

INSPECTION REPORT

BOWLISH INFANT SCHOOL

Shepton Mallet

LEA area: Somerset

Unique reference number: 123672

Headteacher: Mrs Diana Levien

Reporting inspector: Dr Melvyn J Bradshaw
6169

Dates of inspection: 14th to 16th May 2001

Inspection number: 224051

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 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of Chair of Governors:	Mr Henk Strik
Date of previous inspection:	11 th March 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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6169	Dr Melvyn Bradshaw	Registered inspector	English	What sort of school is it?
			Science	The school's results and pupils' achievements
			Geography	How well are pupils taught?
			Physical education	What should the school do to improve further?
			Religious education	
			Foundation Stage	
			Special educational needs	
			English as an additional language	
9999	Mrs Rona Orme	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development?
				SMSC aspect - How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
				How well does the school care for its pupils?
				How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
1177 2	Dr Michael Yates	Team inspector	Mathematics	Curriculum aspect - How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
			Information and communication technology	How well is the school led and managed?
			Art and design	
			Design and technology	
			History	
			Music	
			Equal opportunities	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This infant school, situated on the west of Shepton Mallett, has 93 pupils who attend full-time from Reception to Year 2. At the time of the inspection, eleven children were not of compulsory school age. The numbers of boys and girls are similar, although there are many more boys than girls in Year 1. Children start in Reception in September of the school year in which they are five; they all become full-time by the autumn half-term. The school's roll is quite stable. Virtually all pupils, 99 per cent, are from a white ethnic background. Two pupils have English as an additional language, both are now competent in English. Nine pupils (10 per cent) are eligible for free school meals, which is below average. The number of pupils identified as having special educational needs is average; 21 (23 per cent) pupils are on the register of special educational needs (SEN), of these two have statements of SEN. All pupils on the SEN register are in Years 1 or 2 and the figure represents 32 per cent of these pupils. This figure has increased considerably since the previous inspection. Attainment on entry varies from year to year, but is about average this year; reading and writing skills are the least developed areas.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Bowlsh Infant School is a very effective school and provides its pupils with a good education. Its success is due to the excellent leadership of the headteacher, supported well by the Governing Body, and the high quality teamwork of all involved with the school. Children enjoy their time in the school. They make good progress and achieve well because of mainly good, and much very good teaching. Attainment is above average by Year 2. The school has established very good links with parents, who, therefore, make a positive contribution to their children's education. Teaching observed during the inspection was good overall, and never less than satisfactory. The school has coped very well with the increase in the number of pupils with special educational needs, they receive good support and achieve well. As a relatively small school, the income per pupil is high; it uses its resources well and provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Leadership and management of the school are very good. The headteacher provides excellent leadership, she is well supported by staff and the Governing Body.
- The quality of teaching is good overall, and was never less than satisfactory in the lessons observed. It is especially good in Reception and in literacy lessons. Learning and achievement are good, and attainment is above average in English, mathematics and science.
- Good provision is made to support pupils' personal development, especially in the moral and social areas. This helps to ensure that pupils have very good attitudes to school, and that relationships are excellent, and behaviour is very good.
- The school provides pupils with very good care and support. Assessment is strong for children in Reception and in English and mathematics.
- Pupils with special educational needs are well managed. Staff support them very well and they make good progress.
- Effective links with parents help to ensure they support their children's education well.

What could be improved

- The outdoor equipment for children in Reception and the use of the outside environment.
- The role of co-ordinators in monitoring some of their subjects throughout the school.
- The use of the school's marking policy, and the development of assessment procedures in many subjects.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Bowlsh Infant School was inspected in March, 1996 and found to provide its pupils with a satisfactory education. All areas of weakness previously identified have been dealt with and improvement overall has been very good. Pupils' attainment has improved in many subjects, especially English, mathematics

and science. Teaching has improved, previously it was described as sound, it is now good, with much that is very good. Management by staff and the Governing Body has improved; staff work together very well. More able pupils are given better support, and this is reflected in the proportion of pupils achieving the higher standards by the end of Year 2. The curriculum is good. The programmes which teachers need to follow are more manageable, and subjects are supported by relevant policies and schemes of work, which are updated regularly. Learning support staff are used very effectively to ensure pupils with special educational needs make good progress and achieve well. Written reports to parents meet statutory requirements and give more information about their children's progress and what they can do.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
Reading	A	A	A	A
Writing	A	A	A*	A*
Mathematics	B	B	B	C

Key

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

Over the past four years, the school's results have improved at a similar rate to that seen nationally; it has therefore maintained a performance that exceeds the national picture. In 2000, at the end of Year 2, reading was well above the national results; those for writing were very high, being in the top five per cent of schools. In mathematics, results were above the national average. Compared with the results of similar schools; that is those with between eight and 20 per cent claiming free school meals, results in writing were very high, in reading they were well above average and in mathematics they were similar to the average. This year, attainment is not quite so high, but is above average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. This lower attainment is related to the increase in the number of pupils with special educational needs. Attainment in religious education is currently above that expected by the end of Year 2. Standards in information and communication technology are about average. In other subjects, standards are at least satisfactory, and are higher than this in history and music. Children in Reception make good progress and should have attained the expected standard when they enter Year 1.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils enjoy coming to school and take part in all its activities with enthusiasm. Overall, they have very good attitudes to school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils behave very well on nearly all occasions.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are excellent at all levels. Pupils' personal development is very good.
Attendance	Attendance is good, and morning punctuality has improved.

Pupils' attitudes are very positive and relationships with adults and each other are excellent. On only rare occasions does behaviour fall below a very high standard.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years
26 lessons seen overall	Very Good	Good

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

The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection. All teaching observed was at least satisfactory, and almost all was good or better, and well over a third very good. Teaching in the Reception class is very good, with very well planned activities to promote the personal development of children. In Years 1 and 2, the teaching of English is very good, and that for mathematics good. A significant strength of teaching is the emphasis given to the development of literacy skills and their use across the whole curriculum. Good behaviour management is a consistent feature in all classes. Marking does not always follow the school's marking policy closely. The good teaching results in good learning and achievement by pupils. Pupils show interest and concentrate very well. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported by teachers and other staff and, as a result, their progress while in the school is good.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a good curricular experience for pupils, which has improved since the last inspection. A strength of the provision is the emphasis that is rightly placed on literacy skills.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and, as a result of the very good leadership by the co-ordinator, and the investment in support staff, these pupils make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The few pupils for whom English is an additional language are well integrated into the school and are fully involved in all lessons, they make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for pupils' personal development is very good, with strong arrangements for the moral and social development of pupils.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school makes very good provision for the health, safety and welfare of pupils. All staff know and care for pupils very well. Assessment in Reception, English and mathematics, and for special educational needs, is at least good.

The school involves the community and parents very effectively in its provision. Assessment is being developed in many subjects, but is not securely in place. Pupils are not introduced to the wide range of cultures in the United Kingdom sufficiently.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides excellent, effective leadership. She has a clear vision for the school, which is shared by her staff.
How well the governors	The governing body is very effective, with a good committee structure. It

fulfil their responsibilities	has a clear strategic grasp of the school's priorities and works very well as a team.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has satisfactory, and improving, structures to monitor its performance and is using these effectively to monitor standards.
The strategic use of resources	Financial planning is very good and well targeted to meet the school's aims. Very good use is made of capital funding and specific grants.

The school's accommodation is satisfactory and learning resources are good, except for the provision for outdoor, physical activities for children in Reception. The stable staff work extremely well as a team and there is a very good match of staff skills to the demands of the curriculum. The headteacher and governors apply the principles of best value consistently. The role of subject co-ordinators is not developed sufficiently.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school and their progress is good. • The school is well led and managed. • Behaviour is good and the school has high expectations. • Teaching in the school is good and the school is approachable. • The amount of homework is satisfactory. • Children are helped to become mature and responsible. • They are kept well informed and the school works closely with parents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The activities outside of lessons.

Inspectors support parents' positive views of the school. Teaching is good and pupils make good progress. Expectations, including for behaviour, are high, pupils like school and behave very well; they are helped to become mature and responsible. Leadership and management of the school are very good. The school sets sufficient homework, it is approachable and works very well with parents; they receive good information. Inspectors consider that, for a small infant school, it provides a good range of activities outside of lessons.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

- 1 In 2000, in National Curriculum tests, at the end of Key Stage 1, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected Level 2 or above was very high in writing and mathematics, being in the top five per cent of schools, and well above the national average in reading. Similarly, the proportion achieving the higher Level 3 was well above the average in reading and writing, and similar to the average in mathematics. Overall, taking account of the full range of attainment, results were very high in writing, well above the average in reading and above the average in mathematics. In comparison with similar schools, that is those with between eight and 20 per cent claiming free school meals, results were very high in writing, well above the average in reading and similar to the average in mathematics. Since 1996, results have tended to increase in reading, writing and mathematics at a similar rate to the improvement nationally. As a result, the school has maintained the gap above schools generally. Teacher assessments in science indicated that 97 per cent of pupils achieved the expected Level 2, well above the national average, and 25 per cent of pupils were recorded as attaining the higher Level 3, above the average. Boys and girls tended to attain similar standards except in reading, where boys' results are lower. Inspection evidence indicates that standards are not quite as high this year, owing to the increase in the number of pupils with special educational needs. Attainment, however, remains above the average in reading, writing, mathematics and science.
- 2 The previous inspection indicated that standards were generally average or a little above. The main exceptions were the high standards in music and lower standards in design and technology. Attainment has risen in many subjects, especially in English, mathematics and science. It remains high in music and is now average in design and technology. Pupils continue to make good progress during their time in the school. The school analyses its assessment data in English and mathematics carefully, including looking at the relative performance of boys and girls. Baseline assessment data, completed when children start in Reception, and repeated towards the end of the year, are used well to measure the improvement, as well as to identify individuals who are not making the expected progress. The information gained is used to set precise individual targets for each pupil.
- 3 Attainment on entry to the school is about average, although lower in reading and writing skills. Children's progress in Reception is good. The focus on literacy provides children with good language skills by the time they start in Year 1. They understand that words have meaning, and how the pages of a book are turned. The higher attaining third can read simple stories well and all other children know a range of three letter words. All can write their own names, and the majority write simple text that is readily understood. Children's work in the mathematical area of learning improves well, and virtually all the current children will reach or exceed the Early Learning Goals. By the end of Reception, children have a good knowledge of number, and perform mental operations such as adding two numbers or doubling simple numbers correctly. Children's knowledge of the world gradually increases and is above average. They write and produce pictures about how birds survive in winter, and draw the main events of the Christmas story. They move the computer mouse with good control, selecting different icons and changing programs with confidence. Children's creative skills are good, they control pencils and crayons very well when colouring in shapes and pictures they have drawn. They handle scissors, cut and stick well and

control their movements competently when moving to music in the hall.

