

INSPECTION REPORT

ST. MARY'S C.E. INFANT SCHOOL

George Lane. Marlborough, Wiltshire, SN8 4BX.

LEA area: Wiltshire

Unique reference number: 126339

Headteacher: Mrs Sandra Jones

Reporting inspector: Mrs Joan Walker
25461

Dates of inspection: 3rd – 6th December 2001

Inspection number: 230364

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:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	3 to 8
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	George Lane Marlborough Wiltshire
Postcode:	SN8 4BX
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs C Kitcher
Date of previous inspection:	6 th July 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
25461	Joan Walker	Registered inspector	Mathematics, Art and Design, Geography, History, Equal Opportunities, English as an Additional Language	How well are pupils taught? How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? How well is the school led and managed?
11575	Catherine Fish	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development; How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
11227	John Moles	Team inspector	Science, Information and Communication Technology, Music, Physical Education, Religious Education	The school's results and achievements
25074	Joyce Cox	Team inspector	English, Design and Technology, Foundation Stage, Special Educational Needs	
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Mary's C of E Infant School is situated near to the centre of the historic town of Marlborough. It is the only infant school in the area and takes children from the town and from the nearby village of Mildenhall. There are 142 pupils on roll, which is smaller than the average primary school. The current circumstances of most families are just above those found nationally but there is a significant minority of families who are below.

The number of pupils on the special educational needs register is 46, and is above the national average. The number of pupils with statements of special educational needs is 11, and is well above the national average. The school has two units for special educational needs which the local education authority (LEA) funds. One unit is a special educational needs unit (Nursery) for ten children aged from three – five years who have complex difficulties. The second is a special educational needs unit (Infant) with 12 places for children with moderate learning difficulties. Currently, the LEA is using eight of these places. A few mainstream pupils experiencing extreme problems join this unit for a specific programme of work. The pupils from the units join the mainstream as appropriate for their well-being and development. There are a few pupils known to be eligible for free school meals. The percentage of pupils coming from homes where English is an additional language, 0.8 per cent, is a little higher than in most schools.

At the time of the inspection, there were 43 children in the reception classes. Four-year-olds enter school in September and January, nearly all having attended pre-school education in a playgroup or nursery. Although over the past three years children's attainment on entry has been below average, attainment this year is average according to the county's baseline assessment scheme.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a happy school, which pupils attend readily. It gives a sound education to its pupils. Currently, pupils achieve standards in line with the national average in mathematics, science, speaking and listening and reading and below in writing. In all other subjects, standards are in line with expectations for pupils of a similar age. The quality of teaching ranges from very good to satisfactory and is satisfactory overall. In the two reception classes teaching is always good or better. The national test results for seven-year-olds in 2001 were well below average in English, mathematics, as were the teacher assessments in science and very low in comparison with similar schools. The pupils who took the 2001 national tests entered the school with standards that were significantly below the expected levels. Therefore these results, while low do demonstrate a satisfactory level of progress. In addition, pupils with special educational needs and those from the special educational unit (Infant) are included in these test results. The leadership and management of the school are sound. Taking into account the quality of teaching, leadership and management, the results in national tests and the high cost per pupil, the school provides satisfactory value for money. Currently, the school is on course to improve standards in mathematics, science, speaking and listening and reading.

What the school does well

- Provision for the children in the reception classes is very good and the teaching is good or very good in all lessons.
- Pupils' behaviour, relationships and attitudes to learning are good.
- Provision for pupils' moral and social development is good.
- The school takes good care of its pupils.
- Parents' view of the school and the partnership made with them to support the pupils' learning are good.

What could be improved

- Standards in writing in Years 1 and 2.
- Use of assessment in English, mathematics and science in Year 1 and 2 to accurately match the learning needs of different groups of pupils.

