

INSPECTION REPORT

PEAR TREE INFANT SCHOOL

Derby

LEA area: City of Derby

Unique reference number: 112728

Headteacher: Mrs. K Clark

Reporting inspector: Mrs. J E Platt
11565

Dates of inspection: 5th – 8th February 2001

Inspection number: 208223

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 category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Pear Tree Street Derby
Postcode:	DE23 8PN
Telephone number:	01332 767244
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr. R Sund
Date of previous inspection:	November 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
11565	Mrs. J E Platt	Registered inspector	Science Art and design Information and communication technology Design and technology English as an additional language Equal opportunities	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9399	Mr. R Watts	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
7222	Mr. A Watson	Team inspector	English Religious education Music Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

11419	Mrs. J Underwood	Team inspector	Mathematics History Geography Physical education Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage	
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Pear Tree Infant School is a smaller than average school situated in Derby. At present the school has 143 boys and girls on roll in the age range 4 to 7 years. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals (38%) is above the national average. Currently, 80 per cent of pupils come from homes where English is not the first language and this is very high compared with national figures. The school's register of special educational needs identifies 43 pupils (30%) requiring additional help and this is above average. Two pupils have formal statements of need. The area served by the school is slightly more disadvantaged socially and economically than that normally seen. Attainment when pupils start school is below that expected for their age.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an improving school that provides pupils with an effective education in a friendly and caring community. Overall, teaching is good and enables pupils to make good progress. From a low level of attainment achievement grows as pupils move through the school although standards in English, mathematics and science are below the national average. The headteacher's leadership is strong and thoughtful and, with the support of all staff and the governing body, has done much to tackle the problems identified in the previous report. The cost of running the school is high and the school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- From a low level of attainment pupils achieve well and reach the level expected for their age in many subjects including reading and information and communication technology. Standards in religious education and music are good and this is a significant achievement.
- The quality of teaching is good and helps pupils to learn well in lessons.
- The headteacher provides very good leadership and, supported by all staff and governors, has brought about many improvements in the school.
- An interesting range of activities leads to children making good progress in the reception class.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good. An excellent range of activities is provided to celebrate the cultural diversity in the school.

What could be improved

- Standards in English, mathematics and science can still be improved to reach the national average.
- The use of assessment in lessons in order to guide teachers about what to modify in the next lesson so that it more closely matches the needs of all pupils.
- The curriculum for pupils in the mixed-age classes.
- The organisation of classes to limit the disruption caused by pupils having to change class too often.
- Pupils' attendance which is well below the national average for primary schools.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good progress and resolved the serious weaknesses identified in the previous inspection in 1998. The school is now a far better school and has effective systems in place to move forward. Strong and determined leadership has been a significant factor in bringing about change. The school has a clear direction for the future with a focus on raising standards. Teaching has improved and teachers have clear guidelines to inform their planning. Children in the reception class now experience a rich curriculum and make good progress. Pupils' attainment has steadily improved and more pupils are now reaching the level expected for their age. The weakness in information and communication technology has been resolved and pupils reach the nationally expected level. Detailed planning has raised standards in art and design and design and technology and these are now satisfactory. Assessment procedures are now in place. In English and mathematics pupils have individual targets so that they know what they have to do to improve their work. Pupils with special educational needs and

those learning through English as an additional language now make good progress related to their previous learning. Assessment in lessons is an area still needing attention to check that all pupils, especially higher attaining pupils, are learning effectively in all lessons.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	Compared with			
	All schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
Reading	E*	E	E	E
Writing	E*	E	E	E
Mathematics	E*	E	E	E

Key

well above average A

above average B

Average C

below average D

well below average E

These results show that as pupils leave school, standards are well below the average for all schools and similar schools. The comparison with similar schools does not really present a true picture of achievement in the school as it does not take into consideration the very high number of pupils who come from homes where English is not the first spoken language. Many of these pupils lack competence in their own language as well as in English and this is one of the major reasons for the low test results. Since 1998, when results were in the lowest 5 per cent in the country, standards have gradually improved and the decline in standards has been halted and reversed and standards are gradually improving. Each year has shown an increase in the number of pupils reaching the national average, although few pupils exceed this level and it is this that is holding down overall standards.

Currently, the work seen in Year 2 shows that pupils are achieving well enough although overall standards remain below average in writing and mathematics. More progress has been made in reading where standards are now average and this is a significant achievement for many pupils. Pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs receive effective support and make good progress to meet the targets set for them. The school has set itself realistic targets for English and mathematics and is well placed to reach them.

Teacher assessment for science in 2000 was well below the national average and, although there are signs of improvement, standards seen during the inspection were below average. Standards in information and communication technology have greatly improved and are now satisfactory. Taking into consideration that few pupils have computers at home this is a very good achievement. In religious education pupils reach standards above the recommended level in the Locally Agreed Syllabus and have a good knowledge of world religions. Standards in music are good. More pupils are now reaching the nationally expected level for their age in all other subjects and, considering the low level of attainment as pupils start school, this reflects good achievement.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils enjoy school and are keen to work hard. They have good attitudes to work and school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in lessons and around school is good. Pupils play happily on the playground.
Personal development and relationships	Personal development is good. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good and are based on mutual respect, which leads to pupils' growing confidence in themselves.
Attendance	Although the school has several systems to promote attendance, it is still well below the national average for primary schools.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good

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

Overall, teaching is good and leads to good learning in lessons. All the teaching seen was satisfactory or better apart from one lesson. In 68 per cent of lessons seen teaching was good or better and in 5 per cent of these lessons it was very good. Good teaching was seen in all classes and most subjects.

Teaching is good in English and mathematics. Basic literacy and numeracy skills are taught well and this has a positive impact on improving standards, especially in reading. Teaching of information and communication technology has improved and is now good. Computer skills are taught thoroughly and teachers plan activities to enable pupils to practise these skills in other subjects.

Teaching is good for pupils with special educational needs and those learning through English as an additional language. Classroom assistants offer sensitive support to help these pupils. Teachers include discussions in class to extend vocabulary and ensure all are fully involved in activities.

There were a number of particular strengths evident in the teaching and learning seen. In the reception class, the caring relationships boost children's confidence so that they are eager to try new experiences and work hard. In Years 1 and 2 lessons are planned well and teachers explain very clearly what pupils are expected to do and therefore the pupils are keen to please. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the subjects they teach and ask effective questions that make pupils think, and this extends their learning. Teaching is not so effective at challenging all pupils to the highest levels at all times. This problem is linked to the lack of the use of assessment in lessons which means that tasks do not always match pupils' needs, resulting in underachievement. Although classroom assistants provide good support this sometimes overwhelms pupils and prevents them acquiring the essential skills of independent learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides good learning opportunities, enriched by an interesting range of extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors. The curriculum for pupils in the mixed-age classes is not adjusted to ensure pupils do not omit or repeat parts of the curriculum. The continuity of pupils' learning is disrupted as they have to change classes in the middle of the year.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision is good and pupils make good progress as they receive effective support which is linked to specific targets for improvement.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Pupils learning through English as an additional language are identified as they start school. Provision to help them is good. Translations are provided as required and this helps to boost pupils' self confidence so that they quickly start to extend their English speaking skills.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good overall. Spiritual development is very good and school assemblies provide many opportunities for pupils to reflect on their own experiences. Social and moral development is very good and is successfully promoted throughout the school day. Provision to appreciate the rich diversity of culture in the school is excellent.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares for its pupils to a high level. Good use of discipline procedures eliminates bullying and harassment. Procedures to monitor pupils' academic progress are satisfactory although pupils' attainment in lessons is not always recorded in enough detail and this leads to tasks not matching pupils individual needs.

There is good communication between the school and parents. The number of parents involved in the school is satisfactory and the school does much to encourage this. The school has an active Parent, Teacher and Friends Association that raises considerable funds for the school. Parents are kept well informed about their children's progress.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very good leadership and has been the leading force behind the school's improvements. Together, the headteacher, deputy headteacher and all staff have tackled previous difficulties and created a positive ethos in the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body fulfils its responsibilities well. Governors are well informed about all aspects of school life and have clear views about the future. Most statutory requirements are met except for omissions in the school prospectus and annual report to parents.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school makes good use of assessment information to evaluate its performance. The school's improvement plan is used effectively to address any perceived weaknesses.
The strategic use of resources	The budget and specific grants are used appropriately. Support staff are used effectively to support learning in class. Resources are used well and good use is made of computers to support learning in many subjects. The library is underused to extend pupils' research skills.

The school is well led and managed. The management of English and mathematics is good but it is less effective in other subjects as co-ordinators have limited opportunity to check on what is happening in the classroom. Spending is closely linked to the school's priorities. Money is spent prudently, based on a sound understanding of the principles of best value.

The school has a good number of teachers and support staff and they are all appropriately trained and experienced for this age group. Accommodation is good and the youngest children now have a separate outdoor play area. Learning resources have considerably improved and are now good.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children enjoy coming to school. • Teaching is good and their children make good progress. • Management of the school is good. • Their children are helped to mature and work hard. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Parents had no major concerns.