- 4 Pupils in Year 2 are achieving above average standards in English, mathematics, science and religious education. Standards are about average in information and communication technology (ICT). Virtually all pupils read accurately, with improving expression and a good awareness of punctuation. They have a good understanding of what they have read, giving clear summaries of the book so far. Although many boys do read at least satisfactorily, and some well, virtually all pupils who are below average readers are boys. The school has recognised this and provides good support to give them confidence and improve achievement. This has helped to ensure that few of these boys will fail to achieve Level 2. Writing skills of pupils are above average. Most pupils write in simple sentences using correct punctuation, such as capital letters and full stops. About three quarters of pupils use complex sentences and good descriptive vocabulary in their writing. Spelling is about average or a little above, most spell simple words accurately and more complex words are, at least, recognisable. Handwriting is good, pupils form their letters accurately and virtually all can use a joined script, but only about half use it in their every day writing. Speaking and listening skills are well above average and are promoted by a wide range of activities across most subjects. Pupils listen very well, a reflection on the emphasis given to respecting others, and speak with clarity, expression and a wide vocabulary, such as when asked what pupils thought Grace Darling might have felt during the sea rescue one replied 'petrified'. Pupils' mathematical knowledge is above average. Pupils are confident with using the four rules of number and are accurate when working with numbers up to 100, and for higher attaining pupils beyond this. Pupils' literacy skills are developing very well and literacy is used exceedingly well to support learning in other subjects. Numeracy skills are developing well, but there is limited use across other areas of the curriculum. In science, pupils' attainment is above average by the end of Year 2. They have a broad knowledge across all areas of science. Pupils observe well, such as when different fluids are frozen, or foods heated. They understand a fair test and are beginning to make sensible suggestions to explain their results. In ICT, attainment is about average; pupils use the keyboard to input text, control the mouse well and use these skills to produce pictures or explore a CD-ROM to find scientific information. In religious education, pupils demonstrate a good understanding of some of aspects of Christianity as well as some features and festivals of other religions.
- 5 Pupils generally achieve at least satisfactory standards in other subjects. The mostly satisfactory standards identified in the previous report have been improved or maintained. In art and design, attainment is average; pupils use a range of media, especially paint, to good effect in two-dimensional work. In music, attainment remains high, pupils sing and perform with skill. In history, pupils' attainment is above average, they understand that changes have occurred over time and have a good knowledge of famous figures from the past, such as Grace Darling and Samuel Pepys. In geography, attainment is average. Pupils have a good knowledge of overseas localities and they compare life in Fiji with their own. Map skills are not so well developed. Pupils' design and technology skills have improved and are average, their skills of designing, making and evaluating, develop well. In physical education, Year 2 pupils' gymnastic skills are satisfactory.
- 6 Pupils' achievement and progress while in the school are good. In each class, all children are challenged to do their best, and this has helped to ensure that the key issue of the previous report, related to some under-achievement of higher attaining

pupils, has been addressed successfully. The good progress and achievement are due to well organised teaching, good cross-curricular links and, in particular, an emphasis on developing and using literacy skills. Children enjoy their learning and almost always work with very good concentration and effort.

- 7 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress during their time in school. This is evident in all subjects, and is because of the carefully planned activities and good support they receive. The amount of progress is illustrated by the fact that, in 2000, by the end of Year 2, virtually all pupils achieved at least Level 2 in reading, writing and mathematics. This good progress is associated with good, and much very good, teaching. Progress is also aided by the high quality literacy and numeracy individual education plans, which are used effectively by all staff. The very few pupils for whom English is an additional language make good progress, and in English it is very good. They participate fully in all their lessons without additional support and achieve at appropriate levels. Except for in reading, boys and girls perform at similar levels, and even in reading boys exceed the overall national average.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- 8 Pupils arrive with great enthusiasm to take part in all the activities that the school offers. They come to school with confidence in the morning and are happy to leave their parents in the playground, moving into the classroom independently. They wear correct uniform and are ready to settle down to work. Overall, they have very good attitudes to school.
- 9 Standards of behaviour are very good throughout the school, and there is no evidence of oppressive behaviour. There has been one fixed-term exclusion. Almost all parents consider that behaviour is good. The high standard of behaviour is the direct result of the very good pupil management policy and its consistent use by all staff. The very good behaviour of pupils makes a significant contribution to the progress made in lessons. There are a few instances when the disruptive behaviour of a pupil with behavioural difficulties affects the concentration of a whole class and this impedes the progress made. Generally, pupils maintain their concentration well even if a pupil with special educational needs behaves inappropriately. Pupils behave very well in assembly, around the school and at play and lunchtimes.
- 10 The personal development of pupils is very good, and all parents consider the school is helping their child to become mature. Pupils in Reception follow the clearly established routines well and they find the things they need independently. Pupils of all ages talk to adults confidently and politely. They show initiative, for example, when they clear away without being reminded.
- 11 Relationships are excellent at all levels, and pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language are fully involved in the life of the school. It is a pleasure to visit the school. As parents report, pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong. Pupils enjoy discussing spiritual and moral issues and often show highly developed insight. This was illustrated when a Year 2 pupil in a history lesson suggested that Grace Darling must have been 'petrified' when she rowed out to rescue the shipwrecked sailors.
- 12 Levels of attendance are good, and morning punctuality has improved since the last inspection. Registers are marked accurately at the beginning of each session; they record reasons for absence correctly, and registration procedures meet statutory requirements.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

- 13 Pupils are well taught in the school, this ensures good achievement and pace of learning. All teaching observed was at least satisfactory, almost all good or better and over 40 per cent very good or excellent. Teaching in Reception is very good and generally good, or better, in the remainder of the school. The quality of teaching is better than that described in the last inspection report when it was mainly sound. The improvement has been associated with greater attention being given to the needs of the full ability range, in particular the higher attaining pupils.
- 14 Teaching in the Foundation Stage is very good overall, and ensures that children's learning in virtually every area of the curriculum is good or better. The Foundation Stage curriculum has been introduced effectively and all activities are very well planned. Significant support is given by the learning support assistants working in the class. The attention given to children's personal, social and emotional development is excellent. From the moment children arrive in class they are encouraged to take responsibility for putting away their coats and lunch boxes. A further strength of the teaching is the management and organisation of pupils which means that children develop positive attitudes to their work and, from an early age, take responsibility for aspects of their own learning. During a mathematics session, all children worked very well on their own, concentrating and using the resources provided independently. All adults have a good understanding of the needs of children in the Foundation Stage and how to promote the development of independence, as well as the skills of literacy and numeracy. Early ICT skills are also taught well as children are encouraged to use the computer to support their learning across the curriculum. Adults have high expectations of what children can achieve. Baseline assessments, completed shortly after children start in Reception, are very well organised. Assessment of all areas of learning gives the teacher and other adults a clear picture of each child's progress. The data are used very well to aid planning and target support.
- 15 The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is good overall, and none observed was less than satisfactory. Much of the teaching was very good. Teaching of English and mathematics in the lessons seen was never less than good, and much was better. In all other subjects, teaching is satisfactory or good. Pupils' learning in the lessons observed was usually good, and in many lessons it was very good. There are significant strengths in the teaching. Learning support staff, who, at the time of the previous inspection, were not always used effectively, are now used very well. Subject knowledge is usually good and, where it is satisfactory, such as in ICT, good support is available from the co-ordinator. This, together with more detailed planning, has helped to deal with the previous weakness of not always challenging higher attaining pupils. Good attention is given to their needs, and the success of this is evident, especially in the results in reading and writing. English is very well taught, and the extensive and thoughtful use of literacy across the curriculum is extremely successful. Pupils' attainment is improving in mathematics, especially numeracy, because of well organised lessons which consolidate and extend pupils' skills well. The use of numeracy skills in other subjects is satisfactory, but not yet planned in the detail evident for literacy. Expectations of pupils, in relation to behaviour and the level of work, are high. In many lessons, teachers ensure that pupils work at a good pace, and give them clear time targets and regular reminders.
- 16 Effective use of questions helps teachers to encourage discussion effectively, and this is promoting very good learning in speaking and listening. Pupil management is usually very good and the good relationship between staff and pupils is a strength of

many lessons. There are a few occasions, such as in physical education, when a minority of pupils, notably boys, do not behave or listen as well as they should. In a Year 1 class, one particular pupil disrupted other children during a physical education session, and in the subsequent religious education lesson. Resources are used well to support learning. ICT is used very effectively in subjects such as literacy and science. Teachers know their pupils very well and effective assessment occurs during most lessons. The quality of marking is sound, but there are few comments to help children be more aware of their learning and how they might improve. Some marking does not follow the guidance in the school's policy, in particular that children should not erase and then correct errors the teacher has noted, but merely record the correct answer. Good use is made of homework in English and mathematics.

- 17 The teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good overall and very good in literacy lessons. As a result, virtually all pupils reached the expected Level 2 in reading and writing in the Key Stage 1 assessments in 2000, and most will do so this year. Teachers and other adults provide the right amount of support and encouragement. Teaching assistants have good expertise, they complement the work of the teacher very effectively whether working with individuals or groups. The good teaching in the school is helping to promote increasingly good learning, despite the rise in the number of pupils with special educational needs. Pupils concentrate very well and work hard. Acquisition of new skills and knowledge is good in English and mathematics. Good provision is made for pupils for whom English is an additional language. They make good progress due to good teaching.

