

INSPECTION REPORT

ST URSULA'S RC INFANT SCHOOL

Romford, Essex

LEA area: Havering

Unique reference number: 102333

Acting Headteacher: Mrs Noel McNab

Reporting inspector: Ms Ruth Frith
OIN: 2490

Dates of inspection: 28 – 31 January 2002

Inspection number: 198224

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant School
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	3 to 7 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Straight Road Romford Essex
Postcode:	RM3 7JS
Telephone number:	01708 345200
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Paul McGeary
Date of previous inspection:	20 – 23 October 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
2490	Ruth Frith	Registered inspector	Science Music Foundation Stage English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? a) The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
14347	Joan Lindsay	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
23805	Margaret Lygoe	Team inspector	English Geography History Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
2905	David Shepherd	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Art Design and technology Equal opportunities Special educational needs	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Ursula's R C Infant School is a voluntary aided school for boys and girls of all abilities aged three to seven years. There are 171 pupils attending full-time with an additional 55 children attending part-time in the nursery. The school serves a wide catchment area that includes parishes in Harold Hill, Harold Wood and Gidea Park. Children come from homes with a variety of socio-economic backgrounds. The percentage of pupils receiving free school meals is below the national average. On entering the nursery, many of the children display broadly average skills in language and communication and personal and social development but a significant number have difficulties with speech. Currently, the percentage of pupils with special educational needs is below the national average. Most of the pupils with special educational needs who require regular additional support have moderate learning difficulties. A small number of pupils come from ethnic minority backgrounds. The percentage of pupils speaking English as an additional language is a bit higher than in most schools. The school has recently experienced an unsettled time in its history. In August 2001, the long-serving headteacher retired. This initiated the process of consultation on amalgamation to take place. In November 2001, a decision was made to retain separate infant and junior schools. Currently, an acting headteacher and acting deputy headteacher are managing the school. The nursery opened in May 2001.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

St Ursula's R C Infant School is an effective school with many significant strengths. It achieves good standards and serves the community well. The quality of teaching is good and the pupils are encouraged to work hard. The leadership and management of the school are good and all staff demonstrate a shared commitment to improving the quality of education. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The school is a nurturing community with a strong ethos based on the values of respect and co-operation. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social education is very good overall and results in pupils' good behaviour, personal development and attitudes to school and very good relationships.
- Results in the 2001 national tests for pupils at the end of their last year in school were above average in reading and writing and well above average in mathematics.
- Standards of attainment, the quality of teaching and resources for information and communication technology.
- The quality of teaching is good across the school and is significantly enhanced by the good work of support staff.
- The quality and range of learning opportunities for children in the nursery and reception classes.
- Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language make good progress and this reflects the school's commitment to inclusive education.
- Procedures for ensuring pupils' care and welfare are very good.
- Management and leadership of the school are good. The acting headteacher, acting deputy headteacher and governors are strongly committed to the raising of standards and to continual improvement.
- The school's links with parents are very good. Parents have very positive views about the school and are pleased with the education it provides.

What could be improved

- Pupils' handwriting.
- More opportunities for practical investigations in mathematics and science.
- The assessment of pupils' attainment and progress and the ways in which information gained from this is used to set targets and plan the next stages in their learning.
- Library facilities.

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 satisfactory progress overall since the last inspection in October 1997, although some of the issues identified in the last report have only been addressed in the last year. Teachers' planning has improved and objectives for learning are clearly identified. This results in a better match between the abilities of pupils and the work set, and most pupils are appropriately challenged. Consequently, standards in reading, writing and mathematics have improved. Although some work has been done on developing a more consistent approach to the teaching of handwriting, this has not yet been fully successful. A nursery has been built and a well-resourced computer suite developed. New resources have been purchased for mathematics, literacy and information and communication technology, thus extending the range of activities and level of pupil participation. Progress has been good in the last year and the school demonstrates a clear commitment to further improvement.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
reading	A	A	B	C
writing	A	B	B	B
mathematics	A	A	A	B

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

Children make good progress in the nursery. This is systematically built upon in the reception classes and children achieve well. The children currently in the reception classes are in line to reach the standards expected for their age in all areas of learning by the time they start Year 1. Evidence from this inspection indicates that standards in speaking, listening, reading and writing in the current Year 2 are good but standards in handwriting need to be improved. Standards seen during the inspection were satisfactory in mathematics overall and higher in number work. More practice in solving mathematical problems and carrying out investigations would help to raise standards and, in particular, challenge the higher-attaining pupils. Standards in science are satisfactory, although pupils need to develop further their skills of investigation and enquiry. In Year 2, pupils are currently attaining average standards in art and design, music and physical education. Standards are above average in geography and information and communication technology. Insufficient evidence is available to make a clear judgement on pupils' attainment in design and technology and history. Pupils who come from homes where English is not their first language make good progress and so, too, do those pupils with special educational needs. No significant difference was noted in the progress and achievement of boys and girls in the lessons observed, although boys have performed better than girls in reading and mathematics over the last few years. Higher-attaining pupils and those who are gifted and talented usually make good progress but need to be further challenged in mathematics.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy going to school and are interested in what they do.
Behaviour, in and out of	Good throughout the school. Pupils respond well to the high

classrooms	expectations of good behaviour demonstrated by all staff.
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Personal development and relationships	Very good relationships exist within the school. Pupils develop confidence and become increasingly more responsible.
Attendance	Attendance is satisfactory and broadly in line with the national average. Pupils arrive punctually at school.

The pupils' good attitudes, behaviour and personal development and very good relationships provide a good basis for their learning and make a positive contribution to the levels of attainment that they achieve.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2
Quality of teaching	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.

Teaching and the learning which it promotes are good. This reflects the importance placed on supporting teachers, who are valued and encouraged to give of their best. The teaching of children in the nursery is particularly effective in getting them settled in school and in developing their attitudes to learning. These strengths are built upon successfully in the reception classes. Teachers throughout the school have appropriately adopted the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and the teaching of English and mathematics in the lessons observed was good overall. Staff are now at a stage to develop the teaching of handwriting, and problem-solving and investigations in mathematics and science. The school allocates valuable additional support for pupils with special educational needs and consequently they make good progress towards the targets set for them. Support staff make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. Effective support is also given within mainstream classes to pupils who speak English as an additional language. Higher-attaining pupils are usually appropriately challenged, although sometimes the work set for them in mathematics is too easy.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality and range of learning opportunities are good for children in the nursery and reception classes and satisfactory elsewhere. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is very good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Pupils with special educational needs receive good support and progress well towards the targets set in their Individual Education Plans.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Pupils are well supported and fully involved in all learning activities. They make similar progress to that of their peers.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for personal development through the promotion of spiritual awareness and knowledge of moral responsibilities is very good. Provision for pupils' social and cultural development is good.
How well the school cares	Staff have good knowledge and understanding of their pupils and make very good provision for their welfare, health and safety. The way staff

for its pupils	assess pupils' attainment and progress and use the data gained from this to set targets and plan further work is in a stage of transition but developing appropriately.
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The school's very good partnership with parents and, in turn, the very good contribution that parents make to the work of the school and their children's learning are significant factors in the standards that pupils achieve.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The acting headteacher has a clear vision for the school and central to this is the aim to raise standards. She is effective in motivating a team with a shared sense of values. The acting deputy headteacher and other key members of staff ably support her.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors play an integral part in the leadership and management of the school. They are well informed and fully involved in any decisions. All statutory requirements are met apart from a few minor omissions in the information presented to parents.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Staff and governors have established a system of monitoring and target setting that keeps the school moving forward towards achieving its aims.
The strategic use of resources	Financial planning and control have recently improved and the school is managing and using its resources satisfactorily. Correct financial procedures are followed and staff and governors seek to obtain the best value for their spending.

There are sufficient suitably qualified teachers to ensure that class sizes are not too large. Support staff are effective and the good support they provide is a contributory factor in the pupils' learning. Learning resources are satisfactory overall and used well to support learning throughout the school. The accommodation is generally good, although library facilities are unsatisfactory.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school has a very positive ethos and children are well cared for. • Children like going to school and make good progress. • Children are helped to become mature and responsible and their behaviour is good. • The teaching is good and teachers expect the children to work hard. • The school is well led and managed. • Staff work closely with parents and parents feel comfortable about approaching the school. The acting headteacher and staff are accessible. • Parents are kept well informed about how their child is getting on. • An appropriate amount of homework is given. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More activities outside of lessons.