Inspectors agree completely with parents' positive views.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

- 1 When children start school standards are below those expected for their age. Skills in speaking and listening, writing and mathematics are particularly low. In response to good teaching and a range of stimulating activities children make good progress in the reception class. Much is achieved in personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative and physical development, and pupils reach the required standard in these aspects of their development. Coming from a low level of attainment on entry children achieve well enough in language and communication and mathematical development but do not reach the recommended early learning goals¹ in these aspects.
- 2 In the national tests for seven-year olds in 2000, the pupils' results were well below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics when compared to all schools and similar schools. The comparison with similar schools does not give a true reflection of the school's attainment as it does not take into consideration the very high proportion of pupils who have English as an additional language and have poorly developed language skills. This plus the low attainment of many as they start school are the major reasons for the low results. Standards are also adversely affected by a larger than normal number of pupils starting the school at different times throughout the year. Many of these pupils do not manage to achieve the national average by the end of Year 2. Boys have achieved higher than girls in reading, which is against the national picture. However, trends over time show no consistent difference in the overall attainment of boys and girls. Results since 1998 have been well below average but a closer look at the results shows a rising trend with more pupils reaching the national average. The number of pupils exceeding this level has not shown the same improvement and this has kept overall standards down. The school has set realistic targets for 2001 and is well placed to achieve them.
- 3 The work of the present Year 2 shows continuing improvement in writing and mathematics although standards are below average. Better progress has been made in reading and standards are now in line with the national average. The number of pupils exceeding the national average is slowly increasing but is not as high as it could be because pupils are not always set tasks that enable them to achieve this level. Taking into consideration the vast majority of pupils start school with a low level of attainment the current standards show pupils are achieving well enough and in reading many are achieving very well.
- 4 Since the last inspection the school has put in place many initiatives to raise standards. New schemes of work provide better guidance for teachers' planning and the overall quality of teaching has improved. Resources are better. One of the major reasons for the improving standards is the better use of assessment data to set pupils individual targets in English and mathematics so that they know what they have to do to improve. Assessment data is also analysed to track the progress of pupils and "booster" classes in English and mathematics are provided when required. Pupils with English as an additional language are assessed as they start school. Prompt action is taken to help those who lack confidence in their mother tongue as well as having

¹ Early learning goals are national expectations for most children to reach by the end of the reception class.

poorly developed English. Translations are provided if necessary and this boosts pupils' confidence as well as enabling them to have full access to the curriculum. Teachers place significant emphasis on discussion, which helps these pupils make good progress in extending their language skills. Pupils identified as having special educational needs also benefit from effective support directed to specific targets and they make good progress relative to their prior attainment. These procedures also benefit traveller children who are provided with additional adult support so that they make good progress. In its endeavour to raise standards the school moves pupils into a higher class if they are identified as higher attainers. The predicted results for 2002 indicate this has been successful and more pupils are on target to achieve above the national average.

- 5 In work seen in English during the inspection, pupils show satisfactory standards in listening and pay close attention to stories. Many pupils enter school with poor speaking skills and, although they make good progress, standards remain low. Many pupils have limited vocabulary and answer questions with only brief responses. Writing is the weakest aspect of English and many pupils lack sufficient skills to write an independent piece of work. Reading has shown much improvement and most pupils read competently although not widely and have a limited knowledge of authors. These literacy skills are used to enhance learning in other lessons as pupils record their science results and read the information they have researched on the computer.
- 6 In mathematics, pupils are extending their number skills, add and subtract numbers to 20 and higher attaining pupils understand hundred, tens and units. Pupils are making a good start at learning their multiplication tables. Insufficient attention is given to problem solving and data handling and pupils are less confident in these aspects. Numeracy skills are used to promote learning in other subjects. For example, in Year 1 pupils produce simple graphs on the computer.
- 7 Standards in science are below average and teacher assessments in 2000 were below the national average. From a low level of attainment pupils achieve well enough but overall standards are held down by a lack of pupils exceeding the national average. Also the significant number of pupils in the early stages of English acquisition and those with special educational needs find it more difficult to fully understand the required scientific concepts. Pupils have a sound knowledge of materials and their different qualities and know how to light a bulb by creating an electrical circuit. Pupils enjoy investigating but have not yet reached a level to put forward their own suggestions or predict findings and record them in a variety of ways.
- 8 Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) have improved considerably since the last inspection and are now in line with what is expected for this age group. Pupils are confident using the most important keys and know how to access different programs and to save their work. Computers are used to support learning in other lessons, such as learning to spell new words and matching pictures to numerals. In Year 2 pupils use the Internet to research information. Considering few pupils have computers at home, these standards show a significant achievement for many pupils.

- 9 In religious education pupils attain standards higher than the level recommended in the Locally Agreed Syllabus and this is a very good achievement for most pupils. Pupils have a secure knowledge of Christianity and other religions and understand how this affects the way people live. Music is taught well and standards are good. Standards in all other subjects are wholly satisfactory. The good teaching and emphasis on discussion enables pupils' achievement to grow as they move through the school.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- 10 Pupils have good attitudes towards their work and school. The vast majority enjoy attending and the parents who responded to the questionnaire agree with this. Pupils move purposefully to their classrooms in the mornings and after breaks and no time is wasted. They respond well to good teaching, showing enthusiasm and a thirst for knowledge. They compete to give answers and are disappointed when they are not asked. When the teaching is less stimulating, or when they are not confident with the work, they sometimes tend to become too passive or even inattentive. Pupils are particularly interested in the drama used in assemblies to promote social and moral understanding, clapping enthusiastically when their fellow pupils perform well. A good number of pupils take advantage of the wide range of extra-curricular activities offered.
- 11 Overall, pupils' behaviour is good. In lessons, they do what they are asked by adults, and teachers only have to have a quiet word to correct inappropriate actions. Pupils respond well to the use of praise and value the rewards that good behaviour brings. Sometimes, however, the teacher has to spend too much time correcting indiscipline which arises from their over-enthusiasm, such as calling out or talking about the answer at the same time as the teacher or another pupil. Pupils behave well around the school and in the dining hall, where there is a very civilised and pleasant social atmosphere. They also behave well at playtimes and there are very few incidents of minor dispute. Last year there were no exclusions. Pupils say that there is little bullying or conflict and are confident that the staff can sort out any problems.
- 12 Pupils' personal development is good. They respond particularly well when given opportunities to work together during lessons. Pupils eagerly accept the challenge to raise funds for local charities like 'Basic Bank' and 'Help the Aged.' Relationships within the school are very good. Although there are many different ethnic groups, this has no effect on the way pupils behave well towards each other. They listen to what others have to say but are especially aware of others' values and beliefs. In all lessons seen, there was a very good rapport between adults and children and this allows pupils to learn confidently. Almost all pupils work in groups with adults who are very supportive. However, there are occasions where this support limits the opportunity for pupils to take more responsibility for their own work.
- 13 Attendance is low in comparison with other primary schools and there is too much unauthorised absence. There has been a steady improvement since the previous inspection however. Some of the authorised absence arises when pupils take extended visits to family abroad. After this has been taken into account, attendance is still below, but much closer to, average. Most unauthorised absence is so categorised because parents do not give reasons. A minority of pupils are a few minutes late each morning, although evidence from registers indicates that this is improving.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

- 14 The quality of teaching is good overall and has improved significantly since the last inspection. In 68 per cent of lessons seen teaching was good or better. It was very good in 5 per cent of lessons. Teaching was satisfactory in the rest of the lessons seen except for one when teaching was unsatisfactory. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection. The good teaching is spread evenly between all years including the foundation stage² and learning is good throughout the school. Although good teaching was seen in most subjects it was consistently good in English, music and religious education with other good examples in history and geography. Teaching of ICT is good and computers were used to support learning in many lessons. Only one lesson was seen that was unsatisfactory. This was in science when the activity was unclear and did not match the pupils' ability and therefore learning in the lesson was unsatisfactory.
- 15 Teaching for pupils with special educational needs and those learning through English as an additional language is good with effective support in class and in withdrawal activities. Tasks are planned that match the needs of these pupils and are often activity based so that pupils enjoy the sessions. Teachers use on-going assessment to check pupils' progress and set new targets so that, they move quickly to the next stage of their learning.
- 16 Teaching in the foundation stage is good and has improved considerably since the last inspection. This enables all pupils to achieve well in relation to their low level of attainment as they start school, and their learning progresses at a good rate. All staff have a good knowledge of how children learn and know when to stand back and when to offer support. This allows children to develop their personal and social skills as they learn to do a range of tasks for themselves. Planning is detailed and includes a stimulating range of activities that captures children's interest so that they are enthusiastic learners. Behaviour is managed very well and children learn in a happy, friendly atmosphere.
- 17 Throughout the rest of the school teachers have a secure knowledge of the subjects and are confident answering pupils' questions. The school takes full advantage of teachers' expertise on carousel day³ when teachers teach the same subject to different ability groups. Learning on these days is particularly good in Year 1 in ICT as pupils are taught in small groups so that all can practise their skills on the computers. The teacher's good knowledge enables ICT skills to be taught thoroughly and much is achieved in these lessons. Teachers have a good understanding of teaching reading and the new active approach to teaching letter sounds is making learning fun for pupils and standards in reading are improving. In numeracy lessons teachers are confident following the new national guidelines and use questions effectively to develop skills of mental calculation. The teaching of basic literacy and numeracy skills is good and the use of games and emphasis on discussion is a feature in many lessons that leads to effective learning. Good subject knowledge and enthusiasm for music has led to good standards throughout the school.

² Foundation stage is the provision for pupils from nursery to the end of the reception class.

³ Carousel day is a day a week when pupils are taught English, mathematics, science and ICT in small groups on a rotational basis as they move between different teachers.

- 18 Planning for lessons is good and has been completely changed since the last inspection when it was unsatisfactory. Teachers now identify clear learning outcomes and share these with pupils so they understand the focus of the lesson. The weakness identified in Year 1 when pupils were involved in play activities has been resolved and pupils are now taught specific subjects. This has had a significant impact on pupils' learning in art and design and design and technology. Teachers are now clear about the differences between these subjects and focus on teaching the relevant skills with the result that standards have improved. Although the carousel day has benefits to pupils' learning there are also some drawbacks. For example, if teachers plan to introduce a different mathematics or English topic in these sessions it can disrupt the continuity of learning. For example, pupils learning subtraction on Monday and Tuesday and then a different unit on shape before returning to subtraction on Thursday. A strength in planning is the inclusion of ICT so that as well as being taught specific computer skills pupils practise them in other subjects.
- 19 A positive aspect of most lessons is teachers' determination to raise standards. By grouping pupils according to their ability in mathematics and English they plan activities that challenge pupils to extend their learning. The setting of individual targets in English and mathematics has encouraged pupils to want to learn more as they refer to having to improve 'my use of capital letters' or 'learn to count in 2s'. Assessment is used well to set these targets and also to assess progress at the end of units of work. This is apparent in all subjects as teachers check how pupils are progressing and relate this to the nationally expected level for different subjects. Teachers also identify pupils who need extra support and the extra 'booster' sessions are helping these pupils to catch up with others in their class. Marking is positive but a weakness in assessment is the absence of close checking for areas of weakness in lessons. Although there is a system to record progress on a daily basis this is not always done with sufficient detail and leads to some tasks being set that do not closely match pupils' ability. This was the problem with the unsatisfactory lesson when pupils were not quite ready for the scientific concept being taught and this led to confusion about the activity. It also leads to some lack of challenge in lessons for pupils of all abilities and particularly for the higher attaining pupils who then underachieve. It is also apparent in reading when for instance; pupils who read to the inspectors were reading books that did not really extend their skills.
- 20 A very positive feature in many lessons is the range of activities that make lessons interesting. In mathematics, games are a regular feature and pupils learn by practical tasks that clarify and consolidate learning. This is very helpful for pupils learning through English as an additional language as they can carry out the tasks and often solve problems without being hampered by limited vocabulary. All lessons include opportunities for discussion so that vocabulary and confidence in language is extended as a regular part of the school day. In music pupils have opportunities to sing as well as play instruments and learning is good in these lessons.
- 21 The management of pupils is good and discipline is based on very good relationships. Teachers are positive and firm and behaviour rarely disrupts learning.
- 22 Good use is made of support staff and in most lessons pupils receive additional help. This is usually very effective but on occasions support focuses too much on the task to be completed rather than on what the pupils are to learn and this hampers progress. On other occasions adults kept pupils waiting until all had finished a task before they moved on and this hampered pupils' independent learning as they relied too heavily on support. Bi-lingual support is an asset in many lessons and for the younger pupils is a significant reason for the good progress these pupils make. Time is used well with

lessons being brisk and many teachers including a set time to complete tasks so pupils try hard to complete their work. Resources, including computers, are used well to enhance learning in many subjects. Teachers make good use of visitors. During the inspection a visitor talked about her experiences in Gambia and this led to good learning as pupils listened carefully.