- Monitoring the actions taken to raise standards.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in July 1998. Since then it has made satisfactory improvement. All the key issues from the previous inspection have been addressed, but with varying degrees of success. The school development plan is now good but it is still only for one year and it should be for at least two years. Leadership and management have improved particularly that of the headteacher who manages the school well. The governors are more involved with the strategic management of the school. However, there is not a strategic long-term plan for the school. Aims of the school have been agreed and shared with the parents. Staffing levels have been increased in the special educational needs unit (Infant) in the afternoons. Resources in this unit have been improved but further resources are needed to improve provision. Schemes of work for all subjects are now in place. Progression of the curriculum from Key Stage 1 through to Key Stage 2 has improved. There is now good liaison between the school and the junior school and regular meetings are held between the two schools. Provision for information and communication technology has improved. A new computer suite has been installed. Although the overall quality of teaching remains sound, there was no unsatisfactory teaching during this inspection as there was previously. Standards in English, mathematics and science have declined since the last inspection when they were judged to be above the national average and are now average except in writing where it is below. National test results remain well below the national average in all three subjects.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
reading	E	E	E	E*	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E very low E*
writing	E	E*	E	E*	
mathematics	E	E	E	E*	

Results for seven-year-olds are well below the national average in English, mathematics and teachers' assessments for science and are in the bottom five per cent of all schools. When compared with similar schools, based on the take up free school meals, results are very low. The trend between 1997 and 2001 was below the national average in all years and subjects except in 1998 when all results were better but still below average except in reading when it was above. During these years there was a high proportion of pupils on the register of special educational needs and this adversely affected standards of attainment. Over the past three years in national tests boys do not achieve as well as girls and more so than is found nationally. Currently, pupils attain standards in line with the national average in mathematics, science, speaking and listening and reading however, in writing they are below the national average. Standards in all other subjects are in line with expectations. By the age of five, children make good progress and attain nationally expected standards. By the age of seven, pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their first language make similar progress as their peers.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils like school and they have good attitudes to their work.

Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour in and around the school is good.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils have good relationships with one another and with adults in the school. Their personal development is good.
Attendance	Attendance is satisfactory. There are very few unauthorised absences.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2
Quality of teaching	Good	Satisfactory

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

Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teaching is satisfactory or better in all lessons. In almost one in three lessons it was good or better. In the special educational needs units (Nursery and Infant), teaching was satisfactory overall with three out of eight lessons being good. A good proportion of high teaching was observed in the reception classes with one hundred per cent being good or better and one third of lessons being very good. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory overall with one in three lessons being good or better. The teaching of literacy and numeracy in the reception classes is good and is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. Particular strengths of the teaching in the reception classes are the teaching of basic skills, the effectiveness of the planning to meet the needs of all children and the stimulating and interesting activities presented to the children on a daily basis. Although there is a significant amount of good teaching of pupils aged five to seven, there are some weaknesses. These are in the teachers' planning that does not always address the needs of all pupils with different capabilities, expectations are not always high enough and the marking of pupils' work rarely gives comments to tell the pupils how to improve their work. Support staff make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning although on occasions better use could be made of their time.

The quality of learning ranges from satisfactory to good and is satisfactory overall. The quality of learning for children in the two reception classes is good. Strengths of the learning of pupils under-five are the acquisition of basic skills, their hard work, interest and concentration. A small number of pupils in Years 1 and 2 do not work hard or fast enough and do not sustain concentration to the end of the lessons.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The well-planned curriculum for the under-fives covers the national Early Learning Goals. The school provides a broad range of work for pupils from five to seven years. However, the use of time within the school day needs to be monitored to ensure all subjects are taught in sufficient depth.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Pupils are identified at an early stage and make satisfactory progress. Work is not always planned to meet their specific learning needs. Support provided by the learning support assistants varies between classes.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Provision for pupils with English as an additional language is satisfactory. A specialist teacher who visits the school on a weekly basis gives extra sessions for these pupils.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural	The school makes some good provision for this aspect. It is good in pupils' development for their moral and social development and satisfactory in spiritual and cultural.

development	
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares well for its pupils. Members of staff treat the pupils with understanding and respect. Procedures for child protection are in place. Teachers and support staff know the pupils well.