Inspectors endorse the positive views held by parents and the regard they have for the school. Some parents felt that the range of activities outside formal lessons could be improved. During the inspection no additional activities were taking place but the school offers pupils in Year 2 the opportunity to take part in lunchtime clubs during the summer term. The inspectors judged this to be satisfactory.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children are admitted to the nursery after the age of three. They have a broad range of abilities and experiences but most display average skills in language and communication and personal and social development. However, a significant number have speech problems. Children make good progress in the nursery and reception classes due to good teaching and the provision of a good curriculum. In the current reception classes, the children are displaying standards expected for their age. Children make good progress in developing their personal, social and emotional skills and this helps to support their learning in other areas.
2. Results of the 2001 Standard Assessment Tests for seven-year-olds indicate that in comparison with all schools, pupils' attainment was well above average in mathematics and above average in reading and writing. When compared with pupils from similar schools they attained above average standards in writing and mathematics and average standards in reading. Results of the 2001 standards Teacher Assessments in science indicate that the number of pupils reaching the expected level for their age (Level 2) was below average but the percentage reaching the higher Level 3 was close to the national average. These results show an improvement in writing from the previous year and an improvement in reading, writing and mathematics from the previous inspection. There has been a decline in science standards. Overall, pupils make good progress in Years 1 and 2.
3. Evidence from this inspection indicates that the standards achieved by pupils in the current Year 2 are above average in speaking, listening, reading and writing. Most pupils are keen to take part in discussions and pupils speak confidently and clearly. Most pupils enjoy reading and achieve well. Progress in reading is good and pupils achieve well. Higher attainers read fluently with very good understanding and lower attainers often need help in using letter sounds to work out new words. The very limited nature of the library means that pupils do not have suitable opportunities for finding and using reference books and consequently their library skills are limited. Standards in writing are good overall. Most pupils have a sound grasp of basic punctuation and many write well-structured stories. However, standards of handwriting are not as good as they should be. The school has satisfactorily introduced the National Literacy Strategy and this has helped to raise standards since the last inspection.
4. Standards attained in mathematics by the current Year 2 pupils are average and not as high as those attained last year. Pupils achieve better standards in number work – as a result of the satisfactory introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy - but there is little evidence of pupils' abilities to solve problems, especially using weight, capacity and length, and in carrying out mathematical investigations. More practice in solving mathematical problems and carrying out investigations would help to raise standards overall and, in particular, challenge the higher-attaining pupils.
5. Standards in science for pupils currently in Year 2 are broadly similar to those expected nationally. Although standards are still not as high as those at the time of the previous inspection, staff have identified the need to improve provision and standards are beginning to rise. Pupils' knowledge and understanding is better in the area of Life and Living Processes than in the other areas studied. They do not receive sufficient opportunities to develop their skills of scientific experimentation and investigation or to respond to suggestions, how to find things out, put forward their ideas and make simple predictions. This is depressing the standards of all pupils but particularly the higher-attainers. Also, pupils are not systematically developing their skills of describing and recording their observations.

6. In Year 2, pupils are currently attaining average standards in art and design, music and physical education. Standards are above average in geography and information and communication technology. Insufficient evidence is available to make a clear judgement on pupils' attainment in design and technology and history.
7. The few pupils learning English as an additional language make similar progress to their peers and have full access to a broad curriculum. No significant difference was noted in the progress of boys and girls during the inspection, although boys have performed better than girls in reading and mathematics over the last few years. More able pupils are generally appropriately challenged and reach standards in line with their abilities, although in mathematics they could achieve more. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in all aspects of their learning.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. The attitudes to school that pupils of all ages display have remained at high levels since the previous inspection and are considered to be good. This is confirmed by parents, as 99 per cent of those who returned the pre-inspection questionnaire stated that their child likes coming to school. The children in the nursery are eager to be involved in their activities, such as role-playing in the "hospital", and obviously greatly enjoy what they are doing. Older pupils are also very enthusiastic about their learning. For example, in a Year 2 geography lesson about rainforests they listened attentively and then answered eagerly as the teacher asked them to think about what would result from the destruction of the rainforest. Pupils generally manage to sustain concentration well and show a good level of involvement in tasks such as, in a reception class lesson, doing number puzzles and counting exercises.
9. Behaviour is good overall and again a very high percentage of parents (97 per cent) believe this to be the case. On rare occasions a very small minority demonstrate lower standards of behaviour but teachers' good class management strategies ensure that lesson disruption is kept to a minimum. Behaviour in the playground, at lunchtimes and in assemblies is also good and pupils play well together. The school has had no recent serious behaviour issues to deal with and there have been no exclusions, as was the case at the last inspection.
10. Pupils with special educational needs generally have positive attitudes to their work. Occasionally, some of these pupils are over exuberant in lessons and do not wait their turn to speak. Overall, they come to school with a will to work and to learn and this helps them to do well. Pupils who speak English as an additional language and those from ethnic minority groups have similar positive attitudes as their peers and behave well.
11. Very good relationships are still evident throughout the school. Pupils are treated in a very caring yet mature way by all staff including the highly effective support staff and the midday supervisors. Pupils respond positively to this and there is a high level of mutual respect shown. This is seen from the nursery upwards as children are taught to be kind to one another, to share and to be polite. Pupils show a very high level of respect for the feelings of others; for example, an older girl was sitting with a younger one at playtime because she was sad, as her friend was not there that day. Pupils are also very quick to volunteer to escort others who are injured or ill and they look after them solicitously. Pupils accept each other completely, regardless of background, race or special need, and they are also very polite and friendly with visitors. The result of such very good relationships, based on a very high level of understanding of the impact of their actions on others, is that there is no evidence of oppressive behaviour such as bullying or racism.
12. The extent to which pupils show initiative and take responsibility is good. Although the number of responsible roles available in an infant school is limited, the pupils do undertake tasks such as returning the register and tidying up. Even the children in the nursery needed very little prompting to tidy as soon as they heard the "tidy-up" music. The personal development of pupils is enhanced through raising their self-esteem by involvement in, for example, class assemblies. During the inspection one of the reception classes performed, undaunted, before a large audience of pupils and parents, re-enacting the story of the Three Little Pigs, showing their work and

singing several songs.

13. Attendance is satisfactory and has remained largely in line with national figures overall, although the school's unauthorised absence rate is better than average. There are few holidays taken during term time but absence figures are affected by normal childhood illnesses more prevalent in this age group and therefore the total attendance figure is below 95 per cent. Pupils arrive punctually to school and so the start of lessons is not delayed.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

14. The quality of teaching has broadly been maintained since the last inspection. The good quality of teaching in the nursery and reception classes is an important factor in the way children develop good attitudes to learning and behaviour. Lesson planning is good and reflects the national guidance for teaching children of this age. Appropriate attention has been placed on settling children into school and a good range of activities is provided which maintains the children's interest and supports their learning. The children's knowledge, skills and understanding are successfully extended in the reception classes where they continue to develop confidence and are well prepared to start the National Curriculum, when appropriate. Teachers and support staff give valuable help to the children and this is a key feature in making children feel secure in their learning.
15. Teaching and learning are good in Years 1 and 2. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding and they use this well in most lessons to plan work for the variety of abilities within their classes. However, there is a need in some mathematics lessons for teachers to provide greater challenge for higher attainers, develop the pupils' problem solving skills and not restrict pupils' mathematical thinking by the overuse of worksheets. In science, teachers need to extend the pupils' investigative skills and also develop their skills of describing and recording their observations. Also, in science pupils of all abilities often undertake the same activities and consequently the higher attainers are not always sufficiently challenged. Teachers' knowledge and skills in teaching information and communication technology are used well to challenge pupils and consequently standards are above those expected for children of that age.
16. Support staff work well and are instrumental in encouraging pupils' progress and the standards that they achieve. They, too, have developed their skills well and show a professional approach to their many duties. Overall, teachers use time, resources and the expertise of support staff well.
17. There have been significant improvements in teachers' planning and they support each other well by sharing expertise and experience, particularly within year groups. This ensures that, regardless of which class they are in, pupils have appropriate learning opportunities similar to other children in the year group. In the best lessons, teachers have a clear idea of what they want pupils to learn and share that with them. They provide appropriate support and challenge, which ensures that pupils of all abilities maintain a good pace in their learning and build systematically on their previous learning. Expectations of what pupils can do are often good but teachers need to raise their expectations regarding pupils' handwriting and in some aspects in mathematics as indicated above.
18. The quality of relationships between staff and pupils is very good and has a significant influence on how staff successfully manage the pupils in their care. Teachers are encouraging and supportive, which results in most pupils becoming confident. Teachers use their knowledge of pupils appropriately in lessons and encourage them to improve and work harder. Marking is usually useful and also encourages pupils to achieve and in the best examples clearly indicates how they can do so. However, because assessment practice is still developing there are inconsistencies in practice. Provision of homework is good and supports the work done in school, particularly in English and mathematics.
19. Across the school, the quality of teaching and learning is good in English, mathematics, science,

information and communication technology, geography and physical education. Teaching in history and music is satisfactory. Insufficient evidence was available to make a firm judgement on the quality of teaching in art and design and design and technology. The teaching of literacy and numeracy throughout the curriculum is satisfactory overall.

