the school would like more co-operation from parents in this matter.
60. The quality of information provided for parents is satisfactory. The school uses bilingual staff effectively to encourage parents from minority ethnic communities, including those who have recently arrived in the country, to support their children's learning. Pupils' annual progress reports to parents are satisfactory and contain helpful information for parents to support their children at home. In addition, regular letters keep parents informed about forthcoming events in the school and about the content of the curriculum. There are also sufficient opportunities for parents to meet teachers to discuss their children's progress, and parents are consulted on various issues affecting their children's welfare.
61. The school prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents are satisfactory, but omit some of the information they are required by law to publish. Due to the financial constraints, minority language versions of school literature are not available. However, those parents who need help with translation are invited to talk to the home-school link worker. The teachers and bilingual staff make every effort to be available to

support parents who do not speak English as a first language, and the bilingual home school link worker is very successful in involving parents who may otherwise find it difficult to approach the school. The pressure on their time means that these members of staff are not always readily available, however. The school makes good arrangements for parents to observe customs and practices such as prayer times and celebration of religious festivals. This understanding is much appreciated by parents and carers. Parents say how well the school helps to promote very good relationships between the many ethnic communities represented in the school.

62. The school is fortunate to receive excellent support from Medway Community Centre. A local college also provides courses to enhance parents' skills in helping their children with learning at home. A large number of parents attend courses funded by the local education authority. This enables them to develop self-esteem and confidence and to meet other community members in a welcoming environment. Parents monitor children's reading diaries and help with special topics. There used to be a parents-teachers association, but this was suspended due to lack of support from parents.
63. Parents of pupils with special educational needs attend review meetings at the school. Whenever they have concerns, they are able to contact the class teacher and special needs co-ordinator. The school also keeps parents of pupils who need additional language support well informed of their children's progress. Some parents and grandparents accompany children on school visits and attend school functions, such as Eid and Christmas parties. The inspection findings agree that the school works hard to include all parents as active partners in their children's learning. The governing body is currently supported by the full complement of parent governors.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

64. The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher provides very effective leadership. With the strong support of the deputy headteacher, he gives a very clear direction for the development and improvement of the school. The improvement in the quality of education since the last inspection owes much to this leadership, along with the support of a hard-working and committed staff. The aims of the school, which focus on the community, and the individual educational, social and personal development of the pupils, are very effectively promoted. The headteacher and staff are committed to raising standards and promoting equality of opportunity for all. They have good plans in hand to bring about further improvements in provision and standards. They also have a sense of determination and very good team spirit, together with an openness to advice and guidance. The school therefore has a good capacity to succeed in its aims.
65. By monitoring lessons and other aspects of school life, the headteacher has a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of members of staff. As a direct result of this work, responsibilities have been re-allocated and good quality training provided. All teachers have well-defined areas of responsibility, which they positively embrace, including the co-ordination of subjects. This is a good improvement since the last inspection. The subject co-ordinators are becoming effective in their roles, but most have not yet begun to directly monitor and teaching and learning in their subjects. They lack guidance on how best to do this, which is an area for improvement in management. The co-ordinators manage subject budgets independently and contribute to the priorities outlined in the school action plan. This document is well focussed on the very appropriate aims, but is not consistent in

approach. Some areas have precise time targets, costs, criteria for success and a named person who judges the degree of success, but others do not.

66. The governing body fulfils all its legal duties and is effective in its work. Governors play a satisfactory role in shaping the direction of the school's work. They keep informed of the day-to-day working of the school, mainly through the close relationship between the headteacher and the chair of governors, but also through contributions from staff and parent governors. They are aware of the strengths of the school and also how it needs to improve. The school has maintained the highly effective and efficient working practices in the planning, managing and monitoring of its finances that were reported at the last inspection. The procedures for budget setting are well linked to development planning and reflect the educational needs of the pupils. Records of financial decisions are accurate and clear. For example, detailed accounts of how specific grants have been spent are available to show that all such money is allocated appropriately. The comparatively high carry forward from last year is being targeted on premises and resources improvements when the current building works are completed.
67. The school applies the principles of best value well when purchasing any resources. It analyses its performance, using both national and local information, and then uses this analysis to ascertain where improvements should be made. The school uses new technology well for administrative purposes.
68. Arrangements for the induction of new staff are satisfactory and procedures for performance management are well established. The legal requirements for professional development opportunities are well met, with many staff praising the support provided by the Local Educational Authority. Appropriate opportunities for staff training are built into the school development plan and effective use is made of teachers' interest and expertise. The school is aware that there is now a need for all staff to receive updated training in the support of pupils for whom English is an additional language, as the range of needs within the school has changed significantly in recent years.
69. Staffing levels are sufficient to ensure that class sizes are not too large. All the teachers have appropriate job descriptions and are suitably qualified and experienced. Well-trained and dedicated support staff are deployed efficiently throughout the school and have a positive impact on the pupils' learning. They make a particularly good contribution to the attainment and progress of the pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language. However, the number of staff fluent in one or more of the many languages spoken by the pupils and their families is insufficient to meet all current needs.
70. The specialist support for pupils whose first language is not English is well led and managed by one of the two specialist teachers working within the school. She works in close partnership with class teachers and the senior management team to improve the quality of support for ethnic minority pupils. Much of the specialist team's work over recent years has been concentrated on new arrivals to the school with little or no English. This has left other pupils who have made progress in English but who are still not fluent, with insufficient support for their needs. The fact that there is no one on the school's staff with overall responsibility for managing provision for all pupils with English as an additional language contributes to the needs of this group of pupils not being fully met. Neither is there a specific budget allocation to subject co-ordinators for this area of the school's work to ensure that all staff share responsibility for improving provision. The school is on course to have a policy for racial equality in

place in time for the deadline of May 31st 2002 to reflect current good practice in this area.

71. The school fulfils its statutory responsibilities for special educational needs and complies with the official Code of Practice. Management of provision is satisfactory under a temporary arrangement until a new co-ordinator takes up the post. However, there are weaknesses in the present arrangement in that the current post-holder is allocated no time for specialist teaching or assisting in classes, and little time to carry out administrative duties. Despite these difficulties, the management of the teaching assistants has been very effective, enabling them to work well with pupils and to provide great assistance to the teachers. They have been given appropriate training in leading literacy support programmes. The caring and committed help they give to pupils with special needs makes a very good contribution to the quality of their education.

72. The accommodation is satisfactory, though the lack of a field limits the pupils' development in physical education and the lack of a computer suite is holding back progress in information and communication technology. The school provides disabled access to its facilities. Resources throughout the school are satisfactory overall and used well. The resources for pupils with English as an additional language provided by the specialist team for raising ethnic minority achievement are good. However, there are insufficient resources available for the rest of the staff to meet the continuing needs of pupils with English as an additional language to help them become fully fluent.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

73. In order to continue improving the opportunities available to pupils and the standards they achieve, the headteacher and governors should:

- (1) Raise standards in spoken and written English by:
 - extending the opportunities the pupils have to speak at length and develop and improve their vocabulary;
 - making better use of the texts that are studied in literacy lessons to explore and appreciate the structure and richness of the English language;
 - providing more opportunities and support for pupils to write at length in English and in other subjects;
 - encouraging pupils to read through, correct and improve their own writing;
 - ensuring that teachers' marking gives more consistent and focused support and guidance for pupils on how to improve;
 - extending and improving the support given to pupils with English as an additional language in understanding and using the technical language of different subjects, especially mathematics and science.
(Paragraphs 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 26, 85, 87, 88, 90, 91, 92, 93, 95, 96, 97, 98, 99, 113)

- (2) Improve the provision for pupils with English as an additional language by:
 - continuing to provide adequate levels of support for pupils who have made some progress in learning English but who are not yet fluent;
 - ensuring that all staff new to the school receive good quality training and support in providing for the full range of pupils with English as an additional language;
 - improving the analysis of assessment data so that the progress of pupils at different stages of acquiring English can be tracked and the information used to inform planning;
 - ensuring that all subject co-ordinators include the needs of pupils with English as an additional language in their budget planning;
 - building on the good practice in some classes to raise the profile of minority languages around the school.
(Paragraphs 25, 26, 27, 36, 56, 59, 69, 89, 102, 103, 105, 108)