- 23 Homework is set regularly and many parents hear their children read at home which has a positive impact on pupils' confidence in reading. In mathematics pupils have a range of activities to complete that extend pupils' learning as well as making it fun. The teachers set work for pupils going on extended holidays to India and Pakistan in an attempt to encourage pupils to maintain their mathematical and language skills.

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

- 24 The school provides a broad curriculum and includes all the requirements of the National Curriculum and the Locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education. The curriculum is relevant for this age range with an appropriate focus on numeracy and literacy and the development of personal and social skills. Personal and social development is taught through a planned curriculum and sex education is dealt with sensitively as opportunities and questions arise. The curriculum for the foundation stage is stimulating and provides a wide range of activities covering all areas of learning recommended for this age range.
- 25 Planning is detailed and all subjects now have clear guidelines and this is an improvement since the last inspection. Another improvement is the effective planning to include the use of ICT in most subjects so pupils can practise their computer skills. The curriculum for the mixed age classes is not sufficiently adapted and as a consequence areas of the curriculum are being missed or repeated. This is a particular problem in history and geography. Similarly, the school's system to re-organise classes in the middle of the school year to accommodate the new pupils leads to disruption in learning as pupils have to adjust to a new class and teacher. The carousel arrangement is effective in giving the pupils closer attention to skills in literacy, numeracy, science and ICT. However, work is insufficiently linked to the topic being taught in these subjects on other days. This disrupts the continuity of learning when the carousel day is in the middle of the week.
- 26 The school endeavours to ensure all pupils have full access to the curriculum. Effective support for pupils with special educational needs and those who learn through English as an additional language enables them to be fully involved in all activities in the school. However, the withdrawal of pupils from lessons for additional support leads to a small group of pupils occasionally missing the same lessons each week.
- 27 A very good range of extra-curricular activities is provided to enrich the curriculum. For example, there are environmental, gymnastics, computer, ballet, tabla and chess clubs. Visits and visitors also enhance the curriculum and the pupils have the opportunity to go on a residential visit to Sherwood Forest. This gives them opportunities to develop the skills of tolerance of others. Pupils in Year 2 visit the Kniveton trail as part of their outdoor activities in geography.

- 28 The school makes very good provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is even stronger than at the time of the previous inspection.
- 29 Spiritual development is promoted very successfully. Assemblies are reverent occasions during which the pupils are given opportunities for reflection and prayer. Dance, drama, music, singing and an appropriate theme make a significant contribution to the pupils' spiritual development. The school's policy for collective worship emphasises the importance of celebrating diversity of cultures in the school. Spiritual development is effectively promoted in the curriculum and in extra-curricular activities. In the Environmental Club and through visits pupils are encouraged to appreciate the wonder of the world around them and to consider how they can protect it. In a Year 2 religious education lesson, pupils wrote their own thank you and forgiveness prayers which they shared with the class at the end of the lesson. This encouraged them to reflect on their own actions and grow in self-knowledge.
- 30 The school makes very good provision for the pupils' moral development. In assemblies issues of fairness and equality are effectively addressed. The school upholds good standards of care and respect. All the pupils are taught the differences between right and wrong and are encouraged to consider how their actions and behaviour might affect other pupils and adults in the school community. Discussion lessons, called Circle Time, make an important contribution to the pupils' moral guidance as they learn to understand and tolerate each other's point of view and respect opinions, which are different from their own. Pupils also benefit from the good role models provided by adults working in the school. Consequently, pupils help each other, they provide translations when needed and offer advice when using the computers. Support for the victims of the recent earthquake in India helps pupils to develop a caring attitude for those who are less fortunate than themselves.
- 31 Very good provision is made for the pupils' social development. Teachers provide many opportunities for collaboration in lessons and pupils work together very effectively. In lessons they work well as a class, in small groups and individually. The very good quality of relationships within the school is a major factor in the pupils' social development. Personal and social education lessons make a positive contribution to the pupils' social awareness. Extra-curricular activities provide more chances for pupils to experience working as a group or in a team. The achievement tree wall displays celebrate successes in a range of social as well as academic achievement. Pupils are praised and rewarded for being good friends and smiling and this successfully promotes a happy atmosphere in the school.
- 32 The curriculum makes very good provision for the pupils' cultural development. In subjects such as art, history, religious education and music the pupils develop a very good appreciation of the rich diversity of cultures within society. Theatre and cinema visits and musical events within and outside of school effectively contribute to the pupils' cultural development. Visits from potters, and storytellers as well as ballet and puppetry lessons effectively develop the pupils' cultural awareness. Visits to such venues as Carsington Reservoir and Elvaston castle with its working farm, make a significant contribution to the pupils' awareness of local culture. The pupils have a limited knowledge of authors as their reading is largely confined to the school's reading scheme. Multi-cultural provision is excellent and all ethnic traditions are celebrated within this caring school. In music lessons the pupils sing hymns and action choruses from other cultures such as, Don't Build Your House on the Sandyland, Shalom and the African hymn Si-ya-hamb. Corridor and wall displays of religious symbols make an important contribution to the pupils' knowledge of world faiths.

- 33 The curriculum is enhanced well by the good links which the school has forged with its community. This is particularly so in the arts, where local groups provide a very strong multi-cultural element in dance, music and literature. Local people, such as the policeman and nurse, help with personal, social and health education. Religious education is turned into a real experience by visits to local places of worship and from local speakers. Curricular and induction links with the two nurseries, which feed the school are good and there are plans to make them better. Children visit the school regularly before they start full time. Staff from the different institutions are working together on action to plan to integrate the foundation stage curriculum more closely. Induction arrangements for pupils moving to the junior school are appropriate and records are passed on to facilitate a smooth transfer.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- 34 The arrangements for making the school a secure environment for learning are good. Staff are trained in child protection and are fully aware of the procedures to follow if they have any concerns. Where necessary, they maintain good liaison with welfare agencies. Premises and equipment are kept in a safe condition and staff are aware of how to limit risks for themselves and pupils. Staff trained in first aid care well for pupils who are ill or have accidents at school. A well-planned programme about personal safety, health and hygiene encourages pupils to take responsibility for their own safety and welfare as well as raising their self-esteem.
- 35 The school has good procedures to improve and monitor attendance and works closely with the education welfare officer. This has produced substantial improvement. An essential part of this strategy is well-targeted work with local communities to stress the importance of education. The length of time that pupils spend visiting family abroad has been reduced. They are provided with appropriate learning packs, although these are not always completed. Pupils are encouraged to attend with regular rewards for good attendance.
- 36 All staff use effective strategies for improving behaviour and reduce the impact of indiscipline on pupils' learning. This is often achieved by the use of a quiet word, without humiliating the pupil, or by emphasising the good behaviour of other pupils. More active strategies are used if the behaviour becomes more serious. Pupils are taught to care for each other and how to respond to bullying. The school involves parents of both parties at an early stage. The low level of bullying and harassment in the school is evidence of the effectiveness of these measures.
- 37 The school has a good and sensitive awareness of pupils' personal development and individual needs, although very little is formally recorded apart from in the reception class. However, staff know pupils very well and informal information is used to provide support for those with particular problems. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are helped to play a full part in lessons and those pupils with special educational needs are supported appropriately. The personal and social education programme concentrates on raising self-esteem in pupils, many of whom lack confidence when they start school. Their ability to express their own ideas and boost those of others is developed. The effort made to improve personal development has a positive impact on pupils' progress with their studies.
- 38 The procedures for monitoring pupils' progress are good. Detailed records are kept of pupils' attainment in English and mathematics and each pupil has specific targets to achieve in both these curriculum areas. Pupils and parents are informed of these

targets, and discussions with pupils show they have a good understanding of what they need to do in order to improve. In English and mathematics tests are administered each term and these give teachers useful information about pupils' progress and help them identify areas of underachievement and weaknesses. This is used well by teachers of Year 2 pupils to group them into sets of pupils with similar prior attainment and to identify pupils who need extra support in class. Additional 'booster' classes are provided based on the results of these assessments. These have a positive effect on pupils' learning. In all other subjects assessment is based on performance in end of unit tests that are included in planning. Teachers then check how well pupils are doing compared with National Curriculum levels and provide additional support where required.