Parents have a high regard for the school. There are good links between the school and parents. Parents support the school well by attending assemblies, meetings and through the 'Friends of St. Mary's'.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory overall. The headteacher provides good leadership. Some subject co-ordinators are not fully aware of the standards achieved by the pupils in their subject.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. The governors are very supportive of the headteacher. All statutory requirements are met. They have a good understanding of the strengths of the school, but less sure about where the school needs to focus next to become more effective.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance are sound. However, there is a lack of rigour in taking effective action to secure improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Resources are managed satisfactorily and the principles of best value applied effectively. The school is well staffed and the quality of accommodation is satisfactory. There are sufficient learning resources in all subjects.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • The teaching is good. • Their children behave well in school • The school enables their children to make good progress. • The school helps their children to become mature and responsible. • Their children get the right amount of homework. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information about their child's progress. • The provision of a more interesting range of activities outside lessons.

The inspection team supports the positive views that the parents have of the school. The overall quality of the teaching is satisfactory and is always good or better in the reception classes. Pupils' annual reports to parents do not give sufficient information on pupils' progress and are barely satisfactory. Comments made are generally about what the pupils have covered in each subject and not what they know and understand. The school does provide some activities outside lessons such as recorders but they are limited and parents have to pay for French and ballet lessons. However, it is not unusual for there to be few activities outside lessons for pupils of this age. At the Parents' Meeting, parents were concerned about the induction process for the reception children. There was general agreement that it could be better and more visits to school prior to children attending the school would be helpful.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The results of the 2001 national tests for seven-year-olds in reading, writing and mathematics show that the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level was well below the national average and poor in comparison with similar schools. The proportion of pupils reaching higher than expected levels was below average in writing, well below average in mathematics and average in reading. Results in writing improved from being very low in 2000 to well below in 2001. In teacher assessments in science, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level was well below the national average and below the national average at the higher levels. The pupils who took the 2001 national tests entered the school with standards that were significantly below the national average, therefore these results, while low, do demonstrate a satisfactory level of progress. In addition, pupils from the special educational needs unit (Infant) are included in these results.

2. Results in the national tests over the last three years, based upon analysis of the average levels reached by pupils, show that attainment in reading, writing and mathematics was well below the national average. Girls outperform boys in all three subjects to a greater degree than found nationally. Inspection evidence shows that the school has improved standards, in Year 2, in reading and mathematics and these are now broadly in line with those expected for pupils of this age and boys' performance more closely matches that of the girls. The strategies the school has set in place to improve standards in writing are not having the desired impact and standards are below expectations for pupils of a similar age.

3. The current Year 2 pupils entered school with standards below expectations, while the current intake of pupils have entered school with broadly average standards. As a result of satisfactory teaching the current Year 2 pupils have made satisfactory progress. Inspection evidence indicates that the proportion of pupils in Year 2 attaining standards expected for their age is average in all subjects with the exception of writing in English.

4. The many pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress towards achieving the targets set for them. The systems for identifying the needs of these pupils enable staff to define appropriate targets and support. A significant factor in the progress pupils make is the support they receive and the successful implementation by all staff of the school's behaviour management strategies. The confidence and security provided by all adults helps many pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties to contribute and learn in a positive atmosphere.

5. The attainment of children in the special educational needs nursery unit ranges from P3 to P7 (levels of attainment before the National Curriculum levels) as judged against the national levels for pupils with special educational needs working towards the National Curriculum. While the lowest-attainers are beginning to use signs to communicate, most pupils can use single words or short sentences. Pupils can follow routine instructions and will watch and imitate adults. They make progress in learning to look at adults and responding to simple stories and number rhymes. Some can clap their own name rhythmically. Pupils can sort and manipulate shapes and are learning to match primary colours. They make good progress in the targets set for them in their Individual Education Plans.

6. In the infant special unit for pupils with special educational needs the lowest-attainers are working at P4 while high-attainers are reaching P7, as judged against the national levels

for pupils with special educational needs working towards the National Curriculum. Most pupils can use short phrases, sometimes supported by signs, while others have learnt to use simple sentences in imaginative play or in response to stories. They understand prepositions such as 'in', 'on' and 'under' and concepts such as 'happy', 'sad' and 'tall'. Pupils make good progress in learning to look at one another when talking. They enjoy listening to stories such as 'The Hungry Caterpillar' and acting out parts of the story with various props. Pupils pick out elements of the pictures and some can read single words, such as the days of the week, when these are presented as part of classroom routines. Pupils make satisfactory progress in writing with the lowest-attainers working to develop a thumb/finger pencil grasp while the high-attainers copy over letter shapes accurately. Counting is encouraged as part of class routines with some pupils able to count out the appropriate number of chairs for pupils present. Most enjoy joining in number rhymes. They sort shapes and learn to complete puzzles of nine or ten pieces with adult support. Pupils make satisfactory progress in the targets set for them in their Individual Education Plans.