20. The school has improved its work with higher-attaining pupils, who are in many cases being appropriately challenged. However, expectations of what higher attainers can do in science and mathematics should be raised. Pupils who speak English as an additional language progress in line with their peers and currently have their needs met well within mainstream classes. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good and these pupils make good progress. They are supported well during lessons by their teachers and by support staff. On occasions, these pupils need more help with sounds to help them build up words. All these examples reflect the school's commitment to inclusive education.

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

21. The quality and range of the curriculum are satisfactory overall and statutory requirements are met. The provision for pupils' personal development is very good and strongly underpins the whole curriculum. The school has tackled the key issues identified in the previous inspection report, although some improvements are very recent. The whole-school policy for handwriting has only just been introduced and has yet to have an impact on improving standards. Teachers' planning is generally good and learning intentions are clear. Activities are suitably challenging for all pupils in most subjects; however, there is still not enough challenge for the higher-attaining pupils, particularly in mathematics and science. Many of the school policies are due for revision since they do not reflect current practice. Now that the uncertainty over possible amalgamation is over, the school plans a systematic review of all curriculum policies.
22. The school's strategy for teaching literacy is satisfactory. Reading is very strongly promoted and standards are generally good. However, the limited library area does not offer pupils enough scope to develop independent skills in using reference books. The school has developed the curriculum recently and focused on improving pupils' knowledge and use of letter sounds following an analysis of reading progress. Spelling and punctuation skills are developed well but not enough opportunities are given for extended writing across the curriculum. Although handwriting is taught, standards of presentation are below average. The strategy for teaching numeracy is satisfactory overall, but too little time is devoted to developing knowledge of length, weight and capacity. A greater focus on investigative skills in mathematics and science is required.
23. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is good and fully meets national guidelines for children of this age. Information and communication technology is used particularly well to support teaching. Careful planning ensures that the curriculum is presented in a lively and interesting manner for young children and all children make good progress.
24. The information and communication technology curriculum and facilities have improved since the previous inspection. Provision is good and information and communication technology is employed effectively across the curriculum to support and extend learning in most subjects. Standards are above average and pupils' skills are reinforced in the classrooms. The curriculum for physical education is good. The school has supplemented national guidance with very good additional material to support teachers' planning. Provision for all other subjects is satisfactory.
25. There is good equality of access and opportunity. Joint planning between teachers ensures that pupils in the same year group have similar experiences and is a significant strength in supporting teachers new to the school. Provision for pupils with English as an additional language and ethnic minority pupils is good and they are fully included in the curriculum. Appropriate provision is made for pupils with special educational needs. Teachers' planning regularly includes specific provision for lower-attaining pupils and this helps them learn effectively.

26. Although the lunch period is long, there are no extra-curricular activities except in the second half of the summer term when there is a very good choice for Year 2 pupils. However, teachers often use the lunch period to hear pupils read. Pupils' experiences are extended by a range of other opportunities. There is a good programme of visits and visitors to the school, such as the nurse, the community police officer and the education welfare officer, who all contribute to the personal development of the pupils. Links with the local community are good overall and there are very strong links with the church. There is good support for pupils entering the school but staff and governors have identified the need to strengthen links with the junior school. Inspectors support this.
27. Provision for the pupils' personal development is very good, maintaining the high standards found during the previous inspection. Proper attention, appropriate for the age group, is given to aspects of health, sex education and drugs awareness within the religious education and science curricula. The provision for promoting pupils' moral development is very good. The teachers and support staff provide very good role models for pupils, demonstrating respect, calmness and good humour. Consistently high standards are expected and the staff help the pupils understand the difference between right and wrong. Good behaviour and attitudes are praised regularly.
28. Pupils' social development is promoted well and provision for this is good. There are suitable opportunities for pupils to help in the classrooms and they have the chance to express their views about the school during class discussions. There are good opportunities for pupils to work with others during lessons. Social awareness is also developed through involvement with various charities, including CAFOD, and providing Christmas gifts for Romanian orphans. Assemblies meet statutory requirements and offer pupils very good opportunities to pray and to reflect on their own lives. Regular prayers are also offered during the day in the classrooms. Spiritual development is also promoted very well through the whole ethos of the school community, in which each individual is valued. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on the beauty and wonder of the world, for example during a geography lesson when pupils looked at the rich variety of life in a rainforest.
29. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good. The school actively seeks to promote pupils' understanding of a diverse society through offering them experience of music, art, literature and dance from many cultures. In religious education lessons, pupils begin to gain an awareness of other major world religions.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

30. The school has very good arrangements for child protection and to ensure pupils' welfare. The acting headteacher is the designated co-ordinator for child protection and, in addition to the training that she has had, all other staff received specific training recently during an in-service training day. The school has its own policy for child protection based on local authority guidelines, keeps appropriate records and has close links with the educational welfare officer and the relevant social services.
31. There are several members of staff who have been trained in first aid and there are good systems in place to note pupils with specific medical conditions. For example, the medical room has a display of photos of the relevant children and their needs and each class register has a list. All the necessary checks to fire and electrical equipment are carried out; the school keeper is also the health and safety officer and sits on the premises committee of the governing body, and so plays a very active role in ensuring the safety of those on site. The school is aware of the need to fence around the pond and to resurface some of the uneven pathways and steps, particularly en route to the junior school.
32. Overall, the educational support and guidance for pupils is very good. The school has very effective procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and, as a result, has been very

successful in eliminating oppressive behaviour. Teachers keep their own records of any incidents that occur in class or that are reported by the midday supervisors, who are closely involved with the pupils from their allocated class. The acting headteacher is informed of any more serious matters or those with a racial element. However, it is indicative of the high standards of behaviour and very good relationships that she has recently had nothing to record. The effectiveness comes from how consistently the behaviour policy is applied throughout the school by all adults, and how well pupils understand the high expectations there are in relation to standards of behaviour.

33. The school continues to have good procedures to monitor and improve attendance. There are close links with the education welfare officer, who has recently been involved in emphasising the need for good attendance and punctuality by working with pupils through role-play and by sending home specific leaflets about attendance. There are also frequent reminders given to parents in newsletters about the need for regular attendance and this is further promoted through the award of certificates for 100 per cent attendance.
34. The procedures for monitoring and promoting pupils' personal development are very good although the system is largely informal and based on how well the staff know their pupils. This includes the important part that support staff play in working with and observing pupils. In addition, each staff meeting has an agenda item related to "pupil awareness" when any concerns can be raised. Records of personal development are kept in relation to the teaching of religious education and comments are also made on the pupil's annual progress report in relation to personal and social development. Achievement assemblies, performing in class assemblies and circle time also assist in promoting personal development. A very high percentage of parents believe that the school is helping their child to become mature and responsible.
35. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress and for using assessment information to set targets and guide curricular planning are not yet satisfactory. A new, less wieldy and less time consuming system has recently been implemented in English, mathematics and science, although the process still has some way to go in almost all other subjects. The school does carry out assessment tests when children enter the school and at the end of units of work; however, the current state of transition means that the information gathered is not yet analysed sufficiently to guide planning apart from helping to plan ability groups. The school is very aware that this aspect needs further development and there are signs that recent improvements are bearing fruit. For example, in science, areas of learning that need further work have been identified and, in English, staff identified that pupils' understanding of letter sounds was an area for further development. The systems and use of assessment information are better for children under five.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

36. The school has maintained the very strong and effective links with parents seen at the last inspection and parents have very positive views of the school. The response to the questions in the pre-inspection questionnaire was exceptionally positive, with only one question registering less than 90 per cent agreement. Parents are also highly appreciative of the acting headteacher and her staff and were particularly pleased with the accessibility of staff and the way children are cared for in the school community. The one aspect that some parents felt could be improved was the range of extra-curricular activities. However, the school does offer pupils in Year 2 the opportunity to pick activities from a wide range during the summer term. All teaching staff and many support staff are involved at this time and parents very much appreciate this commitment.
37. Parents make a very valuable contribution to children's learning at home and at school. It is evident from the homework and reading records that the great majority of parents support their children by hearing them read or helping with homework tasks and signing the home/school agreement. Parents also help in school in practical ways. For example, a large group recently undertook a clear-out of classroom cupboards and parents have also helped with story sacks and school performances. A large number of family members attended the reception class assembly

during the inspection week and a high turnout is the norm for other school events. The very strong partnership that exists between home and school does much to enhance the feeling of community and family that exists in the school. There is also a very active Parents and Friends Association, run jointly with the junior school, and its successful fund-raising ventures have provided additional resources for the school. Consequently, the impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school is very good.