- (3) Improve attendance by:
 - improving the monitoring of attendance and punctuality;
 - following up unexplained absences promptly;
 - raising the profile of attendance in information to parents.
(Paragraph 59)

In addition to the key issues above, the governors and headteacher should consider including the following minor issues in their action plan:

- Improving the standards of pupils' behaviour around the school by:
 - involving the pupils more directly in drawing up codes of behaviour;
 - ensuring that all members of staff receive good quality training in the consistent implementation of the behaviour policy at the earliest opportunity.
(Paragraphs 12, 16, 58)

- adopting and/or updating policies to reflect and guide current practice, especially in racial equality, bullying, child protection, health and safety, and behaviour management;
(Paragraphs 50, 51, 52)
- ensuring that the governors' annual report to parents and the school's prospectus meet all statutory requirements;
(Paragraph 61)
- providing more opportunities for pupils to become involved in decision making and citizenship;
(Paragraphs 17, 41)
- ensuring that records of pupils' progress, achievement and personal development are passed on from year to year and used to help guide future provision.
(Paragraphs 23, 53, 55)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	73
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	34

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	30	21	19	1	0	0
Percentage	3	41	29	27	1	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one percentage point.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	40	384
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	142

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	104

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	321

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	124
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	49

Attendance

Authorised absence

%

Unauthorised absence

%

School data	8.7
National comparative data	5.6

School data	1.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	27	28	55

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	17	22
	Girls	21	21	26
	Total	39	38	48
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	71 (78)	69 (75)	87 (88)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	17	21	20
	Girls	20	24	19
	Total	37	45	39
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	67 (73)	82 (76)	71 (75)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	27	28	55

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	16	16	19
	Girls	17	11	20
	Total	33	27	39
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	60 (80)	49 (70)	71 (79)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	13	14
	Girls	12	11	16
	Total	23	24	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	42 (76)	44 (67)	55 (85)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	22
Black – African heritage	14
Black – other	16
Indian	51
Pakistani	38
Bangladeshi	104
Chinese	0
White	30
Any other minority ethnic group	51

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	19.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.2
Average class size	26.5

Education support staff: : YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	17
Total aggregate hours worked per week	103

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	36
Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	388
Number of pupils per FTE adult	7.2

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2.8
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	3

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	2000-2001
	£
Total income	950,854
Total expenditure	930,668
Expenditure per pupil	2,037
Balance brought forward from previous year	42,367
Balance carried forward to next year	62,553

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	424
Number of questionnaires returned	328

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	72	26	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	56	37	4	1	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	56	32	5	2	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	45	32	16	6	3
The teaching is good.	58	36	3	1	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	53	38	6	2	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	57	36	3	1	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	61	35	2	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	45	39	8	1	6
The school is well led and managed.	47	42	3	0	8
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	51	41	3	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	43	38	9	1	9

Summary of parents' and carers' responses

This was an exceptionally high return rate of questionnaires, on which the parents should be congratulated. Their responses are overwhelmingly positive, with no significant concerns expressed.

Other issues raised by parents

At the parents' meeting, some parents expressed concern about the effect of the lack of a playing field on their children's health and about supervision and behaviour at lunchtimes.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

74. At the time of the inspection, 32 children were attending the Nursery part time and a further 24 full time. The two Reception classes had 58 children on roll altogether. Children are admitted to the Nursery according to the school's admission policy, which is available for inspection. Provision in the Foundation Stage is very good. Children make a very good start to their education in the enriched and supportive learning environment of the Nursery and Reception classes, where they are encouraged to learn through structured play, with the introduction of some more formal activities in the Reception classes. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been very successfully introduced into the Reception classes.
75. Children enter the Nursery with standards that are well below those expected for their age; their social skills and speaking and listening skills are low, as is their ability to play. All children, including children with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make very good progress and achieve very well, as a result of very good teaching and very good support from all the staff, including dual language support. Children enter the Reception classes with standards that are much improved because of their time in the Nursery but which, nevertheless, are below those expected for their age, particularly in personal and social skills, and language and communication skills. As a result of very good teaching in the Reception classes, they continue to achieve well. By the time they enter Year 1, a significant minority of children have achieved the nationally agreed learning goals in all areas of learning. Most children have achieved them in creative development and physical development, but children are still restricted in their learning by their inability to communicate fluently in English, although very good progress has been made. Children are encouraged to become independent learners through first-hand experience in all areas of learning. In the Reception classes, they are encouraged to review their achievements at the end of each session. They demonstrate a very good knowledge of their own learning as, for example, when a group of children in Reception described the life-cycle of a butterfly.
76. The Foundation Stage curriculum has been fully implemented and supported by good resources, due to the school's commitment to this, and to the very good leadership of the early years' co-ordinator. The staff in the Foundation Stage work closely together as a team to ensure that the provision of learning is continuous. The quality of teaching in the Nursery and Reception classes is consistently very good. Very good links are made between the six areas of learning. Equality of access to the curriculum is good. Adults ensure that boys and girls, children of different abilities and ethnic backgrounds and children for whom English is an additional language and those with special educational needs are given equal attention and encouragement and additional support where necessary. All adults have a very good understanding of the needs of young children. Home visits and visits to the school and a booklet help parents to prepare their children for starting school. Parents receive an overview of the learning intentions and activities to be experienced each term and parent consultation evenings are held. All information is translated into the three main minority languages of Bengali, Gujarati and Somali.
77. Planning for the Nursery and Reception classes is detailed for each area of learning and is linked to the Early Learning Goals. Any children in the Reception classes who attain the Early Learning Goals, for example, in reading, are able to progress to Level

1 of the National Curriculum. Planning centres on specific topics for each half-term and all activities have a clear focus. Assessment takes place on entry to the Nursery and the Reception classes, and prior to entry into Year 1. Staff work together to compile very good records of pupils' personal development and academic progress and use them well to inform the planning of future work. Children's records of achievement are shared with parents and the teachers of the classes to which the children progress. The management of children is excellent, as is the use of time, support staff and resources. All adults make a valuable contribution to children's learning. Staff expectations are very high and most children apply considerable intellectual and creative effort to their work. Pupils' enthusiasm for school and their interest and involvement in activities, together with their good behaviour and good relationships, lead to very good learning. The high standards of provision reported by the previous inspection have been maintained.

Personal, social and emotional development

78. Personal, social and emotional development is given high priority in the Nursery and Reception classes. Teaching is very good. Children in the Nursery gain first-hand experience through a carefully planned indoor and outdoor curriculum. In the Nursery and Reception classes, children's progress and future learning needs are identified through focused observations by all staff. Their social development is enhanced as they interact with others in activities, taking turns in conversation and negotiating plans. Any child who exhibits signs of having special educational needs is carefully monitored and given good support. Children for whom English is an additional language are given good support. Children learn to work together and play co-operatively and try out new activities with great enthusiasm. A group of children in a Reception class co-operated well during the inspection, for example, in directing a programmable toy to move forward along a track. Children are encouraged to carry out small tasks throughout the day, such as taking the register to the office and handing out drinks and fruit. They gain increasing self-control and begin to understand the difference between right and wrong and the need to show consideration towards others. They develop awareness and respect for the beliefs and religious practices of others through the celebrations of festivals at assembly. All children show respect for the environment and living things, as they plant seeds and search for minibeasts in the environment. Resources are always readily accessible and the children are encouraged to use them independently and put them away after use.

Communication, language and literacy

79. Teaching is very good in this area of learning. The teachers and classroom assistants are very creative in their organisation of the classrooms. They set up a wide variety of activities that encourage the children to develop language skills in every area of the curriculum. In the Nursery, children learn to listen courteously and attentively to each other. They are given opportunities to express their feelings and talk about the things that they can do. Initially, a large number of children who have no understanding of English do not contribute at all and a significant minority do not express themselves clearly, due to poor articulation or limited vocabulary. These children are given specific support in their mother tongue.
80. Traditional rhymes and stories are used well to encourage the children to join in repetitive phrases with enthusiasm. Through the recitation of rhymes and simple songs, for example, they learn the days of the week and the months of the year. There is a good balance between direct teaching and practical activities to introduce and consolidate knowledge of letter sounds and other early reading and writing skills.