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

- 18 The overall judgement from the previous inspection report was that the school provided a 'generally satisfactory' curriculum that met statutory requirements. The school succeeded in offering all pupils appropriate opportunities for personal, spiritual, moral and social development. Three key issues of the previous inspection were related to curricular provision. The first was to use materials, which were more closely matched to the individual needs of more able pupils in particular. The introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has contributed significantly to improvements in this area, as have developments in ICT. The second was to review the curricular framework to ensure a more manageable programme of study. The school has done this and is now in the process of an on-going review after the introduction of Curriculum 2000 and the Qualification and Curriculum Authority's guidelines for foundation subjects. The third issue related to policies and schemes of work; these are now in place for all curricular areas and are subject to biennial review. Furthermore, design and technology, where standards at the last inspection fell below national expectations, has been the focus for improvement and in-service training for all staff. This has resulted in good improvements to the provision in this subject during the interim period.
- 19 The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant, and covers all areas of the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. As a result, pupils make good progress in their learning across the full range of the curriculum. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been introduced successfully. The school has thought carefully about provision in general, and there are good links between different subjects. The quality and range of learning opportunities at Key Stage 1 are good. English is given its rightful large share of teaching time, with very good emphasis on writing and reading. ICT is used particularly well to support learning in other subjects. The development of speaking and listening and literacy

skills across the curriculum is a strength and is planned well. Both music and history have strong planned links to English as pupils are expected to listen carefully and express their ideas orally in lessons. The large proportion of time given to English does not impair the learning of other subjects. In mathematics, the quality of the provision for teaching basic numeracy skills is good but insufficient attention is given to developing depth in shape and space work. In science, the curriculum is strong with a good emphasis placed on investigation, observation and developing skills of hypothesis and prediction. Music is a particular strength outside of the core curriculum with a good balance of provision encouraging the development of high standards of performance, especially in singing, and composition skills. The art and design curriculum provides pupils with a good range of experiences with different media and techniques, including batik, pastel work, the use of computer drawing packages and marbling, as well as the more usual drawing, printing, collage and painting. There is also good curricular provision in physical education where Year 2 pupils are provided with the opportunity to learn to swim. In all other areas, the curricular provision at Key Stage 1 is satisfactory complying fully with national guidance. There is very good provision for personal, social and health education. The school uses 'circle time' to good effect to promote speaking and listening skills and personal development. The positive attitudes and behaviour promoted have a significant impact on learning. Opportunities to develop personal, social and health education are exploited extensively in the cross-curricular context. Children learn about keeping healthy and food safety and hygienic procedures in design and technology when designing and making healthy sandwiches. Awareness of a range of health related issues are raised through science.

- 20 The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is good overall. It provides good access to the areas of learning for all children and is relevant to their specific needs. The school has been successful in improving provision for children in Reception and the requirements of the Foundation Stage have been introduced well. The good curriculum covers all the areas of learning for children under six. All children have good access to the curriculum and benefit from a wide range of activities, although the school recognises that outdoor provision is not yet adequate.
- 21 Throughout the school particularly good thought is given to the provision for children with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. The provision for special educational needs pupils in Key Stage 1 is very good with well-defined and understood systems and procedures, and high levels of adult support. The good quality of individual educational plans is illustrated by the breadth and detail of targets, with particular emphasis on English and mathematics. Provision for children under five is satisfactory. Although recognised early in their time in Reception, there is relatively late formal acknowledgement given to these children's special needs. The quality of support in all other respects matches that given to older pupils. A good balance is struck between withdrawal from class for individual and small group working in a newly designated special educational needs area, and adult support in lessons.
- 22 The school has an Equal Opportunities policy of good quality. This is applied consistently and ensures equality of access to the curriculum for all pupils. Furthermore, it takes account of pupils' age, prior attainment, race and gender. The organisation of pupils in classes and teaching groups and the deployment of adult support ensure all pupils receive equal access and opportunity to experience the full range of the primary curriculum. Each subject area policy gives due consideration to this aspect to ensure that it is initiated effectively in practice and that work is matched to individual pupils' needs and progress.

- 23 The range and quality of extra-curricular activities is good. These include country dancing, recorder and French clubs. The gymnastics club, which did not meet during the current year because of building work, is due to recommence in September. The school liaises with the local football school organised by Bristol City. Furthermore, opportunities are provided for pupils to participate in a range of community ventures with organisations within the Shepton Mallet region.
- 24 The school makes very good provision for the personal development of pupils. All staff are very good role models and treat pupils with great respect and value. The Reception class makes a significant contribution to the personal and social development of children, helping them to become confident and independent learners. The clear classroom routines are particularly helpful. The staff successfully encourage co-operation and helpfulness. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are given opportunities to take responsibility for their own belongings and the materials they use during the day. They help teachers move resources, show independence and generally care for each other well. Adults are consistent in the behaviour expectations and praise is used effectively to promote good behaviour and work. Opportunities to promote and reward the positive are used fully. In the Year 2 classroom, at the end of lunchtimes, pupils are asked to identify a classmate whose actions and behaviour deserve recognition and names are recorded on the blackboard. Throughout the curriculum, opportunities for independent and co-operative work are promoted. A sense of belonging and consideration for others are encouraged in whole-school assemblies. Weekly celebration assemblies are used to value good work and behaviour. The success of this aspect of the school curriculum is evident in the calm ethos pervading the school and the enthusiasm and positive attitudes that pupils of all abilities show towards the school and their work.
- 25 The spiritual development of pupils is addressed well through religious education, personal and social education and 'circle discussion time', and in assemblies. All pupils attend a daily act of collective worship which meets statutory requirements. Assemblies are positive occasions with a distinctive, reflective atmosphere. They are used well to reinforce the ethos of the school in addition to providing spiritual insights. Informal opportunities are used well when they arise in National Curriculum subjects to promote spiritual reflection, and particularly well through consideration of poetry in English and of moods in music. The school acknowledges the need to identify additional planned provision to consider spiritual insights across the curriculum.
- 26 The school promotes the moral development of pupils very well. There is a clear moral basis to the school's behaviour code, and staff always take time to explain why some behaviour is unacceptable. Parents are satisfied that the difference between right and wrong is clearly taught. Inspectors confirm that this is the case. Moral issues are sometimes discussed in geography, history and religious education.
- 27 The school's provision for the social development of pupils is very good. Pupils are encouraged to work in a range of different groups, and 'circle discussion time' has been introduced in Years 1 and 2 to provide formal opportunities to consider each other's views and needs. A Year 1 class took turns to discuss 'why I am a good friend.' Playtimes and the eating of lunch also promote social development well. The school effectively helps pupils learn to accommodate the sometimes erratic and challenging behaviour of others with behavioural difficulties.
- 28 The cultural development of pupils is well addressed through art and design and music. Pupils study the work of great artists and there are delightful displays to look

at. Year 2 pupils can join a French club to learn something of the language and culture. There are good opportunities to learn about different world faiths, and about life in other parts of the world such as Fiji, but opportunities to learn about the multi-cultural diversity of the United Kingdom are limited.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- 29 The care and welfare of pupils are given high and successful priority by the school. The school organises the induction of pupils to the Reception class very well. Parents and children are invited to a range of events that help them to become familiar and confident with the procedures and layout of the school. New parents receive very good information in preparation. Pupils are equally well prepared for transfer to junior school.
- 30 All staff know pupils very well and give them very good support. There are good arrangements for child protection and these meet locally agreed requirements. No health and safety concerns were noted during the inspection. There is good first aid cover. Pupils are very well supervised in the playground, and meals are served with due regard to hygiene.
- 31 The school monitors the attendance of pupils very well so that any causes for concern are quickly identified. Registers are checked consistently and outside agencies involved when necessary. There are very good procedures for encouraging good behaviour. A very clear behaviour policy exists and this is consistently implemented by all staff. The very successful and consistent management of behaviour is demonstrated by how very well the pupils behave. The school uses a range of strategies well to manage the challenging behaviour of a few pupils. Staff react quickly and effectively to any concern about bullying.
- 32 Very good procedures are in place for assessing pupils' attainment and progress in the Foundation Stage. These include good assessment in lessons, detailed records of each area of learning and the effective use of information to plan the curriculum. The assessment of pupils' personal and social development is particularly strong in Reception. Assessment procedures are generally satisfactory in most subjects in Key Stage 1, and good in English, mathematics, ICT and music. Reading is assessed regularly by the headteacher and assessment in mathematics is based on National Numeracy Strategy key objectives and a commercial scheme. A detailed system of assessing pupils' skills in ICT has been devised and introduced recently. The assessment of skills in a number of subjects is an area requiring development. Assessment procedures are very good for pupils with special educational needs. Analysis of their weaknesses is thorough and individual education plans identify clear and achievable targets. The requirements of the statements of special educational needs are well organised. The regular and detailed updating of individual education plans reflects the very good use of assessment data. Whilst all staff know pupils well and use this knowledge to judge personal development, this information is not formally recorded or monitored unless there are specific concerns about a pupil. The formal assessment of personal development is not maintained beyond the Foundation Stage. In Reception, although there is an early recognition of children's specific needs, no children are placed on the special educational register until the summer term.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- 33 There is a very good partnership between parents and the school. This warm and

effective partnership comes directly from the school's efforts to involve and inform parents, and it starts before children join the school. Almost all parents report that the school works closely with them, and their views of the school are exceptionally positive. The secretary provides parents with friendly and efficient help.