38. The quality of information provided for parents is satisfactory overall with some very good elements such as the weekly newsletter. Parents appreciate the friendly tone and that they are kept well informed about future events. Parents also receive a good amount of information about what their child will be learning, as teachers send out information each half term. There are also formal occasions to meet teachers - one in the autumn term to discuss how the child has settled, one in the spring term to discuss progress and a celebration of work in the summer term. In addition, the school ensures that parents are kept up to date with changes in the curriculum, for example how literacy is now taught. The annual written progress report that parents receive in the summer term is satisfactory and is generally individual to the child. However, they do not all include specific targets for improvement.
39. The governors' annual report to parents and the prospectus both have statutorily required items missing. The latter does not include the parents' right to withdraw their child from religious education and collective worship, the school's sporting aims and provision for sport, the percentages for authorised and unauthorised absence or national comparisons for Key Stage 1 Standard Assessment Tests. The governors' report omits items related to disabled pupils, the progress made on the action plan following the previous inspection and information on school security, and it also does not give national comparisons for the Key Stage 1 Standard Assessment Tests.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

40. The leadership and management of the acting headteacher, acting deputy headteacher and key staff are good. During an unsettled time in the school's history the acting headteacher has quickly gained the confidence of staff, governors, parents and pupils and identified appropriate areas for school development. Her vision, drive and energy have proved to be significant factors in how the school community has continued to develop the quality of provision and brought about recent improvements. The acting headteacher has a clear vision for the school, and central to this is the provision of high quality teaching to ensure good standards. She is particularly effective at team building and motivating staff. A good feature of staffing is the strength of united teamwork that is noticeable in school. It is purposeful and motivated, resulting in a determined will to succeed.
41. There is a strong senior management team and the skills, expertise and experiences of the acting headteacher and acting deputy headteacher are complemented well. The senior managers have a clear view of the school's strengths and priorities for development and ably assist the acting headteacher. The role of subject co-ordinator is developing and, although a number of the current co-ordinators are recent appointments, they share a clear understanding of what should be achieved. Established co-ordinators are well informed and effective in promoting their subjects and in monitoring standards.
42. The acting headteacher and acting deputy headteacher have a good understanding of the pupils' needs and how they learn. This is reflected in the school's practice, which encourages independence and learning through a range of activities. These features are well demonstrated in the school where an ethos of care and concern, together with high expectations, are encouraged. By the time pupils leave school they show positive attitudes and are sensitive to the needs of others. There is a good degree of mutual tolerance and respect and racial harmony is self-evident.
43. The school's aims of raising standards and improving the quality of education are increasingly reflected in its work. The school development plan has been reviewed so that priorities are now

more clearly matched to the needs of the school. The fact that senior managers have already identified the areas for improvement currently highlighted by inspectors indicates a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development. The school plan sets a clear agenda for improvement and is now the result of a good consultation process with governors and staff.

44. The school was rather late in addressing some of the key issues arising from the last inspection, such as improving pupils' handwriting, but developments over the last year have been good and all issues are now being addressed. Governors give full support to the school and they, and the acting headteacher, have worked hard to maintain stability in the school during a period of possible amalgamation with the junior school and a period of significant changes in staffing, including the retirement of a well established headteacher. Governors are now well informed and involved in school development. They have good levels of knowledge and this helps them to be fully involved in discussions and developments. They undertake their duties diligently and have trust in the acting headteacher and staff. Governors believe that the school is entering 'a new era' and are very positive about the future. The governors, acting headteacher and staff continue to show a clear commitment to maintaining the pace of improvement and have developed a system of monitoring and setting targets that keeps the school moving forward towards achieving its aims. Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities, apart from a few minor omissions in the information presented to parents.
45. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is co-ordinated effectively by the designated teacher. With the guidance of the local education authority, pupils are identified as having special educational needs. The school then produces Individual Education Plans that include appropriate targets for learning for these pupils. These are reviewed each term and new targets set. This is good practice. Teachers have good expertise in special educational needs in order to teach these pupils well.
46. There is a good match of teachers and support staff in the school to ensure that the curriculum is taught effectively and classes are not too large. The expertise of support staff is used very well and they much valued in the school. They have given a sense of continuity and stability at a time when there has been a high turnover of teaching staff. As teachers become better established in the school, responsibility for curriculum areas can be shared more evenly, reducing the onus on the current senior management team. The school's strategy for appraisal and performance management is satisfactory and the acting headteacher has recently undergone training to enable her to carry on with the appraisal cycle. Office staff provide a warm welcome to parents and visitors and work well to ensure the day-to-day smooth running of the school.
47. The induction of staff new to the school is very good. There are currently no newly qualified teachers in the school but there is one teacher from abroad, who joined the staff very recently, and another member of staff who is undertaking the graduate training programme. Both feel very well supported not only by their specific mentor but also by all staff.
48. The accommodation is good overall with some very good features added since the previous inspection, such as the computer suite and an excellent purpose-built nursery. The classrooms are very spacious and the hall is an adequate size for physical education, assemblies and lunch. Corridors and classrooms are made bright and interesting through the use of good displays of pupils' work and photographs of school events. Recent improvements to the windows and outside fencing have done much to enhance the building and grounds and the school keeper does a very good job ensuring that the standards of cleanliness are maintained. The school is aware that the toilets pupils use in the main school are now in need of refurbishment.
49. Overall, the school has satisfactory resources. The new computer suite has greatly enhanced the resources for information and communication technology, especially as there are additional computers in the classrooms. The resources for under fives are good overall but the outdoor area for the reception age children still needs further development. There is also a need to increase history artefacts and resources for mathematics throughout the school. The library facility can no longer be considered satisfactory as it was at the last inspection. There is only one bookcase in a

corridor and, although there are several new fiction books, the choice is limited, particularly for boys, and what non-fiction there is not catalogued and therefore not easily accessible to pupils.

50. Since being appointed last September, the acting headteacher has taken firm and decisive action, in conjunction with the governing body and local education authority, to correct the over-spending in the school's budget. Current projections are that the overspend of £13,000 from last year will now be cleared and that this year's budget will balance appropriately. This is a considerable achievement to correct a budget to this extent over a seven-month period. The acting headteacher and governors now have a clear view of the school's spending priorities and are linking these closely to the school's improvement plan. This is good practice.
51. The school spends its funding for staff training wisely. The expertise of the staff is good overall and they receive appropriate training when needed either in school or from out of school training courses. The funding allocated for pupils with special educational needs is spent appropriately for its designated purpose. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well in their work by support assistants and their teachers. The co-ordinator for special educational needs is up to date and has received training to fulfil her role efficiently.
52. The acting headteacher consults the governing body about all major spending decisions and they feel well informed as a consequence. They make judgements based on up-to-date information. They take responsibility for arranging tenders to be sought and of ensuring best value. In practice, the school secretary obtains the tenders on behalf of the governors. The governors have recently decided to appoint a temporary teacher for two terms rather than seek supply cover. Although this is not the cheapest option, governors, quite justifiably, made their decision based on value, by ensuring continuity and progression in learning for the pupils concerned. New technologies are being used well in the school. The school provides good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

53. Staff and governors should work together on the following areas to improve the quality of provision further and raise standards.
 - Improve pupils' handwriting by:
 - ensuring that pupils form their letters correctly;
 - ensuring that letters are correctly positioned;
 - ensuring that teachers have consistent expectations of handwriting and presentation.
(Paragraphs 3, 17, 21, 64, 68)
 - Provide more opportunities for practical investigations in mathematics and science to ensure that pupils are fully challenged, particularly the higher attainers.
(Paragraphs 4, 5, 15, 17, 21, 71, 72, 75, 77, 79)
 - Improve the way teachers assess pupils' attainment and progress and encourage them to use the information gained from this to set targets and plan the next stages in learning.
(Paragraphs 35, 70, 82, 92, 96, 103)
 - Improve the library facilities so that pupils have opportunities to develop their research skills by finding and using reference books.
(Paragraphs 22, 49, 66)

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

Staff and governors should also ensure that the information in the prospectus and annual report to parents meets statutory requirements.
(Paragraphs 39, 44)

The school has already highlighted, through its school development planning process, the need to improve practice in several of the areas identified above.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	47
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	28

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	10	25	11	1	0	0
Percentage	0	21	53	24	2	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y3
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	27.5	171
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		13

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y3
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	23

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	5

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	11
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.8

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	34	31	65

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	33	33	33
	Girls	28	30	27
	Total	61	63	60
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (97)	97 (90)	92 (98)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	33	33	31
	Girls	29	31	26
	Total	62	64	57
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	95 (92)	98 (95)	88 (97)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	115
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)	6.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24
Average class size	23

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	112.5

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	28
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	61.5
Number of pupils per FTE adult	9

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
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	£
Total income	421,834
Total expenditure	455,050
Expenditure per pupil	2,571
Balance brought forward from previous year	20,220
Balance carried forward to next year	-12,996

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	8
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	9

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	169
Number of questionnaires returned	150

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	81	19	0	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	79	19	1	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	75	22	1	0	1
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	55	37	3	0	4
The teaching is good.	85	13	1	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	57	35	7	1	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	83	14	2	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	81	17	1	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	72	23	4	0	1
The school is well led and managed.	73	24	1	1	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	79	18	1	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	27	33	17	2	21

Other issues raised by parents

Parents were pleased with the very positive attitude of the school's approach to inclusion.