For example, when listening to the story of 'The Three Little Pigs', children in the Nursery demonstrated their understanding of features of the book, such as the title and author. They are beginning to identify the characters and the sequence of events. They enjoy looking at books that they have chosen for themselves. They also attempt writing for various purposes, such as a letter to Father Christmas, in the stimulating areas that are set out to encourage experimentation with writing. Children who have a special educational need are identified quickly and given good support.

81. Most children make very good progress in reading from a low starting point and, by the end of their time in the Reception classes, a significant minority of children attain the standards expected for their age, due to regular practice at home and at school. For example, after listening to the story of 'The Hungry Caterpillar' in English and Bengali, children in a Reception class sequenced the story, saying what happens first, next, and after that. All children in the Reception classes are beginning to read simple books and they take their reading books home every night. Parents are very supportive in hearing their children read. Reading diaries provide a good dialogue between teachers and parents. Children gradually begin to understand the significance of letters and learn to form recognisable letters themselves. They use writing tools with increasing confidence and begin to write letters, words and phrases independently. Most children are able to write their names and simple sentences by the end of their time in the Reception classes. They write for a variety of practical purposes, for example, menus, recipes, shopping lists, greetings, poems, stories and sequencing life cycles. Their writing skills remain below average, however.

Mathematical development

82. Children in the Nursery gain confidence and make very good progress from a low base in counting, for example by joining in number rhymes and songs. Most children use number names to five in familiar contexts and are learning to count beyond five. A few children count reliably to ten and are beginning to 'add' two groups of objects together. Through simple measuring activities, they begin to understand terms such as 'small', 'tall', 'short' and 'long', for example, by drawing worms to match pictures of short and long worms. The introduction of the numeracy strategy has proved very effective in the Reception classes. Children use number fans to find specific numbers, and numbers before and after a specific number. They count to 20 and back again, order a given set of numbers and add and subtract numbers up to 10 accurately. They gradually learn to recognise coins and participate in 'shopping activities', which include giving change. Interesting activities help them to understand measurement. For example, they measure ingredients as they make milk shakes and play-dough and measure and compare their own height and foot sizes. They use appropriate language to compare quantities when filling and emptying containers, for example, 'full of', 'empty', 'half full', etc. Most children have some understanding of time in relation to everyday routines and are beginning to use mathematical ideas and methods to solve practical problems. There are planned opportunities for children to explore pattern, shape and space. The majority of children recognise flat shapes, such as a square, rectangle, triangle and circle and are beginning to know the names and properties of simple three-dimensional shapes, such as a cube, cylinder and cone. Teaching is very good. Work is matched well to children's prior learning and teachers help children to explain what they have learned, which contributes to their language and communication development. Their understanding is supported through appropriate resources, displays and creative activities, and there is a strong emphasis on appropriate terminology, but their attainment remains below average in this area of learning.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

83. Good provision is made in the Nursery and Reception for this area of learning and teaching is very good. The children become familiar with the layout of the school and the school grounds at different seasons, then move on to explore other places locally and further afield. They are encouraged to talk about the features that they like and dislike, both within the school grounds and in the wider environment. An interest in the lives of themselves and their families develops, and they begin to differentiate between past and present. They observe features of living things by, for example, growing seeds and watching with wonder as tadpoles develop into frogs. Reception children know that plants and animals have various requirements such as water and air for healthy growth. During the inspection, some Reception children visited a wildlife park in Derbyshire. This visit brought their 'minibeasts' topic to life as, under the guidance of a ranger, they searched for small animals in four different habitats. The children also show an awareness of changes relating to their own growth. They become aware of their senses through well-prepared activities. For example, they look at their eyes in a mirror, smell the perfume in the 'flower shop', have a tasting session in the 'café', feel dough and sand as they play, and listen to music. They sort and use materials and describe their texture, talk about light and dark, and learn about the uses and dangers of electricity. They use simple tools and shape, assemble and join materials, for example in the making of a group 'feely book' and in the production of a collage to show the life-cycle of a frog. As they make simple biscuits, cakes and bread, they learn about changes in materials. Work on healthy foods leads to an understanding of the need to take care of their bodies, especially their teeth. A good start is made to religious education in the Nursery. Children learn about belonging to different groups and show a developing respect for people of different cultures and beliefs. They demonstrate a simple understanding of the importance of festivals such as Christmas, Diwali and Eid. The children make very good progress in their computer skills in both the Nursery and Reception classes to reach standards above those expected for their age. They use a range of software to support different aspects of their learning, such as the teaching of letter sounds, number and shapes and to create patterns and pictures. Children in the Reception classes use programmable toys to explore direction and complete a set route. They develop word-processing skills through writing their names and simple words and sentences. Attainment in most of this area of learning is below average at the end of Reception, however.

Physical development

84. Children in the Nursery make regular daily use of the good resources in the safe, outdoor area. They develop an awareness of space, of themselves and others as they use the wheeled vehicles, play inside the large cardboard houses that they have made, and work co-operatively in pairs and groups to develop throwing and catching skills. Nursery children are confident in climbing the fixed apparatus in the school hall. Their co-ordination develops as they move in a range of ways, jump off an object and land appropriately. They balance on various parts of their bodies and adjust speed or change direction to avoid obstacles. A sense of rhythm develops as they move to music. Children in the Reception classes progressively develop their ability to move with confidence, imagination, control and co-ordination and in safety. They practise rolling, throwing and catching skills and develop their social skills through working in teams. They climb onto apparatus and jump off it safely and use large apparatus to practise the skills that have been taught. Most children apply a good level of physical and creative effort to their work. They recognise changes that happen to their bodies when they are active and the importance of the 'warm up' and 'cool down' sessions.

In order to develop this aspect of provision further, the school has put in a bid for a soft play area, under the 'Sure Start' initiative. Physical skills in the classroom are taught very well. Children in the Nursery are taught to use a range of tools and equipment safely and with increasing control, under adult supervision. They develop good hand-eye co-ordination through a wide range of activities, including the use of pencils, paint brushes and scissors. By the end of Reception, most children have achieved the early learning goals in this area because of the very good teaching and provision.

Creative development

85. Children make good progress in their creativity within the stimulating learning environment in both the Nursery and Reception classes and teaching is very good. Activities areas are well organised, with good quality resources readily available. Displays are of a very high quality and reflect the topics that children are exploring and focus on their own work. In the Nursery, children explore what happens when they mix colours, and use their cutting and painting skills effectively to create houses and cameras. The staff encourage development in other areas of learning through creative activities. For example, they helped children to develop their social and speaking skills by talking with each other while building a wall with the mud bricks they have made, and pointing out the change in the bricks as they dry out. In the Reception classes, the children gain further good experience in working collaboratively on creative tasks, negotiating plans and ideas and selecting appropriate resources for a purpose. Children's confidence develops as they try out new ideas. As adults work alongside children, they talk to them about their work and introduce appropriate vocabulary. Children explore colour and texture through a range of resources and sensory experiences and talk about their observations. They enjoy experimenting with different media and exploring form and shape in two and three dimensions. The teachers make good use of work by famous artists to give the children ideas for their paintings. Work of a very high quality emerges, as is illustrated by the children's striking paintings of Monet's water lilies. In the Nursery, children sing simple and familiar songs and learn new ones, such as 'Shape Song'. They tap out repeated rhythms and make up their own. Adults encourage them to use their imaginations and communicate their ideas through music. Children in the Reception classes begin to explore the different sounds of instruments and learn to describe the type of instrument and how it is played. Their imagination is developed well as they dramatise stories and participate in role-play. By the end of Reception, most children have achieved the early learning goals in this area of learning.