- 34 The school provides parents with very good general information, as well as details of the curriculum and pupils' progress. Parents have been given good information about the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The prospectus and Governors' Annual Report both meet statutory requirements, and the Home-School Agreement is clear.
- 35 Parents receive good information about their child's progress. Annual reports have been improved since the last inspection and they now meet statutory requirements. Reports give good information about what pupils know, understand and can do in each subject, and include individual targets for English and mathematics. However, points for improvement are not routinely included under each subject. Good information is given about personal development. Parents also receive helpful formal and informal opportunities to discuss progress and to see their child's work. Nearly all parents feel well-informed about their child's progress.
- 36 The school has established good links with parents of children who are due to start the Foundation Stage. Parents, together with their children, can visit the school in a well organised programme of visits. Parents whose children have special educational needs are fully involved in the review process and are encouraged to make a positive contribution to supporting their children's progress at home.
- 37 The school actively encourages parents to become involved in its work. A number of parents provide help in classrooms and on educational visits. Others provide administrative assistance or contribute to the activities of Friends of Bowlsh School. The vast majority of parents encourage their children to complete homework.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 38 The leadership and management of the headteacher, governors and key staff are very good. The management team works very well together and is determined to continue to raise standards in all subjects and promote high standards of literacy. There is a dedicated team of staff committed to providing high quality education for the pupils. The school's aims and values are reflected extremely well in its work. The governing body fulfils all statutory obligations fully. There has been very good improvement since the last inspection. The headteacher has played a significant part in this process. All major issues raised then have been addressed systematically and effectively. Teaching and learning in design and technology are now organised effectively and the needs of more able pupils have been addressed, aided by the introduction of the National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies. All subjects have schemes of work of good quality. The quality of school reports has been improved and they now meets statutory requirements. The school has an excellent ethos, effective systems and very good capability for still further improvement.
- 39 The headteacher's leadership is excellent. She has a clear vision for the school and since the last inspection has led the teaching team in the systematic review and

development of the curriculum. The ethos established within the school has resulted in a stable teaching team with a good blend of experience and expertise. During this school year, she has worked closely with governors and teachers to oversee the completion of major building development work without disruption to the quality of teaching and learning. This has resulted in a significant improvement to the school environment. She has many qualities that ensure very effective leadership. They include a very clear strategic sense, a calm supportive manner and the personal qualities necessary to gain the trust and commitment of staff, pupils and parents necessary to promote teamwork at all levels. She uses these skills well to produce a school characterised by open communication. Pupils are recognised and valued as individuals and the educational experiences carefully planned to match their needs. She is supported well by a hard-working and dedicated staff team, an able and experienced administrative officer and an effective governing body which is responding well to the expectations to raise standards and efficiency. All who work at the school are most conscientious. They are raising standards, particularly in English, mathematics and science as is evident in the consistently high standards achieved in National Curriculum test results and confirmed by inspection evidence. The recent building developments and investment in ICT provide a very good base for further improvements in teaching and learning.

- 40 Governors support the school extremely well and play a very good part in shaping its direction. They have a good understanding of their monitoring and evaluation responsibilities. The governors review the development plan at every meeting and have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and its priorities. They have a very good structure and make extremely good use of their personal and professional skills on committees. The governing body agrees both the school's budget and its improvement plan. It monitors well the educational standards and the success of the school's work and has a very good understanding of the community the school serves. The very good working relationship the governors have with the headteacher enables them to make a good contribution to the strategic direction of the school. Since the last inspection they have clarified individual roles and participated fully in regular local authority training.
- 41 The headteacher has established good procedures to monitor, evaluate and develop teaching. By monitoring planning and teaching, she understands the strengths and weaknesses within subject areas and works with staff to support and encourage improvement. Baseline and assessment data from standardised tests are used effectively to set targets and priorities and, as a result, the school predicts its results accurately. The headteacher uses external advice and support from the local education authority very well. To ensure the successful introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy, a member of the numeracy team gave demonstration lessons in the school. Overall monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching are satisfactory as the role of subject co-ordinators in the process is not fully developed. At present, they monitor planning and discuss specific work with children. This is a satisfactory arrangement and the school recognises that monitoring of teaching and systematic sampling of pupils' work across the school are the next steps in providing co-ordinators with a clear understanding of standards in their subjects. The deputy headteacher has recently undertaken training to enhance the quality of school self-evaluation. A good appraisal system for teaching staff is in place and this links well to the professional development of all staff and to school improvement priorities. The school has a recently introduced a performance management system of good quality. Educational support assistants and non-teaching assistants are trained well and are provided with appropriate feedback to ensure their performance is effective. Since the last inspection very good progress is evident in their deployment and effectiveness.

Primarily this has been achieved by planned training at school and local authority level, and informal monitoring by the headteacher and teaching staff. Prior discussion of activity objectives and outcomes provides them with a clear insight into their role in all lessons.

- 42 The management framework is excellent with clearly identified roles and responsibilities for staff and committees. The school identifies its priorities for development very well and it has a very good capacity to succeed. Arrangements for development planning are very good. There is a clear process of consultation with staff and governors before a comprehensive plan is approved with governors appropriately involved in the long-term planning. There are effective arrangements for achieving specified goals with responsibility allocated against success criteria with target dates. The school monitors and evaluates school development planning very well. Financial planning is linked extremely well to development planning; there is a careful and systematic process of budget planning which takes account of the major priorities in the school development plan. The school uses technology satisfactorily. All financial planning is computerised and there are plans to introduce a program enabling computerised monitoring and tracking of pupils' progress shortly. It has very efficient financial management systems and the administration supports the work of the teachers well. As a small school, vulnerable to fluctuations in pupil numbers, a budget surplus of approximately seven per cent is normally carried forward to protect staffing for one year, as recommended by the local authority. The additional balance at the end of 1999/2000 was linked to the planned improvements in the school's accommodation, and related capital works, which had not been paid for. Good use is made of local authority financial expertise and services. A very competent administrator provides accurate data to enable the headteacher, chair of finance and governing body to monitor expenditure and to plan for contingencies. Funds for specific purposes are allocated very well against clearly defined objectives. These are spent very effectively and pupils' achievements are consistently high in literacy and improving in numeracy and ICT.
- 43 The governing body employs best value principles. It understands the quality of education provided by similar schools and evaluates its standards compared with them well. The governing body and headteacher evaluate the level of need and question carefully the value of new initiatives, for example the recent school building extension. They consult widely when considering major spending and consider carefully the cost of their decisions. Procedures are in place to ensure that all outside suppliers and contractors provide good value for money. The administrative officer provides a detailed and careful analysis of the school's financial position and procedures. Satisfactory responses have been made to all recommendations identified in the most recent auditor's report which found financial control to be satisfactory with sound procedures established.
- 44 The day-to-day management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The co-ordination and management of the programme are very good as is the quality of the individual education plans and associated targets. Funding is used well to provide a good balance of in class support and withdrawal from lessons. However, the complete support necessary for two pupils with specific needs is only achieved through a combination of school funding and voluntary work by trained learning support assistants. Systems for record keeping and monitoring progress are very good and used extremely well. Support from outside specialist agencies is managed extremely well. Very good links exist with a local special school whose staff have contributed to in-service training. The governing body is well informed by the

special educational needs governor and discharges its duties efficiently.

- 45 The school is well staffed. It has a good level of appropriately qualified staff to teach the subjects of the National Curriculum, religious education and children in Reception. The teachers have a satisfactory range of experience and co-ordinators have a clear understanding of their roles. The investment made in additional adult support is having a positive effect on standards. Competent, skilful classroom assistants support pupils' special educational needs well and contribute significantly to the development of literacy and numeracy skills. Teachers deploy and brief classroom assistants well and all staff work closely together to improve the achievement of pupils.
- 46 The quality of the accommodation is satisfactory. Recent building work has enhanced provision considerably, however the outside temporary building lacks sunblinds and fans, and temperature control can be difficult in summer. The school recognises deficiencies in the provision of an outside area and suitable equipment for the youngest children. Learning resources are satisfactory overall; they are good for literacy and numeracy and are used well. Limitations in the ICT provision restrict the teaching styles that teachers can employ. This is a school which is raising standards. There is evidence of very good improvement since the previous inspection, particularly with respect to the quality of teaching and the use of educational support assistants. The school is now providing good opportunities for pupils with higher levels of attainment to achieve in accordance with their abilities. The school has above average income per pupil and gives good value for money.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED?

- 47 The school does not yet have sufficient equipment, or well organised outside area, to extend Reception children's learning, especially in relation to physical development. The role co-ordinators is not defined sufficiently clearly in relation to monitoring standards and teaching in their subjects. The school's marking policy is not always followed consistently, and, except for English and mathematics, assessment procedures are not developed sufficiently. The attention given to promoting pupils' awareness of the important multicultural aspects of British society is limited.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- 48 In order to improve standards further, the headteacher, staff and governors should:
- (1) Improve the use of the outdoor environment for children in the Reception class by:
 - implementing the school's plans to enhance outdoor provision;
 - establishing a suitable site and improving resources, such as large toys, to develop children's physical skills further.(Paragraphs 21,46, 51, 56)
 - (2) Develop the role of subject co-ordinators, especially in some of the foundation subjects, by:

- producing clear job descriptions which include clear reference to the precise roles of the subject co-ordinator;
 - establishing opportunities for co-ordinators to review systematically the planning, teaching and quality of pupils' work in their subjects.
- (Paragraphs 41, 77, 82, 86, 90, 94, 98, 106)

(3) Extend assessment procedures and the quality of marking by:

- ensuring the school's marking policy is followed by all staff;
 - reviewing existing assessment practice, including identifying the features of the high quality assessment of the Foundation Stage;
 - developing systematic and manageable procedures which enable both skills and knowledge to be assessed in each subject.
- (Paragraphs 2, 14, 16, 32, 53, 68, 76, 77, 82, 86, 90, 94, 106, 110)

In addition to these key issues, the headteacher and governors should consider for inclusion in the action plan the following more minor area:

- (1) Ensuring that pupils' awareness of the richness of cultures within British society is increased.
- (Paragraphs 28)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	26
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	16

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3.8	38.5	50.0	7.7	0	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)	93
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	9

FTE means full-time equivalent.