Parents praised the consistent approach across the school from the nursery onwards.

Several examples of recent improvements were quoted.

Although parents perceived the school to be in a period of transition, they had respect for senior management and appreciated the presence of the acting headteacher and staff before and after school.

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

54. The school has maintained the good practice in the reception classes which was indicated in the last inspection report and improved facilities overall by providing nursery education. The new nursery offers excellent facilities and children make a good start with their learning. The good quality of teaching in both the nursery and reception classes is characterised by a good understanding of how young children learn, high expectations, and the systematic development of children's good attitudes to learning and good behaviour. This results in children being confident in what they do and willing to 'have a go'. All staff work well together and work hard to provide a consistent approach to teaching and learning. Support staff play an important role in developing the children's learning and supporting their achievements. The curriculum takes into consideration the national guidance for the Foundation Stage and staff adapt this to meet the needs of the children. Staff plan the work appropriately and use assessments of the children to inform their planning. Assessment systems are still developing. Records are kept to monitor the progress that children make in all areas of learning. Staff provide a calm, secure learning environment which encourages children to develop good attitudes to school. The pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language participate well and made good progress as a result of effective teaching and good support.

Personal, social and emotional development

55. Teaching and learning in this area are good in the nursery and reception classes and children are likely to reach the standards expected for children of that age by the end of the reception year. The school is successful in creating positive relationships with parents before their children start school and has developed a good induction programme. Staff use a range of strategies to encourage children to play together in the nursery and they develop relationships quickly. Also, staff are effective in creating a caring and stimulating learning environment in which children quickly understand the routines and structure of the day and develop good attitudes to learning. Children were observed playing well together and sharing resources, for example, when acting out roles in the nursery hospital and in the reception cafés. They learn how to share resources and take turns, as a result of the expectations of the teachers and support staff, who make appropriate comments to encourage co-operation, for example when playing outside on the climbing equipment or working together in a music lesson. Children in the nursery were observed negotiating roles by saying 'You be the daddy we are the children'. Children recognise the importance of keeping healthy and are aware of personal hygiene issues. Their independent skills are developed when they are encouraged to wash up their mugs after snack time in the nursery and help clear away after activities in the reception classes.
56. A good balance is created between teacher-directed activities and those when children are able to play without direct adult supervision. This develops the children's confidence and a growing independence and initiative when presented with choices. They are encouraged to be polite and sensible and move easily from work undertaken as a whole class to group and individual activities. Staff act as good role models and the children's skills are continually developed through the positive interactions between staff and children. Consequently, children are well behaved and form very good relationships with each other and with adults. The good gains made in pupils' personal, social and emotional development are a key feature in children feeling secure and learning well in other areas of the curriculum.

Communication, language and literacy

57. Teaching and learning in this area of the curriculum are good. Children, including those who speak English as an additional language, make good progress through experiencing a range of activities that stimulate their learning and maintain their interests. Most are likely to reach the standards

expected nationally by the end of the reception year. However, a significant number enter the nursery with speech problems and this makes it more difficult for them to reach average standards in speaking, even though they make good progress. Children's speaking and listening skills are developed well across all areas of the curriculum, for example when small groups of children sit with an adult for snack time in the nursery and when support staff help children to describe the houses they are building in a reception class. Children's speaking skills are also systematically developed through the provision of specific activities such as the imaginative play areas when children pretend to be doctors, nurses and patients in the nursery and cooks and customers in the reception cafés.

58. Children like to choose books in the nursery reading area and sometimes settle down to 'read' alone or with a friend. Children handle books carefully and know that print carries meaning. Most follow and recall a story by looking at the pictures and some higher-attaining children enjoyed talking about the books with the inspector. In a good lesson, children developed the idea of sequencing events by following instructions to make a sandwich and later placing four pictures in order to show what they had done. In a reception class, a very good session encouraged the children's responses to the story of 'Handa's Surprise'. The teacher was very effective in maintaining the children's interest throughout the reading of the story by giving clear instructions, involving the children well and through the use of excellent resources. Regular sessions on phonics support children well in their recognition of letters and the sounds that they make. All children are encouraged to read regularly with their parents at home, which has a significant impact on the progress that they make and the standards that they achieve.
59. Children in the nursery develop their writing skills by learning how to hold the pencil correctly and recognising and writing their names. They quickly become aware of writing for different purposes, for example by writing letters to their friends, or by writing prescriptions when acting in the role of doctor. These skills are developed further in the reception classes when higher attainers complete sentences after reading a story and average attainers write words to describe pictures. Children receive good support from staff, which encourages the development of their handwriting and use of vocabulary. Overall, a good range of resources to encourage writing and communication is available and results in the youngest children making marks on paper and the oldest drawing a picture and writing a sentence about it.

Mathematical development

60. Teaching and learning in mathematics are good and children make good progress. Children in the reception classes are likely to reach the standards expected nationally by the time they start in Year 1 and a few higher attainers will achieve above this. The children's skills and understanding are regularly developed and consolidated in the nursery through daily play activities and through specific sessions. In one very good session observed, children quickly got involved in counting to 10 using body movements. This was followed by children matching the correct number of animals to the number on a card. The teacher developed their mathematical thinking well by saying 'Think inside your head' and encouraging them to reflect on what they had done. The teaching was well paced and children were offered opportunities to develop their counting skills further by working with the teacher or member of support staff with number songs and rhymes. The children's skills are developed further in the reception classes by the provision of a variety of activities which develop their skills in number, shape and space. The teacher in one lesson observed had a very clear understanding of what she wanted the children to learn and offered a range of appropriate activities to develop their mathematical skills of counting on from a given number. She used 'Rosie', a toy hen, to encourage the children to count the number of chicks under her wing. This resulted in the children answering correctly that four and three chicks made seven. A scrutiny of reception children's work showed that average and higher attainers could complete a number line to 20 and recognised common two-dimensional shapes correctly. They also used language such as *shorter than* and *longer than* correctly. The teachers' good subject knowledge is used well and their careful use of mathematical language and questioning encourages the children's mathematical thinking and understanding in both the nursery and reception classes.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

61. Teaching to promote children's knowledge and understanding of the world is good and pupils progress well in both the nursery and reception classes. Most children are likely to reach the standard expected nationally for children at the end of the reception year. Children in the nursery develop an understanding of the roles of familiar people by their work on *People who Help Us* and children in the reception classes extend this by talking about *special people*. Children have a good understanding of the uses of everyday technology. Opportunities are provided for children to assemble and disassemble simple models, using a variety of construction kits. They work together well in the nursery using wooden building blocks to make a house. In both the nursery and reception class, the children's skills in using the computer are well developed and they reach standards above those expected for their age. Children in the nursery confidently use the mouse to work through a program which encourages them to click and drag images of fruit and also encourages their counting skills. In the reception classes, children use a paint program confidently to create a house and a third of one class displayed good mouse skills and could complete the task unaided. Children in the reception classes learn about houses and homes including those in other countries. This learning was consolidated by the children making a multicultural village. These older children also develop their understanding of their bodies by working on *Our Senses* and write about *I like to smell...* and *I like to taste...* They understand how things change over time by looking at toys and use their skills well to create their own toy.

Physical development

62. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and the children are expected to reach standards appropriate for their age by the time they leave the reception class. In the nursery, children get regular opportunities to develop their physical education through playing outside where they learn to balance, climb and run. They also develop their skills through playing with beanbags and by riding bikes. Good intervention by staff develops the children's counting skills when throwing a beanbag on a number ladder. In a good dance lesson for the reception children, they responded well and developed good movements which reflected the movements of different animals. Children were interested in the lesson and tried hard. They understood what was required and tried to move appropriately to different sounds. Control and co-ordination was good and many children achieved skills which were above those expected for their age. The children's use of small objects, such as pencils, construction equipment and paintbrushes, is satisfactory, and they handle them safely and appropriately. Although the reception children play in the nursery outdoor area, staff are aware of the need to improve their outdoor play facilities and there are plans to do so.