ENGLISH

86. English is an additional language for most pupils when they begin school, and the number with special needs in language is above average. As a result, there is a wider range of attainment in all classes than generally found, and this has a significant effect on results in the national tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Standards of pupils currently in Year 2 are average in listening, below average in reading, and well below average in speaking and writing.
87. Those who begin their education in the school's Nursery and Reception classes and stay on in the school make good progress through Years 1 and 2. A significant number of pupils of all ages who speak little or no English join the school later. Such pupils make very good progress initially in learning English because of the intensive and well-structured support they are given. Nevertheless, their attainment remains well below that of the other pupils. As a result, the gap between the highest and lowest attaining pupils in each year group increases through the school. This presents teachers with a substantial challenge in meeting the needs of all pupils, particularly in Years 3 to 6. Overall, pupils in these years make satisfactory progress. The standards reached by pupils currently in Year 6 are average in listening, below average in speaking and reading, and well below average in writing.
88. The routines of the literacy hour are well established by Year 2, so that pupils generally know what is expected of them. They listen carefully to instructions. Teachers develop good relationships and involve all pupils in discussions, including those with special needs or English as an additional language. Year 2 pupils are very keen to join in reading aloud, particularly when they have practised key phrases together first. Most take an active part in discussions, though they speak very briefly in answer to questions, using a limited range of vocabulary and sentence structures.
89. By the end of Year 6, pupils have sound listening skills. They listen politely to the views of others and collaborate well when working in pairs. Their co-operative attitude helps their learning in other subjects, where ideas are explored and developed through discussion. A few pupils, mainly older boys, switch off when teachers' questioning does not interest them, however. Speaking skills are below average. Pupils try hard when teachers encourage them to develop their ideas, but only a few pupils with higher attainment give detailed answers. These pupils also use more formal language appropriately in class discussions, particularly when teachers have trained them in the correct use of technical terms. Pupils are generally confident in speaking to the class or in assemblies, but most of those who are fluent speak too quickly and not carefully enough. Individuals in all years respond well when given the chance to repeat and improve what they want to say. An excellent example was seen in a Year 2 science lesson, where careful coaching and repetition produced impressive gains in pupils' ability to use technical terms. However, few instances of such useful coaching were seen.
90. The school is very successful in raising pupils' interest in books of all kinds. Home reading is well-established, and pupils regularly borrow books from the school library. Their progress in the early stages is guided successfully by commercial reading schemes, graded to ensure that confidence and skills build steadily. The skill of sounding out new words to find their meaning is well taught. Pupils with higher attainment are particularly successful in this, though their proficiency can be deceptive since they do not always understand the meaning of key words, even though they can read them aloud correctly. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a sound understanding of what they read, though their books are mostly simpler than

usual for their age. Those with special needs are given additional help, and some follow an officially recommended intensive programme so that they make good progress.

91. Standards are below average in reading at the end of Year 6. Pupils read longer texts silently and with good concentration. Their level of understanding is sound, and a few read aloud with dramatic expression. Nevertheless, even those with high attainment are not fluent in talking about books. They do not make comparisons between books and explain their preferences, though the school is working to raise standards in this area, through teacher-led guided reading groups. The library is used satisfactorily to help meet the objectives of the National Literacy Strategy. Interest in non-fiction books is high, and pupils' knowledge of how to find books in a library is well developed as a result of regular class instruction. More use could be made of these research skills to promote reading and writing in all subjects, however, particularly to challenge older pupils with high attainment.
92. Throughout the school, pupils learn to write in different forms that include poetry, stories, letters and factual accounts. This interestingly wide range of writing is an improvement in provision since the previous report. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are given extra help so that they make good progress in expressing their meaning. By the end of Year 2, most pupils can express their meaning in stories and personal accounts, though their writing in all subjects is generally very brief. They write in short sentences using a narrow range of vocabulary. This reflects their limited speaking skills. Standards are well below average overall at this stage. The handwriting programme is successful in ensuring that pupils write in a joined style, and this is well established by Year 3. Standards of punctuation are sound, but spelling is a significant weakness throughout the school. There is too great a gap between spellings learned for homework and the words that pupils use in their free writing.
93. Standards in writing are well below average at the end of Year 6. Pupils have a sound grasp how to begin and end stories, and those with higher attainment use correctly punctuated speech well for dramatic effect. Poetry and other shorter forms of writing are particularly successful. This is because all the pupils across the wide ability range choose their words carefully. They then improve and correct the piece to produce satisfying results, even if they write slowly or have limited language. The range of vocabulary used in the pupils' writing remains narrow. Pupils throughout the school do not use aides such as a thesaurus, dictionary and word banks enough to extend their vocabulary. Most pupils use simple sentence structures. These are adequate for some purposes, for example to express meaning in factual accounts in other subjects, but reduce the quality of the pupils' imaginative writing. Pupils with higher attainment use paragraph structures correctly in letters and news reports.
94. Pupils are given strong encouragement to develop their own ideas in writing, but this is not matched by high enough expectations for pupils to read through and check their own work. Frequently-used words and key technical terms in all subjects are incorrectly spelt much too often, even when copied. Pupils do not develop rigorous habits of checking their own work before handing it in or of correcting it after marking. This is a significant weakness in teachers' expectations that adversely affects standards. Much work in exercise books is untidily presented, but the standard is much higher in work planned, improved and corrected for display, such as the stories in Year 4, the class poetry anthologies in Year 5, and information leaflets in Year 6. A small amount of work is word-processed, which helps to ease the process of rewriting and correction.

95. Teaching is good overall in Years 1 and 2. Half the lessons seen were very good, and the remainder satisfactory or better. Teaching is satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. All the lessons seen were at least satisfactory, with very good teaching in one lesson. Throughout the school, teaching assistants work very closely and effectively with teachers. They give good support to individuals and groups, particularly to those with lower attainment or at an early stage in learning English. As a result, these pupils take a full part in activities and make good progress.
96. In the best lessons, teachers read stories dramatically, catching pupils' interest while helping their understanding. In some lessons, though, not enough time is spent on appreciating the quality of language in texts chosen for close study, even though they offer very good examples of poetic or factual expression.
97. In a very good lesson in Year 2, pupils were kept fully involved through a variety of well-structured activities that focused on basic skills. Excellent teamwork between the teacher and other staff was founded on very careful planning of their respective roles and the lesson targets. Pupils were able to keep up with the quick pace because routines had been well established, and they gained in confidence because they already knew some of the material. New information was repeated in varied and enjoyable ways to ensure that pupils built on success. All were fully included in the instruction because the difficulty of questions was adjusted to match different levels of attainment, and those who did not put up their hands to answer were asked direct questions. This good practice of fully including all pupils, including those with English as an additional language and with special educational needs, is not well established throughout the school. It is a weakness of some lessons across the school that the pace of instruction and the level of language that teachers use are more suitable for the most able pupils, who also answer most of the questions.
98. In a very good Year 4 lesson, pupils successfully learned how to write a balanced argument because of detailed and sustained instruction on the characteristics of the form. Individuals across the range of attainment were involved in giving specific examples so that they practised and applied their new learning while reinforcing key principles for other pupils. By contrast, achievement is much less secure when this instruction is not thorough, does not demonstrate more than one example of what is being taught, and does not require pupils to practise new skills under close supervision before they try independently.
99. Routines of the literacy hour are well established in all classes and make a very good contribution to pupils' social development. When asked to work independently, pupils generally work hard and act sensibly. They are helped to stay on task because the work is generally interesting and matched appropriately to the needs of groups at different stages of development. This is not always the case however. Instances were noted where lower attaining pupils did not achieve well, particularly when writing from their imaginations. In the main, their difficulties begin when teaching beforehand is too brief or not emphatic enough for them to fully understand and remember what is expected of them. Their difficulties multiply if they lack the guidance of written instructions and examples they can imitate, and word banks to help them express meaning and spell correctly. This leads to superficial and inaccurate results; this criticism was also made in the previous report. Generally, not enough use is made of the review session at the end of lessons to develop pupils' speaking skills and to check the accuracy of their learning.

100. In the best marking, teachers give encouragement and identify the main weaknesses that need attention. However, much of the impact of marking is lost because pupils are not routinely required to do corrections or follow-up work. There is a tendency to over-praise, which misleads pupils as to what they need to do to improve. Teachers' marking in other subjects does not highlight literacy errors, and expectations for accuracy are too low overall.
101. Leadership and management of the subject are good. The new co-ordinator has made a very good start in reviewing provision and seeking professional advice from local authority advisors so that the targets in her action plan are well informed. Assessment information is analysed for trends by different groups of pupils. Targets are set for individuals and groups; this is very good practice. There has been some monitoring of teaching, and the literacy strategy is securely in place. Nevertheless, more monitoring is needed to secure best practice, focusing in particular on: the match between the work set and the needs of different attainment groups; the use of the final review session to reinforce the lesson's targets; the use of marking to direct work that follows.
102. Pupils' best work is well displayed to encourage pride in achievement. To stimulate their interest and enjoyment, the curriculum is extended through a good range of visits and visitors. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development.