- 39 The school makes good use of assessment information when a weakness in the curriculum is identified. This has been effective in English when test results identified a problem with pupils' knowledge of letters and sounds. A new scheme, which has a more active approach to learning, has been introduced and is already having an impact on pupils' knowledge of sounds and letters. The results of national tests are also analysed to track the progress of different groups of pupils. This has been useful in identifying the progress of different ethnic groups but has not been further extended to show how well pupils with English as an additional language achieve in comparison to others. This information is available through checking pupils' individual files but is not easily accessible. Teachers' day-to-day assessment is not sufficiently rigorous and opportunities are missed to extend the learning of pupils of all abilities, but especially the higher attainers, by providing them with more demanding tasks. A review of pupils' work highlighted how similar the work was for both the average attainer and the higher attainer.
- 40 An obvious improvement in assessment procedures since the last inspection has been the early identification of pupils who have English as an additional language. Early screening clarifies pupils' mother tongue and identifies pupils who need more help with language acquisition as well as those who also have special educational needs. Individual programmes are drawn up and progress monitored so that additional help is linked closely to pupils' needs. This system has effectively raised staff's understanding of difficulties caused by language acquisition as opposed to a learning difficulty and has had a positive impact on the good progress these pupils now make.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- 41 Parents have a good opinion of the school. Those who attended the parents' meeting had no criticisms and were very supportive. Many of them are active in helping in school. The number of questionnaires returned was very poor, even though translation into ethnic community languages was provided. A very high proportion of those returned strongly agreed that their child liked school. They were pleased with the teaching, pupils' progress and the ease with which parents could approach staff. The school is, in their opinion, well led and managed and their children are helped to become more mature. The inspection agrees with this positive perception. There were no issues of significant concern.
- 42 The school has put in place a good range of procedures for raising parental awareness and participation in school. Ethnic minority support staff are used well within the community to raise the status of education with parents. The school has a very strong multicultural emphasis, with welcoming notices in several languages. Parents whose English is not strong are therefore encouraged to play a fuller part in

their children's education. Before children start at school, their parents are visited at home and their role discussed. They are given good advisory booklets to help them. Once their child is in the school, they have regular opportunities to discuss their child's work and are given a good picture of progress in the annual pupil report. The teachers are always available for an informal chat. The home-school agreement was issued, after extensive consultation, which helped to focus parents' minds on their rights and responsibilities. Some elements of required information are missing from the school prospectus and governors' annual report to parents, notably the comparative data for national test results. The 'Share' project has involved a dozen or so parents in increasing their understanding of how to help their child at home, and a homework club is to start shortly which is aimed particularly at those children who lack academic support at home. All volunteers are put through a 'better reading' course to raise their value in the classroom.

- 43 Many parents show good interest in the school and their own child's education and have responded well to the school's initiatives. A majority help raise standards in English by hearing children read at home and attend formal meetings with teachers. They value the school and take every opportunity to support its work. However, some give little educational support, sometimes because they lack English language skills themselves. Similarly, the high level of unauthorised absence is largely because parents will not explain reasons for their child's absence, despite the considerable efforts made by the school. Several parents help out in school, giving much valued additional adult support in group work or practical lessons. Parents manage the school library and fund additional books. The Parents, Teacher and Friends Association works effectively to organise social events, which help unite staff, parents and pupils as a community and raise funds for extra equipment and activities. It also acts as a mouthpiece for parents wishing to raise concerns about the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 44 Leadership and management of the school have greatly improved since the previous inspection and this is one of the most significant reasons for the improving standards and teaching in the school. Staff morale is positive with a clear focus on providing the very best for the pupils in the school.
- 45 The headteacher provides very strong leadership and has not wavered from her determination to resolve the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection. With the appointment of a deputy headteacher a clear direction for the school is evident and strategic planning for improvement is in place. There is ample evidence to show the school staff has worked as a team to tackle the concerns identified in the previous inspection. The school still has a way to go to see these improvements fully impacting on standards. However, success can be measured by the fact that the decline in standards has been halted and the results of national tests at the end of Year 2 are gradually improving.
- 46 The governing body is supportive and the majority of statutory requirements are fulfilled although the governors' annual report and the school prospectus have omissions. Governors have extended their roles to establishing links with different subjects. This enables them to have an informed view of the school's strengths and areas for development. Currently, the governors still rely on the headteacher for major decisions but they are becoming more demanding of information to support any major changes. This was apparent in the decision to spend money on more support staff when the headteacher had to present a well supported argument before this initiative was

agreed by the governing body. The success criteria for this spending was closely linked to improved standards particularly for pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs.

- 47 Governors have set challenging targets for the headteacher that are appropriately linked to raising standards in English and mathematics. Targets for other staff are linked to appraisal and staff training is matched to identified areas for development. Newly qualified teachers are provided with effective support and training. Training for all staff is also closely linked to the school's development plan, which is a well structured document based on collaboration between staff and governors. Since the last inspection priorities have been led by the identified weaknesses and the school has made good progress in tackling these issues. However, the school has not lagged behind on implementing other national initiatives and the Numeracy and Literacy Strategies and the provision for children in the foundation stage are firmly established.
- 48 Procedures to monitor the school's performance are in place. The headteacher and governors review the results of tests to check on the school's overall performance. They recognise results are well below average and monitor progress to see that individuals and groups of pupils are achieving as well as possible. Data is scrutinised and action plans drawn up to resolve any identified weaknesses. These plans often include very practical activities and involve governors more in the school. For example, governors hear pupils read and have agreed spending on additional reading books and a new spelling and handwriting scheme. The headteacher and the chair of governors regularly monitor teaching, the obvious impact of which has been the improved quality of teaching seen during the inspection.
- 49 The headteacher delegates responsibilities efficiently to the deputy headteacher and teachers with management roles for subjects and other aspects of the school. Management of special educational needs and provision for pupils with English as an additional language is good. Clear procedures are in place to support these pupils. Management of English, mathematics and ICT is good with co-ordinators having opportunities to check on how well their subjects are being taught. Other co-ordinators have implemented detailed guidelines to help teachers but they do not have enough opportunities to check that these are impacting on standards in lessons.
- 50 Financial planning is good. Difficult decisions have been made in order to reduce spending and get to the present situation of a balanced budget. Future spending is now based firmly on predicted numbers of pupils and is on a much more secure footing. The governors and headteacher spend prudently on priorities in the school's development plan. The finance committee and headteacher monitor the budget and seek best value for all their spending. Effective use has been made of all specific grants, and additional resources are having a positive impact on standards. This is particularly noticeable in ICT when the school made an informed decision to purchase resources for each class so that pupils could access these computers easily to practise their skills. The school has not had an audit for a long time and the recommendations of the most recent one have been addressed.
- 51 School administration is effective and the school runs smoothly on a day-to-day basis. Administrative staff provide a warm welcome to visitors to the school and parents often 'pop-in' with concerns.
- 52 Efficient management has led to a good number of staff. Classes are kept at acceptable sizes. However, the system to achieve this leads to adjusting classes throughout the year as new pupils start school and this disrupts learning as some

pupils have to adjust to a new class and teacher. The school has a good number of trained support staff. Their contribution to learning is generally good although on occasions staff give too much support and this hampers pupils developing skills of independent learning. Accommodation is good. The school benefits from ample space and a weakness in the cleanliness of the building has been resolved. Similarly, the lack of provision for the youngest children to play in a secure outside area has been addressed. The created space is only small but has a range of climbing and large play equipment and is a favourite feature for these children. The library is attractive but is underused for independent research. Learning resources have improved. The gaps in design and technology and history have been filled with new equipment and artefacts. The school has invested wisely in books and the range has improved although the use of these needs further development. Reading has improved but pupils still rely heavily on the school reading scheme books and have a limited knowledge of different authors or stories. The most significant improvement has been in ICT resources and this has had a positive impact in pupils' confidence and skills in using computers.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

53 To improve further the quality of education the headteacher, staff and governors should:

(1) Raise standards in English, mathematics and science by:

- providing more opportunities for extended writing;
- improving the range of books pupils read and checking more closely on the progress pupils are making in reading;
- providing more opportunities for problem solving in mathematics;
- providing more help in mathematics and science for pupils learning; through English as an additional language to extend their vocabulary and clarify scientific and mathematical concepts;
- providing more opportunities in science for pupils to raise their own ideas for investigations, to predict outcomes and record results in a variety of ways.

(See paragraphs 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 18, 19, 22, 63, 65, 66, 70, 71, 73, 76, 77, 78)

(2) Improve the use of assessment information obtained during lessons to set work more closely matched to the needs of all pupils.

(See paragraphs 14, 19, 39, 68, 74, 78, 92, 100, 112)

(3) Further improve the curriculum by:

- adjusting the long term curriculum plan for pupils in the mixed age classes to ensure they do not miss or repeat important topics and are taught skills appropriate to their age;
- minimising the disruption caused as pupils change classes in the middle of the school year.

(See paragraphs 25, 52, 92, 96)

(4) Look for even more ways of impressing on parents that they are responsible for the regular attendance and punctuality of their children.

(See paragraphs 13, 35, 43)

In addition to the key issues above the following less important aspects should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- provide more opportunities for subject co-ordinators (excluding English and mathematics) to check that the new planning guidelines are being effective in class; (paragraphs 49, 79, 83, 87, 92, 96, 105, 113)
- monitor the use of support staff to ensure they do not restrict pupils developing the essential skills of independent learning; (paragraphs 22, 68, 74, 77, 82)
- ensure the school prospectus and governors' annual report to parents include all the required information; (paragraphs 42, 46)
- extend the use of the library. (paragraphs 52, 65)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	44
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	26

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0%	5%	64%	30%	2%	0%	0%

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR- Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	143
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	54
Special educational needs	YR - Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	43
English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	115
Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	27
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	17

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.2
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	2.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	31	27

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	22	28
	Girls	18	19	17
	Total	37	41	45
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	64 (64)	71 (66)	78 (66)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	28	25
	Girls	18	19	18
	Total	38	47	43
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	66 (66)	81 (69)	74 (85)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No. of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	8
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	27
Pakistani	53
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	27
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)	9.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	15
Average class size	23.8

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	89

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	450,402
Total expenditure	447,834
Expenditure per pupil	2,731
Balance brought forward from previous year	-3,927
Balance carried forward to next year	-1,359

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	143
Number of questionnaires returned	14

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	92	0	8	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	83	17	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	50	50	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	42	42	8	8	0
The teaching is good.	75	17	8	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	67	25	8	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	67	25	8	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	50	42	8	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	67	25	8	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	83	8	8	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	83	17	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	67	17	8	8	0

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 There is good provision for the children in the foundation stage. Children start school in the term of their fifth birthday and are taught in the reception class. Initial assessments, conducted shortly after admission to the school indicate that children's speaking and listening skills, awareness of written language, mathematics and some aspects of personal and social development are below the average expected for their age. Good teaching and a rich curriculum are having a positive impact on children's learning so that most children are making good progress towards the agreed early learning goals. The vast majority achieve the level expected in their personal, social and emotional development, their knowledge and understanding of the world and their creative and physical development. Although the vast majority are not reaching the expected level in their language and communication skills and their mathematical development there is clear evidence that year-on-year more children are achieving this level. This is a direct result of good teaching, which includes careful planning, day-to-day assessment of children's progress and positive relationships. The class teacher has a thorough grasp of the development and educational needs of young children under five and this makes a significant contribution to the quality of teaching and learning. The class teacher is ably assisted by a nursery nurse and other class room assistants, including bi-lingual support where necessary.
- 55 The previous report was very critical of the reception stage of education highlighting some unsatisfactory teaching, planning and provision. There has been significant improvement and the foundation stage now provides good all round experiences for the children, paying particular attention to the development of language.