Creative development

63. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff are effective in getting good responses from children in relation to what they see, hear, feel and imagine and most pupils reach the standard expected for their age by the end of their time in the reception classes. Their creative development is successfully fostered through a range of activities. In the nursery, children were observed painting a picture in response to their imaginative play in the hospital and could correctly name the basic colours. In the reception classes, children looked at the work of Van Gogh when studying houses and rooms and were encouraged to use his work as a stimulus for their own paintings. In one session children were effectively supported to develop their skills of colour washing. In the same lesson, good teaching and instruction from the teacher resulted in the children making good observations of a range of fruit when creating pastel pictures. Children used fine lines, shading and colours well to show segments and the fruit pips. The children's responses are also developed through specific music sessions and through singing rhymes and songs. In one reception lesson, the high expectations and challenging tasks set by the teacher resulted in children attaining good standards for their age. By the end of the lesson all were able to keep to a steady pulse and could follow conduction by a member of the class when using a range of instruments. The role-play areas in both the nursery and reception classes provide opportunities

for children to play co-operatively and develop their imagination. They extend their language skills by re-enacting familiar situations or making up their own.

ENGLISH

64. Standards in English are good overall and have improved since the previous inspection, when attainment was found to be average. When pupils start in Year 1, standards in language and literacy are similar to those found nationally at this age. Progress overall is good and pupils achieve well, due to consistent good teaching. Pupils with special educational needs make good gains in their learning, as a result of focused support and carefully planned work. National Curriculum test results have risen over the past four years at a similar rate to those nationally. Spelling and punctuation skills are being thoroughly taught and standards are generally good but standards in handwriting and presentation are weaker. The school has already identified handwriting as a focus for improvement. Boys consistently perform better in reading than girls, in contrast to the national trend. Neither the school nor the inspection evidence could suggest a reason for this.
65. Pupils make good progress in speaking and listening and by the time they are seven they reach standards which are above those expected at this age. Listening skills are usually good. Teachers are skilful at holding pupils' attention and the content of lessons is pitched accurately at the age and interest level of the class. Teachers encourage pupils to take part in discussions and give them enough time to explain their ideas in detail. For example, in a Year 1 lesson, pupils discussed imaginative ways in which the wolf might find his way to Red Riding Hood's house, and then shared their ideas with the class. Confidence in speaking in front of a large audience is also developed very effectively through the class assemblies. By Year 2, most pupils speak confidently and clearly and the higher attainers express their ideas with assurance. Teachers generally target questions carefully to ensure that pupils from all ability groups are involved in answering.
66. Reading is generally promoted well throughout the school and most pupils enjoy reading. Progress in reading is good, and pupils achieve well. Teachers ensure that the pupils learn to use a range of strategies when they read. The school has increased its focus on improving pupils' skills in using letter sounds to tackle unfamiliar words. A new system for teaching letter sounds has recently been introduced in the Foundation Stage, following an analysis which showed some weaknesses in this area. Class teachers give suitable attention to this aspect during lessons but there should be a greater emphasis on developing word-building strategies when pupils with special educational needs are withdrawn for specific group teaching. By Year 2, most pupils read simple texts competently and with expression. Higher attainers read fluently and with very good understanding. The lower-attaining pupils often need help in using letter sounds to work out new words. Teachers use the structured reading schemes effectively alongside other books, so that the pupils encounter a range of good quality books. Basic reference skills are taught but the very limited nature of the library means that pupils do not have suitable opportunities for finding and using reference books. Most Year 2 pupils can distinguish between fiction and non-fiction books and have some understanding of how to use a contents and index page. They are, however, unable to find books readily on specific topics since the very small library area has no index. The "Home-school" books provide valuable links with parents, who appreciate the clear information about the different levels of reading books. Many children read regularly to parents.
67. Standards in writing are good overall by the time pupils are aged seven. Most Year 2 pupils have a sound grasp of basic punctuation and many write well-structured stories. Higher attainers use increasingly imaginative vocabulary and begin to use inverted commas to denote speech. Punctuation skills are taught well and many pupils in Year 1 are aware of the need to use full stops and capital letters. Average and higher-attaining Year 1 pupils write sentences independently and many already write short stories or parts of stories, linking their ideas in a logical sequence of sentences. They become increasingly confident in using their knowledge of sounds to spell words and gain a good knowledge of words which they use frequently.
68. Standards of handwriting are not as good as they should be. Handwriting is taught in all classes but these lessons do not have enough impact on improving writing and good habits are not firmly established. Too many pupils form some of their letters incorrectly, particularly "b" and "d", and this will slow the development of a legible joined style of writing. Letters such as "y", "g" and "p"

are often incorrectly positioned in relation to the line. Not enough progress has been made over time on the key issue related to handwriting from the previous inspection.

69. Pupils respond well to the consistently high expectations of behaviour in all classes. Little time is wasted during lessons and pupils settle down quickly to start activities. Learning support staff make a significant contribution to pupils' progress; they are well trained and have full access to lesson planning so that their support is focused and effective. Inclusion is very good. Teachers are very careful to ensure that all pupils are fully involved and use day-to-day assessment effectively. For example, in one Year 2 lesson, the teacher skilfully targeted questions at individuals either to check their understanding, or to reinforce specific teaching points. Planning is good and lessons generally are well structured, with a good balance between direct whole class teaching and individual or group activities. Teachers use information and communication technology well to reinforce learning and use of the computer is planned as an integral part of most lessons. Lesson planning is good and tasks are usually varied appropriately to the different needs of pupils. The pace of lessons is good and pupils remain motivated and interested. Teachers have good presentational skills and whole-class sessions are lively and enjoyable. For example, Year 2 pupils were motivated by the short "Bingo" sessions, eagerly waiting for "their" words to come up, reinforcing their reading and spelling skills at the same time. Texts are carefully chosen and teachers use them effectively to illustrate teaching points. In one Year 2 class, pupils made very good progress in their ability to describe characters as they talked about "Six Dinner Sid" and his many personalities.
70. Subject management is now very good. Recent analysis of the subject by the co-ordinator and the senior management team has resulted in a development plan for the subject which is focused on raising standards. There has been satisfactory progress overall since the previous inspection but some good progress recently in improving resources and successfully introducing guided reading sessions. A new phonics programme for the Foundation Stage has also been introduced. The school is just replacing unwieldy assessment procedures with a more detailed and informative system. Although individual targets are set, there is scope to increase the focus on these so that pupils are reminded of what they have to do to improve their work.

MATHEMATICS

71. In the 2001 national tests in mathematics for seven year-olds, standards of attainment were well above average when compared to all schools nationally. However, standards were lower when compared to schools in similar contexts. An analysis of teacher assessment data indicates that standards were highest in number and lowest in using and applying mathematics. Standards achieved by high-attaining pupils were well below average in using and applying mathematics and number. During the past three years, the boys have achieved much higher levels in mathematics than the girls and much higher levels than their peers nationally. During the past five years, results in mathematics have improved at a similar rate to the national trend.
72. Inspection findings suggest that standards attained by the current Year 2 pupils are not as high as those attained last year. The reasons for this can be found from an analysis of the school's baseline from the nursery and data from the reception year. Last year's cohort of seven-year-olds scored significantly higher in these assessments than did the pupils in the current Year 2. As a result, the school's predictions from this data suggest that the results in the national tests will be lower this year. Inspection findings agree with this analysis. During the inspection, standards attained in lessons and in pupils' books are average for Year 2 pupils. Overall, most pupils are generally making satisfactory progress. Pupils with special educational needs are making good progress in mathematics due to the quality and quantity of support they receive from support staff and teachers. Higher-attaining pupils are generally not making the progress they should because the work set for them is sometimes too easy. Overall, standards are highest in number. However, there is little evidence of pupils' abilities to solve problems, especially using weight, capacity and length, and in carrying out mathematical investigations. This is a pity as these elements provide the appropriate challenges to extend pupils' learning, especially that of higher-

attaining pupils. Taking the national rising trend into account, standards and the progress pupils make in mathematics are similar to those found at the last inspection.