MATHEMATICS

103. The inspection found that standards are well below average at the end of Year 2 and below average at the end of Year 6. However, pupils make good progress and achieve well overall. The results of the 2001 national tests were well below average for both age groups. Standards therefore appear to have fallen since the last inspection when they were average. However, the tests include a lot of questions that contain mathematical words that confuse pupils who speak English as an additional language. They know the mathematics to solve the problems involved, but do not understand what the problem is. Inspectors' conversations with pupils about their work confirm that in some cases, the pupils' mathematical ability outstrips their ability to understand the questions. The school has carried out an analysis of the pupils' answers to questions and identified how to help them overcome these difficulties. Overall, pupils with English as an additional language make good progress once they have understood the necessary mathematical vocabulary. The school's assessment data also shows that higher attaining pupils make good progress through the school. This is a marked improvement since the previous inspection when this group made unsatisfactory progress.
104. In Year 2, standards in number are below expectations. Few pupils know their odd and even numbers to 50, for example, which they should by this stage, and very few count accurately up to 100 and beyond in twos. Some higher attaining pupils count in tens and fives and know that addition is the opposite of subtraction, but these are expected attainment targets for average attaining pupils. Attainment in shape and measure is at the expected level. For example, most pupils name two-dimensional shapes and know their properties, with the higher attaining pupils able to understand what happens when a shape is moved or rotated. However, some pupils with English as an additional language are confused by the names of shapes, which limits their ability to accurately record the mathematics they know.

105. Pupils make good progress in Years 3 to 6. Nearly all Year 3 pupils count orally up and down in tens and fives, for example, and mentally find numbers that solve problems with answer up to 20. By Year 4, pupils add two and three columns of numbers. Some know their numbers to 1,000 and a few to 10,000. They also round numbers up and down to the nearest 100. This shows good progress in number skills. In some areas, progress is not so good. For example, not many of the Year 5 pupils know all their tables or can multiply and divide two digit numbers, and few add and subtract three digit numbers, which they should be doing by this stage. Good work was seen by more able pupils in Year 5, however, on the links between fractions, decimals and percentages.
106. Standards in Year 6 are below average overall because of the continuing difficulties many pupils have with mathematical language. However, those pupils who have overcome or who have not experienced these problems reach expected levels of attainment. For example, some pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of fractions, using correct mathematical vocabulary to describe concepts such as 'equivalent fractions'. The most able pupils know all their tables and have a sound grasp of the four rules and place value up to 100,000. Their knowledge and understanding of data-handling is below average, but improving. For example, they are currently learning how to read the scales on graphs accurately and how to interpret information from these diagrams. The less able pupils are making good progress in learning how to calculate simple percentage discounts, which is an expected target for this age group. The school's targets for 2002 are higher than the 2001 test results and the school is on track to achieve them.
107. The quality of teaching and learning is good, securing good progress for pupils overall, including those with special educational needs. All lessons observed were at least satisfactory with eight out of the twelve observed being at least good. Teaching was very good in four lessons, three of these in Years 3 to 6. Where teaching is good or better the mental sessions are lively, have a sense of urgency and involve all pupils fully. In the best lessons the teachers have a clear idea of their objectives, use the correct mathematical language and set realistic, achievable and challenging targets. In these lessons the higher attaining pupils are given good extension work that takes their learning that stage further. The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented well and all staff have received effective training. Numeracy lessons are divided into satisfactory time allocations. Most of the lessons have an effective mental 'warm-up'. Some also end with a good whole-class session to review what has been learned and set the scene for the next step. This is not a consistent enough feature of lessons, however. Homework is set and supports learning satisfactorily. Some use is made of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning in this subject, but this is an area for further improvement.
108. Planning across the school is good and the teachers have recently adopted an extensive system for assessing, tracking pupils' progress and setting targets. Day to day assessments, however, are not used as effectively as they should be inform daily planning. In the best classes, planning for the higher attaining pupils is good. It is designed to extend their learning and not just to give them many extra problems of the same type to solve. The enthusiastic and hard-working co-ordinator leads and manages the subject well. She has begun to monitor lessons in order to identify areas for improvement, but is in the early stages of this work, being relatively new to the post. There is a satisfactory range of resources that are well used and this has a good impact on teaching and learning. The pupils cover the full mathematics curriculum, with good emphasis now being placed on their ability to understand, explain and apply their calculations.

SCIENCE

109. Standards in science are below average at the end of Year 6, which is an improvement on the well-below average results in the 2001 national tests. Average attaining pupils have a sound knowledge of electric circuits, for example, and describe the differences between liquids, solids and gasses. They also know the main features of the life cycles of plants and animals, and understand that different animals need different environments in which to flourish. Each year group contains an above average proportion of pupils who do not have a secure knowledge in each area, however, because of their difficulties with English. This means that for the group as a whole, the levels of knowledge and understanding are below average. The pupils have acquired much of their knowledge through experimentation and research. In this area, their skills are in line with expectations. All pupils know the importance of devising a fair test. They predict what might happen and know they must only vary one condition at a time during an experiment. This is a good improvement since the last inspection. Overall, improvement in the subject is satisfactory.
110. Standards at the end of Year 2 were found to be in line with expectations for pupils of this age. For example, pupils know that many appliances in their homes are powered by electricity, and they explain how an electric current travels around simple electrical circuits that they make themselves. This finding conflicts with the school's own assessments in 2001, which found standards to be well below average. The school acknowledges that the accuracy of the teachers' assessments needs improving, and some work has already been done on this.
111. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. It was often good or better in the lessons observed during the inspection, with one example of excellent teaching seen in Year 6. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when teaching was satisfactory overall.
112. Teachers plan collaboratively in year groups, enabling them to share ideas and ensure that pupils have similar coverage of the curriculum. They share the objectives of their carefully planned lessons with the pupils to focus their thinking and help them concentrate. Teachers have good subject knowledge and ensure that pupils are able to engage in scientific enquiry. This was a very good feature of almost all the lessons observed. An excellent example was seen in Year 6, where pupils designed and carried out their own experiment to test their own hypotheses about evaporation. All the pupils, including some with special educational needs related to behaviour, sustained their concentration during a whole afternoon. The excellent planning and structure of the lesson inspired the pupils and constantly challenged them to think, co-operate with each other and remember the clear guidelines developed throughout the school about how to conduct an experiment. Good use was also made of the available information and communication technology as pupils worked in pairs on the class computer to look up further information on the topic. By the end of the afternoon the pupils had made very good gains in their knowledge and understanding, and recorded their results appropriately.
113. Other examples were seen of very good teaching that interested and inspired the pupils. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, pupils were asked the intriguing question: "Where do plants come from?" An exciting lesson included the use of magnifying glasses to examine the structure of a variety of fruits and identify which seeds belonged to each fruit. The work was related to a story about an apple tree to link in with literacy, and the results recorded on a chart, giving the pupils a good opportunity

to apply this mathematical skill. A good link with literacy finished the lesson as the pupils used an excellent collection of photographs taken from the book they had just read to plan "The Life-Cycle of the Apple Tree". The teacher kept the pupils' interest by asking open-ended questions that challenged them to think about all they had learned during the lesson. She gave opportunities for many pupils to answer, including those with special educational needs and pupils who were at different stages of learning English. These pupils received very good support from the classroom assistant, who made a significant contribution to the success of the lesson.