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	21

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	3
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	4.6
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.1
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	15	17	32

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	15	15
	Girls	17	17	17
	Total	31	32	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (90)	100 (97)	100 (97)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	14	14
	Girls	17	17	17
	Total	31	31	31
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (93)	97 (97)	97 (93)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	81
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	1	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)	5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18.6
Average class size	23.2

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	124

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	223237
Total expenditure	215711
Expenditure per pupil	2179
Balance brought forward from previous year	18677
Balance carried forward to next year	26203

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	93
Number of questionnaires returned	52

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	65	35	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	75	23	0	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	67	29	2	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	56	42	2	0	0
The teaching is good.	85	15	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	62	33	6	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	81	17	2	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	77	23	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	63	33	2	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	73	27	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	71	29	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	19	44	19	4	13

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

- 49 The previous report indicated that children made satisfactory progress in Reception and achieved at least sound standards. This was due to satisfactory organisation and teaching. The school has been successful in improving provision for children in Reception and the requirements of the Foundation Stage have been introduced well. Teaching is now consistently good, and much is very good. This results in children making good progress from a broadly average base. Teaching is effective in promoting the development of skills across all areas of learning, but in particular in literacy, numeracy and personal development. Currently there are 27 full-time children in the Reception class. All children enter school part-time in the September of the school year in which they are five. They all become full-time by half-term of the autumn term.
- 50 When they enter the Reception class, children's attainment is about average for children of their age. Assessments, made shortly after starting in Reception, show that weaknesses are most common in the areas of reading and writing; personal development is a strength. The baseline for this year's intake is marginally stronger than that of last year, a group which has over a third with special educational needs. A good curriculum is in place, which covers all the areas of learning for children under six. All children have good access to the curriculum and benefit from a wide range of activities, although the school recognises that outdoor provision is not yet adequate. Particular strengths of the teaching are the very good attention given to developing children's independence and the wide range of planned activities. These experiences help children make good progress and achieve, and in some cases exceed, the Early Learning Goals in all aspects. Very few children fail to achieve these standards. Assessment arrangements are very good with extensive information gathered across all areas of learning. Baseline tests are repeated towards the end of the Reception year. This information, which demonstrates the good progress, is passed on to the teachers in Year 1. The teacher identifies children where there are concerns, but they are not formally placed on to the school's special educational needs register even though they receive individual, well targeted support. Those who are still causing concern during the summer term are formally assessed and, if necessary, placed on the register of special educational needs.
- 51 Good admission arrangements are in place. Children arrive from a number of different early years settings. Staff visit the children in their pre-school settings before they transfer to Reception. Effective links are established with parents and the children who are to start in the following year. Children and parents also visit the school. There is a well planned programme which sees all pupils transferring to junior or secondary schools able to go to their new schools on the same day. Thus, within Bowlish Infant School, all pupils also move up to visit their new class, enabling the next group of Reception children to spend time in their new environment with their teacher and other adults. Children settle easily into the class, and rapidly become confident and independent. The adults in Reception work together to establish a positive, caring ethos. All children are valued and known well to staff. The good relationships with parents and carers help children transfer confidently to Year 1. Accommodation

available is good and is used well to promote all aspects of learning within the Foundation Stage. The use of the outside space is limited, but there are plans to improve this. Resources are good.

Personal, social and emotional development

- 52 Children's personal, social and emotional development is given high priority to very good effect. They make good progress and almost all have exceeded the Early Learning Goals. The good progress, which builds very effectively on the strengths children bring to school, is due to very well organised teaching throughout the whole school day. When children first enter Reception, they are expected to take responsibility for their own possessions, and to put away their coats and lunch boxes correctly. This sometimes involves them having to stick on a label on which they write their name. They follow routines very well, sharing resources and working and playing with others. They are confident to answer questions and to sing, individually, in front of the whole class. This is because the teacher organises these activities well and uses praise to very good effect. Adults in the class encourage the children to be independent and make choices about their activities, especially in the afternoon session. Encouragement to work with others on, for instance, mathematical pattern work is very effective. Teachers also encourage children to explain to others the patterns they have created. During direct teaching activities, staff are very good at inviting children to contribute their own ideas. Children are encouraged to work independently and co-operate, such as in role play, which varies according to the planned curriculum or children's own interests. When sitting on the carpet, children are encouraged to listen carefully, to both the teacher and other children.

Communication, language and literacy

- 53 On entry to the Reception class, children's communication, language and literacy skills are a little below those of children of a similar age. Teaching is very good in this area, children are supported very well and encouraged to speak, and on occasion sing, to the whole class. The questions the teacher uses encourage children to extend their replies. Children make good progress and, by the end of the Foundation Stage, attainment is above average. This helps to ensure the school achieves one of its key aims, that children leave the school with good literacy skills. Good opportunities are taken by the teacher and other adults to increase the range and use of children's vocabulary when they are completing the wide range of tasks planned. When they start in Reception, children's knowledge and understanding of stories, and their use of print, are a little below average. Through the effective use of story time and individual sessions with books, children make good progress. They handle books carefully, know that the pages are turned from right to left, and understand the difference between words and pictures. All children know that print carries meaning. Lower attaining children 'pretend read' the story, based on the pictures, but they do recognise some individual words. Higher attaining children read simple stories well and talk about what they have read. Virtually all children write their own name. Lower attaining children over write or copy letters and words written for them. Higher attaining children write simple, understandable sentences, with spellings that are recognisable. The child for whom English is an additional language has made good progress and his English is as good as the majority of the class. Good records are kept about children's reading, knowledge of letters, words and sounds. The teacher uses this information well to organise activities. The arrangements for teaching literacy are very good. Whole-class teaching introduces children to important areas such as stories, words, letters and sounds, and these are then emphasised in some of the small group activities.

Mathematical development

- 54 When children enter Reception, their attainment is about average compared with that of children of a similar age. Provision for the development of mathematical skills, including number and associated language, is very good. Children make good progress and almost all achieve the full range of expected outcomes by the time they enter Year 1. Through very good teaching and well organised practical activities, such as pattern games, and counting during registration, children successfully extend their understanding and use of mathematical vocabulary. Mental warm-up activities promote quick, accurate recall of simple addition number facts and doubles of numbers up to five. Staff working with children use a wide range of opportunities to promote the use of numbers to ten. The highest attaining children count to at least ten and recognise their numerals. They sort and match objects, and recognise and extend repeating patterns involving numbers. Average attaining children create patterns using two different colours of unifix, and extend patterns based on different shapes. Owing to good adult support and use of questions, lower attaining children make good progress to recognise repeating patterns using two different colours. Most children recognise two-dimensional shapes such as square, rectangle and triangle. Lower attaining children have limited knowledge of numbers beyond seven, higher attainers recognise numbers to 20 and are beginning to add or subtract successfully using single digit numbers. Teachers use mathematical language associated with length and height well, and reinforce learning with good displays.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

- 55 Provision and teaching for children to develop knowledge and understanding of the world around them are good. Children enter Reception with attainment that is average compared with that of children of a similar age. They make at least satisfactory progress in many areas and, by the time they reach the end of Reception, reach the standards expected. Children observe different organisms well and produce pictures or write about how birds survive in winter. They use pictures to illustrate changes that occur in winter, and describe snails crawling over concrete. They retell the Christmas story, including the journey to Bethlehem. In geography, they know that rubbish can result in the environment being spoilt. They control the computer with improving skill, and use ICT to enter and print text, and to draw pictures. They select different icons and change programs with confidence.

Physical development

- 56 Teaching of aspects related to physical development is good and children achieve the Early Learning Goals by the time they reach the end of Reception. The lack of suitable outdoor accommodation and limited resources, however, restrict the development of the physical skills associated with the use of large apparatus and ride-on toys. The school has plans to deal with this weakness, but implementation has been delayed until the completion of the building work. In the physical education lesson, good teaching led to an improvement in skills. Children responded quickly to the teacher's instructions about behaviour during the lesson. They listened to the music and created good movements to illustrate different watery environments, such as under the sea or in a swimming pool. Dexterity is developed through handling objects, such as sand, jigsaws, puzzles and construction apparatus. Opportunities are planned carefully for children to use paint brushes, tools, pencils, crayons and felt pens for making marks, writing or drawing pictures. They handle scissors, cut and stick well.

Creative development

- 57 Good displays of art work demonstrate that children progress well in this area. Good teaching encourages children to use a variety of media, including paint, pencils, crayons, materials and recycled objects. Children's creative skills are good, they control pencils and crayons very well when colouring in shapes and pictures they have drawn. They create good pictures of owls so that texture varies. Children show a good awareness of the use of colour when completing pictures of themselves. They plan and make Christmas cards and make sensible suggestions for the pattern for a quilt for a baby. Children listen to music and enjoy singing, for instance hymns with other children, which they do well. In a dance lesson, children interpreted music about watery places well, although more progress could have been made had they had chance to listen to the music more between activities. Good opportunities are provided for role-play; these are varied regularly to link with the current topic or children's interests.

ENGLISH

- 58 In 2000, at the end of Year 2, attainment recorded in National Curriculum tests was very high in writing, and well above the average in reading. In reading, 97 per cent of pupils achieved the expected Level 2 or above, well above the national average. Almost 85 per cent achieved Level 2B or above and over 40 per cent the higher Level 3, both figures were well above the national average. In writing, all pupils achieved the expected Level 2 or above, and 88 per cent Level 2B or better. Both figures were very high, being in the top five per cent of the country. The proportion achieving Level 3 was 16 per cent, well above the average. Compared with similar schools, results in reading were well above the average, and those for writing very high. Over the past four years results have improved at a similar rate to that nationally, with the school maintaining the gap. The performance of boys is below that of girls in reading, but boys do achieve better than the overall national average. Owing to the increase in pupils with special educational needs, current Year 2 pupils are achieving slightly lower standards. This is especially the case with a group of lower attaining boys.
- 59 The previous inspection found that standards in English were about average, with some slight under achievement in reading. The school has made very good progress as pupils have consistently achieved standards that are well above average over the past four years. This improvement has been maintained in spite of a gradual increase in the number of pupils with special educational needs. Teaching was described as satisfactory or good, it is now at least good, and often very good.
- 60 When pupils start in Year 1, virtually all have reached the standards expected for Reception children, and a minority has exceeded this. Inspection findings for current pupils show attainment in English to be above average by Year 2. Pupils make good progress in reading, writing, and speaking and listening. In relation to pupils' prior attainment, achievement is good. Pupils with special educational needs also make good progress because of the effective use of support staff, and the well planned use of literacy across the curriculum, together with well focused individual support when pupils are withdrawn from class. This is shown by the fact that virtually all pupils achieve Level 2 in reading and writing by the end of Year 2. The pupil for whom English is an additional language makes good progress and achieves as well as other pupils in the class. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented but, in view of the school's high standards, it is modified on occasions, such as when more attention is given to an extended writing session.

