

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **PARK INFANT SCHOOL**

Kettering, Northants

LEA area: Northamptonshire

Unique reference number: 121840

Headteacher: Mrs M Lewin

Reporting inspector: Mr S O'Toole  
20891

Dates of inspection: 2<sup>nd</sup> – 5<sup>th</sup> July 2001

Inspection number: 197805

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

© Crown copyright 2001

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 7 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Park Avenue Kettering Northants
Postcode:	NN16 9RU
Telephone number:	01536 481922
Fax number:	01536 481922
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr R Attwood
Date of previous inspection:	September 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
20891	Sean O'Toole	Registered inspector	English as an additional language Equal opportunities Information and communication technology (ICT) Mathematics	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught How well is the school led and managed What should the school do to improve further
9545	Kevin Greatorex	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils How well does the school work in partnership with parents
27206	Margaret Debrou	Team inspector	Science Geography History	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils
24022	Julia Lawson	Team inspector	Foundation stage Physical education Religious education	
22671	David White	Team inspector	Special educational needs English Art and design Design and technology Music	

The inspection contractor was:

SES  
132, Whitaker Road  
Derby  
DE23 6AP

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager  
Inspection Quality Division  
The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS</b>	<b>10</b>
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>28</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Park Infant School is located in Kettering. The school is very popular and is oversubscribed. Most pupils come from the surrounding area which is average socio-economically. A total of 269 pupils aged between four and seven attend the school with an almost equal number of boys and girls. The children start in the reception classes at the beginning of the year in which they are five and most have benefited from pre-school education. The school admits children of all abilities and initial assessments show that attainment is broadly in line with that expected for four-year-olds. Thirteen pupils (five per cent) have English as an additional language and their main languages are Gujarati and Punjabi. This figure is above average. The school has identified 23 pupils (8.5 per cent) who are entitled to free school meals, a figure that is broadly average and one that has risen this year. The school has identified an average number of 62 pupils (23 per cent) with special educational needs. Two pupils have statements of special educational need, which is about average. A third of the teachers, including the headteacher, have been appointed since the previous inspection.

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

This is a good school with several significant strengths. Standards in English, mathematics, science and art and design are at least above those expected for seven-year-olds. The teaching is mostly good and has a beneficial impact on learning. The pupils are keen to learn and work hard. The headteacher is a very good leader and manages the school well, supported by an effective team of staff and governors. The school prepares pupils well for life in a multi-ethnic society. The school provides good value for money.

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

- Standards in English and art and design are well above average, and above average in mathematics and science.
- The quality of teaching is good.
- Leadership and management are very good.
- Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal, social and emotional development are good.
- There is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- The parents make an excellent contribution to the life of the school.
- The school is a very caring place.

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

- The use of assessment, target setting and marking to plan the next stage of pupils' work and help pupils make faster progress
- Monitoring of pupils' learning to ensure consistency between classes

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

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

The school has made good improvement since the previous inspection in September 1997 and has maintained its high standards in English, mathematics and science. The good quality of teaching has also been maintained. Leadership and management have improved and are now very good. The issues raised at the time of the previous inspection have been dealt with effectively. Planning and schemes of work are better than they were. Assessment has improved in English but more remains to be done in other subjects. The school has improved its provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and has maintained its very strong links with parents. All statutory requirements are now met. The school has good capacity to improve further.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
Reading	A	A	A	A	Well above average A Above average B Average C Below average D Well below average E
Writing	A*	A	A	A	
Mathematics	A	B	B	C	

Provisional results of national assessments in 2001 show that the school has maintained its impressive results in reading and writing and maintained its performance in mathematics and science. The school has kept pace with the national improving trend; although standards in mathematics dipped they have now begun to rise due to effective teaching. The school easily achieved its targets in national tests and has set more demanding levels for 2002. Inspection evidence shows that standards have been maintained at a sufficiently high level since the previous inspection. Standards in English by the end of Year 2 are well above average and pupils have very good reading and writing skills. In mathematics and science standards are above average with particular strengths in number and using and applying mathematics and science. Pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are improving at a good rate due to the school's emphasis on and adaptation of national strategies.

Throughout the school standards in art and design are well above those expected. In design and technology, information and communication technology (ICT), religious education, history, geography, physical education and music standards are at the level expected by the end of the infants. Strengths in the subjects include the good progress made in singing and pupils' factual knowledge of history. Areas for development include extending pupils' competence in using research skills and computers in other subjects. Progress is good for all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. Given the pupils' average attainment on admission standards are sufficiently high and pupils achieve well.

Standards at the end of the reception year exceed the early learning goals in communication, language and literacy, mathematical, personal, social and emotional and creative development. Children achieve the expected goals for their age in knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. The pupils are enthusiastic learners. They respond particularly well in English and mathematics lessons and apply themselves creatively in art and design. Children in the reception year make good gains in personal, social and emotional development.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. The pupils work and play together effectively; they are polite and well mannered. There have been no exclusions. The pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong.

Personal development and relationships	Good. Relationships are very good. The pupils enjoy taking responsibility such as helping with jobs around the school.
Attendance	Good. Attendance is just above average and pupils enjoy school very much.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years
Lessons seen overall	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 teaching is good. In the lessons seen 22 per cent were very good or excellent, 38 per cent were good and 36 per cent satisfactory. Four per cent of lessons were poor. The teaching in the foundation stage is good and has a good impact on the children's learning. The teachers focus strongly on developing the children's personal and social skills alongside very effective teaching of communication, language and literacy and mathematics. Infant teachers plan work well and match it to the needs of the pupils. There is sufficient challenge for the pupils and this is particularly good in reading and writing. Mathematics is taught well. The teachers help the pupils effectively to use their literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language receive effective and often very good support and make significant strides in their ability to learn independently. Learning is good; pupils work hard and concentrate well. They produce good quantities of work and take pride in what they have achieved. They very much enjoy practical work in art and design and technology. There are some areas for development in teaching which include the more effective use of marking, improvement in the pace of some lessons and better use of assessment to plan work which is more challenging and, in the poor lessons, better management of behaviour.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The school provides an interesting and lively curriculum that fulfils statutory requirements. The school is successful in promoting the pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy. There is satisfactory provision for extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Individual education plans are sharply focused and used to plan work. The support staff make a very good contribution to pupils' progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Staff working with these pupils have very good skills and expertise. Pupils make good gains in learning and using English and most attain average standards by the end of the infants.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. Cultural experiences through visits and visitors enrich pupils' experience. There is a strong and consistent approach to promoting very good social and moral behaviour. Spiritual development is good and pupils are taught about valuing others' beliefs and appreciating the wonders of creation.

How well the school cares for its pupils	This is a very caring school where the interests of pupils lie at the heart of the school's work. Procedures for assessment are satisfactory but staff make insufficient use of it to set challenging targets.
--	--

The school benefits from the excellent support of parents. Parents are involved much in supporting their children's learning. Reports on pupils' progress do not guide parents on how to help their children.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher inspires confidence in the staff, parents and governors and has created an effective team. The senior staff work together well. The subject leaders' role in monitoring learning is underdeveloped.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very effectively. The governors are very supportive and have a clear understanding of their role in shaping the direction of the school
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The headteacher and governors rigorously analyse the teachers' and pupils' performance and set challenging targets. The school uses data well to pinpoint areas for improvement in performance in national tests.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The school considers best value when purchasing supplies and services, for example in developing ICT. The school's finances are in good order and controls are very effective.

There is a good number of teaching and support staff. The accommodation is good and the range and quality of resources enhance learning. There are shortages of outdoor play equipment for reception children.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children thrive at the school, become effective learners and are encouraged to take responsibility</li> <li>• Pupils' very good behaviour.</li> <li>• The high quality of the teaching and leadership and management of the school.</li> <li>• Staff are open and friendly.</li> <li>• The school's high expectations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information about what is to be taught.</li> <li>• The opportunities for extra-curricular activities.</li> </ul>

The inspection team fully endorses the parents' positive views. The school provides a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities, which are held mainly at lunchtime. There is limited information for parents about what is to be taught each term.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS**

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

1. Overall standards at the school are above average and have been successfully maintained at this level since the previous inspection. Strengths include the pupils' well above average reading and writing and their ability to use these skills in other subjects. In the 2000 national tests pupils attained well above average standards in reading and writing. Inspection evidence and the preliminary results of tests in 2001 show that the school has successfully maintained these levels. There was a dip in performance in mathematics from well above average in 1998 to above average in 1999 but standards have now begun to rise as the school's successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy begins to have an effect on results. In particular, standards are now beginning to rise in number and applying mathematics, although they remain at above average levels overall. The school has carefully analysed pupils' performance in mathematics and identified shape, space and measures as an area of relative weakness. Teaching has taken account of these gaps in pupils' experience and this aspect of the pupils' work has also improved this year. Teachers' assessments in science in 2000 showed that standards were above average and inspection evidence and this year's teacher assessments show that these standards have been maintained
2. Analysis of trends over time shows that the school has kept pace with the improving national trend in reading and writing although the trend was below average in mathematics. When compared with schools with similar intakes the pupils' performance was well above average in reading and writing and average in mathematics. Boys and girls perform equally in reading and mathematics but the girls do significantly better than boys in writing. Results of national tests show that the more able are sufficiently challenged with a well above proportion attaining the higher level 3 in reading, mathematics and science and a very high proportion in writing.
3. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress towards attaining the targets in their individual education plans. They are supported well in their classes and this means that they participate well with their classmates. Individual education plans have well-focused targets and teachers and support assistants use them effectively. Most of the pupils with special educational needs attain close to average standards by the end of Year 2. Pupils with English as an additional language also receive good support and the strong emphasis on developing spoken and written English means that by the end of Year 2 most of the pupils attain the standards expected for their age in reading, writing and mathematics. More able pupils make good progress and attain above average standards for their age as the work set for them in English and mathematics is sufficiently challenging. The school has identified a few pupils who are gifted and talented and makes good provision for them. These pupils have well advanced reading skills and are given good opportunities to read complex texts.
4. Children start in the reception class in the September of the academic year in which they are five. Most have benefited from pre-school educational experience. Attainment on admission to the school is about the level expected for four-year-olds. The level of children's skills on admission is not as high as at the time of the

previous inspection. The school makes good use of national guidance for children of this age which is called the foundation stage. The children make consistently very good gains in their learning through the stepping stones of learning towards the early learning goals. Stepping stones are the levels through which children progress towards the expected standards for their age. The children make good progress. By the end of the reception year most children exceed the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development and become active and interested learners. They also exceed the goals in communication, language and literacy, and mathematical and creative development. In the scientific aspects of knowledge and understanding of the world the pupils exceed the early learning goals and attain them in technology, history and geography. Pupils attain the early learning goals in their physical development. Children with special educational needs are identified early and the classroom assistants provide good support so that the children make good progress.