114. Overall, pupils with English as an additional language make good progress when directly supported in this way by the class teacher, teaching assistant or specialist language teacher. When this support is not available, however, their progress slows down considerably because of the difficulties they have with scientific words. For example, in a Year 5 lesson, pupils were asked to label a diagram of the parts of a flower. This task was well within the capabilities of most pupils, but was too hard for pupils for whom English is an additional language. Another area for improvement is in the use of marking of pupils' work to support for their learning. Marking is often cursory and does not provide sufficient encouraging comments or targets for improvement, or highlight spelling and other errors in English.
115. Leadership in science is not as effective as it should be. The co-ordinator has not had sufficient opportunity to undertake training or develop monitoring and evaluation of the subject. This has resulted in a lack of overview of the standards of pupils' work, the quality of teaching and the gaps in resources in Years 3 to 6. A portfolio of pupils' work has been started to provide the co-ordinator, class teachers and support staff with a clearer idea of what needs to be done to raise standards further. The action plan for developing science is not in sufficient detail, however, and is not a helpful document to guide improvements. For example, only one task is identified for the 2002/3 school year. Some good displays of pupils' work help raise the profile of the subject as well as providing a learning resource, but this is not a strong feature in all classrooms.
116. The improved range of resources since the previous inspection has enabled teachers to include more practical activities in lessons. This has contributed to raising standards in experimental science. The school is well placed to raise standards in the future providing pupils with English as an additional language can reach a satisfactory level of understanding of scientific language.

ART AND DESIGN

117. Pupils' work reaches the nationally expected standards at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Standards have been maintained at this level since the previous inspection.
118. Many pupils have immature pencil control and under-developed observational skills on entry to the school. To counter this, tasks in Years 1 and 2 are well planned to focus their attention, for instance in sketching plants as part of their science topic in Year 1. Pupils respond well to such practical work, with higher attaining pupils producing detailed pencil drawings with carefully coloured flowers. Observational drawing is continued and extended in Year 2, where pupils make sketches of fruits, then select a motif to make into a template to produce repeated patterns. By the end of Year 2, pupils know how to make paper weavings and use a range of materials to make collages. They have sound techniques in painting and drawing, and take care over the quality of their finished work.

119. The range of topics and techniques broadens in Years 3 to 6 so that by the end of Year 6, pupils are confident in techniques of collage and printing, and in painting and drawing in different styles. They develop a sense of perspective in their paintings of buildings, but their portraits lack depth and detail. It is good practice that pupils in Year 3 use sketch books to plan ideas and try out techniques, but the approach is not then followed up consistently through the school. Pupils study the work of some famous artists, such as Lowry and Van Gogh, and examples by older pupils show that this study has a good effect on the quality of their work. More use could be made of the art of non-western cultures to reflect the cultural diversity of the school, however.
120. Teaching is satisfactory overall, and one good lesson was seen. Strengths of this lesson for pupils in Year 2 were the clear targets carefully planned to take earlier work further. A detailed explanation of what was expected was very well supported by examples, and followed by a demonstration. A strength of teaching generally is the freedom that pupils have to express their own ideas in drawing, painting, designing of patterns and collage. A weakness is that skills are not taught in enough detail, and expectations for the quality of work are not demanding enough.
121. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The curriculum has been recently revised to follow official guidance. As a result, pupils work on a satisfactory range of topics using a variety of materials and techniques. The co-ordinator has begun to monitor standards informally, but staff need to work together to share best practice and review standards and progress through the school. The topics selected for each year group are appropriate, but they are not linked tightly enough from year to year to ensure that skills are developed systematically. Art is used effectively as a means of expressing learning in other subjects, as in the Tudor portraits in Year 4, but best use is not made of such tasks to extend skills taught in art lessons. Lack of work in three-dimensions, such as modelling with clay, was a weakness noted in the previous report. Provision continues to be very limited in this area, though there has been some improvement. Assessment procedures need to be further refined to monitor progress and so identify what individuals need to learn next.
122. The subject makes a sound contribution to pupils' personal development. Higher attaining pupils in Years 2 and 5 have recently taken part successfully in a local art competition. The standard of display is satisfactory overall but it varies widely. There are some inspiring displays of artwork in some classrooms and open areas, but also examples of indifferent quality. School policy needs to be reviewed to ensure that displays consistently stimulate interest, inspire creativity and celebrate cultural diversity.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

123. The attainment of pupils in design and technology at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 matches the standards expected nationally, as it did at the last inspection. Inspection findings show that the level of improvement has been good. There is a revised and improved scheme of work; teachers' knowledge is much improved, independent learning is encouraged and there is a more consistent approach to planning, designing, making and evaluation. Standards are beginning to rise as a result. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to disassemble and evaluate simple products.

124. Overall, achievement is good. By the end of Year 2, pupils design and make simple models incorporating some of their own ideas. They evaluate their work and suggest improvements. Pupils have a good understanding of mechanisms and how they can be used. For example, they have designed and made moving pictures that work by a sliding mechanism, wheeled vehicles and models that use winding mechanisms. They use construction kits to design and make models of houses, with the focus on stability. By the end of Year 6, pupils evaluate, adapt and improve their work, for example during the design and making of chairs. They apply knowledge gained earlier to their current work. For example, they incorporated their knowledge of levers and linkages from Year 1 into their designs for a storybook. In discussion, Year 6 pupils show a concern for quality, as they describe how they evaluate and adapt their products to ensure that they meet the design criteria. They confidently explain how axles help wheels to move and demonstrate how they stopped their paper tower structures from falling over.
125. Inspection evidence shows that teaching is good. During the inspection, only two lessons were observed, both in Year 1, due to timetabling arrangements. Further evidence was obtained from an examination of pupils' designs, end products and evaluations, the policy and scheme of work, teachers' plans, resources, displays, photographic evidence, a discussion with the subject leader and a discussion with a group of pupils from Year 6. This combined evidence shows that good teaching leads to good learning on the part of most pupils. Teachers' knowledge and understanding is good and the skills of design and making are taught well, with the result that pupils' acquisition of knowledge, skills and understanding is good. Lesson planning is sound, although not always to a common format. Teachers' expectations are high; they build on pupils' prior knowledge and ensure that all pupils understand what they are going to learn and what they are expected to achieve within the lesson. Pupils are managed well. They are enthusiastic and interested and apply creative and intellectual effort to their work. Their good behaviour and relationships promote good learning. Teachers make good use of time and resources, with the result that learning is maintained for the full time available. Trained support staff contribute effectively to the good progress made by all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. Pupils are encouraged to use their literacy skills as they complete their design sheets. They draw on their mathematical skills to measure accurately at both the design and making stage. Ongoing assessment ensures the active involvement and learning of all pupils. Pupils are expected to evaluate their products and suggest improvements, which contributes to good knowledge of their own learning.
126. The management of the subject is satisfactory, during a period when the school lacks a permanent subject leader. During the coming academic year there are plans for a new subject leader to review the policy, develop a portfolio of assessed work, monitor pupils' performance and consolidate procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress and the use of assessment to guide curriculum planning. This demonstrates clear educational direction and reflects very well the school's aims and values. There is a shared commitment to improvement, and the capacity to succeed is good. The recently appointed subject leader has been instrumental in raising standards, improving resources and placing a greater emphasis on the production of quality products.

GEOGRAPHY

127. Three lessons of geography were observed during the inspection week. All the lessons seen were in Years 3 to 6. Inspection findings are based on the work seen in

pupils' books, displays, and samples of past work kept by the school, as well as interviews with teachers and pupils.