73. By the time they leave the school, most pupils add and subtract two digit numbers. Higher-attaining pupils calculate using three digit numbers. The majority of pupils work with their 2, 5 and 10 times tables. They measure in centimetres and tell the time in hours, half hours and quarter hours. They weigh objects and recognise which is heavier and lighter. They understand symmetrical shapes, know the properties of some simple shapes and add simple fractions, such as halves and quarters.
74. The quality of the teaching of mathematics observed during the inspection was generally good. This is similar to that observed at the last inspection. Thorough planning of lessons, challenging oral work followed by stimulating tasks that are pitched at the appropriate levels for pupils' abilities, and effective conclusions for lessons that summarise and extend the learning that has taken place are characteristics of the good teaching. For example, at the end of a Year 1 lesson on doubling numbers, the teacher introduced the idea of adding together in their heads 'near' doubles, such as 7 and 8. This extended the learning that had taken place on doubling numbers. In the most effective lessons, teachers teach pupils numerical skills well and are helping them to become able mathematicians. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, the teacher encouraged pupils to think of different ways to find the answer to mathematical problems. Some calculated their answers by rounding numbers up or down, others by adding near doubles, others by a mixture of both methods. In the best lessons, pupils receive good help from their teachers, who assess what they are learning and help them to improve. In nearly all cases, relationships are positive and this helps pupils learn. Pupils generally enjoy mathematics and work with enthusiasm in lessons. Extensive use is made of computer programs to help pupils consolidate their learning of mathematical skills. This is good practice. There are examples of pupils using their numeracy skills in other subjects. For example, in design and technology, Year 1 pupils measured lengths before cutting out shapes. The strengths of the teaching help many pupils to make sound progress in mathematics.
75. However, the teaching is not always as positive as this. Sometimes, the work given to pupils, especially higher-attaining pupils, is too easy for them. It is not pitched at the appropriate level to challenge and extend their thinking. In a few lessons, teachers give too much attention to certain groups of pupils and leave others to work by themselves. On these occasions, many pupils who do not receive feedback from their teacher during the lesson do not make the progress they should. Overall, not enough opportunities are provided to promote pupils' thinking and encourage their problem-solving skills. Pupils do not use and apply their numeracy skills enough by carrying out mathematical investigations. Sometimes, lessons are too noisy to encourage pupils to think clearly enough and the pace of learning is too slow. A more general weakness in the teaching is that teachers rely too much on worksheets and commercially produced workbooks that often lack challenge and hold pupils back in their thinking.
76. The school is wisely implementing the National Numeracy Strategy. This provides good guidance for teachers and is helping many pupils make satisfactory progress. However, teachers allocate too much time to teaching number, much of it at a similar level, and not enough time to teaching capacity, weight and length. More time needs to be allocated to teaching problem-solving and investigations. The school is aware of these issues as they were identified during its monitoring of the subject last year. They now need to be acted upon in a systematic way.

SCIENCE

77. Standards for seven-year-olds are broadly similar to those expected nationally. This indicates a slight improvement compared to the results of the most recent National Curriculum Teacher Assessments where the percentage of pupils reaching a level appropriate for their age was below the national average. Pupils' standards were higher in the area of Life and Living Processes than in the other areas studied, particularly in Experimental and Investigative Science. Although

standards are still not as high as those at the time of the previous inspection, staff have identified the need to improve provision and standards are beginning to rise. Teaching and learning for pupils in Years 1 and 2 are now good.

78. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those that speak English as an additional language, make good progress in Years 1 and 2. In Year 2, pupils know the names for the parts of the human body and that healthy eating and exercise are important and good for you. Pupils with average abilities describe meals which indicate a sound understanding of a healthy diet and higher attainers know there are vitamins in an orange and carbohydrate in a potato. Pupils understand stages of growth from a bean seed to a plant and name the parts of a flowering plant. Pupils also understand how materials change and higher attainers identify those that rust. Pupils in Year 1 have a sound understanding of the parts of a torch and compare the brightness of different torches. Although there is some evidence of pupils developing their skills of experimentation and investigation, more opportunities should be provided for them to respond to suggestions how to find things out, put forward their ideas and make simple predictions. This will help to raise the standards of all pupils but particularly the higher attainers.
79. In a very good lesson in Year 1, the teacher's high expectations and very good questioning assessed the pupils' understanding and gained the pupils' interest as she quickly moved on to introduce new scientific ideas. The teacher developed the pupils' thinking well by setting problems, getting them to predict and asking them to discuss the issues with each other. During the whole-class investigation, the pupils' understanding of a 'fair test' was developed and resulted in pupils giving reasons for why some torches gave a brighter light than others. The end of the lesson was used well to assess pupils' understanding and consolidate learning points. Pupils of all abilities made very good progress. The scrutiny of work, however, did not indicate a range of investigative activities in all classes and pupils are not systematically developing their skills of describing and recording their observations. Also, in many cases pupils of all abilities undertake the same activities and consequently the higher attainers are not always sufficiently challenged.
80. In the best lessons, teachers clearly outline what they want the pupils to learn and share this with them so all know the purpose of the lesson. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge and provide challenging activities that test pupils' understanding of science. In a good Year 2 lesson, pupils responded well to a homework task on diet. The completed work indicated good involvement with parents in some cases and good effort by pupils. Some pupils had used their computers at home to gain additional information or to present their work. Computers are also used well as pupils add text to pictures when identifying proteins, fats and carbohydrates and when creating charts which indicate favourite foods. Data-handling skills are developed well.
81. Good methods are used to stimulate pupils' enthusiasm and interest in science. In a Year 1 lesson where they were learning about the brightness of light, pupils were encouraged to work in groups. This maintained their interest and concentration in what they were doing. This was also seen in a Year 2 lesson where activities were well introduced and pupils spent their time working to complete their posters on 'How to be Fit and Healthy'. The teacher was then able to support individuals and groups in their learning without interruption. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language are well supported in lessons and make similar progress to their peers. No significant difference was noted in the attainment and progress of boys and girls. All these examples reflect the school's commitment to inclusive education.
82. A good action plan indicates clear and appropriate priorities which include staff training, improved resources, a greater focus on scientific investigations and improvements in assessment. These issues reflect those identified by the inspectors and indicate that the management and co-ordination of the subject by the acting headteacher and acting deputy headteacher is good.

ART AND DESIGN

83. At the time of the inspection, there was limited evidence available in order to form robust views about all aspects of art and design. During this inspection, examples of pupils' work were scrutinised, as were teachers' plans. One art and design lesson was observed and conversations were held with pupils about their work in the subject. Overall, by the end of Year 2, standards in art and design are average and most pupils make satisfactory progress in the subject. This is

similar to the standards achieved and progress made during the last inspection. Insufficient evidence means that no judgements can be made about the quality of teaching of art and design.

84. Pupils have opportunities to draw, paint, use pastels and create collages using card, tissue paper, materials and glue. They use computer programs to draw, paint in a variety of ways and print off their work. In Year 2, pupils have produced some careful pictures from the stimulus of a section of a photograph. Some of these are of high quality and show that some pupils are developing accurate observational skills of landscapes, desert scenes and country scenes in order to continue their pictures from sections of a photograph. Year 2 pupils also produce pictures in the style of artists, such as Pollock and Mondrian. They learn about the importance of creating backgrounds and foregrounds in pictures, and of adding detail in people's faces in order to express feelings and moods.
85. The school is wisely following national guidance for its scheme of work in art and design. This ensures coverage of the National Curriculum. Pupils are taught art and design in half-term blocks alternatively with design and technology. This is an appropriate way of organising the curriculum. The development of art and design has not been a school priority for a number of years but provision has been satisfactorily maintained. There is a need to ensure that there is a permanent co-ordinator for art and design as well as a systematic review of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject. These steps are necessary in order to raise standards of attainment further.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

86. No lessons were observed in design and technology during the inspection. Some evidence of standards achieved was drawn from a small sample of pupils' work and discussions with pupils. However, this evidence was not enough to form a robust view about standards achieved or the quality of teaching in the subject. No judgement can also be made about improvement since the last inspection.
87. From the work seen, there is evidence that pupils plan their work before making products and afterwards they evaluate how well they have achieved. Pupils are taught skills in handling tools, for instance, how to cut accurately using scissors. They use computers to help them in their work by using spray paint to colour hair. Year 2 pupils have designed and made glove puppets. They stitch materials together and join material, card and decorations when making a hand puppet to represent a cat.
88. The school is wisely following national guidance for its scheme of work in design and technology. Statutory requirements are met through this. Design and technology is taught in half-term blocks of time alternately with art and design. This way of organising the curriculum is appropriate. However, design and technology has not featured as a school priority for a number of years and there is not a permanent co-ordinator for the subject. There is a need to appoint a permanent co-ordinator for design and technology and to identify the strengths and weaknesses in the subject. By taking action to improve on the weaknesses identified, pupils' standards and the quality of teaching will improve.

GEOGRAPHY

89. Standards are above those expected nationally of pupils, by the time they are aged seven. This reflects the good standards found during the previous inspection. Teachers have high expectations and resources are good. Lessons are interesting and pupils of all abilities make good progress and achieve well.
90. Year 2 pupils generally have a good awareness of localities beyond their own. They use a range of maps and atlases as they search for different countries. Most identify England accurately on a world map, name the countries in the United Kingdom and explain clearly what an island is. A few lower-attaining pupils find it difficult to recall work covered in previous weeks. After watching a

video about St Lucia, pupils talked confidently about the differences and similarities between the lives of children there and those locally. Most pupils know that people can affect the environment, for example by cutting down trees in rainforests and destroying wildlife. Pupils in Year 1 learn about the local environment and can identify aspects they like and those they want to change. They are introduced to the concept of mapmaking when they record their journey to school.