5. Inspection evidence shows that standards in reading, writing and speaking and listening are well above average by the end of Year 2. The school has particularly good methods of teaching reading which involve consistent practice at home and school, successful teaching of the sounds that letters make and regular testing and analysis of pupils' performance. There has been a strong emphasis on teaching writing and the skills taught are used effectively in other subjects. The setting of Year 2 pupils by ability has added extra challenge for the more able and they respond very well by producing imaginative and interesting writing in several styles. Standards in mathematics are above average and the pupils achieve well above average standards in number and using and applying mathematics. Pupils have a very good understanding of different strategies when solving problems. Standards in science are above average and the pupils have a very good understanding of life and living processes. The school has correctly identified the need to raise standards in mathematics and science to the same level as achieved in English. Headway has been made this year in some aspects of mathematics, although more needs to be done to raise the percentage of pupils attaining the higher level 3 in national tests and assessments in both mathematics and science. Overall standards in English, mathematics and science are sufficiently high, although more remains to be done in using assessment, marking and target setting to target further improvement.
6. By the end of Year 2, standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are in line with expectations. However, pupils have insufficient opportunities to apply their computer skills in other subjects and this is a weakness. Pupils in Year 1 make good progress in improving their computer skills due to the high quality of the teaching by the subject leader. This progress slows but is satisfactory in Year 2. Standards in religious education are in line with the targets in the syllabus followed by most schools in Northamptonshire. Pupils have a good knowledge of Christianity and other major religions. They correctly recount Bible stories and have a good understanding of the importance of religion in some people's lives. Standards in art and design are well above those expected for seven-year-olds. Pupils have a very wide range of skills and techniques and they use them well to create imaginative and effective pictures and models.
7. By the end of the infants, the pupils achieve average standards for their age in geography, history, design and technology, music and physical education. They have good knowledge of historical and geographical facts but have insufficient opportunities to research independently. The pupils sing well and standards in this aspect of music are above those expected. Pupils also make good progress in learning to play the recorder. The pupils make models to an appropriate standard in

their work in design and technology but have limited skills in evaluating and improving their designs.

8. Pupils apply their skills in literacy well in other subjects. They write interesting descriptions in history although there are limited opportunities as there is an over-reliance on simple worksheets in history and geography. Pupils have a good knowledge of number and use this understanding in their work in measuring plans and models in design and technology and in creating intricate patterns in art and design.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

9. The standards of pupils' attitudes, values and personal development have been maintained well since the previous inspection and they have a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning.
10. Children in the reception classes settle quickly to school and soon begin to enjoy the routines. They are well motivated and say that they like school. Infant pupils are enthusiastic about their work and eager to succeed. They sustain high levels of interest and concentration. They take great pride and enjoyment in producing work of good quality and are keen to share their results with others, as seen in the Year 2 art lesson where much very good work was achieved. Pupils are encouraged to express their ideas and opinions and they respond with confidence, enthusiasm and enjoyment.
11. The pupils' attitudes to learning contribute much to progress. They respond excitedly to the teaching of English and mathematics and rise to the challenges set for them. In a mathematics lesson in Year 2 the pupils speedily and correctly answered mental arithmetic questions, keenly competing to be the first to answer; they showed good levels of perseverance as they solved a complex problem and were keen to share their strategies with others. Pupils in Year 1 responded very well in a lesson in information and communication technology, showing much interest in the way the computer responded to their directions. From an early age the pupils begin to show an appreciation of the beliefs and values of others showing respect and tolerance.
12. Behaviour is consistently good and this confirms the views of parents. When they come to school, in assemblies, at lunchtimes and at playtimes, virtually all pupils show that high standards of behaviour are achieved. Pupils move around the school in an orderly manner and have a clear understanding of the standards expected of them. In lessons, behaviour is almost always good although in a few lessons in Year 1 where pupil management is unsatisfactory a small number of pupils lose concentration and their behaviour is unacceptable. There have been no recent exclusions. During the inspection there was no evidence of bullying or lack of respect for school property.
13. Relationships throughout the school are very good. Pupils form constructive relationships with each other and with adults. They work co-operatively together, demonstrating that they will listen with interest to each other and will try to understand the other person's point of view. Pupils show genuine pleasure in the achievements of others as shown in the spontaneous applause in an assembly. Most pupils act in a mature and responsible way. They consistently demonstrate patience, tolerance and understanding for others.

14. Pupils' personal development is good. The school provides a good number of opportunities for pupils to show initiative and take responsibility and they demonstrate that the trust is well placed. From the earliest stages of their time in school, children make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development as they perform jobs within the classroom. As they progress through the school greater degrees of independence are encouraged. Older pupils act as monitors around the school helping the younger ones in the dining hall and in the playground.
15. Some of the pupils have been identified as having special educational or other needs and are well supported by caring learning support assistants, who encourage good behaviour and positive attitudes towards work and school. The pupils are keen to learn and apply themselves well and their success in the national tests is due to the strong input by adults but also the pupils' own positive attitudes. Pupils with behavioural difficulties respond well and achieve the targets set for them. Pupils with English as an additional language have very positive attitudes and behave well. They contribute enthusiastically in lessons and respond to guidance from their teachers.
16. Attendance continues to be consistently above the national average and is good. Unauthorised absence for the current year is broadly in line with the national average and is monitored well to identify any emerging problems at an early stage. Punctuality is very good. Virtually all pupils are punctual, many arriving early. They come happily to school, eager and ready to learn, enabling the school to make a prompt and efficient start to the school day.

#### **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT**

17. Teaching and learning throughout the school are mostly good. The good quality of teaching has been maintained since the previous inspection and there is now a higher proportion of very good or better teaching. In the lessons seen, teaching was satisfactory or better in 96 percent of lessons; 22 percent were very good or excellent and 4 percent were poor. Most of the very good or excellent teaching was in the teaching of English, mathematics, information and communication technology (ICT) and art and design. The teaching of English and mathematics is good. The quality of teaching in the reception classes is mainly good. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language benefit from very good support and are taught well. In most lessons the teaching meets the needs of the pupils. Two lessons, one each in history and geography, were poor as behaviour management was weak and the pupils made little progress. There are a few areas for further improvement in teaching including more effective marking and increasing the pace of some lessons.
18. Good teaching for pupils with special educational needs is well supported by individual education plans that are carefully drawn up by the co-ordinator and the class teachers. A significant factor in the high quality provision for these pupils is the assistance and encouragement they receive from all adults involved in their education. Close teamwork is sustained from Reception to Year 2. Teachers and learning support assistants work hard to ensure the pupils make improvements and grow in confidence. Regularly throughout the inspection, support staff were observed providing sensitive and purposeful help to pupils, such as the patience and reassurance pupils in a Year 1 numeracy lesson received when the pupils were recalling number bonds and coin values. The good impact of this teaching is evident

in the number of pupils who achieve appropriate standards in English and mathematics by the time they leave the school.

19. The school identifies and meets the needs of pupils who have English as an additional language effectively through good teaching. The support assistant works through a well structured approach to improving the pupils' spoken English and then skilfully moves learning on by systematically teaching new words using good resources which stimulate the pupils' interest and enthusiasm for stories and books.
20. Teaching and learning in the reception classes are mostly good. The teachers and support staff work together well and form an effective team; they have good expertise and experience of working with young children and provide stimulating and interesting lessons. The settling in process at the start of the year when children attend part-time works well as the staff are able to identify individual needs and less confident children gradually become used to working with other children. The staff emphasise personal, social and emotional development strongly and there were many incidents when the staff intervened sensitively with well-focused questions or guidance to encourage the children towards independence. They use a variety of methods including individual, small group and whole class sessions to develop the children's co-operative skills. Communication, language and literacy are taught well. The staff have good expertise in developing early reading and writing skills through structured play, opportunities to write and regular practice of reading at home and school. The children respond well to these opportunities and become avid learners who work hard and take much pride in their achievements. The parents speak highly of the teaching of reading and feel that the school's approach contributes much to their children's success. The staff regularly listen to the children read, play lots of word games and teach a wide variety of rhymes and songs well. There is a good emphasis on teaching the names and sounds of letters. The teaching of the mathematical area of learning is good. There are good opportunities for the children to learn through using apparatus. Practical lessons underpin the children's learning. The staff make very good use of apparatus to ensure that the children have understood the lesson. There are very good records of reading progress and the staff use the information well to plan the next stage of learning. This careful monitoring ensures that pupils make very good gains in reading and good progress in mathematics. The children are keen learners and apply themselves very well. Teaching of knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development is good. The staff have good knowledge of the foundation stage curriculum and a thorough understanding of how young children learn. By following the stepping-stones for learning the staff create opportunities for the children to learn through play, direct teaching and small group work. The staff manage behaviour well; the children are left in no doubt about what is expected of them. The very good relationships between staff and children engender a feeling of security and also ensure that learning can take place in a purposeful environment where all are cared for.
21. Teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 varies between excellent and poor and is good overall. The most successful teaching is of basic skills in English, mathematics and ICT. There is some variation in the quality of teaching between classes but pupils have similar opportunities because the teachers' planning is consistent. The poor teaching was in a history and geography lesson where the teacher did not control the pupils and opportunities for learning were lost.
22. The teachers have a good understanding of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and effective leadership of these subjects has promoted consistency in

teaching between the classes and year groups. The teachers make effective use of the school's good resources for English and mathematics and the successful work of support staff in literacy and numeracy lessons does much to enhance the pupils' progress. The school uses several methods to develop pupils' literacy skills, including teaching new words, extending pupils' knowledge of punctuation and spelling and teaching how to build words from letter sounds. There are good opportunities for pupils to extend their reading skills at home and the staff liaise very effectively with parents on reading. As a result standards are high in this aspect of the pupils' work. The school has focused successfully on improving pupils' writing. Staff training, opportunities to write imaginatively and the setting of pupils have all contributed to effective learning and good performance in national tests. In many lessons, the teachers communicate their own love of books through story telling and poetry reading and this enthuses the pupils who are then keen to read the stories for themselves. Spelling, grammar and punctuation are taught very well and the pupils apply these skills in their writing in subjects such as history and geography.