128. The standards achieved by the pupils in geography at the end of Year 6 are in line with what is expected nationally. This means that the school has maintained the standards seen at the last inspection. The standard of the samples of work produced by Year 2 pupils is also in line with expectations. This is an improvement that addresses one of the key issues from the previous inspection. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make good progress.
129. Year 6 pupils have a sound geographical knowledge of the United Kingdom, the continents, volcanoes and earthquakes, the local area, and how to use maps, atlases and globes. They compare the climate and vegetation of different regions of the world and consider the effects that human activity has on them. For example, they understand the impact that the felling of trees has on the rain forests and the need for the conservation of these areas. The work seen has good links with Literacy through the use of persuasive language in posters, and with science through the study of the effects of pollution on the growth of plants and trees. Good links are made with the pupils' own backgrounds to arouse their interest and promote positive views of different cultures. For example, pupils in Year 4 are using the village of Chembakoli in India, where some of them have relatives, as a location to compare and contrast with where they live. They have revised their knowledge of continents and oceans and have located the country and its neighbours. They are looking at differences and similarities in the climate and the lives of the people. The work completed by Year 2 pupils reflects a sound understanding of their own environment and an awareness of some localities further afield.
130. The quality of teaching in Years 3 to 6 is good overall, which represents an improvement since the last inspection. Of the lessons observed none were unsatisfactory, two were very good and other good. In the best lessons, the teachers have very high expectations of pupil behaviour and standards of work. Very good direct teaching, using the correct technical language, enabled the pupils to make good progress in using geographical skills to deepen their understanding of the world. For example, good lessons in Year 6 and Year 4 gave the pupils a very clear idea of what life is like in India and the rain forests of Brazil compared to the United Kingdom.
131. The planning of topics ensures that the each year group builds on the geographical knowledge and skills from the previous year. Assessment procedures are informal, and do not help teachers to plan suitable starting points within these topics to challenge pupils of all abilities. This is a priority in the subject action plan, however, as are plans for the co-ordinator to monitor the teaching and standards of geography throughout the school. There is a satisfactory range of resources in the school that are used well. The work is well planned, with the school adapting a published scheme to suit the pupils' needs and the available resources.

HISTORY

132. The standard of pupils' work is below national expectations for pupils at the end of Year 2 but in line with expectations at the end of Year 6. This reflects standards found at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are set appropriate tasks for which they are well supported so that they make similar progress to that of other pupils.

133. Many pupils begin school with a narrow range of experience and limited language with which to explore and express historical ideas. To extend their experience, teachers design lessons around practical activities in Years 1 and 2, such as comparing old and new toys, which focuses pupils' attention on changes over time. By the end of Year 2, they understand some changes in the recent past in the context of their family lives and the local neighbourhood. They gain a broad understanding of other historical periods by studying the significance of famous people, such as Guy Fawkes and Grace Darling. Their progress is satisfactory, but they produce less written work than generally found for their age because of their weak writing skills. Nevertheless, their writing is well presented in the form of miniature books, and teachers do well to raise pupils' sense of achievement by this means.
134. Pupils make good progress in Years 3 to 6 because they benefit from more time and resources devoted to the subject, particularly in Years 4 and 5. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a sound understanding of a range of historical periods, including the civilisations of the Greeks and Aztecs, and aspects of British history including the Viking invaders, Tudors, Victorians and changes since the 1930s. They have sound skills in identifying and interpreting evidence from a range of sources, including documents and objects from the periods studied. They use time-lines successfully to develop a sense of historical perspective. They show sound understanding of causes and consequences of major events, such as the Second World War, and reasons why children were evacuated. Their written work shows good attention to the detail of factual accuracy, though it is generally brief and there is no evidence of attainment at the higher level because of weak writing skills.
135. Teaching is good overall. It was at least good in half the lessons seen, and satisfactory in the others. One lesson was excellent. The best lessons are carefully planned and supported with imaginative resources to focus attention on key points. As a result, pupils are interested and understand the direction of their learning. Teachers are secure in their subject knowledge. They use questioning well to probe understanding and have high expectations for accurate, extended explanations. In the excellent lesson in Year 4, the teacher and a visitor presented pupils with challenging material that required them to judge what punishments Tudors would consider appropriate for particular crimes. This was highly successful in holding pupils' attention and developing their understanding because the sequence of picture and language cards gave them hands-on experience while supporting their literacy development. The activity was particularly well organised and managed, and pairs of pupils showed very good levels of social development in their conversations. Such strong support for language learning combined with a high level of intellectual challenge was not a feature of less successful lessons, where reading and writing tasks are not so closely matched to the differing levels of pupils' language skills.
136. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The policy and scheme of work have been revised, following official guidelines, to provide progression in understanding from simple to more sophisticated concepts. Procedures for assessment are adequate in identifying weaknesses in pupils' knowledge and understanding so that future teaching can be adjusted. There are good links with other subjects, particularly art and design. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development. Good use is made of visits to the neighbourhood and to museums and sites of historic interest.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

137. There have been significant improvements in provision for information and communication technology during the past year. These have partially addressed the weaknesses identified in the previous report. Until the arrival of the new headteacher, insufficient work had been done in this area and resources were very poor. Staff lacked confidence in their teaching and there was a lack of leadership due to staff absence. As a consequence, standards remained very low.
138. Evidence gathered from lesson observations and discussions with teachers and pupils indicates that pupils' attainment at the end of Year 2 is now broadly in line with national expectations, which is a good improvement. The attainment of pupils at the end of Year 6 is below that expected nationally for this age group, however. This is because, until this year, pupils in Years 3 to 6 have not had the opportunity to cover the programmes of study of the National Curriculum in the subject or the opportunity to practise on high quality equipment.
139. By the time pupils reach the end of Year 2, they are confident in using computers for a range of purposes, and their skills are in line with expectations. Progress is good in Years 1 and 2. Year 1 pupils know how we get information from computers. They learn the various functions of the icons and know how to use them. They use their computers in literacy, for example, to match key words to pictures. Levels of attainment are below the expected level in Year 6. In some of the elements of the National Curriculum, pupils in Year 6 have expected levels of skills, for example, in creating a text page on the computer. However, standards and progress are still held back by pupils' lack of prior experience and to some extent by a shortage of computers. For example, pupils in Year 5 made good gains in their knowledge of how computer-driven devices can be used to control important aids such as traffic lights and panda crossings to improve road safety. However, because only one computer was available for use, pupils had to wait a long time for their turn to practise using it to illustrate the sequence of colour changes. Most pupils are enthusiastic about information and communication technology, although some of those who have had little regular teaching in the past or have just joined the school with little or no English or any experience of computers do not feel confident.
140. The school is beginning to catch up with other schools in the use of computers in other subjects. For example, a pupil in Year 3 used word-processing to write about her trip to Oxford with her family. In Year 4, pupils have used computer-generated graphs to compare the climates of London and Bangalore, and Year 6 pupils have produced graphs of their favourite colours. Although these examples show the pupils' limited skills, they illustrate the efforts now being made to raise standards in the subject and ensure that computers are used as a tool for learning.
141. The quality of teaching is good. During the inspection, teaching was always at least satisfactory. In half the lessons it was at least good, with very good teaching observed in Year 1. Teachers have adequate subject knowledge following recent initial training, which they use well. Lessons invariably begin with a brief recap of earlier work and an outline of what pupils will be expected to learn in the lesson. The teachers' explanations are usually very clear. This ensures that the pupils listen and watch well. Often the teachers involve the pupils themselves in demonstrating correct procedures. This engages and keeps the pupils' attention to and involvement in the lessons. Teachers and classroom assistants give good support to pupils with special educational needs and pupils who have English as an additional language. Classroom support assistants have all received extra training themselves and this has given them the confidence to play a greater role in lessons. This extra help enables all pupils to be fully included in the lessons and the majority of pupils are now

beginning to make at least satisfactory progress in their learning. Teachers make good use of other information and communication technology equipment, such as listening posts and tape recorders to support the pupils' learning, especially in English and music.

142. The subject is now very well led by a team of teachers working very closely together and giving help and guidance to their colleagues. Together with the headteacher they are responsible for the rapid improvement noted in the past year. The school is therefore well placed to continue the very good progress it has made in the past year. A scheme of work based on the latest National Curriculum guidelines is in place, and plans for further development are very clear. Some further delay to the full implementation of the school's plans is unavoidable however. The teachers are not due to attend the national training programme until the autumn term, and the computer suite is not yet up and running. Recently there has been very good investment in computers and software, and good plans are in hand for the speedy implementation of the computer suite once the building work is complete. During the inspection the school was linked to the Internet, marking a vital step forward, and parents received letters about its safe use.