- 61 Standards in speaking and listening are well above average. By the end of Year 2, pupils listen very well to the teacher reading, asking questions or leading discussions, and to other pupils when they share their ideas with the class. In the Year 1 classes, the teachers organised effective discussions in a science lesson about the use of different fabrics for curtains. Pupils listened well and responded appropriately to the questions posed, explaining why they had made their choices by reference to the science involved and their own preferences. During literacy sessions, pupils are attentive. Pupils speak with clarity, and use an extensive vocabulary, as when a pupil suggested that Grace Darling would have felt 'petrified' during the rescue. Teachers stimulate learning by providing good opportunities to answer questions at length.
- 62 By the end of Year 2, standards of reading are above the national average. Pupils make good progress and virtually all pupils leave the school able to read at least simple text accurately. The vast majority read much more complex books well. Reading is also coupled with good understanding, with pupils illustrating this by suitable references to the text. Reading materials are organised to ensure that pupils make good progress in developing their skills. Pupils regularly read in whole class and group sessions during the literacy hour and in other subjects, and at other times individually. As a result of this extensive and well planned programme, pupils read with accuracy, fluency and improving expression. By Year 2, pupils know about authors and illustrators. Books are taken home regularly and teachers and parents comment on the quality of reading. Pupils with special educational needs read competently, but are less sure of the meaning of what they have read compared with other children.
- 63 By the end of Year 2, attainment in writing is above average. Pupils often write interesting and imaginative stories, with higher attaining pupils writing at considerable length. Spelling is accurate or easily recognisable. Handwriting is good, almost all Year 2 pupils can write using a joined script, but only about half use this in their everyday writing. Many opportunities are provided to write within literacy and other subjects. Pupils write stories, poems, reports and instructions. This work shows a good vocabulary, with higher attaining pupils using an increasingly complex sentence structure. Punctuation is used with accuracy, virtually all pupils use capital letters and full stops correctly, with higher attaining pupils using question marks and speech marks. Pupils with special educational needs write simple, short sentences well, with recognisable spelling and correct use of basic punctuation.
- 64 The teaching of English, including in literacy lessons, is very good. Lessons always have a brisk pace and high expectations, with work well matched to the needs of different groups of pupils. Teachers have a good recognition of the need to extend able pupils, and this is done effectively, which has resulted in the increase in Level 3 performance. Pupils know what they are doing and why. A calm approach and clear explanations help to ensure pupils' learning is promoted effectively. Although there are occasions when modifications are made, staff use each part of the literacy hour effectively, with independent tasks being well organised. Pupils with special educational needs are given good support by well-briefed classroom assistants; in addition, a well-planned programme of withdrawal from the whole class for individual support is effective. Teachers regularly use good questions to help pupils extend their knowledge, for instance when looking at how adverbs are formed, the teacher made regular reference to examples of their use and asked for suitable synonyms. Pupils behave very well because they are interested in their work and fully involved in whole-class activities.
- 65 The co-ordinator provides very good leadership. The results in English demonstrate

the success of the school's aim to ensure that children leave the school with high quality literacy skills. The headteacher regularly conducts reading assessments and analyses data closely. The information gained is used well to target support and set clear, individual targets. The curriculum for English is good, and a great strength, and a major contributor to the school's success, is the well-planned and effective use of literacy across the whole curriculum. Poetry is used well to promote reflection.

MATHEMATICS

- 66 In National Curriculum tests in 2000, mathematics results were above the national average, but average when compared to schools in a similar context. All pupils attained the expected Level 2 in the 2000 National Curriculum tests and this figure was very high in comparison with the national average. The 84 per cent gaining the Level 2B and above was above the national average. The 22 per cent gaining the higher Level 3 was close to the national average. These figures matched closely the teacher assessments. Results have been consistently above national averages since 1997. No difference was found in the inspection in the attainment of girls and boys. When averaged over the past five years both groups have performed equally well in mathematics tests, and above national statistics based on gender. Overall progress made by pupils whilst in the school is good. Those pupils who enter school with reasonable mathematical ability progress well and attain the expected Level 2 or higher Level 3 by the end of Year 2.
- 67 The previous inspection reported standards in mathematics close to national expectations. Deficiencies were noted in the provision for more able pupils and in the teaching of place value in particular. Standards are currently above national expectations in Key Stage 1. Resource purchases and the adoption of the National Numeracy Strategy have addressed earlier deficiencies and uniformity is evident throughout the school in planning and the structure of lessons. The local authority numeracy adviser has taken demonstration lessons in the school. National Numeracy Strategy implementation and in-service training have had positive effects. Primarily, this is reflected in improved teachers' subject knowledge and consistency in planning, teaching in lessons and assessment structures. The headteacher has monitored planning and teaching and this has provided the school with an overview of standards. These factors contribute to the very good improvement that the school has made in the subject since the last inspection. The percentage of pupils gaining Level 2 in the current Year 2 will be below that of last year, reflecting the standards of a minority of pupils with special educational needs. However, the percentage of pupils achieving Level 3 is likely to be higher.
- 68 Standards in the current Year 2 are good with the majority of pupils secure at Level 2 and working at an appropriate level for their age and ability. The development of basic number skills is good. The majority add and subtract numbers to twenty accurately. They have a good understanding of place value up to 100 and show proficiency in counting in tens, fives and twos. The majority tackle and discuss number pattern work and can, for example, identify odd and even numbers, and identify and apply knowledge of near doubles. Most pupils have a good understanding of simple fractions, including a half and a quarter, and have developed an understanding of time by sequencing activities. They read clocks using half and quarter hours correctly. The higher attaining pupils generalise, predict and explain what happens when combinations are made of pairs of odd or even numbers and are secure working with the four times table. This group understands inverse operations, add and subtract mentally up to twenty accurately and use a variety of mental strategies to solve problems correctly. Aspects of shape and space are not always developed in

sufficient depth. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, know the names for common two- and three-dimensional shapes, but are less secure in their properties and in aspects of symmetry and tessellation. Some of the best work in measurement is linked to first-hand experience, for example, estimating the length of body parts and then measuring accurately. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, have a good understanding of simple block graphs. Throughout the key stage, presentation and accuracy in the formation of numerals and use of vocabulary are given a high priority. There is little evidence of number reversals even in Year 1. The development of appropriate mathematical language is well planned so that pupils use terminology such as counting on and back, multiples and total with accuracy. In Year 1, pupils benefit from the two small class sizes and the majority are secure at Level 1 and confidently completing work at Level 2. In both year groups, good use is made of ICT to consolidate work on mathematical ideas such as basic number skills, place value and graphs. However, not all teachers are following the school's assessment policy with pupils rubbing out errors before correction.

- 69 Overall, teaching and learning are good. The teaching in all lessons observed was never less than good. Both lessons in Year 1 were of this quality and the one in Year 2 was excellent. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject are good, and appropriate emphasis is given to discussion, mental and practical work. Questioning and explanation by the teacher to the whole class and individuals are particular strengths. They are adapting this approach to suit the needs of pupils and matching work to the ability of children well. The use of resources, including other adults, is good. Educational support assistants are trained well and have a clear understanding of the outcomes of the lesson and activities. An emphasis on practical work and structural apparatus keeps pupils motivated and able to learn in small, identifiable steps. The management of pupils in all classes is very good. The good teaching results in pupils making good progress. Their attitudes to the subject are very good, as are behaviour, personal development and relationships. Transitions are smooth and pupils settle to tasks quickly. They show interest and generally work hard, sharing equipment well and discussing work in progress. They have very good levels of concentration and work at a very good pace. In the excellent Year 2 lesson, pupils explained mental strategies employed with confidence, worked hard within time targets set by the teacher and used mathematical vocabulary, such as multiple and factor, with precision. The lesson concluded with enthusiastic oral practice consolidating multiplication facts. The use of homework is good with an emphasis placed on oral skills and consolidation through the use of games. Pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language make good progress.
- 70 Numeracy is supported satisfactorily in other areas of the curriculum. Effective links are made with ICT and good use is made of computers to enhance pupils' understanding. Work on angles and directions is consolidated through the use of a programmable robot, and a good introduction to Key Stage 2 topics of data handling in science is provided when pupils produce bar charts and pictograms. Very good use is made of numeracy displays throughout the school. In Year 1, work on measurement is effectively consolidated with pupils' work illustrating sequencing of heights and the vocabulary of time. In the main hall a colourful, interactive display by Year 2 children makes good use of computer generated art and poses appropriate questions related to shape, measurement and number.
- 71 The subject has been a school development plan focus during the current year and the co-ordinator is highly competent and hard working. Her management of the

subject is good, as is monitoring in mathematics. Teaching, planning and pupils' work are monitored and analysed well, and the school sets itself realistic targets. Analysis of baseline and National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 1 is used effectively to monitor individual progress. Assessment of National Numeracy Strategy key objectives is uniform across the school and additional assessments are used from a commercial scheme. Staff work well as a team and there is a shared commitment to improvement. Staffing and learning resources for numeracy are good and accommodation satisfactory.

SCIENCE

- 72 In 2000, at the end of Key Stage 1, attainment recorded in teacher assessments was well above the national average. The results indicated that 97 per cent of pupils achieved the expected Level 2, and 25 per cent the higher Level 3. Both figures were above the national average. Inspection evidence suggests that attainment is similar this year.
- 73 The previous inspection found that most pupils attained the expected level, but there was some under achievement as few pupils achieved Level 3. Teaching and learning were satisfactory, however there was not enough challenge for more able pupils. Inspection evidence shows that teaching is better; this has led to improved learning and a notable rise in the number of pupils achieving Level 3. The issue of under achievement has been dealt with successfully.
- 74 During Key Stage 1, pupils acquire both knowledge and skills well. This is because of teaching that is never less than good, and sometimes very good. Pupils have a good knowledge across all areas of science. They know the five senses and correctly associate particular parts of the body with each sense. Effective teaching links this work to other aspects of science very well. This was evident in Year 2 where pupils considered how different musical instruments made their sounds. They describe the properties of different materials, and group them according to pairs of criteria, such as soft or hard. Pupils do not yet group materials according to combinations of characteristics. Good attention is given to developing pupils' scientific skills. Pupils in Year 2 predicted what would happen when certain fluids, such as water, tomato soup and tomato sauce, were placed into a freezer. They recorded their observations clearly. Higher attaining pupils are beginning to attempt to explain why some of their observations have happened. Year 1 pupils know the parts of a plant and label them correctly, they also know the external features of mammals. All pupils of differing abilities achieve at appropriate levels. Pupils with special educational needs are given good support which helps to ensure that they extend their knowledge. The use of drawings, or modified tasks, helps them to record their work well. The pupil for whom English is an additional language achieves as well as others in the class.
- 75 Pupils enjoy their science, especially discussion, practical activities and using a CD-ROM to explore information about the habitats and lives of different creatures. Their concentration and their attitudes to science are very good; illustrated by pupils in Year 1 who concentrated very well to select materials to illustrate the terms transparent, translucent and opaque. Similarly, those in Year 2 looked closely at pictures in books and spent time over their observational drawings for a display. Behaviour is very good in both whole class and group activities. These features are because teachers organise their activities well to interest pupils, explanations are clear and this aids learning.
- 76 Good teaching helps to promote good learning by pupils, because of the interest

generated and the effective use of questions. Good use of resources and subject knowledge helped pupils examine materials closely and to increase their knowledge. Pupils with special educational needs are given effective support and tasks modified to match their standards of literacy. This helps to ensure their scientific knowledge and skills are extended appropriately. Literacy is used very effectively to promote learning in science, there is little use of numeracy. Marking is satisfactory, but does not always help pupils to understand how they can improve.