23. The teaching of mathematics is good overall with some very good and excellent teaching. The teachers have worked hard to introduce the National Numeracy Strategy and use its guidance well to plan lessons which have good pace and challenge. The teaching of number and strategies to solve problems is a strength in the teaching. The staff have made many resources to assist learning and they are used imaginatively and effectively. Some teachers are particularly good at inspiring confidence in the pupils through skilful questioning and thorough explanations of the tasks. In an excellent lesson in Year 2 the teacher moved learning along briskly by setting time limits, clearly explaining what was expected and monitoring the pupils' success. The pupils were totally absorbed in solving the problem of empty number squares and devised ways of finding the correct answer. Again the teacher moved learning on by insisting that the pupils clearly articulated how they had done their work and this method proved very effective in reinforcing learning for the less confident. In another Year 2 class, the teacher imaginatively displayed pupils' work on symmetry focusing very well on developing the pupils' understanding of shape.
24. Teachers have good subject knowledge, although some staff lack confidence in using ICT to support the teaching of other subjects. There is sufficient expertise in the teaching of science, although the limited use of assessment and target setting means that work in some lessons is insufficiently challenging. Basic skills in ICT are taught well and the staff have benefited much from training and the support of a visiting teacher and the subject leader in developing computer skills. Teachers make good use of artefacts, visits and visitors to enhance the learning of history and geography. As a result the pupils become fascinated by the subjects. In an excellent lesson in Year 1 in design and technology, the teacher used her knowledge very well to challenge the pupils and by asking well focused questions moving learning along at a very brisk pace. The pupils were absorbed in the task and worked very hard to good effect.
25. Most lessons are prepared thoroughly, although in a few instances the teachers do not give sufficient thought to the pace of lessons. Although the content of lessons is usually consistent between the classes in each year group the pace of delivery varies and sometimes pupils have to sit too long on the carpet and become restless. The teachers make sure that the resources are readily available and the pupils confidently select them and use them with care. The support staff make a very good contribution to learning. They are briefed well and focus sharply on tasks, providing much support and encouragement. Most lessons are well structured and include a wide variety of methods. They begin with a brisk introduction in which objectives are

made clear to the pupils. The teachers use questions very well to check on the pupils' understanding, although marking is often lacking in incisiveness. The teachers praise the pupils and encourage them but comments in books rarely include guidance on how the pupils might improve. Homework is given for reading and spelling and occasionally for mathematics. Most parents were happy with this satisfactory arrangement. The pupils said that they enjoy homework.

26. Learning is mostly good. The pupils work hard and are keen to please their teachers. They listen carefully to instructions and follow them, settling to tasks quickly. In most lessons the pupils participate eagerly, love answering questions and are keen to be the first to finish their work. The pupils produce good quantities of work during lessons and persevere with tasks. The more able are beginning to work independently and this was seen to good effect in mathematics where they solved problems by discussing their work and trying out several strategies. Occasionally, learning drifts as the teachers take too long over explanations and do not maintain sufficient control. Generally, the teachers exercise firm and friendly discipline and are good at motivating the pupils with a well timed and focused remark or a word of encouragement.

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

27. The curriculum provided by the school is good. It is lively and interesting and fulfils statutory requirements. All subjects and religious education are covered and have appropriate time allocated to them. There has been a good improvement in the quality of the school's curricular provision since the previous inspection. The staff have successfully developed a useful framework for the whole curriculum and there are now policies and schemes of work for all subjects. Considerable attention has been given to checking progress and provision in English and mathematics and this has helped to maintain high standards. Parents are very happy with the curriculum provided by the school. They feel it is enriched by work in art and music and very good use is made of the local park, especially for sports in the summer. The school makes satisfactory provision for extra-curricular activities. The school ensures that all pupils have similar opportunities and all staff are aware of the particular needs of different groups of pupils including those with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language.
28. Provision for ensuring that all pupils are fully included in the life of the school is good. There is a shared commitment to equal opportunities evident in many aspects of the school and reflecting a useful policy. Pupils with English as an additional language are also well provided for and make good progress. They benefit from the support of a bi-lingual classroom assistant and good quality involvement of outside agencies. Where possible, parents are encouraged to work alongside their children to help them settle in more quickly. The school is used as a model for other schools in the area. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Pupils with special educational needs have full access to the curriculum offered by the school and are provided with good support through the deployment of additional staff. The school makes good arrangements to support the pupils in class and sometimes to be taught in small groups or on an individual basis. This flexibility in the provision works well.
29. The strategies for teaching the basic skills in literacy are very effective and there is a strong emphasis given to reading and writing. Particular attention has been given to providing challenging work for more able writers and this is having a positive

impact on standards. There are good opportunities for pupils to use their skills in reading and writing in other subjects. Strategies for numeracy are effective and have resulted in pupils attaining high standards in their number work. The work provided for the pupils in English and mathematics is constantly under review and each week teachers meet to evaluate its success and make any necessary changes. In this way the different needs of all pupils are met.

30. The aspects of the curriculum which cover personal, social and health education are good and have been developed well since the previous inspection. Considerable emphasis is given to promoting pupils' self-esteem through praise assemblies and merit systems such as "I am a star". These celebrate pupils' academic and personal achievements and also acknowledge their kindness and care for others. Parents feel that the curriculum is enriched by opportunities to perform in public and pupils are very confident and enthusiastic about singing and dancing in local and school concerts. Provision for drugs and sex education is appropriate and is usually integrated within work in other subjects. Health education is also promoted through well-planned topics on growth and diet in science and the importance of exercise in physical education.
31. Some parents voiced concerns about the range of extra-curricular activities but the inspection confirms that arrangements are satisfactory. There are three well-attended recorder groups. Pupils have good opportunities to perform regularly in assembly. Both boys and girls enjoy a well-organised and energetic football session at lunchtime.
32. Overall provision for pupils' personal development is very good. This is in line with findings of the previous inspection when it was judged to be a strength of the school. Provision for spiritual development is good. Interesting assemblies are appropriately linked to moral themes and religious stories and are used well to promote pupils' self esteem. During an assembly taken by a member of a local church on "Talents" pupils stayed attentive throughout and enjoyed the humour of the well-told story. Assemblies include a brief opportunity for prayer and reflection and most pupils are respectful of this special time. Songs such as "the Magic Penny" are carefully selected to promote positive values and the pupils' singing is lively and tuneful. The "praise assembly" is successful in developing pupils' self esteem and they show great pride in their achievements. Other pupils are generous in their response. Spiritual development is well supported in other subjects. During an investigation into sound there were gasps of amazement from Year 1 pupils as the "invisible" vibrations from a tuning fork made an object move. Pupils are taught to appreciate the wonder of the natural world through studies such as "The Dormouse Project". Beautifully displayed artwork enhances the atmosphere of the whole school.
33. Provision for moral, social and cultural development is very good. An understanding of the difference between right and wrong is constantly being promoted through the school's strong moral code. The agreed rules have a positive impact on maintaining good standards in pupils' behaviour. Teachers set a very good example by valuing the ideas and opinions of the pupils and provide very worthwhile opportunities for them to share feelings and beliefs. Parents feel that the pupils are encouraged to be tolerant, respect others and value individual differences. The school motto provides a very thoughtful reminder of the importance of caring and sharing. A wide range of charities including Children in Need and Comic Relief is very well supported through fund raising events. Pupils are made aware of the terrible difficulties facing people in other countries and they are encouraged to collect clothes and toys.

34. The very caring atmosphere throughout the school and the high quality of relationships contribute very effectively to the pupils' social development. Pupils are expected to undertake a variety of responsibilities including the school register and milk duties. Throughout the school pupils respond very well to expectations that they work sensibly and productively together and this supports activities in a range of subjects including mathematics, science and physical education. The different group arrangements, such as in the additional support for writing, encourage pupils to mix and co-operate successfully. They relate confidently to a variety of adults, including visitors to the school. School trips and visits to the park and the local area provide an important extra dimension to their social development.
35. Very good opportunities are provided for the pupils to learn about their own heritage and traditions and about the diversity of other cultures. The May Day celebration is very popular and is an important event in the school and local calendar. Subjects such as science, geography and history are well supported through a range of visits and visitors. Children in the reception class talked excitedly about their environmental walk and the mini-beasts they found when they were pond dipping. Studies of countries such as Peru give Year 1 pupils an insight into cultures and experiences other than their own. Year 2 pupils experience the harsh life of Victorian servants in a visit back in time. Particularly good use is made of the school building and the local area to help pupils understand similarities and differences now and in the past. An outstanding feature of the school's provision is the imaginative use of a wide variety of artists such as Mackenzie Thorpe and Ben Collins to inspire and enthuse the pupils. Pupils, staff and parents take part in a range of special assemblies, including Divali and Shabbat. Parents feel that cultural differences are celebrated in many ways and that empathy is very positively encouraged.
36. Links with the community continue to be good. All the emergency services make regular visits to the school and the local community policeman is a welcome visitor well known by the children who accept his presence with pleasure and confidence. Many other visitors attend the school to help in a variety of ways. Local church officials come in to take assemblies, senior members of the community come into the school to share their early experiences with the pupils and the local MP was involved in a problem with the environment. The school works closely with all the specialist agencies to support the children's needs.
37. Links with partner institutions are very good, particularly those with the junior school on the same site. Relationships have been strengthened since the appointment of the headteacher and now there are very high levels of co-operation. There is good liaison with the feeder playgroups to ensure that children are well prepared for their arrival at the school. When pupils are due to transfer to the junior school they are familiar with the new environment and look forward confidently to the move.

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

38. The school provides high quality support and guidance and effectively promotes the welfare, health and safety in a warm, caring and stable environment. This atmosphere encourages pupils to learn and develop as individuals with high aspirations and a love of learning. All staff show great concern for the well being of pupils and a range of measures exists to promote their development. Teachers are sensitive to the needs of the pupils and monitor well their ability to cope on a day-to-day basis.