Personal, social and emotional development

- 56 The teaching is good and many children will reach the expected standards in this area by the time they leave the reception class. Children enjoy school, are enthusiastic about learning and are developing independence and confidence. This reflects the skilful teaching and the encouragement to achieve that is consistently reinforced by all the staff. Children display an understanding and empathy towards the needs of others, particularly in play and group tasks when they work well together and understand the need for rules. This was evident when a small group were playing a racing game that involved taking turns, or when sharing the resources in the water and sand tray. Adults provide good role models. They treat the children and each other with courtesy and respect and children know they are valued. Children develop self-reliance in taking responsibility for their own actions, for example when dressing and undressing for physical activities, when asked to tidy the classroom and during role-play. In the class 'Post Office,' careful structure and provision of resources such as telephone, note pads and a series of suggested writing activities encourage the children to develop independent writing skills. The teacher makes an effort to ensure lessons are exciting and challenging and this results in positive attitudes towards learning.

Communication, language and literacy

- 57 Teaching is good. Well organised and managed lessons pitched at an appropriate level are carefully planned by the teacher and ensure that children achieve well. Although overall standards are below the level expected for this age an increasing number of children are reaching this level. Communication skills are encouraged throughout the day and speaking and listening skills progress well. This is evident in many classroom activities. There is a specific input for pupils who have English as an additional language, with effective support and reinforcement of skills in the classroom as well as during withdrawal. These sessions focus on planned activities that reflect the classroom activities followed by the other children. Children listen and respond to the teacher's questions although many have a limited English vocabulary. All the children enjoy participating in the stories such as 'Dear Greenpeace' and 'Lenny's last journey' and recall the main events in the stories. Many of the children have made an enthusiastic start with reading and enjoy sharing early reading scheme books with an adult or listening to stories. The higher attainers read a small number of commonly used words and are beginning to develop the appropriate skills for decoding unfamiliar words. As a result of the effective teaching of phonics through the implementation of a new approach and the adoption of elements of the Literacy Framework, children are recognising letters and their corresponding sound. They are developing confidence and independence in early reading and writing skills. The majority of children can write their name but few are producing well-formed letters.

Mathematical development

- 58 Teaching of mathematics is good and promotes good levels of achievement for all pupils although they do not attain the early learning goal recommended for mathematics. Many of the children count up to 20 and recognise the missing number in a number line and some higher attaining children describe the number as being between two numbers or before or after a number. The majority of children count to 10 both backwards and forwards and can tell "Rachel" the puppet which number she has missed out when she counts to 10. Many children also know how to add one more to a number and a few are able to perform simple addition tasks although are not yet confident subtracting. Others are not yet at a level to use their early skills in simple calculations. Good use of resources helps to capture the children's interest and sustain their concentration. A range of practical tasks, suitably matched to the children's needs, is available within the classroom. Very good use is made of support staff to help children develop appropriate mathematical skills and vocabulary. Children are confident using 'longer' and 'shorter'. Much of the mathematics is done orally which again helps all the children, especially those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, to develop appropriate vocabulary and understanding. A review of children's work shows that children have begun to sequence day and night, and a few children know the days of the week.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

- 59 Teaching is good and by the time they are five many of the children will attain the expected standards in this area. Children enter the school with some basic general knowledge. As a result of good teaching they build on this successfully in the reception class and are confident moving around and learning about the school environment. They have looked at the surrounding area and talked about how they would like to improve it. They know about Guy Fawkes and firework night. They have compared materials to find out whether or not a particular material was waterproof. Many children enjoy the experience of playing with the sand and water and developing

appropriate vocabulary. As part of the topic about people who help us the children have been looking at the post and a postman visited them to talk about his job. This made learning more interesting and pupils extended their knowledge of communications. Children are beginning to develop skills in ICT such as use of the keyboard, mouse and cursor. They use a range of software programs including drawing, word matching and shapes, which involve moving items around the screen. Children were regularly seen choosing to use one of the two computers set up in the room.

Physical Development

- 60 The quality of teaching for this area is good and by the time they are five children attain the expected standard in physical development. The curriculum for children's physical development is organised well and a large hall, appropriate resources and effective teaching enable children to learn a range of physical skills. Outdoor play is a little restricted at present, until the specially enclosed area is re-laid with a suitable surface. This work is already in hand. However, there is a good range of large wheeled toys and equipment for outdoors. During a physical education lesson children used the space well, controlling their movements. However, many children find throwing and catching a ball difficult and few have success with this task. Children use scissors carefully and cut out shapes, some with better control than others, as they successfully cut out eyes in the middle of a mask. All children hold a pencil correctly and many are able to control it well enough to write recognisable letters and numbers. Some colour in carefully within the lines. The children dress and undress themselves confidently for physical education.

Creative Development

- 61 Teaching is good. Children make good progress and many are on course to reach the expected standards for this area. Provision is good and the teacher provides a range of activities to develop creativity. Children enjoy and express themselves through singing, drawing, painting, collage and model making. They are taught how to use a variety of techniques to apply paint and to mix colours. Role-play areas are well resourced and the 'Post Office' and 'Toys' Hospital' stimulates the children's imagination. Children use the telephone, write letters or pretend to be doctors using appropriate medical equipment. Children enjoy responding to music, particularly action songs, and know the names of many of the untuned percussion instruments and how to play them. One child knew that the violin is played under the chin. They recognise the difference between a low-pitched sound and a higher pitched sound.

ENGLISH

- 62 Standards in English for seven-year-olds are well below those found nationally. Since the last inspection standards have remained broadly the same throughout the school. The results of the national tests for seven-year-olds in 2000 were well below the average for all schools and that of similar schools. During the three years up to 2000, test results have remained well below those found nationally. However, a closer analysis of performance reveals that year-on-year more pupils are attaining the nationally expected level for their age. Few pupils exceed this level and this is holding down overall standards. When interpreting these results it must be borne in mind the higher than usual number of pupils identified as having special educational needs as well as a very high number of pupils learning through English as an additional language. There are also a significant number of pupils transferring to the school who

have not benefited from the good foundation provided in the school's reception class.

- 63 Work seen during the inspection shows that from a low base on entry many pupils make good progress towards achieving the national average although few attain above this level and overall standards are below average. Reading has been a focus in the school and standards at the end of Year 2 are now in line with the national average which is a significant achievement for many pupils. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language receive good support and make good progress towards the targets set in their individual programmes. In terms of gender, boys perform marginally better in national tests and this is against the national trend. However, over time there is no consistent pattern of a significant variation in standards of boys and girls. Standards are slowly rising and there is ample evidence to show that pupils currently in Year 1 are on target to close the gap to the national average with more pupils identified as working at a level above the national average. The successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, effective teaching, the setting of individual literacy targets so that pupils know what they have to do to improve and a good programme of additional support are important factors in the improving picture. The school is well placed to achieve the targets set for 2001.
- 64 In speaking and listening, the substantial majority of the pupils at all levels of attainment make good progress towards reaching the nationally expected levels in listening although speaking skills are below average by the end of Year 2. Pupils participate well in the introductory activities. They listen attentively during whole class elements of the lessons and demonstrate growing confidence when responding to the teacher's questions. They benefit from the opportunities to interact with the teacher particularly during whole class work. The great majority demonstrate a growing vocabulary and an increasing awareness of the need for more formal expressions in some situations. A small group of higher attaining pupils talk enthusiastically about their work. In a Year 2 English lesson, for example, the pupils listened attentively and talked with enthusiasm about things which were coloured red before discussing the poem, *Colours*, by Christina Rossetti. However, many lower attaining pupils lack confidence and find it difficult to sustain a conversation of two or three sentences.
- 65 In reading progress is good. By the age of seven the vast majority of pupils achieve the national levels for pupils age seven. Average and higher attaining pupils read with a satisfactory range of strategies for tackling unfamiliar words and to establish meaning. They have a secure knowledge of letters and their sounds and use this knowledge effectively to tackle new words. Higher attaining pupils check that new words make sense and have a good recall of previous stories. The substantial majority read with satisfactory expression and growing confidence. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs benefit greatly from the additional help given by support staff. They make good use of pictures to help them read unfamiliar words. Although their reading standards are well below those expected for their age, the pupils make good progress in relation to their prior learning. Teachers' reading records are lacking in sufficient detail to identify the strategies individual pupils are using. This leads to some texts being either too easy or too hard for the pupil and hampers pupils' progress. Although the school has a wide range of reading books, pupils are not encouraged to read widely and the pupils who read to the inspectors referred to the school's reading scheme books as their favourite books. They had limited knowledge of other stories or authors. Library skills and the ability to use reference and text books is limited. More frequent use should be made of the library and pupils should have access to a wider range of books.