MUSIC

143. The attainment of pupils in music by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 matches the standards expected nationally, thus maintaining the position at the last inspection. Now, as then, the quality of singing is good.
144. Improvement since the last inspection is good. Provision for all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, is good and they make good progress, due to very good teaching by the subject leader and good teaching overall. Equality of access and opportunity is good. The introduction of a new scheme of work, which focuses on skills, has proved beneficial.
145. By the end of Year 2, pupils sing songs from memory, with developing control of breathing, dynamics, pitch and rhythm. They perform simple patterns and accompaniments to a steady pulse. They use the different sounds made by the musical instruments they explore to create musical effects and sustain a simple repeated rhythm. They enjoy listening to music from different times and places and respond to musical elements through movement and dance. During a May Day celebration, pupils clapped spontaneously, as 16 children performed a circle dance and the Virginia Reel. This proved an enjoyable way for children from a range of cultures to learn about English traditions and also contributed to pupils' social development. During large group singing, pupils demonstrated very good listening skills, as they guessed the name of various songs after hearing as little as two notes. They responded well to moods in music and sang with clear diction. In a similar session, they listened to 'Gymnopedie No. 1', by Eric Satie, with attention to detail and increased their understanding of duration. In class music, pupils in Year 2 showed good understanding of the sounds made by different sound sources, as they accompanied a simple weather song on a variety of instruments, using bells for a light breeze, drums for rumbling thunder and tambourines for a downpour.
146. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 listen closely to other performers as they sing songs in two parts. They show good control of diction and musical elements, particularly phrasing.

They made good progress in this aspect of music during the inspection. Pupils with talent have the opportunity to sing in the choir. During a lunchtime choir practice, pupils from Years 4, 5 and 6 developed accuracy in singing in unison and in two parts, in preparation for the Primary Schools Music Festival at De Montfort Hall. They demonstrated discipline, self-control, teamwork and good social interaction as a result of very good specialist teaching. In class lessons, pupils improvise melodic and rhythmic phrases as part of group performance, and compose pieces by developing ideas within musical structures. They suggest improvements to their own work and the work of others.

147. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good and, in some cases, very good. In general, a combination of good subject knowledge, high expectations, effective planning, management of pupils and good use of time, support staff and resources, leads to good learning. Pupils show positive attitudes to all aspects of music. They improve their knowledge, skills and understanding and have a good knowledge of their own learning, for example, pupils in Year 6 know the basic rhythmic patterns used in many drumming traditions. They are able to sustain a drone or melodic repeating pattern to accompany singing, and perform in a way that reflects meaning.
148. Leadership and management are good. The co-ordinator provides clear educational direction and ensures that work in the subject reflects the school's aims and values very well. Informal procedures are in place for monitoring pupils' subject performance, assessing their attainment and progress and using assessment to guide curriculum planning. There are plans to formalise these and for the subject leader to monitor teaching and learning in the classroom. A particular strength of the school is its recognition of music as a universal language, which develops self-esteem and builds bridges amongst pupils who have difficulties with English.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

149. The standards of achievement seen in physical education are in line with what is expected for pupils nationally at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This maintains the standards reported by the last inspection.
150. Pupils experience the full National Curriculum programmes of study. All pupils make good progress in the development of their skills in gymnastics, movement and games lessons to reach the expected standards by the end of Year 6. Swimming is part of the curriculum for Year 5 pupils; they make good progress and enjoy the sessions. The school reports that well over 90% of the pupils achieve the national target of being able to swim 25 metres by the end of Year 6. There are plans to extend swimming to Year 4 in order to aim for 100% of pupils achieving the basic swimming and water safety skills. Pupils are given the opportunity to undertake outdoor activities, with a visit to a residential centre in Year 6.
151. In Year 2, pupils perform different moves and balances with appropriate levels of skill. They successfully join the individual movements with increasing control and poise. Year 5 pupils have expected skills in cricket. They strike, throw and catch a ball with good hand-eye co-ordination and awareness of the space available. All pupils are aware of the needs for safety in physical education and are learning to improve their performance by evaluation, discussion and practice.
152. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. It was good in two of the lessons observed, satisfactory in one and unsatisfactory in another. In good lessons, the teachers encourage the pupils to take part with enthusiasm and challenge them to think about

their performance and how to improve. The pupils are active for most of the time in these lessons. The teacher gives good demonstrations and the pupils made good progress in the skills that are the objective of the lesson. The pupils with English as an additional language benefit from the good demonstrations, which enable them to fully participate. All pupils enjoy physical education lessons and their response is good. The only bad behaviour seen was in the unsatisfactory lesson where the pupils were not involved in the activities enough and became bored and restless. This was due to poor classroom and pupil management and the inappropriate choice of activities.

153. In all the lessons observed, pupils were encouraged to warm up, and were aware of the importance of exercise and safety. They were not always taught to cool down correctly at the end of a period of exercise, however. Some, but not all of the teachers provide good role-models by changing for the lessons; all of the pupils change into suitable clothing.
154. The school has a satisfactory range of modern resources and equipment that is used well. The lack of a field area hinders the pupils' development in the subject, but plans are being made to use a local field. The school's annual competitive sports day gives the pupils a positive experience of exercise and friendly competition.
155. Provision for extra-curricular activities is good. There is a range of after school sports activities and there are plans to soon have teams playing competitive matches. The community makes a positive contribution to the teaching of physical education. Specialised sports coaches from Leicester City Football Club, Leicester Tigers Rugby Club, Leicester County Cricket Club and Leicester Riders Basketball Club visit to coach the pupils. For example, a coach from the Basketball team visited the school during the inspection to provide an expert and lively session on the skills of the game. The subject is well led by a keen and enthusiastic co-ordinator, but so far there has been little opportunity for the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning throughout the school.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

156. The attainment of pupils in religious education by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 matches the standards expected in the locally agreed syllabus. This maintains the position at the last inspection. Improvement since the last inspection is good and pupils achieve well.
157. By the end of Year 2, pupils understand what it means to belong and know that there are faiths other than their own. They show a developing knowledge of the beliefs and practices of and Judaism, which they were studying during the inspection. They know that Jewish people in their area worship at the local synagogue, and that their sacred writings are 'The Torah'. They showed appreciation of its importance to the Jewish faith and, through examining a Torah scroll and making their own. This also taught them to appreciate the care that goes into making something beautiful. There are plans for each year group to visit a place of worship, in connection with the topic studied. Younger pupils visit the local church, for example, and are able to describe the building and what it is used for. In Years 3 to 6, a similar approach enables pupils to develop an understanding of Hinduism and Islam, in addition to broadening their understanding of Christianity. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of the practices and beliefs of the major world religions is good, and is enhanced through the celebration of the main festivals, such as the Chinese New Year, Christmas, Diwali, Passover and Eid.

158. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers' good subject knowledge and understanding leads to the good acquisition of knowledge, skills and understanding on the part of most pupils. As they gain an insight into the beliefs and values of others, most pupils are able to give explanations of related elements in their own experience. Teachers' expectations are high and pupils are motivated to apply intellectual and creative effort to their work. Teachers' planning is effective and teaching methods engage pupils' interest and encourage. The management of pupils is good; their good behaviour and relationships lead to good progress. Time, support staff and resources are used well to support learning.
159. Weaknesses identified by the last inspection have been addressed. For example, the amount of time devoted to religious education in each class has been standardised and is sufficient to cover the agreed syllabus. Progression in learning from year to year is no longer a weakness. The breadth, balance and relevance of the curriculum has improved with the introduction of a revised scheme of work. The amount of time devoted to the teaching of Christianity is now appropriate. Improvements in the quality of teaching have led to improvements in learning. Equality of access and opportunity is good. Provision for all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, is good, leading to good progress.
160. Religious education makes a good contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of all pupils. For example, pupils are taught to respect the values, customs and beliefs of others and opportunities are provided for them to consider moral issues in relation to religious belief. The school is currently liaising with the Interfaith Dialogue Project to establish links with a school with pupils from a different ethnic background, which staff and pupils can regularly email. Displays celebrate pupils' work and stimulate interest.
161. Pupils develop their literacy skills as they take part in discussions and record their work, but more could be done to encourage extended speaking and writing and to use the subject to improve spelling and grammar. Information and communication technology is beginning to be used for research purposes, but this is at the very early stages.
162. Leadership and management are good. The recently appointed subject co-ordinator has a clear sense of educational direction and is beginning to raise standards. She has an overview of planning and pupils' work and there are plans for her to monitor teaching and learning throughout the school. The scheme of work, based on national guidance, is comprehensive and is supported by the provision of appropriate resources. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress and using assessment information to guide curriculum planning are satisfactory and are to be further refined.