39. Teaching and learning support assistants know their pupils very well and the mutual respect evident throughout the school ensures all feel confident that help is available when needed; the school follows the Code of Practice guidance fully and has good, early and effective procedures for identifying these children. Children and pupils, including those with special educational or other needs, are very well supported by all staff and well integrated with their peers.
40. The school has made satisfactory headway in improving assessment since the previous inspection. The procedures are satisfactory. The use of assessment in English has helped the staff to plan more rigorous work in writing and has contributed to rising standards. However, assessment in the other subjects is underdeveloped. The school has experimented with several ways of assessing pupils' progress but it has yet to find a system which links target setting and marking. Some aspects of assessment are too cumbersome and do not pinpoint the strengths and weaknesses in pupils' attainment so that teachers can plan lessons which are sufficiently focused on developing skills, knowledge and understanding. There are suitable portfolios of samples of pupils' work, which include National Curriculum levels, and these guide staff on the levels achieved by the pupils but teachers do not make rigorous use of them to set sufficiently challenging targets. In some classes, insufficient account is taken of assessment and this hampers the rate of pupils' progress. Teachers' assessments at the end of Year 2 closely match the pupils' actual performance in national tests. Assessment is used particularly well to identify and set individual education plans for the pupils with special educational needs. Similarly, the needs of pupils with English as an additional language are clearly identified and the targets set are well focused.
41. The school has very effective systems to monitor and promote attendance. Registers are marked speedily, correctly and efficiently at the start of the school day and after lunch. All absences are properly noted and contact made with parents to explain the absence. Attendance figures are properly aggregated on a weekly basis and emerging patterns of absence noted and followed up in order to minimise possible escalation.
42. The headteacher and other staff provide very good role models in promoting high standards of good behaviour. The good behaviour policy is consistently applied by all members of staff, many of whom were seen to pre-empt incidents of possible misbehaviour with firm, calm intervention maintaining good tight control.
43. Measures to secure child protection issues have improved and are now effective. The child protection policy is good and the headteacher is named as the designated person. All members of staff are aware of the need for vigilance, the signs to look for and the steps to take if suspicions are aroused. Health and safety is promoted effectively in the school. Potential hazards are identified and remedial action taken as appropriate. All members of staff are safety conscious and watch for the security of the children. Hazardous materials are kept securely away from pupils. Overall, members of staff work hard to create a secure environment in which the well being of pupils is promoted effectively.

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

44. Parents are overwhelmingly supportive of the school and confirm that it has many strengths. A high proportion of parents responded to the questionnaire. All those responding to the questionnaire agree that their children like school and are making good progress. They believe that the school expects their children to work hard and they would feel comfortable approaching the school with a problem. Virtually all parents feel that the school is well led and managed and the teaching is good. They believe that the school is helping the children to become mature and responsible, behaviour in the school is good, the school works closely with parents and they feel well informed about how their children are getting on. Only a very few parents were unhappy about the amount of work to be done at home and the range of activities outside lessons.
45. Parents and other adults are encouraged to involve themselves in the life of the school and many respond enthusiastically by participating in a wide range of activities. Many help regularly within the classroom and around the school as well as on trips and other activities. Helpers are deployed effectively, they are given clear directions and their help is well structured. In addition, parents are supportive of the work that their children are expected to do at home. There is an active Parents' and Friends' Association that organises a range of social and fund raising events in support of the school.
46. A recent initiative by parents in co-operation with the school and the authorities has been the introduction of the walking bus to alleviate the congestion in the roads around the school, when pupils are dropped off for school in the mornings. Pupils are assembled at a local club car park approximately a quarter of a mile from the school and then under direct close supervision walk to school. The ratio of parents to children is good, safety issues are observed and the exercise is completed effectively. The school values highly the contributions made by parents that materially enhance the children's learning and development.
47. Information to parents is satisfactory overall. A range of letters and newsletters keeps parents well advised about events and activities being organised. The governors' annual report to parents and the prospectus give appropriate background information. Parents confirm that they are offered ample opportunities to discuss their children's progress with the maintenance of an open-door policy. Reports to parents give much good detailed information about progress and what the children know and can do. However, there is no information in the reports about areas identified for improvement or future targets. Several parents also said that they did not receive sufficient information about what is to be taught each term.
48. The school makes every effort to ensure that parents have the opportunity to take part in the identification and provision for the special educational needs of their children. There are good systems to inform parents of their children's education within the special educational needs procedures of the school. Similarly parents who have children with English as an additional language are kept fully informed and involved in their children's education.

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

49. Leadership and management are very good and have a beneficial impact on pupils' learning. The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy and the governors, has a

good understanding of the strengths and areas for development at the school and has worked hard to successfully tackle the issues which were raised at the previous inspection. The quality of teaching has improved through better planning and the successful introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The governors have planned carefully to improve the provision for children in the foundation stage. Subject leaders have improved their role in developing schemes and policies, although more remains to be done in monitoring the pupils' progress to ensure consistency between classes. Standards have been at least maintained at similar levels as in 1997 although there was a decline in mathematics which has now been reversed. The school now meets all statutory requirements including those for child protection.

50. The management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The recently appointed special educational needs co-ordinator provides good leadership and has a good grasp of the needs and aspirations of the pupils with special educational needs. Teaching and support staff successfully fulfil the requirements of the Code of Practice for Special Educational Needs. The governors have a good understanding of this aspect of the school's work. The register of pupils with special educational needs is kept up-to-date and pupils' progress is monitored well. The school also manages the provision for pupils with English as an additional language effectively. There are good systems to ensure that support is matched to the pupils' needs and additional support from outside agencies is managed well. The school makes good use of funds provided to support pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. The provision of additional staff to work with these groups of pupils has been a high priority for the governors and has resulted in effective and well-focused support.
51. The governors are very supportive of the school and have a clear understanding of its work. They are well organised and play a key role in strategic development and in monitoring the school's performance through analysing test results and through visits to monitor the teaching and learning. Governors have a good understanding of the principles of best value and tenders or major purchases of supplies and services. They are prudent and forward thinking in trialling new initiatives before committing the school to large expenditure. The developments in information and communication technology (ICT) are a case in point where the school has experimented with a new system of class teaching using a large screen and as this has met with success there are plans to extend the initiative to all classes. Another effective spending decision has been to increase the number of support staff working in classrooms and this has had a beneficial effect on standards. Governors are involved well in strategic planning. The school's development plan is a helpful document which identifies priorities clearly and includes costs and measures of success. Progress in meeting the targets in the plan is reviewed regularly and the governors' sub-committees monitor its success and where necessary allocate additional funds, resources or time. Much thought goes into ensuring that the funds are available to maintain new initiatives.
52. Financial control is robust and there are good systems to control expenditure. The governors have built up a large surplus representing almost 12 per cent of the budget. These funds have been set aside for new building work at the school and are being used well. Financial decisions receive serious attention and funds are used wisely. The administrative staff provide very good support and their effective organisational skills and pleasant and efficient approach contribute to the smooth running of the school. Since the previous inspection the subject leaders have been allocated budgets. Budgets vary between subjects according to priority in the

development plan and are sufficient to maintain the good quality of resources. Subject leaders carefully account for the funds and use them well.

53. The role of the subject leaders has improved since the previous inspection and there is more consistency in the subjects. However, assessment and its use to monitor the pupils' performance is underdeveloped in most subjects. The subject leaders have developed helpful schemes of work and co-ordinators for literacy and numeracy have successfully guided their colleagues through these initiatives. Similarly, the recently appointed co-ordinator for ICT leads her subject with enthusiasm and determination and as a result standards are rising.
54. The staff are an effective team, and all are valued and contribute much to the quality of education. There are sufficient teachers who have suitable training and expertise and they make a good contribution to the pupils' progress. The school has an above average number of support staff and they are fully involved in lessons, in working with pupils with English as an additional language and pupils with special educational needs. They make a very good contribution to the pupils' progress. They are highly regarded by staff and pupils and have benefited much from rigorous training. The school's training programme is well organised and linked to priorities in the development plan. Training has been particularly effective in English, mathematics and ICT. Staff who are new to the school receive helpful advice and support and soon settle into the school's routines. The staff handbook and guidance for supply teachers are useful documents. The school would make a good provider of initial teacher training. There is an effective system to monitor the performance of the headteacher and teachers; the governors have set challenging targets which are reviewed regularly. The headteacher has a rigorous programme of monitoring teaching and this has raised the quality of teaching.
55. The school has good resources. There are sufficient high quality computers and a very good range of software. The small library is attractive and welcoming and has a good range of books which include provision for pupils with English as an additional language. Resources are well cared for and used effectively to enhance learning. The staff have made most of the apparatus for mathematics and these resources are of high quality. Staff make good use of the resources available. The school has good accommodation and has been extensively refurbished in keeping with the original Victorian building. Although some classrooms are rather small, the staff make good use of space. The staff also enhance the school by displaying pupils' work very effectively. This does much to raise the pupils' pride in their achievements. The school also enhances its teaching resources through extensive visits. The recent resurfacing of the play area for the youngest children is of high quality. The school has correctly identified the need to provide more apparatus for outdoor play for children in the reception class.
56. Taking into account:
- the average attainment on admission and the above average costs of educating the pupils;
  - the above average standards achieved at the end of Year 2;
  - the good quality of the teaching and curriculum;
  - the school provides good value for money.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER

57. In order to build upon the good quality of education and the standards achieved the headteacher, staff and governors should:

\*Accelerate the rate of progress for pupils by:

- making better use of assessment to identify the pupils' achievement and using the information to build on what pupils already know;
- making more effective use of targets for pupils which are easily measured;
- ensuring that marking is well focused and used to guide the pupils on how they might improve;
- extending the role of the subject leaders in monitoring most subjects.