7. In English, seven-year-olds currently are attaining average standards in speaking and listening. They use an appropriately wide range of vocabulary when speaking to their teachers, learning support assistants and each other. Pupils listen attentively, which enables them to respond appropriately to questions and take in what they are expected to do in group activities. Standards in reading are average. Many pupils read competently and with understanding and they are able to describe the plot of a story and identify which are their favourite characters and why. The standard of pupils' writing does not progress at the same rate as those in speaking and listening and reading. By the age of seven their handwriting is still immature and the construction of sentences and the length and complexity of their work has not progressed sufficiently. This is the result of the school not using its assessment data to identify specific strategies to raise standards in writing.

8. Currently, pupils' attainment in mathematics is in line with the national average. Pupils use appropriate vocabulary in their recorded work and in class discussions. Standards in mental work are improving and most pupils can work out answers to calculations and explain their preferred method of working. The pupils use their knowledge of work in number in other areas, such as money. Not all pupils are able to record their solving of investigative problems in a clear fashion and are the result of a weakness in their writing skills.

9. In science, pupils' attainment is average. Particular strengths are in their ability to describe the activity they are undertaking and in their understanding of what constitutes a fair test. A weakness is in their ability to record their findings in a clear fashion and is the result of a weakness in their writing skills.

10. Currently, pupils' standards in information and communication technology are in line with those expected for their age. Pupils are confident in the use of a wide range of technology including computers, small robots, tape recorders, and photocopiers. They readily use the computers in their classrooms to support the work in lessons when required to do so. Direct teaching is planned for one session per week in the computer suite, but because there are too few computers in the suite for even half a class, pupils' learning is slowed, as they have to wait their turn.

11. In religious education seven-year-olds attain standards that are in line with those expected for their age. Strengths for most pupils are their knowledge of the stories in the life of Jesus and the parables he told. The development of pupils' consideration for others, for example through learning about the life of a Christian child and a Muslim child, is a strength in the attitudes the school promotes.

12. Standards in art and design are in line with expectations for pupils of a similar age. Pupils successfully use watercolours to paint collages of autumn leaves. They use materials to sew a collage from a design they made on the computer.

13. In history, pupils attain standards that are in line with expectations. They use a time line to identify major events in history. They can discuss in detail the differences between the police force of today and in the past.

14. Pupils achieve standards in geography that are in line with expectations. They can make simple maps to show the way round the school and to the police station. They make drawings of the buildings they pass on their way to school.

15. Standards in design and technology are in line with expectations at the end of Year 2. In all classes, the teaching promotes and encourages the pupils to design. Pupils make and design vehicles made from recycled materials and they are of reasonable standards when completed. They learn how wheels and axles fit onto their vehicles so that they turn.

16. Strengths in pupils' standards in music include confident and tuneful singing and their use of percussion instruments to support the pulse and rhythm in their singing. Significant to this are the whole-school music sessions led by the headteacher where pupils learn new elements of music such as beat and joyful or sad singing. A relative weakness is in their creative interpretation of the music they have learnt in these sessions when back in the classroom.

17. In physical education, the majority of pupils have begun to swim unaided. They perform as well as may be expected in gymnastics, twisting and turning in a controlled fashion in both floor work and on apparatus. They develop good social skills as they organise and put out apparatus and improve their listening skills well as they are expected to listen to and then follow a range of instructions correctly.

18. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their reading and numeracy skills. Teachers use other lessons across the curriculum to satisfactorily promote reading and the use of books to support learning. Writing is insufficiently developed in this way and this contributes to the overall weakness in standards in writing. All teachers provide pupils with opportunities for discussions that contribute satisfactorily to their confidence in speaking and listening. However teachers do not insist the pupils reply in complete sentences, which is a missed opportunity to develop sentence construction in a way that would support sentence construction in writing.