- 66 In writing standards at the end of Year 2 are below the national average. However, an increasing number of pupils are now achieving the national average and this represents good progress. However, few pupils have sufficient skills to express their ideas in a fluent style and there is a limited amount of extended writing in English or in other subjects. Average and higher attaining pupils are beginning to show an awareness of the reader when writing for different purposes. In Year 2, for example, pupils have effectively written about Winnie the Witch, in a style which will encourage people to want to read the book. The writing of the substantial majority of the pupils during the group and independent elements of the lesson is satisfactory, with appropriate attention given to the quality of presentation and handwriting. Handwriting has improved since the last inspection and is satisfactory with most pupils having a legible style of print.
- 67 The consistent encouragement for pupils to apply new skills, acquired during literacy lessons, has a positive effect on the quality of their writing in other subjects. For example, after a geography visit pupils in Year 2 have written interesting letters about their visit to local residents. Pupils label their diagrams in science and design and technology. With the improvement in reading and teachers' emphasis on discussion in subjects, such as history and geography, literacy skills are not holding down progress in other subjects and are now at a level to enhance pupils' learning.
- 68 The quality of teaching and learning is predominantly good and is having a positive impact upon the pupils' good rate of learning. All the lessons observed were satisfactory or better and over 66 per cent were good. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject and how pupils learn. This enables them to provide useful advice to pupils as they are working and leads to pupils progressively extending their literacy skills. The active approach to teaching sounds and letters is making a significant contribution to the improvement in early reading skills. Teachers' planning is clear with precise learning objectives explained to the pupils so they have a good understanding of what they are to learn. Most teachers achieve a good balance between the different elements of the lesson but on a few occasions the conclusion is rushed and includes no new material. Teachers provide an effective stimulus through well selected shared reading texts which capture the pupils' interest. For example, in Year 2 pupils when reading "Give Yourself a Hug" by Grace Nichols, were effectively introduced to the expressions, 'cold shoulder' and 'airs' in dramatised form. However, in Year 1 the text was a book from the school's reading scheme and did not fully capture pupils' enthusiasm. It was made more interesting in the conclusion when the teacher and supporting adults acted out the main parts much to the amusement of all. Individual tasks and group activities are well managed with appropriate resources to support the pupils' learning. ICT is often used to support learning and this was very effective in Year 2 when pupils followed a spelling program to learn new words. Support staff are used well and this is particularly effective in providing translations for pupils learning through English as an additional language. However, on occasions too much support is given and this hampers pupils accepting responsibility for their own learning as they wait for adult support. The best lessons are delivered within a time frame adding good pace and pupils are enthusiastic to learn more and try hard to complete tasks. Class management is of a consistently high standard and this effectively contributes to the good behaviour and strong relationships throughout the school. The pupils' work is marked correctly with appropriate encouraging comments. Pupils have individual literacy targets and teachers refer to these so that pupils have a clear understanding of what they need to do to improve. However, assessment at the end of lessons is not always as effective and this leads to tasks being set that do not always closely match pupils' needs. This particularly applies to higher attaining pupils who are not always sufficiently challenged and could achieve

more. Teachers provide homework on a termly basis and these are practical activities that pupils and parents can do together so that learning is extended at home.

- 69 The work in English is effectively managed and co-ordinated and this is an important factor in the effective delivery of the National Literacy Strategy. Lessons have been monitored and advice given when a weakness has been identified. Test results have been analysed and as a result a new approach to teaching letters and sounds has been introduced and is already having an impact on learning in the reception class. Pupils benefit from such initiatives as the Better Reading Partnership and more support for parents has been introduced so that pupils get better help at home.

MATHEMATICS

- 70 In the National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds in 2000 results were well below the national average and few pupils exceeded the expected level. In comparison to similar schools the results were also well below average. Analysis of the data for the last three years shows that the performance in mathematics fell below the national average. There was no difference in the attainment of boys and girls. However, although standards remain below average they are slowly rising after a dip in 1998. Results are low because of the large numbers of pupils who have special educational needs and also have English as an additional language. Also, several pupils start school at different times in the school year and many have not had the benefit of the good teaching provided in the reception class. The previous inspection identified standards were broadly average although the results of tests were below the nationally expected level. The inspection identified improvement in the subject and this has been maintained with an increase of approximately 20 per cent of pupils gaining the national average.
- 71 Standards of the present Year 2 remain below the national average. However, most pupils are achieving well considering the low level of attainment when they start school. The progress the pupils make is good, particularly for those pupils who have English as an additional language. They enter the school with attainment well below average on the mathematics baseline assessment and by the end of Year 2 are just below average, showing significant achievement for these pupils. Their main difficulty is reading the written problems and understanding the language. Thus they are more able to succeed with numbers rather than problem solving where the questions are in the form of words.

- 72 The effective introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy and its implementation has been successful, with teachers having clear ideas of the most effective ways of teaching the various elements. The benefits of the improved mental recall and systematic development of mathematical knowledge and understanding can be seen in pupils' approach to mathematics. The guidance provided by the National Numeracy Strategy has supported teachers in their planning, leading to more detailed plans with clear outcomes and this has resolved a weakness from the last inspection. Inspection evidence suggests that the rise in standards will continue with more pupils achieving the nationally expected level and a slight increase in the number of pupils achieving above this level. The school has set a realistic target for 2001 and is well placed to meet this. The tracking system now in place, highlights the fact that this rise is set to continue into 2002.
- 73 By the end of Year 2 the higher attaining pupils halve and double numbers to 10 with about a quarter of these pupils being able to perform the same function using numbers above 10. The pupils demonstrate an understanding of how to use a folded right-angled shape to measure objects to see if they contain any right angles in their shape. Pupils are also experimenting with the programmable toy to draw two-dimensional shapes: the higher attainers are confident doing this task but the lower attainers require more support to complete the programming. Pupils in the middle ability group are secure in recognising two-dimensional shapes and are beginning to appreciate that there are different types of triangle. The lower attainers are struggling to recall the names of the shapes and to recognise which shape is which. All groups of pupils are taught the appropriate mathematical vocabulary although the lower attainers, many of whom have both special educational needs and speak English as an additional language, find the reading and recall of such words difficult. Higher attainers understand place value, hundreds, tens and units, know their multiplication tables, 2, 3, 5, and 10's, have looked at division with remainders and can add up money. The lower attainers are able to add and subtract numbers to 20, recognise first, second, third place, can count on in two's and can identify objects that are smaller than they are. Teachers do not plan sufficiently for data handling and problem solving and pupils' skills in these aspects are underdeveloped. The mathematical skills of many now support their learning in other subjects. For example, in Year 1 when pupils produce graphs on the computer and in science when, in Year 2, they measure the distance a car travels down a slope.
- 74 The quality of teaching is good. In 60 per cent of the lessons seen teaching was good and pupils learnt at a good rate. Lessons move at a brisk pace and there are a variety of challenges for the pupils. Introductions include quick fire mental questions and activities and pupils confidently apply their skills to a range of practical tasks. Teachers have good subject knowledge and share this well with pupils who listen carefully and are keen to increase their knowledge. The teaching of basic numeracy skills is good and teachers use a range of imaginative strategies and resources, which contribute successfully to raising motivation and enjoyment in mathematics. For example, in Year 2 pupils enjoyed using their own envelope of two-dimensional shapes to show their answers to questions about shape. All teachers have very good relationships with their groups and offer much praise and encouragement. This leads to lessons being carried out in a busy working atmosphere. The conclusion of lessons is effectively used to reinforce pupils' learning and ensure pupils fully understand new concepts. Pupils are encouraged to explain how they found their answers and teachers target specific pupils to assess their understanding and to increase their self-esteem. The difficulty of the question varies for each pupil and this is effective in enabling all pupils to join in. The tracking of pupils and setting of individual targets is having a positive effect on the pupils' learning as they strive to

achieve their targets. The division of Year 2 pupils into groups according to their ability is having a positive effect on their learning especially as work is more carefully matched to the needs of the pupils. However, the use of assessment on a daily basis is not always sufficiently rigorous and this leads to tasks not building on previous learning. This is more apparent for the higher attainers where tasks are sometimes insufficiently challenging and they could achieve more. Support is used effectively particularly for those pupils with English an additional language. However, too much support occasionally deprives pupils of the opportunity to become independent learners when staff do not allow them time to explore the tasks for themselves before giving them help.

- 75 The subject is effectively managed and the co-ordinator has had the opportunity to monitor both teachers' planning and observing teaching. This has led to improvement in teaching although there are still gaps in some areas within the curriculum. These areas include data handling and problem solving. The school has one day a week when pupils are taught a different aspect of mathematics as part of the school's carousel day. This is effective in making groups smaller and also being taught by a teacher with more experience in the subject. This has obvious benefits for the pupils but when the topic being taught is different to lessons in the rest of the week this hampers the continuity of learning. The previous report criticised some of the resources for being old, to date many of these resources have been replaced.

SCIENCE

- 76 Standards of work at the end of Year 2 are below average. These standards reflect a slight improvement on the results in the 2000 national teacher assessments, which were well below average. At the time of the last inspection standards were unsatisfactory. Pupils were reported as lacking in the ability to put forward their own predictions or to suggest how to find things out, and prepared worksheets were overused for recording findings. The school has worked successfully to avoid the use of worksheets. More investigations are planned but many pupils still lack sufficient competence in English to predict outcomes or put forward their own ideas for investigations. However, more pupils are now reaching the nationally expected level for their age. Considering the low level of attainment as pupils start school the vast majority are making good progress to achieve the national average. Approximately 15 per cent of pupils do not achieve this level. However, most of these pupils are learning through English as an additional language or have special educational needs and are making good progress. Few pupils are exceeding the nationally expected level, indicating underachievement by higher attaining pupils.
- 77 At age 7 pupils gain appropriate knowledge about materials and identify similarities and differences between them, using language such as hard or soft. Pupils learn about the sources of light and know that some are brighter than others. In Year 1 pupils understand that a shadow is caused by a barrier blocking the light but they were unable to take this knowledge further to appreciate that light can be reflected. Knowledge of some physical processes is satisfactory. For example, pupils know how bulbs work in a simple electrical circuit. There was no evidence to indicate pupils understand that they have to apply the same conditions to each item they test for it to be considered fair. When studying living things pupils know that humans have five senses and they can identify healthy foods. They label the main parts of plants and animals and know that animals have baby animals but, overall, their understanding of living things is not of sufficient depth for their age. Pupils are eager to investigate. The organisation of the curriculum means pupils are taught science in small groups of

similar abilities. This has obvious benefits when carrying out investigations and teachers plan a range of interesting activities. After investigating with dough pupils in Year 2 understood that they can apply different forces to change its shape and know that 'push' and 'pull' are forces. With adult support a small group of higher attaining pupils understood the idea of predicting their outcomes but, as at the time of the previous inspection, many pupils have not acquired sufficient skills to put forward their own suggestions to find things out or to predict what might happen. This is a particular difficulty for pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs. For both these groups of pupils effective support is provided and translations provided when required and they make good progress. Problems arise in lessons when support is not available or the help is over-directive and hinders pupils making their own discoveries.