(Paragraphs 5, 24, 40, 49, 53, 74, 86, 92, 94, 103 and 125)

**Other less important issues which the school should consider for inclusion in the action plan:**

- \*Improving the provision for outdoor play for children in the reception class. (Paragraphs 55, 58 and 70)
- \*Extending opportunities for pupils to use computers to support their work in other subjects. (Paragraphs 6, 24, 78, 91, 104 and 108)
- Improving information to parents about what is to be taught, and providing guidance in annual reports on how parents might help their children to improve. (Paragraph 47)

**\*Denotes that the school has already identified this issue in its improvement plan.**

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	52
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	35

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
6	16	38	36	0	4	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/A	269
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	18

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/A	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/A	62

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	13

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	2.9
National comparative data	5.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	42	39

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	39	39	39
	Girls	39	39	38
	Total	78	78	77
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	96 (92)	96 (94)	95 (95)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	38	38	39
	Girls	38	38	39
	Total	76	76	78
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (88)	94 (95)	96 (99)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

### Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	0
Indian	4
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	171
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

### Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

## **Teachers and classes**

### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26.9
Average class size	29.9

### **Education support staff: YR – Y2**

Total number of education support staff	16
Total aggregate hours worked per week	275

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## **Financial information**

Financial year	2000/2001
----------------	-----------

	£
Total income	543,597
Total expenditure	511,144
Expenditure per pupil	1,989
Balance brought forward from previous year	33,170
Balance carried forward to next year	65,623

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	269
Number of questionnaires returned	110

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	68	32	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	68	32	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	52	45	0	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	43	45	10	0	2
The teaching is good.	80	19	0	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	56	41	2	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	82	18	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	68	32	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	61	35	2	1	1
The school is well led and managed.	79	19	0	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	69	29	0	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	25	39	17	1	18

### Other issues raised by parents

Parents spoke highly of the work of the school and were particularly impressed by the teaching of reading and writing. They feel that the school is building effectively on its good reputation. A few parents would like more information about what is to be taught each term.

## **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**

58. Children start in the reception classes in the academic year in which they are five. Most children have benefited from pre-school education in either a playgroup or a nursery. They start school with average levels of skills, knowledge and understanding for their age. The school has improved its provision for the foundation stage since the previous inspection and has recently developed an attractive play area, although more equipment is needed for outdoor play. Children make good progress and soon adjust to school life and its routines. Teachers and classroom assistants, who provide good teaching, support them very well. The foundation stage co-ordinator oversees the work of her colleagues to ensure that skills, knowledge and understanding are built upon consistently in the reception classes. The school's assessments of children on admission to the reception classes are used effectively to plan work that is matched to the needs of the individuals. By the end of the reception year, almost all children exceed the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, and mathematical and creative development. In knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development the children achieve the early learning goals. Children with special educational needs are identified very early and the staff work hard to provide very good individual programmes of work for these children that meet their needs and provide sufficient challenge. The parents speak highly of the work done in reception and feel very involved in helping their children at home and at school.

#### **Personal, social and emotional development**

59. Children make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development and exceed the early learning goals by the end of reception. Children use their environment with confidence, they are experienced in choosing their own areas to work in and display good levels of independence. They know how to use equipment and operate a tape recorder. Children co-operate well together, and can take turns. For example, whilst playing in the sand two children shared their ideas and supported one another; "Let's do this slowly". All children dress and undress themselves for games and undertake responsibilities within class. However, a few children find it difficult to work independently and require the support of an adult to help them maintain concentration and complete their task.
60. The teaching of this area of learning is good. Staff have worked hard to develop children's personal, social and emotional development. They make good use of circle time to encourage friendships and to help children to express their feelings about themselves and others and to learn routines. They make provision for children to work together, for example, during reading time four children played lotto. Children readily talk about their work and most sustain good levels of concentration. All staff are caring and sensitive, they celebrate achievement in all aspects of children's learning through the use of 'star charts' and children respond well.

#### **Communication, language and literacy**

61. By the end of reception the children exceed the early learning goals in communication, language and literacy. The teaching is good as staff achieve a good balance between the consistent development of skills and providing good

opportunities for the children to explore language through games, rhymes and role-plays. All children make good progress in speaking and listening. They talk confidently in large groups and listen attentively to the contributions made by others. Children willingly initiate conversation and are supported well in their speech by staff who provide good role models. They talk in sentences and readily ask questions about areas of interest, For example, religious objects from the Jewish faith. Children have a wide vocabulary, using words such as 'disappointed' when responding to a story, and provide a range of three letter words to support their phonic work. There are many opportunities for children to develop their speaking and listening skills and this aspect is taught well. The children listen to stories on the tape recorder and participate in role-play in the classroom shop. At the end of lessons, the staff encourage the children to describe their work; on some occasions there is too much focus on one child and the remaining children loose interest.

62. Children make good progress in writing. They are beginning to write independently, using their knowledge of letter sounds to write unknown words. Higher attaining children use full stops and capital letters to construct sentences and all children have made improvements in their handwriting. There is evidence of increased control over the size and orientation of letters and children's writing is clear and legible. A range of writing activities including acrostic poems, lists and story writing are planned to meet the varying needs of all children and children benefit from working in small ability groups. Marking provides the context in which learning takes place and generally gives good support for lower attaining children. However, on occasions there are missed opportunities to extend learning, particularly for higher attaining pupils, as insufficient use is made of target setting.
63. Children make good progress in reading. All children understand the conventions of books and show an understanding of how books are organised. They know that the title gives clues about the story and are familiar with the terms 'author' and 'illustrator'. Children enjoy books, they listen attentively to stories and willingly respond when asked how they would feel if they were one of the characters. Most children read with confidence and will attempt unknown words using picture clues and phonic blending. They can identify initial letter sounds and know vowel sounds in three letter words. Higher attaining pupils read with expression and enjoy the story linking it to their own experiences; "We buried my dad in the sand too". All children can retell the story and make sensible predictions as to what will happen next. Their enthusiasm for reading is encouraged by the school's home reading scheme, which provides opportunities for children to share their reading at home. This support from home has been valuable in helping children to make such good progress in reading. Teachers keep detailed records of children's attainment in reading and identify future targets for learning.

## **Mathematical development**

64. By the end of reception the children exceed the early learning goals in their mathematical development. Children, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make good progress in their mathematical development. They are confidently working with numbers to 10 and can count and recognise numbers above 20. Higher attaining children count, recognise and write numbers to 100. Children can count in 2's and count backwards from 10. They can estimate a number to 10 and check by counting. All children can add and subtract numbers to at least 10 and some can record their work using appropriate number sentences. The teaching is good. There are effective opportunities to extend children's mathematical skills, for example, playing 'What's the time Mr. Wolf'

reinforces vocabulary on time Children learn about money by playing in the shop and have explored three-dimensional shapes from making models. Very good use is made of ability groups to ensure that all children's needs are being met; they respond well to additional support from support staff and parents. Detailed records of children's progress in mathematics are regularly updated and well maintained, they indicate clearly the attainment of each child.

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

65. By the end of reception most children attain the early learning goals in knowledge and understanding of the world. Overall progress in this area of learning is satisfactory for all pupils including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language. Children make good progress in the scientific aspects of this area of learning and exceed the early learning goals. The teaching of this aspect is good. The children display a very good knowledge of the life cycle of a butterfly and a frog. They know that frogs like it better on land because they need to breathe and have been introduced to appropriate vocabulary, chrysalis, cocoon, and pupa. The use of the school garden enhances the work in science; children look for ladybirds in their natural habitat and use magnifiers to observe them in more detail. Children have visited a local rural centre and developed their scientific knowledge through experiences such as pond dipping and walking in the environment. They use information books to support their work on minibeasts.
66. The teaching of other aspects of this area of learning is satisfactory. In information and communication technology, children meet the levels expected for their age. Children can follow a simple program on the computer and display good control over the mouse. They are learning to use the keyboard to type their names and can print their work out with help from the teacher. Children can operate the tape recorder to listen to a story. In history children have observed changes in themselves from a baby and in geography they have made a locality study identifying buildings and features in the park. Their historical and geographical understanding is appropriate for their age.

## **Creative development**

67. Children make good progress in their creative development and by the end of the reception have exceeded the early learning goals in their creative development. The teaching is good with some very good teaching of skills and techniques as the staff have very good subject knowledge and make effective use of training and the work of famous artists. The children undertake a range of activities, which include accurate observational drawings of ladybirds, detailed and effective pattern work and sophisticated printing techniques. Children have a good understanding of the work of other artists and have produced good work in the styles of Amedo Modigliani and Mackenzie Thorpe. They have modelled using recyclable materials and make collages from fabrics to good effect. The children are skilful in using a variety of other media and tools. .
68. In music, the children are beginning to use symbols to illustrate a sound poem and are learning about the role of the conductor. They play a range of percussion instruments with confidence and imagination. For example, when exploring the movement of animals, one child slowly rubbed two blocks together to make the sound of a snake. Children sing familiar songs and rhymes very well; they understand pitch and have been introduced to appropriate vocabulary such as pace

and dynamics. They respond well to the staff who show enthusiasm for musical activities.

69. Scrutiny of teachers' plans indicates that children learn about other cultures and festivals such as Divali, Sukket, Eid, Christmas and Easter. They are beginning to show a respect for special religious objects; this was particularly noticeable when children very carefully held items from the Jewish Faith. The school has recently extended its resources for role-play, and children now have opportunities to engage in a wide range of play activities such as baby clinic, estate agents and cafe. Classroom assistants play a crucial role in supporting children in this area. In design and technology, the children have experienced modelling dough, lacing and threading, and their work is at an appropriate level for their age. As part of their work on the local environment children have been involved in designing a playground. They have constructed well-made models and used different materials to join junk containers together. Children use construction materials appropriately but in some classes these are not structured to provide sufficient challenge to the wide ranges of ability present in the class.

### **Physical development**

70. By the end of reception, the children attain the early learning goals in their physical development. They are confident in the hall and when using the outdoor area. They show a suitable understanding of space by finding their own area to work in and can remember appropriate vocabulary such as 'control', 'balance' and 'strike'. In games children steadily improve their skills in throwing, catching, skipping and jumping. They can strike a ball with a bat and direct it with control to a partner and can balance items on different parts of their body. Children persevere in their work and show imagination. They confidently demonstrate their efforts to others and work co-operatively with a partner. The outdoor play area requires apparatus to further develop children's gross motor skills of climbing, balancing, wheeling and jumping. Children use a range of equipment to develop their fine motor skills. They use scissors and writing implements with an appropriate grip and manipulate malleable materials using tools.
71. The teaching is satisfactory. Teachers' plans are detailed and relate well to the early learning goals. Short term planning clearly identifies the learning objectives for the lesson and allows for the different needs of children within the class particularly in their language and mathematical development. Children are well supported through a lively and attractive learning environment. Teachers' use of time at the end of lessons is sometimes ineffective as there is a lack of review of the children's progress. On some occasions there are missed opportunities to reinforce and extend children's learning through appropriate supplementary tasks.