19. In other subjects, pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils build as expected on their skills as they move through the school. Pupils for whom English is an additional language make satisfactory progress as a result of the level of support they receive in the classroom from teachers and learning support assistants. In addition, they receive support and care from their classmates and this is the result of the ethos of caring for each other that the school has worked hard to create. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress as a result of the school's carefully planned and managed provision. Those with additional learning difficulties integrated into the mainstream school from both the special educational needs units make satisfactory progress towards meeting the targets identified for them in their Individual Education Plans. Learning support assistants, staff and other pupils with learning difficulties provide good support for these pupils. The pupils themselves have positive attitudes to their inclusion.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

20. At the time of the previous inspection, pupils' attitudes, values and personal development were good and this positive position has been maintained. Parents say that the school promotes good attitudes; inspection findings support this view. Pupils are happy to come to school and approach each day enthusiastically. In lessons, attitudes are good overall. They are frequently better than the teaching warrants, showing that the pupils are willing and prepared to learn. In most lessons, the pupils settle well to the task set, and are keen to take part in the activities organised for them. They can be very patient, waiting to take turns and for others to answer. Generally they listen well and this enables them to get on with the work set quickly. For example, in a Year 2 science lesson about 'senses' pupils had listened very carefully to what they had to do and were then able to start work in their groups speedily, as instructed, and without cheating! Pupils are eager to be involved with the life of the school. They enjoy taking part in assemblies and are proud to be asked to open or close the Bible.

21. Pupils in the special educational needs nursery unit are happy and relaxed. They move confidently around the nursery and play independently. As yet they have not developed the necessary skills to play co-operatively. In structured sessions, pupils roll a ball or pass objects to one another when prompted by staff. The response of lower-attaining pupils is more enthusiastic when signing is used to support their understanding.

22. In the special educational needs infant unit the relationships between staff and pupils are good. Pupils make good progress in their social skills and some learn to interact with others in play for short periods. Most pupils are confident and co-operative in the classroom but some demonstrate challenging behaviour related to their special needs.

23. Nearly all parents consider behaviour in school to be good, and again the inspection team confirms that behaviour is good. Pupils behave well; they are aware of the expectations set by the school and, in the main, strive to meet them. The pupils who experience difficulty controlling their behaviour are well supported, with staff reminding them of how to behave and talking to them about their behaviour. In lessons, most pupils respond quickly to any correction and this also applies in assemblies when pupils quickly become quiet when expected to do so. Behaviour at playtimes is also good. Pupils play well together; these times are lively, but pupils are aware of each other and try hard to avoid interfering with each other's play. One pupil during the inspection was observed reminding a friend of the need to behave properly. No harassment or bullying was observed during the inspection. The school reports that there are few of such incidents. However, where children report any concerns, such as not being allowed to play with someone, the school brings the pupils together and helps them to talk and adjust. The number of exclusions has dropped significantly since the time of the previous report; there were no exclusions last year.

24. Pupils show good levels of respect for property; no vandalism or litter was evident during the inspection. Pupils are polite to teachers and other adults in school. Good relationships exist throughout the school community; pupils play and work well together and support each. For example, in reception at the start of the day one pupil went over and engaged another pupil in conversation, encouraging her to go and play so that her mother could leave without her becoming upset. This was a completely spontaneous action by the pupil and shows a high level of social awareness and development. Pupils can work together in groups and pairs when asked to and friends help each other, for example, when hurt in the playground.

25. A large number of parents say that the school helps their children to become mature and to take responsibility and inspection findings support this view overall. From the time the

children come into reception, they are expected to take responsibility for their own belongings. They are also expected to collect books for a group and to distribute them and to clear up after themselves. Mostly pupils do this with good humour and with little prompting. However, sometimes pupils do not appear to know, for example, where mathematics equipment is in the classroom. Pupils are happy to take part in the day-to-day routines around school.