78 Overall the quality of teaching is good. Due to the timetable only three lessons were seen and teaching varied from very good to unsatisfactory. Whilst pupils' learning is good overall, when teaching is very good pupils are enthusiastic about the investigations, the practical approach captures their interest and the rate of learning improves and is very good. For example, in Year 1 when pupils were finding out what makes silver items sparkle. The teacher had blacked out a room so pupils could try out their torches on sparkly and dull items and see for themselves the effect of light on different materials. This approach led to a clear understanding that shiny objects need light to make them sparkle. Management is positive and behaviour is good. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject and ask effective questions that lead to new learning. The focus on discussion enables all pupils to be fully involved and effective conclusions to lessons successfully consolidate learning. The system to assess learning at the end of units is effective in tracking pupils' progress throughout the year and to check on standards compared to National Curriculum required levels. There are no records of progress for teachers to use to plan work to meet the needs of individuals on a day-to-day basis. This results in a mis-match of work for pupils of all abilities and hampers learning in lessons. This was the problem when teaching was unsatisfactory as pupils were unclear about the task and unable to carry out the investigation and so little new knowledge was gained in the lesson. Time is used well in lessons and planning ensures pupils are involved in interesting tasks. The weakness identified in the previous inspection about the overuse of photocopiable worksheets has been overcome with the good opportunities for experimenting. However, methods of recording results are not always suitable and the use of grids and graphs is underdeveloped.

79 Management of the subject is satisfactory. Since the last inspection a new scheme of work has been put in place and this is giving teachers clear guidelines for teaching scientific skills. Monitoring of the subject is currently being carried out by the headteacher until a permanent co-ordinator for science is in post.

ART AND DESIGN

80 Standards in art and design are satisfactory and are similar to those seen in most schools at the end of Year 2. Although it was only possible to see one lesson there is ample evidence of pupils' work on display to show pupils use a satisfactory range of materials and have been taught a variety of artistic skills. This is an improvement since the previous inspection and reflects the use teachers make of more structured guidelines when planning lessons. This has helped teachers to distinguish between the skills of design and technology as opposed to art, which was a weakness in the previous report.

- 81 The work on display shows pupils achieve satisfactorily and build on their early skills to increase techniques and knowledge. Pupils have a clear understanding of mixing colours and use this effectively in their paintings to create a fantasy landscape. Most are confident with creating different shades and understand adding white makes a colour lighter and black will create a darker tone. In Year 2 pupils have painted pictures with one main colour and several layers of different shades and these are very effective. Higher attaining pupils in Year 1 understand and use the term 'primary' colours but are less sure of secondary colours. A wide range of resources is used to make imaginative collages and these are displayed attractively around the school. Most of these include a range of techniques but some examples include too many repetitive tasks that do not challenge pupils to improve their skills. For example, an overuse of sticking crumpled tissue paper on outlines to create texture and not developing other ideas to create this effect. A weakness in the previous inspection was a limited awareness of other artists and satisfactory progress has been made to resolve this concern. In Year 1 pupils have used lines and dots to create colourful patterns that show an appreciation of the style of Paul Klee. Pupils have used paper effectively to build up layers to create a landscape after looking at Pieter Brueghel's picture 'Hunters in the snow.' These pictures were done by groups of pupils, which is a positive feature of lessons that enables pupils to collaborate with friends when planning their work. Pupils at Year 1 and 2 have used ICT to create a range of colourful designs. Pupils have few opportunities to work in clay or fabrics. Pupils with special educational needs and those who learn through English as an additional language are fully involved in lessons and make good progress. However, their lack of confidence and limited English vocabulary skill hampers their ability to suggest improvements to their work.
- 82 Only one art lesson was seen so it is not possible to give an overall judgement on the quality of teaching. Taking into consideration teachers' planning and the pupils' work, it is at least satisfactory. The teaching seen reflected this judgement and learning is also satisfactory. Evidence shows the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection have received due attention. Art is now taught as a separate activity and in the lesson seen attention was given to teaching specific art skills. For example, pupils were shown how to use pastels to get the desired effect and their standard of work to mix colours improved. Artistic vocabulary is used appropriately and pupils increase their use of words such as 'primary' and 'tone' when describing their work. Support staff are used effectively to enable pupils to work in small groups but on occasions too much help leads to pupils copying each other and this hampers their individual creativity.
- 83 Management of the subject is satisfactory and since the last inspection a scheme of work has been put in place that provides good guidance for teachers. Currently the co-ordinator only works on a part-time basis in the school and this means there is limited opportunity to check on what is happening in lessons.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 84 No lessons took place during the inspection and judgements are based on examining models of work and discussions with pupils. At the end of Year 2, all pupils including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, are achieving satisfactorily and reach satisfactory standards similar to those seen in most schools. This is an improvement since the last inspection when standards were unsatisfactory because too much attention was given to decorating objects rather than their purpose. A new scheme of work identifies very clearly skills to be taught and the subject is taught separately and not as closely linked to art.
- 85 At the end of Year 2, pupils have experienced a range of model-making skills and have made a range of models of a carriage suitable for Cinderella. Planning involved looking at the major components of a vehicle and deciding how these could be incorporated in their models. This was useful in deciding the essential elements but lacked detail on methods and materials to be used in the design of their own carriages. Pupils worked in groups and discussions show due attention was given to ensuring the vehicle would move and simple axles were used. A variety of methods were used to fasten items together. Discussions revealed pupils had checked on their models as they worked. For example, more cardboard wheels were added to make them thicker as initially they were not strong enough to support the carriage.
- 86 As no lessons were observed and there was little written evidence to identify planning and evaluation of models it is not possible to make a fully balanced judgement on teaching. However, indications are that it has improved since the last inspection and the new detailed guidelines are raising teachers' knowledge and confidence in teaching the subject. Although designing a model was not sufficiently detailed in Year 2, this was included in Year 1 work. Pupils identified on planning sheets how they were going to make the joints of a puppet work. The variety of decorations included on plans led to some good work, with puppets all moving. This work captured pupils' enthusiasm and many went on to be more adventurous in making sliding models. A model of Batman moves from behind a tree and the skills and detail in the model are of a high quality.
- 87 Effective management of the subject has led to good progress being made to resolve previous weaknesses. Planning guidelines now make very clear the skills to be taught in each year. Resources have improved with a wider range of building equipment including packs for levers and pulleys. Assessment procedures are in place and each unit of work has a suggested assessment that leads to teachers being clear about the National Curriculum level pupils are achieving. Teachers' plans are reviewed to check the new plans are being followed but as yet the co-ordinator has no opportunity to monitor what is happening in lessons. The many opportunities to work in groups have a very positive impact on pupils' social skills as they collaborate and help each other.

GEOGRAPHY

- 88 Pupils achieve standards at the age of seven that are in line with those expected for their age. Standards identified in the previous inspection have been maintained. Judgements are based on one lesson, teachers' planning, analysis of work, including displays and talking to pupils. A review of pupils' work revealed little evidence of written recorded work. More work was on display and discussions with pupils showed that much is achieved through discussion.

- 89 By the end of Year 2 pupils show a growing awareness of their local environment. Pupils in Year 1 have considered different building materials, types of housing and suggest improvements to different types of houses. Many pupils have links with other towns, often in other countries, and are aware of different ways of life. Maps have been drawn to illustrate Goldilocks' route to the three bears' house and pupils know that symbols can be used to represent features on the journey. Pupils have studied their routes to school and drawn a graph to show how many pupils travel by car, bus or walk. In Year 2 pupils visit a contrasting area and have recorded similarities and differences between the two locations. They are beginning to use geographical vocabulary to describe in their comparisons.
- 90 Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress in developing an understanding of geographical vocabulary. Much work is done orally which also helps the language development of these pupils. In the one geography lesson observed pupils enjoyed the input from a visiting speaker and they listened carefully and responded with interest to questions.
- 91 As only one lesson was observed there can be no judgement on the quality of teaching. However, the use of a speaker who had visited the Gambia and taken many photographs to illustrate her experiences had a positive effect on the pupils' learning. They asked appropriate questions eager to increase their knowledge about life in that country and how it affected people. They were fascinated by the lifestyle and questions and discussion led them on to identify how different it was from life in Derby.
- 92 The subject is satisfactorily managed although to date there is little or no monitoring except of teachers' planning. A new scheme of work is being produced. Currently, the curriculum is not sufficiently adjusted for pupils in the mixed age classes to ensure that areas of the curriculum are not being missed or repeated. Assessment is mainly informal at present but is included in the planning at the end of some specific units.

HISTORY

- 93 By the age of seven pupils achieve standards in line with the level expected for their age. These standards match those noted in the last inspection. As history and geography are taught in termly or half-termly blocks, there was no history observed in Year 2. Evidence is supported by looking at pupils' work and teachers' planning.
- 94 By the end of Year 2 pupils know that events and people change over time. They have an understanding of the changes that have taken place through the lives of various famous people. For example, the effect of the life of Martin Luther King on equality for all people. They know how Mary Seacole influenced the changes in hospitals, comparing her role to that of Florence Nightingale. They are beginning to understand the concept of chronology and the use of time lines. Pupils in Year 1 were fascinated by the artefacts used in homes from the past and how they compare to the modern day equivalent. They described the tools used for washing clothes and, through first hand experience, attempted to see how effective this way of washing was. Pupils' historical vocabulary is developing slowly and they use words such as "before then", "after" and "a long time ago" correctly.
- 95 The only history lessons observed were in Year 1. Overall, including teachers' planning and preparation the quality of teaching is good. Lively discussion, appropriate use of questions and very good use of artefacts captures the pupils' interest and

imagination. Consequently pupils become aware of how evidence is obtained and thus form a picture of life in the past. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, are fully integrated into lessons and teachers target questions accordingly. Pupils listen carefully and respond with interest and enthusiasm to the teachers' questions. Teachers' own interest and knowledge helps to promote effective learning and good behaviour. This leads to pupils enjoying history particularly as much of the input is through discussion and the handling of artefacts.