### **ENGLISH**

72. In last year's national tests the percentage of seven-year-old pupils attaining the expected standard was well above average in both reading and writing when compared with national average and with similar schools. In reading, a half of the pupils achieved the higher level 3 and almost a third achieved the higher level in writing. For 2001 the provisional results show that a similar percentage of pupils achieved the expected standards in reading and all pupils achieved the expected standard in writing. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher level in writing was similar to the previous year whilst there was a slight decline in the percentage of readers achieving the higher level. The high level of pupils with special

educational needs, over a quarter of the present pupils, has had an impact on the proportion attaining the higher level this year. Inspection evidence confirms that for pupils at the end of Year 2 standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing are all well above the average expected of seven-year-olds. Since the previous inspection, the school has successfully maintained its high standards and the trend has kept pace with national improvements in the subject.

73. The school is fully committed to maintaining and improving its present high standards. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented very effectively and developments, such as additional reading and writing opportunities, have been identified to ensure that the provision meets the needs of the pupils. Teachers have a good level of subject expertise and apply the elements of the literacy hour to meet the pupils' needs well. Teaching is good overall. Teachers' planning is good; learning objectives are clearly identified and tasks are well matched to the needs of the pupils. Teachers are skilful in their questioning to ensure that the pupils know and understand what they are expected to do. Learning support staff are used very well to support and extend the pupils' learning. All pupils are positively encouraged to make contributions to class and group activities. Provision for the pupils with special educational needs is very good and, as a result, their progress is very good. Homework is used effectively to extend and support the pupils' reading skills. Parents speak highly of the school's provision for reading. Pupils with English as an additional language make very good progress and it is a mark of the school's success in teaching these pupils that most of them attain average levels in reading and writing by the end of Year 2.
74. Teachers' marking has improved since the previous inspection. All marking is supportive of the pupils' efforts and careful assessment comments are included. Some teachers also add written comments on how the pupils can improve their work. Teachers' assessment procedures are good and are used to set yearly targets for pupils and cohorts. As yet there is an insufficient link between marking, short term target setting, assessment and planning.
75. By the end of the infants, pupils' speaking and listening skills are well above average. Throughout the school pupils have good opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills. In many lessons the staff use discussions with pupils to promote clear and effective speech. Pupils follow instructions and listen intently, particularly to stories. There are also good opportunities for pupils to discuss their work together in groups. This method works well in the teaching of reading where pupils are able to express their views and form opinions. Pupils listen avidly to stories and they make very perceptive predictions as to what might happen next.
76. The pupils clearly enjoy reading and make good progress and attain well above average standards by the end of Year 2. By the age of seven, the pupils enjoy a whole range of stories, poems and information books. They make good use of the school's very extensive resources to foster their enjoyment of reading. They make good use of their knowledge of the sound of letters to build new words. More able pupils read fluently and with good expression, showing a real understanding of the text. All pupils are avid readers and make valiant efforts to understand the meaning of unfamiliar words. They are confident when reading to an audience, for example, the narrative for the Christmas Story, and particularly their own writing about 'The Lost Toy.' They are familiar with finding books in the library using the colour codes and are beginning to understand the new Junior Dewey system. They are confident learners when using lists of contents and indexes to find information.

77. The pupils thoroughly enjoy writing and make good progress, achieving at well above average levels by the end of Year 2. They understand such terms as adjective, noun and verb and the main features of punctuation. More able pupils in Year 2 use direct speech correctly in their writing and, in their poems about 'Feelings' they choose words for both interest and effect. In their stories about 'The Lost Toy' their sentences are well constructed and words are chosen with imagination and care. All pupils in Year 2 write sentences that are interesting with good descriptive words. Spelling is accurate and their handwriting is well formed but not yet joined.
78. The pupils make good use of their literacy skills in other subjects. they consistently apply the principles of spelling and handwriting in their work in history and geography. They use a wide vocabulary when describing their feelings and emotions in religious education lessons. Although the pupils have sufficient basic skills of word processing they have limited opportunities to use information and communication technology in their English work.
79. The subject leader manages the development of literacy very well. She monitors teaching and learning, supports staff and ensures governors are well informed about the school's provision. Test results are analysed, targets are set and the pupils' progress is tracked by an effective system introduced since the last inspection. The library and the large and varied collections of reading books distributed around the schools have a very positive impact on the high standards of reading that the school enjoys. The library is attractive and has a good range of information books that supports the curriculum.

## **MATHEMATICS**

80. By the end of Year 2 pupils attain standards in mathematics which are above average. The provisional results of national tests in 2001 show that pupils achieve well. The school has increased the proportion of pupils attaining average and above average levels due to a good emphasis on developing pupils' mental arithmetic skills, understanding of mathematical vocabulary and knowledge of how to apply mathematical facts to solving problems. Following the previous inspection there was a dip in overall standards and, although results remained above average, there were relative weaknesses in pupils' understanding of shape, space and measures. Analysis of results by the headteacher and subject leader has led to a sharpening up of teaching and consequently there has been a stronger emphasis on improving the breadth and depth of pupils' mathematical skills. This approach, linked to the National Numeracy Strategy, has helped to improve the teaching of mathematics but more remains to be done to achieve the high levels reported at the time of the previous inspection and to match the pupils' performance in English. When compared with schools with similar intakes the pupils' performance was average and provisional results in 2001 show that this level has been maintained.
81. Although standards are sufficiently high they are lower than those achieved in reading and writing and this represents a relative weakness in performance. There is no difference between the performance of boys and girls. Inspection evidence shows that overall progress in mathematics is good between year groups. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support and their individual education plans include well focused targets which enable the staff to provide work that is matched to their needs. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress as they receive effective support.

82. By the end of Year 2, the pupils have a well above average understanding of number and apply their skills well in problem solving. One of the strengths in developing the pupils' mathematical understanding is the way in which teachers link numeracy to work in other subjects. In art and design the teachers skilfully develop the pupils' understanding of pattern and link this well to work on symmetry and portraits. In design and technology the pupils are encouraged to estimate and measure carefully as they design and make models. The teachers have also improved the use of computers to enhance the pupils' number skills. In lessons in Year 1 the pupils gave an instruction to a ladybird and directed it to several destinations on the screen, improving their skills of estimating and knowledge of directional vocabulary.
83. The pupils have very good skills in calculating mentally, aided by their knowledge of multiplication facts and number bonds. They use this knowledge well in solving problems and the more able sometimes use several strategies to find the correct answer. The pupils are very confident in addition and subtraction and have a secure knowledge of multiplication and division of small numbers. The pupils' progress is helped by their teachers' thorough knowledge of the National Numeracy Strategy and the strong emphasis given to developing mathematical vocabulary. This effective teaching enables pupils to cope well with different types of problems and to use appropriate number operations. The pupils have an above average understanding of shape, space and measures. Many recognise centimetres and metres and make reasonable estimates when measuring. Their work in information and communication technology (ICT) has helped them to achieve above average understanding of graphs and charts. The pupils collect data and then make a variety of graphs and charts. The more able extract information from the graphs and clearly understand that this form of presentation is effective.
84. Almost all pupils thoroughly enjoy mathematics and those in Year 2 are keen and avid learners. The pupils like to compete with each other to be the first to answer a question but also listen carefully to what their teachers and friends have to say. During lessons, the pupils work hard, produce a good quantity of work and present it well. In group-work the pupils share ideas and discuss their work sensibly. They are keen to help each other. Pupils are very careful when using mathematical apparatus.
85. The quality of teaching and learning ranges from excellent to satisfactory and is good overall. Teachers have good subject knowledge and also have benefited much from training in the National Numeracy Strategy. The subject leader has played a key role in promoting teachers' confidence in using the National Numeracy Strategy. Lessons are planned well and the work set for classes in each year group is similar. This ensures consistency in coverage but not all teachers are equally confident and some lessons proceed at a much faster pace as expectations of the pupils are higher. Similarly, the pace of learning varies. It is at its best where the teachers use time allocations for each section of the lessons and tell the pupils how much time they have to complete a task. The pupils respond keenly to these challenges and work productively. In the excellent and very good lessons, the teachers explain very clearly what is to be learned and during the lesson refer to these objectives so that pupils have a clear understanding of what is expected of them. Most teachers move around the room during lessons providing support and guidance and checking on how well the pupils have understood. A strength in the teaching of mathematics is the way in which support staff work alongside groups of pupils, skilfully intervening with challenging questions. Relationships are very good and help to inspire confidence in the pupils so that they are willing to have a go at

solving complex problems. The staff use praise and encouragement very effectively to promote learning.

86. The teaching of mathematics has improved since the previous inspection. However, there are some inconsistencies between classes. More needs to be done through monitoring learning and using assessment to ensure that teachers maximise the rate of learning. The subject leader has a clear understanding of how to raise standards even higher. The school has good resources for mathematics, many made by the staff. ICT is used regularly to support and enhance learning.

## **SCIENCE**

87. By the end of Year 2 pupils attain above average standards. The provisional results of teachers' assessments in 2001 show that pupils achieve above average standards and that a third of pupils achieved the higher level 3. Standards in 1997 were above average. The school has maintained these levels of performance and standards are sufficiently high. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls. Progress in all aspects of science is good due to effective teaching and a good balance between practical work and recording. The pupils do particularly well in using and applying scientific knowledge and have a wide subject vocabulary. When compared with similar schools performance in 2000 the school achieved average levels.
88. Inspection findings confirm that pupils' attainment is above the national expectations and the pupils make good progress. The work in their books shows that pupils gain more detailed knowledge and understanding as they move through the school. Year 1 pupils gave simple accounts of how animals grow and change and related this well to the different stages of their own development. They produced good descriptions of the difference to a hot cross bun mixture before and after cooking; "It was gooey and sticky, now it's shiny and crusty". In their study of forces, they gave simple, sensible suggestions for how things move on different surfaces and decided the car would go quicker on the floor because it was "smooth and slippier." Year 2 pupils kept detailed bean diaries and knew what helped or hindered their growth. They made good guesses about whether different materials are natural or man-made and gave sensible explanations of the difference; "You get wood from trees but plastic is made in a factory." They set up simple experiments to find out how to complete an electrical circuit and knew that; "You need to fix the wire to the battery to make it work." Overall, there is good coverage of scientific knowledge and understanding and particular emphasis is given to the planned development of the important skills of investigation and experimentation.
89. Teaching and learning are good. Work is carefully planned between classes to make sure all the pupils have the same learning activities. Clear links are made with previous work so pupils can make the necessary connections. In a Year 2 class, the teacher made good use of the work one pupil did at home to remind the class about what makes a healthy meal. They used appropriate vocabulary to group the different foods and made good suggestions for how the teacher's planned meal could be improved. In the good and very good lessons the teachers are knowledgeable and enthusiastic about science and this generates a high level of interest and confidence in the pupils. Pupils are very well motivated to make contributions and, in a Year 1 investigation into sound, they listened attentively to both teachers' extremely skilful introductions to their lessons. A sense of excitement was built up and pupils were fascinated throughout. The tasks and activities chosen help the pupils to develop their knowledge and understanding and to make good

progress during most lessons. However, in some lessons the same worksheet or activity is given to the whole class to record their work and this restricts the challenge for the more able. In most classes the pupils are told what they will be learning at the beginning of the lesson and this helps them to have a clearer understanding of the work they are covering. Often the end of the lesson is also used well to discuss what the pupils have learnt and what they will be doing next. In a Year 2 lesson, when the pupils had finished planning their own meals, the teacher chose some pupils to explain their choices and why they thought they were healthy and balanced. This led to an interesting discussion about some of the more unusual combinations!