91. Teaching is good overall. Questioning is used effectively to challenge pupils to think. Inclusion is very good and teachers are careful to check that all pupils take a full part in the lessons. In one Year 2 lesson, the teacher ensured that she built on pupils' existing knowledge, where some pupils had direct family links with other countries. Lessons are well planned and have a good balance of whole-class teaching and group or individual activities. Teachers have high expectations in terms of pupils' understanding but there is scope for some more time to be spent, either with individuals or small groups, on ensuring that lower-attaining pupils have a secure understanding of work covered in previous lessons. During the lessons observed there was good support for pupils with special educational needs, which enabled them to complete activities at the same rate as others.
92. Subject leadership is satisfactory. The recently appointed co-ordinator has a clear understanding of her role. The school has adopted national guidance to assist teachers in their planning and the subject policy is due for review as part of the school's programme of curriculum development. There is no formal system for assessing and recording individual progress and this is an area for improvement. Teachers do, however, evaluate lessons and identify pupils who are particularly successful and those who find aspects difficult.

HISTORY

93. The school operates a timetabling system common in many schools where pupils study history and geography during alternate half terms. History was only being taught in Year 1 during the inspection. There was not enough evidence available to make secure judgements on the standards pupils reach by the time they are aged seven. Planning documents show that pupils have access to the expected Programme of Study.
94. Pupils learn to find out about the recent past from a suitable variety of sources. They examine artefacts, look at photographs and talk to adults about their memories. They learn about events in the distant past, such as the Gunpowder Plot and learn that people remember the past in different ways, for example by wearing poppies on Remembrance Day. There is scope for pupils to have more opportunities to undertake extended writing activities in history and for links with the literacy period to be developed. Year 1 pupils learn about the past by studying toys. They develop a sound understanding of the features of new and older toys through comparing those used by their parents and grandparents and those they play with now. Pupils' experience is suitably extended by visits to museums and through visitors to the school.
95. Teaching in the one lesson observed was satisfactory. The teacher held the pupils' interest very effectively and her good organisation and behaviour management ensured that all pupils listened and were fully involved as they looked at a number of toys. Questions were targeted effectively to include pupils of all abilities and pupils were given time to explain their thinking. Although the teacher used the limited resources reasonably well, the examples of toys did not give enough scope for pupils to compare different features of old and new artefacts. The activity was clearly explained and lower-attaining pupils were given good support by the class teacher and two students. As a result, all pupils made satisfactory progress.
96. Subject leadership is now satisfactory. The co-ordinator has already identified the need to improve the school resources to support the current Programme of Study. As with geography the subject policy is due for revision and the school has yet to introduce whole-school assessment procedures.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

97. Standards of attainment and the quality of teaching of information and communication technology are strengths of the school. This marks an improvement since the last inspection. By the time they leave the school, most pupils achieve and many exceed the standards expected of pupils of this age.
98. Most pupils in Year 2 control a mouse skilfully. They word process, change font, save and print their work. For example, some Year 2 pupils word processed traditional stories for a classroom display. A further display comprised pupils' names in different fonts and colours. Most Year 2 pupils compose, colour and label designs to reflect the work of artists such as Mondrian and Pollock. They are learning to think ahead to consider the most appropriate tools on the program to use in order to achieve the most effective results. They have a good understanding of some of the technical vocabulary used in ICT. They are familiar with words such as 'tool bar', 'fill tool' and 'folder'.
99. The teaching of ICT is generally good. Teachers and teaching assistants prepare lessons thoroughly, have sufficient expertise to teach the subject well and teach with enthusiasm and commitment. They support pupils effectively in their work, ensuring that they understand what they are doing and how best to achieve results. In their turn, pupils at all levels of ability respond eagerly to this approach and they make good progress in the subject. Pupils concentrate hard in lessons and are generally pleased with their efforts.
100. The school sensibly uses national guidance for its scheme of work in ICT. This provides a good structure to ensure the National Curriculum in ICT is being taught fully. However, teachers need to work out how best to adapt aspects of this scheme of work to ensure pupils make the progress they should all the time. The school has a clear vision and sound plan for future developments in ICT. These are being supported well by future staff training and additional purchases of computers and software.

MUSIC

101. By the time they are seven, pupils' attainment is similar to that expected nationally. This reflects the findings of the last inspection. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language make good progress due to the effective support given by teachers and assistants. Overall, most pupils make satisfactory progress.
102. In Year 2, pupils sing a variety of songs with confidence and awareness of pulse. They have a clear understanding of the differences between pulse and rhythm and can clap or play an instrument to a steady beat. They listen well to music and sing familiar songs developing an awareness of dynamics and tempo. In Year 1, pupils develop an understanding of rhythm by clapping or tapping out the rhythm of their names. They enjoy singing and are aware of other performers. In assemblies, pupils enter to music being played and this helps to develop their appreciation of music from different countries and times. In assemblies, their singing is tuneful and controlled and enhanced by guitar and piano accompaniment.
103. The quality of teaching and the learning which it promotes are satisfactory. A new scheme of work has been introduced and teachers are using this successfully to plan their work. There is evidence of continuity and equality of provision across year groups as teachers plan together and share their expertise. In a good Year 2 lesson, the teacher had a clear understanding of what she wanted the pupils to learn and provided a series of activities which gradually built on their previous knowledge, skills and understanding. By the end of the lesson all pupils had made good progress and enjoyed the lesson. The teacher had maintained the pupils' interest by ensuring that they all had opportunities to perform and by using current popular music, to which they responded well. All teachers have a sound knowledge of what they are teaching but there are variations in the level of skill with which this knowledge is used. Teachers expect pupils to care for the instruments and

they respond with well-developed self-control. Information and communication technology is regularly used in lessons; for example, all classes have good compact disc players and the co-ordinator has recently purchased a computer program to help pupils with their composing skills. Teachers do not systematically assess pupils' attainment in a way which makes it easy to identify the progress which they make over time.

104. The subject is well managed by a part-time teacher, who tries to ensure that music plays an important part in school life. Every year the school takes part in a music festival along with other schools in the area and last year this involved all pupils in Year 1. Pupils also have opportunities to take part in Christmas concerts, harvest festivals and Easter assemblies where pupils develop their own compositions and sing, dance and recite poems in front of a wider audience of family and friends. Pupils in Year 2 also have opportunities to play the recorder in the summer term and all pupils develop their singing through weekly hymn practice. Pupils have opportunities to listen to live performances, for example, a string ensemble.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

105. Provision is made for pupils to take part in a good programme of physical education which fully meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. During the inspection one lesson each of games, gymnastics and dance was observed; however, only dance was seen in Year 2. This makes an overall judgement on standards difficult but standards in dance in Year 2 were similar to those expected of pupils at this age. There is some very high attainment and the provision for gifted and talented pupils is good. The school has made a satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.
106. Lessons are structured well and pupils learn to warm up at the start of all lessons and cool down at the end. They learn to use space safely and sensibly and most pupils move with control and co-ordination. In a gymnastics lesson in Year 1, pupils began to link balances, jumps and different ways of travelling to create a sequence of movements. In a games lesson in the parallel class, most pupils worked well with others to practise and develop their throwing and catching skills. A few pupils showed above average skills, could throw and catch confidently, and understood how to intercept the ball when playing "Piggy in the middle". Pupils are taught to understand that exercise is good for them and teachers make effective links with the science and health education programme. In a Year 2 dance lesson, pupils worked with partners to develop a sequence of movements based on a circle theme. There were some examples of very high attainment, where pupils danced with considerable poise but attainment was overall similar to that usually seen at this stage. Most pupils worked well and tried hard but a few pupils found it difficult to co-operate with others. Pupils are used to discussing their work and watching others, and many can identify aspects of performances which they like.
107. Teaching is consistently good and is better than at the previous inspection. Teachers are good role models for pupils, joining in and demonstrating warm up activities. Behaviour management is good and teachers intervene quickly to prevent potentially silly behaviour from developing. Occasionally, the pace of teaching slows when pupils continue to chat among themselves rather than listen. Adult support is used effectively. All teachers use demonstrations well to illustrate their teaching points and this assists pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language to have full access to the lessons.
108. Leadership of the subject is good. The school has supplemented national guidance with good additional material and teachers have good resources to draw on when they are planning their lessons. The system of joint planning between teachers in the same year group is a significant strength and offers good support to teachers new to the school. Resources are good.