- 96 The previous inspection criticised the school for lack of resources, this has been improved through the addition of photographs, videos, books and the use of library collections. Teachers also provide a wide range of artefacts for the pupils to study. The local community and visits to places of interest where pupils can have hands-on experiences of a Victorian kitchen or play with old-fashioned toys enhance their understanding of history. The co-ordinator has introduced a detailed scheme of work but has had limited time to monitor its effectiveness although teachers' planning is monitored. In the mixed age classes the curriculum is not adjusted to the different ages to ensure appropriate skills are taught to both age groups and topics are not missed or repeated.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

- 97 The school has made considerable improvements to the subject since the last inspection. Standards are now in line with that expected for this age and, considering many pupils do not have access to computers at home, this represents a significant achievement for the vast majority. A new scheme of work is in place supported by staff training so teachers are more confident helping pupils as they work on the computers. Additional resources have been obtained and each class has good access to computers. Time is allocated to teaching specific ICT skills and there is ample evidence to show that the present standards will be built on in the future.
- 98 At the end of Year 2, pupils have satisfactory word processing skills. They understand the use of specific keys to write upper and lower case letters, and delete and change text. Pupils with special educational needs use a spelling program to help them learn new words. They quickly grasp the sequence of the program and this improves their spelling as well as their ICT skills. Pupils have good mouse control and confidently select items from the menu. They know how to save their work and have a file containing examples of their work. They access different programs and close them down with a minimum of supervision. Pupils are beginning to combine pictures and text. In Year 2, pupils create a simple program to direct a programmable toy. In Year 1 pupils use computers to classify data and produce graphs of their results. This was not evident in Year 2 and the use of ICT to investigate is another area for development. Pupils have started to use the Internet to access information for other subjects.

- 99 Learning is good and reflects the good quality of teaching. In Year 1, ICT is taught by the subject co-ordinator to small groups of pupils. Pupils benefit from the teacher's good subject knowledge and get prompt help if a problem occurs. Structured guidelines of skills are followed so that pupils' learning is good as they successfully build up their confidence to use ICT. Lessons include clear learning outcomes so that pupils understand the focus of the activities and these are then consolidated at the end of the lesson. This was most effective in Year 1 when early word processing skills were being taught. The initial introduction allowed all pupils to see the purpose of the keys so that when they went to try them on a computer they were confident using delete and space bar in their work. The lesson was brisk with all pupils having access to computers and the rate of learning was good. This was less apparent in Year 2 when pupils spent a long time observing and waiting for a turn to program a mechanical toy and therefore enthusiasm for the activity waned. A strength in teaching is the use of computers to support learning in other subjects. For example, research skills are used in history developed and in mathematics pupils practise their problem solving and numeracy skills. Pupils with special educational needs and those learning through English as an additional language are sensitively supported and make good progress in extending their ICT skills. Specific vocabulary is explained thoroughly, with a translation if required, and these pupils make good progress in learning new ICT skills.
- 100 Management of the subject is good and has had a significant impact on the obvious improvements in the subject. As the co-ordinator teaches all the pupils in Year 1 and works in class in Year 2 she has a good overview of the subject throughout the school. Assessment is included at the end of specific units of work but currently the school lacks a formal system to check on pupils' progress on a more regular basis. Pupils are often encouraged to work with a partner so that a more confident pupil can help another pupil and this does much to enhance social skills and develop pupils' self-esteem.

MUSIC

- 101 Standards in music are good and this reflects good achievement for many pupils. Since the last inspection standards have been maintained. The substantial majority, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress during their time in school.
- 102 By the end of Year 2 pupils have a good sense of rhythm. Breathing exercises and voice control significantly contribute to the pupils' sensitive singing. They sing well in unison and also sing more complicated arrangements such as, 'London's Burning' as a four part round. Pupils are effectively introduced to musical vocabulary and understand such words as, 'stave' and 'melody.' The pupils in Year 2 have a good understanding of different musical patterns and effectively sing 'Brown Bread, White Bread' recognising a repeating pattern. They listen carefully and appraise music by identifying loud and soft, quick and slow and other variations of recorded elements of music. The pupils compose their own graphic scores. In small group activities they perform their own compositions on a range of percussion instruments while following a conductor. Higher attaining pupils handle instruments well and play with sensitivity. The pupils with lower attainment have difficulty when performing within a group. Pupils sing well in assemblies and listen carefully to such quality music as an excerpt from Beethoven's 'Sonata Pathetique.'

- 103 Teaching is good and lessons are well prepared with clear learning outcomes. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject and are confident performing in front of the class. This leads to pupils developing confidence in their own musical skills. The most effective lessons have a timed structure to each part of the lesson and this adds good pace and rigour. Effective use is made of the wide range of good quality instruments, lessons include a good range of tasks and pupils enjoy learning new skills. They learn to work together well as a class, in small groups and individually. They show respect for their own and each other's performances and handle the expensive instruments and resources they use with care. Ethnic instruments are used to good effect in lessons and assemblies. Good use is made of rhythmic clapping, body movements and actions to support the pupils' singing. This is effective in enabling pupils who learn through English as an additional language to join in with the activities.
- 104 Music makes an important contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They sing such songs as Shalom with feeling and sensitivity and enjoy such African hymns as Si-ya-hamb. Seven pupils benefit from tuition from a visiting tabla player and their confidence playing in front of the whole school was impressive.
- 105 Music is well managed and co-ordinated and lessons are based on the National Curriculum programmes of study. Currently the co-ordinator does not have time to check on what is happening in other lessons so is unclear about where help is needed.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 106 Standards achieved by pupils at the age of seven are in line with what is expected nationally and with that found in most schools. Standards seen during the inspection were not as high as those identified at the time of the last inspection.
- 107 For pupils in Years 1 and 2 the lessons observed were in gymnastics, dance and games. By the end of Year 2 pupils move round the hall with control, changing direction and use different ways of moving such as jogging and galloping. They stop at appropriate moments. In dance pupils use the space effectively and try to portray a variety of characters met in the story of Red Riding Hood. Pupils can show movements to illustrate the wolf prowling around the forest or the woodcutter chopping down trees. In a games lesson pupils show how well they can throw and catch balls, dodge and change direction in order to score a goal and then play a simple team game. In gymnastics pupils jump and control their landing and find different ways to move around the hall. They successfully transfer their skills on to the apparatus. The pupils are also aware of the need for warm up and cool down and what happens to their hearts during exercise. Throughout all lessons the safety of the pupils is a priority. When setting up the apparatus pupils know what the procedures are for carrying equipment safely. It is set efficiently and quickly. Progress and the development of the necessary skills are satisfactory across the school. Pupils with special educational needs or who speak English as an additional language make satisfactory progress commensurate with that of other pupils.

- 108 Learning in lessons is good and reflects the good quality of teaching. Teachers manage pupils well and have a good understanding of physical education for the age and ability of pupils they teach. They plan lessons carefully, making sure there is a balance between explanation, demonstration and practical activities for trial and improvement. This was particularly observed in the Year 2 games lesson where the teacher was clearly coaching the necessary skills to improve ball handling. This meant that pupils made good progress towards developing good ball control. Teachers use pupils to demonstrate and pupils are keen to share their ideas and take a pride in their work. However, on occasions opportunities are missed to explain why particular movements are good or how they could be improved so pupils cannot use the information to make their movements better. In some lessons teachers did not allow pupils time to cool down or discuss in sufficient detail what happens when they exercise. Teachers have very good relationships with their classes and frequently praise and encourage the pupils to achieve a higher standard of performance, this despite the fact that the pupils are often not given the opportunity to evaluate and improve their work. All teachers stress the need for safety when apparatus is set up and pupils appreciate the need for this. Most lessons have a good range of activities and pace, and pupils respond with enthusiasm and keenness.
- 109 The management of the subject is good and the co-ordinator has introduced a variety of new initiatives into the school including detailed planning guidelines. Resources are adequate and the school has identified the need to improve the large apparatus, as funding becomes available. Staff give generously of their time to provide extra curricular opportunities for gymnastics, ballet and Indian dance and these all contribute positively to the pupils' physical education.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 110 Standards are above those identified in the Locally Agreed Syllabus for pupils of this age. This represents a very good achievement for most pupils. The substantial majority, including those with special educational needs and those learning through English as an additional language, make good progress during their time in school. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
- 111 By the end of Year 2 pupils talk knowledgeably about Christianity and other religions and are familiar with such holy books as the Bible and the Koran. They are familiar with the New Testament account of the wise and foolish builders and understand the underlying meaning of this story. They have a growing understanding and knowledge of the range of world faiths including, Christianity, Judaism, Islam, Buddhism and Sikhism. Assemblies effectively support lessons and help the pupils place the teachings of such leaders as Martin Luther King and Mahatma Gandhi in a religious context. The pupils in Year 1 have a good knowledge of such major religious festivals as Christmas, Divali and Eid and effectively link this with the celebration of the Chinese New Year. In Year 2, pupils understand that gestures and body movements are an effective way of communication in worship. Religious education lessons are making an important contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Year 2 pupils, with great sensitivity, wrote their own thank you and forgiveness prayers which they shared with the class at the end of the lesson.

- 112 Teaching and learning are good. Lessons are carefully prepared with clear learning outcomes and pupils understand the main focus of the lesson. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject and are confident answering pupils' questions. The best teaching includes effective questioning which probes the pupils' thinking and allows them time to express their own views and feelings. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, the diversity and richness of religious experience of the pupils was effectively used to demonstrate the range of gestures and postures they use when they pray. Good use is made of a range of artefacts, visiting speakers and visits such as to a temple, neighbouring churches and the Pakistan community centre. These make learning more relevant to pupils and the rate of learning increases. Literacy skills are promoted in lessons and pupils have made bi-lingual books, which are available in the library. However, there are insufficient opportunities for extended writing. The pupils' work is effectively assessed as the lesson proceeds but assessment is not always used to inform curriculum planning to ensure that tasks build closely on previous learning. This leads to higher attaining pupils not achieving as much as they could. Stimulating wall displays of religious symbols and the story of Divali, Christmas and the Chinese New Year make an important contribution to the pupils' learning. The enthusiasm and sincerity of the teachers encourages the pupils to form positive attitudes to religious education.
- 113 The co-ordination and management of the subject is good and ensures the subject receives sufficient attention in the school. However, insufficient opportunity is provided to check on what is happening in lessons so that relevant support can be provided. The diversity of cultures within each class is a strength and pupils appreciate the rich diversity in the school. Religious education makes a very significant contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.