90. Teachers use questions well to check what the pupils already know and to make sure they have understood the work they are doing. This is particularly effective when the questions challenge the pupils to explain their thinking and use appropriate vocabulary. As a consequence of more probing questions Year 1 pupils were confident in explaining what makes for a fair test and predicting which sounds would be high or low, loud or soft.
91. In most lessons the resources are prepared and organised effectively to support pupils in their investigations. However, information and communication technology (ICT) is not used sufficiently to support the teaching and learning of science. The learning support assistants and adult helpers are also used to good effect and this means that pupils are given help where it is most needed. The support given to pupils with special needs is particularly good. The assistants help the pupils to come up with their own ideas and praise them for their efforts. Good use of time means that most lessons move along at a brisk pace and pupils stay focussed on what they are doing. They are encouraged and motivated to concentrate and finish their work. Relationships are good throughout the school and an atmosphere is created where the pupils can become confident learners and support each other. Teachers constantly stress the importance of working together and sharing ideas. In the Year 1 work on sound this led to a lively discussion and a high level of co-operation.
92. Throughout the school, pupils' work is regularly marked. However, there are few comments to help the pupils and teachers know what has worked well or what the pupils need to do to improve further. Overall teachers keep good quality class records of how well individual pupils have understood each topic and these are passed on to the next teacher. There are plans to review and rationalise the current method for assessment and recording to ensure a more consistent approach in order to build up a more accurate picture of the pupils' progress.
93. Pupils' attitudes are good throughout the school and sometimes very good. In a very good Year 1 lesson, pupils were very keen to participate in their investigations and were eagerly responsive to the teacher's questions. They listened very well, followed the instructions carefully and were highly motivated. Overall, pupils show a great deal of interest in their lessons and try hard to concentrate and complete their work. In discussion they are keen to talk about their work and show enthusiasm and enjoyment. They offer interesting suggestions and ideas, e.g. in guessing why there would be less echo outside Year 1 pupils decided it was because it would be more open than the hall. Pupils work well together. They share, take turns and use materials and equipment sensibly.
94. The subject leader for science is knowledgeable, enthusiastic and keen to develop the subject further. She has a good understanding of what needs to be done,

particularly in developing more consistency in teacher assessment and making sure the use of worksheets is appropriate and challenging.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

95. Attainment in art and design is well above expectations for seven-year-old pupils. This is an improvement since the last inspection when attainment was judged to be above average. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make good and sometimes very good progress.
96. The school overflows with beautiful displays of the pupils' artistic talents. Their considerable skills in drawing, painting, printing and modelling are very evident in the central hall display. The school's current art theme of "Faces" includes press printing in the style of Modigliani; collage using 'Dream Nights' by David Dean and 'People' by McKenzie Thorpe as inspiration. This work is of high quality and is attributable to the successful combination of teaching basic skills and techniques well, using other artists as examples and providing opportunities for pupils to experiment with a wide range of media. Year 1 contributions included sensitive texture, colour and composition in the style of Ben Tobias; two-dimensional mathematical shapes arranged into scenes of movement in the style of Paul Klee; and a large mask constructed with modelling rock. Faces in the several styles of Pablo Picasso and Paul Klee together with screen prints and fabric printed self portraits joined together in an American Lovers' Quilt were contributed by Year 2. Additionally, the displays were accompanied by poems and acrostics composed by Year 2 pupils and presented for display by using computers. The teachers make good use of pupils' literacy skills and successfully use pupils' art work as an inspiration for poetry writing.
97. In the lessons observed the pupils in Year 2 demonstrated considerable skill and sensitivity when sketching a bowl of fruit and in the manner in which they applied pastels and watercolour and inks. The pupils think very carefully about their compositions and show a pride in work. Younger pupils apply themselves well when modelling clay birds, drawing by observation and scraper boarding with wax crayon.
98. The quality of teaching in lessons is very good. Lessons are well planned; clear objectives are shared with pupils and achieved successfully. Teachers make good use of extensive, high quality resources to encourage and extend the pupils' artistic experiences. The school benefits from working with the Advisory Teacher for Art who inspires pupils and teachers alike, acting as a catalyst for the school's artistic activities. The subject leader has great skill and plays a significant role in the school's artistic development. Teachers are well supported and work hard to maintain all aspects of art teaching.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

99. Attainment in design and technology is appropriate for pupils aged seven although there was little evidence of pupils suggesting ways of improving their work. All the pupils take a full part in the curriculum; those with special educational needs achieve appropriate standards. It was only possible to observe one lesson during the inspection and evidence was collected from examining completed work and discussion with the pupils. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress overall and good progress in Year 1 due to the effective teaching.

100. The pupils in Year 2 described correctly the design process they used for their coats for Joseph and the manner in which original designs were improved. They detailed how materials and fabrics were considered and chosen for the coat and the difficulties they experienced in cutting the fabrics with scissors, especially felt. The completed coats showed that the pupils use scissors with care and accuracy. In discussion, they suggested ways of improvement but no recording had been made in their folders. The excellent lesson observed in Year 1 built on the skills the pupils had learned whilst building their go-carts. In constructing their carts the pupils had made designs for consideration and having amended their original ideas, they then built the carts using a range of materials. They thoroughly enjoyed testing their carts and made further suggestions for improved performance. The whole process was recorded in drawings, explanations, photographs and evaluations using computers and their own writing skills.
101. In preparation for their new project to produce a moving picture the pupils cut out and constructed an example of a moving picture at the same time discussing with their peer's ideas for a moving picture. A well-chosen "pop-up" book shown to them by their teacher had inspired their imagination.
102. Overall teaching and learning are satisfactory but there was excellent teaching in one class in Year 1 where the lesson was very well planned with clear learning objectives that were shared with the pupils at the beginning and during the lesson. The teacher's knowledge and understanding of the subject was excellent and this was used to good effect in the way in which she involved her pupils in discussion and questioned their understanding. As a consequence, the pupils enjoy their lessons and make very good progress in extending their designing skills. The lesson had an appropriate pace and rigour that was led by the teacher's on-going assessment of the pupils' progress. They responded well to the highest expectations their teacher had of them and the challenges she set them. Most teachers have an appropriate understanding of the scheme of work for design and technology. Lesson planning is satisfactory and lessons are prepared well. The support staff play a good part in supporting pupils with special educational needs.
103. The pupils enjoy design and technology and work hard. They take good care of resources and tools. Assessment in the subject is underdeveloped and this leads to some inconsistencies between classes and year groups. For example, the rate of progress in one Year 1 class outstrips learning in other classes as insufficient account is taken of previous learning. The subject leader supports colleagues and has been influential in the setting of standards in the subject. She has a clear view on the future direction of the subject to raise the pupils' achievements. Resources are good and easily accessible, they are used effectively to enhance learning.

## **GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY**

104. Standards in history and geography are in line with those expected for pupils aged seven, have been maintained at this level since the previous inspection and are sufficiently high. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress. The school's use of visits and the local area enhance the pupils' learning in these subjects. Due to the school's timetable arrangements few lessons were seen. The quality of teaching varied from good to poor. Analysis of pupils' work and discussions with the pupils show that teaching is satisfactory. The school allocates sufficient time for geography and history and an appropriate range of topics is covered. Pupils' historical and geographical knowledge is appropriate for seven-year-olds but, due to the over-

reliance on simple worksheets in some classes in Year 1, there is insufficient development of pupils' research skills. There is some good historical writing, mainly in Year 2, where pupils imaginatively and accurately describe the lives of famous people and their impact on society. However, in some classes in Year 1, the teachers do not extend the more able sufficiently.