- 77 The pupils follow a broad curriculum, which helps to ensure all areas of scientific knowledge are developed. Good attention is given to developing pupils' skills and to extending opportunities for higher attaining pupils. Assessment of pupils' knowledge is satisfactory, but skills are not yet assessed systematically. Science makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development. In particular, pupils are encouraged to look closely at living things, to enjoy finding out for themselves. Through literacy, they are introduced to modern day people, such as the astronaut Helen Sharman, who are making a contribution to science. Leadership is good, and this has helped to bring about recent improvements in the subject. There are not yet enough opportunities for the observation of teaching or to monitor the quality of pupils' work.

ART AND DESIGN

- 78 The majority of pupils reach standards in art and design that are in line with national expectations and they achieve well for their abilities by the time they leave the school. Standards are similar to those recorded at the last inspection and this marks satisfactory progress during a period of considerable curricular change.
- 79 The quality of teaching in art and design is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and children are given a wide range of experience with different media. In Year 1, pupils have been taught a variety of basic skills including shading and line drawing with pencil, pastel work including rubbings, collages, batik work and using black silhouettes on water paint colour wash backgrounds. Stimulated by one of Mondrian's paintings, pupils drew minibeasts, such as a snail, in pencil and ink and then used a variety of techniques to produce effective mosaics in the style of Mondrian. In Year 2, pupils work with these materials and extend their skills, for example using wax resist pastels and learning techniques such as marbling. In the Year 2 lesson observed, good teaching stimulated pupils to experiment with water paints to produce good quality landscapes in the style of the impressionist Monet. The lesson built on previous successful sessions on the artist where pupils had been taught how to use pastels in an impressionist style. The teacher demonstrated good subject knowledge, concentrated on developing skills and techniques and demonstrated effectively using pupils' work to explain how they varied brush strokes and colour shades. Throughout the lesson, she managed pupils well, scanning the classroom, encouraging pupils to look closely at pictures from which they worked and to refine efforts to improve the final piece.
- 80 As a result of the good teaching, all pupils including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make good progress in art and design. In the Year 2 lesson observed, pupils worked with interest and perseverance. They were well used to working independently and at a good pace. The level of skill and knowledge demonstrated by pupils was good. During the lesson, pupils showed consideration towards others and shared materials well. The contribution that the lesson made to the pupils' personal and social development was very good.
- 81 As a result of the range of children's displayed work, the school is a lively, bright and

stimulating environment. Art and design makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development as they study the work of famous painters and the artwork associated with different countries and faiths. In Year 2, work is planned carefully to link with religious education, enabling pupils to design and make cards for the goddess Lakshmi with detailed coloured pencil drawings, Islamic designs with repeating patterns and, for Divali, decorated clay divas. Good links are made to ICT and good computer generated art is displayed throughout the school. There are plans to extend this work with the purchase of a digital camera.

- 82 Resources in art and design are good and there is a good range of painting equipment and materials. Educational support assistants are briefed well and make a good contribution to pupils' progress in lessons. Co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory. The current programme is based upon national guidelines although there is less evidence of sculpture. The assessment of pupils' work and monitoring of their progress are satisfactory. Throughout lessons, teachers help pupils to evaluate their work and suggest improvements. However, the records of the development of skills are not uniform throughout the school and the assessment process is not used sufficiently to raise pupils' awareness of their progress. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic but requires time to monitor the teaching of the subject in all classes to gain a clear view of standards.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 83 It was not possible to see any lessons during the week, so evidence is taken from scrutiny of displays of work around the school and photographic evidence of pupils' work. In those aspects seen, the majority of pupils reach standards that are in line with national expectations and achieve appropriately for their abilities at the end of Year 2. This marks a good improvement since the last inspection when standards were similar to, or below, national expectations. There is now an appropriate emphasis given to evaluating and improving designs in which the last inspection report identified significant under-achievement. Since the last inspection the school has developed a suitable policy and scheme of work.
- 84 Pupils in Year 1 design and make hand puppets from felt and other materials. Good teaching helped pupils practise sewing skills in advance, which led to an improvement in the quality of the final piece. Children plan the list of materials required, stitch these together well and decorate accurately and effectively using a variety of techniques including gluing and sewing. Experience with a range of construction kits is provided during the year, which enables pupils to explore mechanisms, consider strong and stable structures and model ideas. Other experiences have included using card to design and make clock representations with moving hands, reindeer Christmas cards and jointed card skeleton outlines with paper fasteners. Felt was used as the basis for designing and making a Father Christmas serviette holder. Year 2 pupils have experience of working with food, such as designing, making and evaluating healthy sandwiches. The use of ICT is planned as part of the design process, for example by displaying survey results to support decision making and word processing sandwich ingredients. Pupils in Year 2 also work with card, and have designed and made pop-up cards, to a suitable standard, for Christmas and Easter. Experiences planned for later in the summer term include the design, construction and evaluation of a wheeled vehicle linked to the Quentin Blake story of Mrs Armitage. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate their finished products both in written form and orally.
- 85 Although no lessons were observed, overall judgements about teaching and learning were made on the basis of teachers' planning, scrutiny of pupils' work and discussion

with teachers. From the schemes of work, teachers' plans and the outcome of pupils' work, it is evident that, as a result of in-service training, teaching is satisfactory. Teachers have sound subject expertise, plan effectively to build on and extend pupils' skills and have appropriate expectations of what pupils can achieve. All pupils make satisfactory progress in the subject, including those with special educational needs. As a result, all achieve at suitable levels according to their ability.

- 86 Curricular provision is satisfactory with continuity provided by termly units of work. Currently the school is adapting its scheme of work to meet national guidelines. Assessment practice in the subject is currently satisfactory. Assessment of pupils' skill and experiences with a range of tools is not used sufficiently to inform planning. Manageable, uniform systems of assessment and record keeping, which contribute to pupils' self-knowledge of their learning, are not developed extensively. The accommodation supports learning in the subject well, with sufficient space for pupils to work. The school has suitable resources and tools to support learning. The management of the subject by the headteacher is good and has resulted in the good improvement since the previous inspection. However, greater use could be made of classroom observation for monitoring teaching and pupils' work to help raise standards further.

GEOGRAPHY

- 87 The previous inspection report indicated that attainment at the end of Year 2 was similar to expectations. In particular, pupils had a good knowledge of life in Fiji. Teaching and learning were sound. The school has made satisfactory progress and maintained the position of geography in the curriculum. However, although early map work skills are introduced, they are not extended sufficiently. It was not possible to observe geography being taught during the inspection.
- 88 At the end of Year 2, attainment is about average. Pupils have a good awareness of place because of good teaching about Fiji and how life in a Fijian village differs from their own. This work is enhanced by the teacher's personal knowledge of Fiji. Pupils map skills are developed satisfactorily early in the school, with fictional stories and fairy tales being used effectively to encourage pupils to produce their own maps of, for instance, 'Cinderella' or 'The Gingerbread Man.' These are satisfactorily produced, but pupils are not introduced to using simple symbols on these maps. There is no evidence of pupils beginning to use simple letter and number co-ordinates in their map work.
- 89 Pupils are interested in geography, especially when comparing localities with their own. Teaching is satisfactory overall, with good features related to the teaching of different localities. All pupils' learning and achievement, including those with special educational needs, are satisfactory, but more limited in relation to map skills. Literacy skills are used well in geography.
- 90 The geography curriculum is satisfactory. It is stronger for knowledge about, and comparisons with, other locations, it is weaker in the development of skills. Geography makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development. In particular, the study of Fiji enhances pupils' cultural knowledge and moral and social issues, such as pollution and care for the environment, are explored. Assessment of pupils' knowledge takes place during lessons, but the development of their skills is not assessed consistently. Leadership is satisfactory, but there are limited opportunities for monitoring the quality of lessons or pupils' work across the school.

HISTORY

- 91 One history lesson was seen during the inspection, but a sample of pupils' work was scrutinised and discussion with teachers and pupils took place. Policy documents, teachers' planning, portfolios of work and display materials were also seen. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards in history are above national expectations. This represents good progress since the last inspection when standards were similar to those expected nationally.
- 92 Pupils make good progress in history and have very good attitudes towards the subject. In Year 1 pupils gain a good sense of time and develop associated vocabulary by sequencing simple events and developing timelines, initially related to themselves and their lives. They discuss, compare and sequence both photographs and artefacts with good precision. The very good literacy skills developed in English lessons enable them to discuss and interpret evidence, and show insights into cause and effect. Year 2 pupils were able to recount key facts about the life of Samuel Pepys and the Fire of London, and to demonstrate a good understanding about the period, including the plague and how life was different to life today. In the lesson observed with this year group, pupils were studying Grace Darling and made very good progress. They listened very well as the teacher read an account of life on the lighthouse, and settled quickly to an associated writing task that was completed very well by all pupils. Pupils work well in lessons and sustain interest. By the end of the key stage, most pupils are beginning to give reasons for, and the main results of, the events and changes studied. Pupils listen attentively, ask good questions and are stimulated to research independently. This helps them to make good progress in lessons and in their knowledge and understanding.
- 93 The good progress pupils make is a result of good teaching. Teachers plan work carefully, have high expectations of pupils, good subject knowledge and an ability to teach basic historical skills well. The Year 2 lesson on Grace Darling exemplified very good teaching. The teacher had selected materials carefully from a number of sources, including video-tape, and used these very skilfully at various points in the lesson to ensure key facts were reinforced and pupils appreciated differences in life at that time. Tasks were very carefully matched to pupils of different abilities and the teacher demonstrated very good skills of class management. As a result, pupils of different abilities show good learning and achieve well.
- 94 The school has planned the history curriculum carefully and account is taken of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's guidance. The scheme of work is due for review in the next year. The co-ordination of history is satisfactory and appropriate emphasis is given to both the acquisition of historical enquiry skills and knowledge of the past. However, although planning is monitored, the co-ordinator is not given time to monitor the teaching of the subject in all classes to gain a clear view of standards. This is a weakness recognised by the school. Good links are made to other subjects, particularly English and ICT. Assessment practice is not uniform across classes and is rightly recognised by the school as an area for development. History makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development, particularly in relation to social and cultural differences in the past. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language make good progress.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

- 95 No direct teaching of ICT was observed during the inspection although informal observations were made as individuals worked on computers in other lessons.