26. Attendance at the school is broadly in line with national averages. This level has been maintained over a number of years. Parents say the school requests that they do not take their children on holiday during the national test week. The school has very little unauthorised absences. If reasons for absence are not identified to the school, the headteacher writes to parents asking for a written explanation. Most pupils arrive at school before the register is called, allowing a prompt start to the day.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

27. The quality of teaching across the school is satisfactory overall. Teaching is at least satisfactory or better in all lessons observed during the inspection. In almost one in three lessons it is good or better. In both the special educational needs units teaching is satisfactory overall with three out of eight lessons good. A good proportion of high quality teaching is in the two reception classes with one hundred per cent being good or better and one third of lessons being very good. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory overall with almost one in three lessons being good. These findings are an overall improvement since the last inspection when there was a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching. Parents at the meeting commented positively on the level of good teaching and this was borne out during the inspection when every teacher was judged to have good teaching in some lessons.

28. Teaching of pupils in both the special educational needs units is satisfactory. Staff work well as a team to support the needs of the pupils. Planning to meet the requirements of the pupils' Individual Education Plans is good. Teaching is matched to the needs of individuals and offering them a choice in their activities encourages pupils' independence. While teaching is supported by the use of signs this use is not sufficiently embedded in classroom practice and little use is made of symbols to support communication, the understanding of classroom routines or literacy. This leads to the lower-attaining pupils being physically helped rather than being encouraged to respond independently. The appropriate software is not currently available to teachers to support this important aspect of their teaching. Pupils are managed calmly with consistent strategies applied to promote participation and acceptable behaviour, but the pace of lessons is sometimes slow thus losing the attention of pupils. Relationships between pupils and adults are very good and pupils are encouraged to interact with one another in the planned class routines. Methods of assessment are being reviewed with staff currently using their own developmental checklists. These have been supported by the introduction of 'P' levels assessments expanded by a commercially available system known as 'B-Squared'. In the Key Stage 1 class, progress in numeracy and literacy is documented using the format of the national strategies.

29. The teaching in the Foundation Stage meets the needs of different groups of children well and consequently all children make good progress in lessons. The children's learning is good. They show interest in their work and they acquire new knowledge quickly and apply their skills well. All the reception staff have high expectations of children's learning and behaviour. Children respond by being enthusiastic, motivated and eager to learn. Tasks prepared are imaginative and stimulating and reflect the reception team's very good knowledge and understanding of how young children learn.

30. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory for pupils aged five to seven years. It ranges from very good to satisfactory. Teaching is good in mathematics and art and design and satisfactory in all other subjects. In the most effective lessons, planning is very good; it sets clear guidance of what pupils are expected to learn, learning objectives are shared with the pupils and teachers' subject knowledge is very good. The very good planning ensures that pupils' learning is very focussed and they make good progress. Some teachers do not always plan learning objectives to meet the needs of pupils with varying levels of capabilities and this has a detrimental effect on the rate of pupils' progress. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can do varies from low to high and often the learning objectives are set mostly for the average ability pupils in the class. A small number of pupils in Years 1 and 2 do not work hard or fast enough and do not always sustain concentration to the end of the lesson. In the best lessons, teachers used open-ended questions to enable pupils to learn basic skills and make pupils think hard about their answers. For example, in a Year 2 science lesson the teacher used open-ended questions to make the pupils think about how they use their senses and also how animals used theirs differently from us. However, some teachers miss opportunities to use open-ended questions to help the pupils move forward and make better progress in their learning. In a good information and communication technology lesson the teacher's subject knowledge was good, work was well planned and built upon the pupils' previous skills and knowledge. There was a good progression of skills that led to future work and extend pupils' understanding of information handling.

31. Teachers' subject knowledge is sound across most subjects. Technical competence in the teaching of basic skills is sound and, consequently, the literacy and numeracy strategies are being taught satisfactorily. Individual teachers also display specialised expertise in mathematics, music, art and design and in most areas of learning in the reception classes.

32. Teachers use a range of appropriate teaching methods. These include whole-class, group and individual work involving practical, investigative and problem-solving activities. These teaching approaches motivate pupils and give them the chance to work co-operatively and collaboratively, thereby significantly contributing to their personal development. Pupils are grouped according to ability in many lessons. However, the tasks set for them do not always meet their needs well enough for them to make good progress. Information and communication technology is used effectively to support learning, especially since the introduction of the new computer suite. However, the computers in the classrooms were infrequently used in lessons observed during the inspection.