105. Planning for both subjects is satisfactory and there are now guidelines that cover all National Curriculum requirements. The teachers also use national guidance to plan what will be covered and when and how it will fit in to the term's work. Appropriate links are made to other aspects of the curriculum such as drama, mathematics and writing. Use of information and communication technology (ICT) and the Internet is at an early stage of development. The curriculum for both subjects is enriched and enlivened by a very good range of visits, visitors and community links. The recently appointed co-ordinator realises the need for a more systematic approach to checking pupils' attainment and progress, as they move through the school.
106. In history and geography teaching is satisfactory overall, although it ranges from very good to poor in Year 1. In each year group teachers plan the work together and this helps to make sure that pupils are covering the same work in the different classes. However, insufficient adjustment is made at the planning stage to reflect the range of pupils' abilities. Pupils with special educational needs are involved sensitively in discussions and are given good support from their teachers and learning assistants. In history, Year 1 pupils are developing a secure awareness of time passing and are making relevant comparisons between the present and the past. They go on interesting history walks round the local area with a particularly knowledgeable grandparent acting as guide. In one lesson good use was made of photographs from their visit to help them understand how the use of buildings such as the bandstand and the shoe factory has changed over the years. In most lessons, teachers give clear explanations so pupils know what they have to do and why they are doing it. They use questions well to remind pupils of work they have previously covered and to encourage them to share their ideas. In a Year 2 class pupils were confidently responding to questions about their visit to Holdenby House and were eager to tell the teacher what they remembered. This was then used to help them realise how equipment such as kettles, irons and warming pans can be used to tell them about the past. Using their well developed writing skills, Year 2 pupils had previously produced imaginative accounts of life as a Victorian servant, describing it as harsh, lonely and tiring. During a walk around the school pupils in another Year 2 class were being history detectives and were making sensible comparisons between the old and new buildings.
107. In one very good geography lesson in Year 1, very high expectations and imaginative use of resources and display kept the pupils enthralled throughout. Drama and music were used very effectively to engage pupils' interest and help them reflect on ways in which their lives differed from children in Peru. The teacher made sure all the pupils contributed and kept the pace tight by involving pupils directly and actively. Weak management of the pupils' behaviour in another Year 1 class meant that very little learning took place.
108. A brisk pace and clear time limits mean pupils stay focussed throughout the lessons and finish their work. When the introduction is too long some pupils become restless and are less attentive. Throughout the school relationships are good and most pupils work diligently and sensibly in their groups. The work in their books shows that the recording is mostly on the same worksheets. This is not always appropriate

especially for the younger pupils and does not provide enough challenge for more able pupils.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)**

109. By the end of Year 2, pupils attain the standards expected for their age in ICT. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection and the school has made good headway in improving the quality of teaching and learning. There are more computers and pupils have increased opportunities to learn skills. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress. The subject leader makes a very effective contribution to raising standards and her infectious enthusiasm, skills and the training she has provided have inspired her colleagues to make use of computers in their teaching. More remains to be done to extend the use of computers in other subjects but a good start has been made in mathematics.
110. By the end of Year 2, the pupils have a secure understanding of how to load, save and print their work. The pupils know how to change fonts and use several tools to align their work. They enlarge and reduce the size of print and write captions to describe photographs taken using the digital camera. The pupils know that computers are used in a wide variety of situations for a range of purposes and understand that ICT has advantages over manual methods of writing when correcting mistakes or altering what they have written. They use several programs confidently. In mathematics the pupils have created good symmetrical patterns and used a variety of tools from painting software to make accurate and interesting symmetrical creatures. They draw and paint using the computer and know that they can access information from the Internet. Their recently purchased digital camera is used to good effect to record visits and events and the pupils respond enthusiastically when seeing their images printed. The pupils make good progress in understanding how to control a series of actions using the computer. The teachers effectively encourage the pupils to practise giving instructions to adults about the direction and distance to move and then apply what the pupils have learned to create movements of ladybirds or robots on the screen. The pupils thoroughly enjoyed this activity and made good gains in learning. The moving objects captivated them and this enhanced their learning.
111. Teaching and learning are good. The pupils enjoy using ICT and apply themselves well; they enjoy using new programs. One group of pupils with special educational needs working with a support assistant made good gains in learning about the sounds that letters make as they used the mouse skilfully into position and clicked on pictures making the “sh” sound. The support assistant carefully recorded the pupils’ progress and there was good opportunity for the pupils to share their learning with classmates. The teachers share ideas and have made good improvement in their subject knowledge through effective training. The school is experimenting with a different approach to teaching skills using a demonstration screen and this is proving very effective. There are plans to extend this approach, as equipment becomes available in the near future. The good guidance provided by the subject leader has enabled the teachers to plan more thoroughly and to build consistently on what has been taught before. There is a good range of software which is gradually being introduced as the teachers gain in confidence. The software available for pupils with special educational needs is good and used effectively to promote skills in literacy and numeracy and is having a beneficial impact on these pupils’ improving skills in English and mathematics. The subject leader is developing

an effective system of recording pupils' achievements but this is not consistent across the school.

112. The governors have been very involved in supporting developments through careful financial planning and provision of resources. The appointment of the new subject leader has had a marked impact on the staff's confidence. Training for all staff including classroom assistants has also enabled the teaching to become more effective as the assistants' skills are used effectively. The school has made good use of the training grants to purchase expertise from the local authority and the high quality machines have improved reliability and consequently the use of computers.

## **MUSIC**

113. Standards in music are in line with the expectations for seven-year-old pupils. The quality of singing is good and the pupils' skills of composition are satisfactory. Music makes a significant contribution to the cultural life of the school and to the pupils' personal development. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make good progress.
114. The standard of singing is impressive during lessons, assemblies and on recorded school concerts. The pupils know many songs by heart and show enthusiasm and enjoyment in their singing. Singing is confident, expressive and tuneful, often accompanied by actions, especially in assembly. Teachers' own talent and enthusiasm have a significant impact on the pupils' singing. They lead by example, expect and achieve high standards and their own enthusiasm is infectious. Having live accompaniment enhances the quality, although the pupils sing equally well when unaccompanied.
115. The quality of teaching is good overall. Lessons are well planned; clear objectives are shared with the pupils effectively and achieved successfully. Teachers make good use of extensive, good quality resources to encourage and promote the pupils' practical music making. They work hard to ensure all pupils, whatever their ability or talent, are fully involved in the lesson. The pupils respond positively, handle the instruments with care, enjoy their lessons and make good progress. In Year 2, for example, they play an accompaniment to their song "Natural Food" using chime bars to provide four chords and are beginning to introduce a rhythmic background using tambourines and maracas. They worked diligently with a great deal of concentration and careful encouragement from their teacher. The teacher's questioning introduced an element of evaluation into the lesson.
116. Music has a high profile in the school. The recently appointed subject leader is enthusiastic and talented in encouraging the pupils' music making. She provides good support for the teachers' planning. She is aware that the policy and scheme of work need reviewing and updating in line with new curriculum requirements. Pupils enjoy attending their recorder clubs and listening to concerts and workshops given by visiting musicians. These activities contribute positively to pupils' progress.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

117. By the end of Year 2, standards in physical education are in line with expectations for pupils aged seven. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress. The school has maintained the standards reported at the time of the previous inspection and improved planning and resources, and the role of the subject leader has been extended and improved.
118. By the end of Year 2, pupils travel in different ways using various body parts and are able to balance on different body combinations. The pupils have steadily improved by exploring different ways of travel using direction, level and speed and now can work with a partner to explore a variety of movements, for example, turning, twisting and dodging. Pupils make good gains in their control. They are imaginative and show a good awareness of space. They improve their throwing and catching skills by aiming bean bags at targets and improve the speed and accuracy of their throws. In Year 1, pupils enjoy participating in competitive team games, they show a desire to win and try hard. All pupils understand the effects exercise has on our bodies.
119. The teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers use radio programmes to support their work in dance and pupils are provided with suitable opportunities to explore moods and feelings and to respond imaginatively to music. Good emphasis is placed on the teaching of traditional dances, which are performed to parents and the adjoining junior school. These form part of the schools May celebrations and include Scottish dancing, Line dancing and Maypole dancing.
120. All pupils show an enthusiasm for physical education; they practise skills and show good levels of concentration. Pupils in Year 2 respond well to instructions but in a lesson in Year 1 the pupils were slow to respond and time was wasted reinforcing instructions. When involved in an activity all pupils react well to direction and participate; they work well together in pairs in throwing and catching balls. Lessons are well planned with clear learning objectives. The pace of lessons is appropriate and the teachers provide sufficient time for pupils to practise and refine their skills. In Year 2, good teacher involvement and direct teaching ensures that pupils of all abilities are sufficiently challenged. In some lessons there were missed opportunities for pupils to evaluate their performance and to identify areas for development.
121. The school organises a lunchtime football session with coaching support from the local football club. This is well attended and both boys and girls participate in supervised football matches and practise their individual skills of dribbling and passing the ball. Very good use is made of adjacent parkland to teach games and to provide an appropriate area for sports day. The school has recently appointed a new subject leader who has responsibility for an annual budget. There are clear plans for the future development of physical education that include assessment and the resourcing of an outside area. The school currently follows a suitable published scheme that supports the teachers adequately and provides a detailed programme of work. However, the school does not have its own programme that ensures continuity between year groups. Resources have been developed during the past year and there is a good range of large apparatus to challenge the pupils sufficiently.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

122. By the end of Year 2, standards in religious education meet the expectations of the syllabus followed by most schools in Northamptonshire and are the same as when the school was last inspected. Overall, progress for all pupils, including those with English as an additional language and special educational needs, is good. Since the previous inspection the school has made good improvement in teaching, leadership of the subject and the rate of pupils' progress. Pupils have a good understanding of Christianity, which is enhanced by visits to the local church and a wide range of visitors who contribute much to bringing the subject to life.
123. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a good understanding of Christianity, they can name features of a church and understand the meaning of different coloured vestments during the Christian year. They know the meaning of religious symbols, for example, that the cross is a reminder of Jesus' death and can recount outlines of some religious stories. The school makes use of a wide range of high quality religious objects that capture the pupils' imagination and help them to understand the different celebrations and traditions of major faiths. The pupils have a deep understanding of the Jewish faith due to a member of staff's particular expertise. They have studied symbolic objects in connection with the Jewish Shabbat and have experienced the lighting of candles and the tasting of Jewish food. Pupils are developing a good understanding of special places and their importance to some people. They respect the views of others by sharing their own ideas of special places. Pupils in Year 1 know that the church is a special place to Christians; "It is a quiet place, people say their prayers."
124. The teaching of religious education is good and promotes positive attitudes and good progress. A new school scheme based on national guidelines and the Northamptonshire syllabus provides a well-planned programme of work for all year groups. It supports teachers by providing key questions, learning objectives and suggests activities, resources and areas for assessment. Teachers provide a good range of activities to help pupils develop their understanding of religious beliefs. Pupils' understanding of religious beliefs has been enhanced by visits to local churches and from a wide range of visitors who contribute much to bringing the subject alive. Throughout the year the pupils have celebrated a number of festivals such as Eid, Divali, Christmas and Easter. Year 1 pupils enacted a Christian naming ceremony and Year 2 pupils explored the feelings of David and Goliath through drama. Circle time is used effectively to encourage pupils to listen to one another and to respect the views of others. Teachers lead lessons well, they value pupils' contributions and effectively use questions to gently probe and help to develop their understanding. Pupils express their feelings, willingly share their ideas and take part in a range of practical activities.
125. The new subject leader monitors teachers' plans and has identified the area of assessment for further development. The school has recently updated its good resources to provide pupils with opportunities to observe and handle a range of religious objects.