Primarily judgements are based on the scrutiny of documentation, samples of pupils' work and discussions with teachers and pupils. Standards in the subject by the end of Year 2 are in line with national expectations. Pupils know the different parts of the computer and what they do, and almost all know the functions of special keys, such as 'shift' and 'delete'. Pupils are familiar with painting programs, and confidently change colour and tool. They use databases to produce bar charts and pictograms, and are developing satisfactory word processing skills. Pupils write sentences, and then save, edit, load and print. Pupils program a robot to follow a simple route and standards in computer control are in line with those found in most schools by the end of Year 2. They use CD-ROMs and the worldwide web to retrieve information. Although the school has plans for pupils to send and receive e-mails, work on e-mail has not yet commenced. All pupils show at least satisfactory achievement, with some lower attaining pupils achieving well.

- 96 Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers have worked hard and undertaken training to ensure that they have basic knowledge and skills in this rapidly changing subject. The school has used money from the 'New Opportunities Fund' to train teaching and support staff. New computers have been purchased and there is at least one personal computer in each classroom. Primarily the teaching and learning takes place individually, in pairs or in small groups. Teaching styles used are limited and little whole-class demonstration is possible because of the lack of computer suite facilities and the limited number of classroom computers and associated equipment. However, teachers plan extremely well to maximise the opportunities for computer use across the curriculum. ICT supports learning in literacy with pupils word processing work, in mathematics for reinforcing place value and in science and geography by using CD-ROMs to find information on animals and Fiji. Pupils work very well independently and, when working at the computer, behaviour is very good. The independence of pairs of Year 1 pupils was promoted as they completed the spelling of simple words during a literacy lesson. A number of pupils in Year 2 were keen to extend their learning on the computer during break times, at lunch times and even after school.
- 97 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in their learning. This is the result of good support received from educational support assistants in the classroom who have received appropriate training. In addition, they benefit from the facilities available in the special educational needs resource room where three Archimedes computers are equipped with a good range of software well suited to their needs. In one session in this room, a Year 1 pupil confidently typed his spellings on the computer using upper and lower case letters, deleting and correcting his errors, before using the speech facility to check his words.
- 98 The last inspection reported standards in line with the national average. This is still the case, but national expectations for ICT have risen considerably since the last inspection. The school has done well in keeping up with the national trend. The subject has been a major focus for school development over the current year. Resource provision in the subject is only satisfactory with a minimal number of computers and printers that are networked. Progress since the last inspection has therefore been satisfactory. The school has plans to purchase a digital camera. The co-ordinator is very competent and leads the subject well. The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's guidelines for the subject have been implemented alongside the new Curriculum 2000 expectations. A new ICT assessment record-keeping log has been devised and this is the basis for a uniform assessment system of good quality, with potential for target setting. When fully implemented, the log will enable pupils to develop greater self-knowledge of their learning and progress. Insufficient time has been provided for the co-ordinator to monitor teaching and learning in

classes, but she is monitoring teachers' plans and pupils' work well. The school knows what needs to be done and has plans for improvement.

MUSIC

- 99 At the end of Key Stage 1, standards in music are well above the national expectation and pupils reach very high standards for their ability. This confirms the findings at the last inspection and the maintenance of these very good standards in the subject represents good progress. The school provides a wide range of good quality learning opportunities.
- 100 Pupils have learnt a repertoire of songs from a commercial scheme well. During whole-school hymn practice they listen very carefully and use their voices expressively, singing tunefully without accompaniment. They clap the pulse and rhythm of music confidently and competently. In assemblies, pupils listen to the work of the great composers and learn to identify instruments played and appreciate the mood and emotion conveyed.
- 101 Teaching and learning are very good. Teachers possess very good subject knowledge and are very experienced and confident in teaching the subject and age group. In the very good Year 1 lesson observed, pupils behaved very sensibly, responding quickly to the teacher's instructions. The start of the lesson set a good tone with pupils taking turns and individually singing their names to a chorus line with emphasis placed on tone and tempo. The teacher questioned pupils very skilfully, as they correctly selected specified instruments from the range provided. Within the main activity, all pupils were involved fully in singing a well-known song unaccompanied, with individuals confidently adding a variety of musical sounds for each verse. The pupils made very good progress, demonstrating good listening skills, learning the characteristics of the different instruments, improving the quality of performance and taking turns. Year 2 pupils in recorder club are introduced to musical notation and read music well to play simple tunes. They have a good musical vocabulary and knowledge, for example recognising simple and compound time, and work with enthusiasm and concentration to refine pieces in sessions. Satisfactory use is made of ICT, with Year 2 pupils devising melodies and experimenting with different styles. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language are involved fully and make good progress.
- 102 Music throughout the school is planned well to develop pupils' knowledge and skills. A commercially produced scheme is used to ensure that all requirements of the National Curriculum are met. The school has a good range of resources, which includes percussion instruments and recorders. Subject co-ordination is good, as is the informal monitoring of pupils' performance. The quality of assessment, which is completed each half term, is good. Uniformity of planning, assessment and teaching is provided because all teaching is undertaken by the headteacher. Pupils are encouraged to consider what they have done and this raises their awareness of what they have learnt. Music makes a significant contribution to pupils' personal and cultural development. All pupils have opportunity to perform for a wider audience at Harvest and Christmas and in the wider community, for example, to the elderly.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 103 The previous inspection indicated that pupils' attainment was about average and that pupils made satisfactory progress. Teaching was sound. The school provided a broad curriculum, which included swimming. The quality of teaching and learning are

similar. The school continues to provide a broad and varied curriculum, including swimming. Owing to the organisation of the timetable, no physical education lessons were observed in Year 2, but two Year 1 gymnastics lessons were seen.

- 104 All pupils in Year 1, including those with special educational needs, made satisfactory progress when developing a range of tucked, stretched, high and low movements. Initially these were exercises while moving around the hall and at floor level, and were then extended to the use of low apparatus. The teachers organised the lessons well so that there was progression in the tasks. The warm-up session led carefully into the development of the floor exercises. Pupils showed appropriate gymnastic skills, and the higher attaining pupils transferred their floor skills into sequences on the apparatus well. During the sessions, there was a least satisfactory improvement in pupils' work. Teaching was satisfactory, with good elements. There was a good explanation of the range of movements to be explored, and appropriate intervention to help some pupils improve their skills. The teachers assessed pupils' skills satisfactorily during the sessions and used pupils to demonstrate their work. The opportunity was not taken to introduce pupils to the skills of commenting upon the performance of others.
- 105 Most pupils enjoy physical education and exhibit good attitudes and behaviour during lessons. However, the teachers had to work hard to maintain the attention and concentration of some pupils, especially a few boys. This limited the learning of the whole class because time was wasted. This was especially evident in one of the Year 1 classes where one pupil in particular was uncooperative and this had a negative effect on other pupils.
- 106 All areas of the National Curriculum are taught, thus ensuring pupils develop skills across all relevant areas of physical education. Swimming is taught to Year 2. The extra-curricular gym club had to be suspended this year owing to the school's building work; it is planned to start this again in September. Systematic assessment of pupils' physical education skills is not well developed, although teachers assess satisfactorily during lessons. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development, such as working with a partner or in small groups, and learning about aspects of dance. Leadership is satisfactory, but there are no opportunities for the observation of teaching.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 107 The previous inspection indicated that pupils' work was appropriate for their age and that learning had many good features. Teaching was good. Teaching and learning remain good and, as a result, attainment is above what might be expected. This is because pupils have a broad knowledge of Christianity, an awareness of other faiths and a good understanding of how religious values affect all our lives.
- 108 By the end of Year 2, pupils' knowledge and understanding are good and reflect the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus well. They know that different religions, such as Christianity, Islam and Hinduism, have their own 'special books' and different places of worship. They know some of the stories told by Jesus, such as 'The Good Samaritan' and appreciate its meaning. They write their own prayers and record 'What would Jesus ask you to change?' All pupils' work, including those with special educational needs, displays a good understanding of the areas covered, although the detail in the work of some lower attaining pupils is limited by their more restricted vocabulary. In Year 1, pupils know some detail about the Christmas story and about the importance of festivals, such as Hanukkah and Shabbat, in Judaism. They also

know that Shabbat was special to Jesus. Lower attaining pupils demonstrate their understanding well when support staff record their thoughts for them.

- 109 Pupils are interested in discussions and enjoy making contributions. They listen carefully and mostly behave well. A few occasions of inattention occur and, in one Year 1 class, one boy in particular disrupted the learning of other pupils. In the lessons observed, pupils generally listened to each other well, because teachers emphasised the importance of this. Teaching is good, and this is reflected in the detail recorded by pupils in their work. Teachers' good subject knowledge helps pupils' learning by ensuring the correct vocabulary is used. Teachers also make learning relevant to children's lives. Management of pupils is mostly good, and the majority of pupils respond well to this. Planning is mostly good, but occasionally lacks detail and relevant links are not always made.
- 110 The contribution of religious education to pupils' personal development is very good. Pupils reflect on why we should thank God for the sun, rain and food we eat. They consider that they, and other people, are special. Teachers encourage pupils to think about why families are special, who is special to them and how they can help others, and consider what it is like to feel sorry. The introduction of the faiths of Hinduism, Islam and Judaism raises pupils' awareness of a range of cultures. Religious education makes a very positive contribution to the development of pupils' literacy skills. The school has a good range of relevant artefacts, and has plans to extend these to support the teaching of Judaism. Assessment of what pupils' have learnt in religious education has begun, but not yet in relation to clear criteria related to the syllabus.