33. Teachers manage the pupils well in lessons and their expectations of behaviour are high. Some pupils show some very challenging behaviour but teachers and support staff cope with these pupils very well. They are kind but firm when supporting these pupils. Staff have established a positive rapport with the pupils and this results in a good atmosphere for learning across the school. Most pupils respond positively to this and, as a result, behaviour in lessons is good. The results of the parents' questionnaires show a large majority of parents feel that behaviour in the school is good and the inspectors support their view.

34. Teachers use time effectively in most lessons, but sometimes it is not always used very constructively at the end of the day. At times the introduction to lessons is over long and pupils spend too long sitting on the carpet. Teachers use resources, such as number cards, whiteboards and practical equipment well to demonstrate teaching points and to assist pupils in their understanding of new concepts. The teacher effectively demonstrated this in a Year 1 mathematics lesson when pupils used whiteboards to hold up their answers at a given signal. The teacher used this activity to assess what pupils knew and what they were less sure of. During a good part of all lessons support staff are used very effectively to support pupils. However, during whole-class sessions, at the beginning of lessons, they often sit with

the pupils but this time could be better used, for example, to assess pupils' knowledge or their speaking and listening skills.

35. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Learning support assistants work in close association with teachers. During the inspection they worked hard and provided appropriate support particularly for those pupils with statements of Special Educational Need. On some occasions, learning support assistants sat and watched the teachers managing all the pupils and better use could be made of their time. Teachers' planning did not always take sufficient account of targets identified in pupils' Individual Education Plans.

36. Improvements have been made to the school's procedures for assessing pupils' progress especially in English and mathematics. However, in both subjects new procedures have recently been introduced and the impact of these initiatives have yet to be assessed. The school monitors and evaluates test results well although some teachers are not always using this information to plan for the next stage of pupils' learning. Marking of pupils' work is generally satisfactory but rarely gives comments to help pupils make improvements in their next piece of work.

37. Teachers provide appropriate opportunities for homework especially in reading. Many parents support their children's learning and this has helped to improve pupils' attitudes to school and their reading.

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

38. The school provides a broad curriculum that is satisfactory overall. It meets statutory requirements in all subjects of the National Curriculum, including religious education and sex education, and is in line with the findings of the previous report.

39. The time given to each subject is generally appropriate, providing a curriculum that is satisfactorily balanced. However, the use of time within the school day needs to be monitored to ensure that all subjects are taught in sufficient depth. For example, in some foundation subjects, the taught curriculum needs to give the pupils the opportunity of continuity, progression, acquisition of skills and understanding. The curriculum promotes pupils' intellectual, physical and personal development effectively and prepares them for the next stage of education.

40. The curriculum and learning opportunities for the children in the reception classes are very good and provide a very broad and balanced range of learning opportunities, which encompasses the Early Learning Goals. Strong features include very successful strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy and good planning for the needs of all children. Time is appropriately allocated to the various areas of learning. The county's baseline assessment for the year 2001 indicates that children entering the school have average levels of attainment whereas in previous years attainment was significantly below expectations for children of a similar age. By the time the children leave the reception classes the majority will have achieved the Early Learning Goals in most aspects of learning.

41. Children in the special educational needs unit (Nursery) attend school in the mornings only. In this time, they have good curricular opportunities with planning based on the Early Learning Goals for children in the Foundation Stage of their education. Every care is taken to ensure a balance of activities across the six curriculum areas of this phase and the activities are appropriate to the needs of the pupils. Enjoyable practical activities such as making

honey sandwiches to support a story are a regular feature of the approach. Work by school staff is supplemented by sessions with the speech and language therapist.

42. The curriculum for pupils in the special educational needs unit (Infant) is satisfactory. There is very clear planning for numeracy and literacy based on the national strategies for these areas. Time is given to specialist activities of riding and hydrotherapy but the substantial travelling time involved leads to a lack of balance in the timetable. In particular, provision for science is insufficient.

43. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Pupils are provided with an appropriate curriculum and there is a good number of learning support staff. The special educational needs co-ordinator, in conjunction with class teachers, writes clear Individual Educational Plans for these pupils. These plans effectively detail the pupils' learning needs in literacy and numeracy and there are also targets for behaviour. They are reviewed regularly by the conscientious co-ordinator. However, the impact of additional support and the Individual Educational Plans are sometimes limited, as activities are not always well matched to pupils' needs when teachers plan the lessons. The provision for the small number of pupils for whom English is an additional language is satisfactory.

44. Health, drug, sex and citizenship education are part of the personal, social and health programme and are also addressed through other subjects of the curriculum. The curriculum satisfactorily implements the aims of the school. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their first language, have equal access to the curriculum and all aspects of the life of the school.

45. Teachers organise most of the curriculum in a subject-based approach throughout the school. However, subjects such as art and design, history, geography and most of information and communication technology are encompassed in a topic theme for each term. Cross-curricular links between literacy, numeracy and science and foundation subjects are generally good. For example, during literacy lessons good links were made between history and religious education.

46. The school has implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies satisfactorily. The school policy on homework is consistently applied. The support from many of the parents has helped to improve learning, attitudes and standards in reading.

47. The school's provision for personal, social and health education is satisfactory. It is taught both within other subjects and also in its own right. Elements covered include sex education as it relates to loving and caring relationships. As pupils ask questions, they are answered honestly and sensitively. Parents are kept fully involved wherever possible.

48. The school enjoys good links with the local community. Each year the school focuses on one of the emergency services. This year is the turn of the police. A policewoman has visited the school, spending some time in each class. Pupils have been on a visit to the police station, including the recently opened museum and are soon to enjoy a finger printing session. Other recent visitors include the school nurse, and local clergy. Local businesses provide good support for the school such as providing a novelty rubbish bin and prizes for school events. The school regularly enters the local gardening show and for the last two years has received a first prize at the Marlborough Carnival. Local senior schools send pupils for work experience and community service and the school accepts students doing child-related courses from the local college to help in classes.

49. There are good relationships with other local schools. The transfer arrangements to the local junior school are good; both parents and pupils spoke positively about them. The

school tries hard to develop good links with local playgroups and nurseries, but this was curtailed last year due to constraints on the time available for the reception teacher to undertake this. The induction process when pupils started school in reception this year was good.

50. The school's provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. Adults in the school mostly value the views and ideas of pupils and this prepares them for developing an insight into the ideas of others. In lessons, pupils are encouraged to listen to each other and to respect each other's ideas. School assemblies make a good contribution to the development of pupils' spiritual awareness. Pupils are eager to be chosen to open and close the Bible at the start and end of the act of worship, knowing that this represents a special time. Often pupils are asked to reflect before a prayer is said. In religious education, pupils begin to develop an understanding of the values and beliefs of others. However, during the inspection little spiritual experience was offered to the pupils in the lessons observed.

51. The provision for pupils' moral and social development is good and is promoted by the good relationships within the school. Adults are good role models. Staff respect and value pupils as individuals and this is reciprocated. Pupils are helped to grow up understanding the difference between right and wrong and appreciating the needs of others. The school actively supports charities each year; recent ones include Red Nose Day and flood relief in Africa. Pupils make visitors in school feel welcome and smile and talk in a friendly manner with them. Pupils undertake a few responsibilities around school and those able to enjoy the clubs organised in school helps the pupils to extend their social interactions.

52. The school's provision for cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils' own culture and historical culture have a secure place in the curriculum through studies in religious education, geography and history. Visits occur to places of interest occasionally and a trip is usually arranged for Year 1 to see a pantomime. Pupils have been introduced to life in Gambia and have watched dance, native to that country, through a link with trainee teachers from there. There are a few pupils in school from different cultures. They are well supported and respected by the pupils but the opportunities they bring to celebrate and understand these cultural differences are not yet exploited. Provision for giving pupils a clear understanding of the variety of cultures in today's society has not been fully developed.

53. Provision for this aspect has improved slightly since the previous inspection.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

54. The procedures and practices in regard to ensuring pupils' well being, health and safety described in the previous inspection report have been strengthened and this aspect is now good. The school tries to create a calm and supportive atmosphere in which pupils feel safe and valued. Good care is taken of pupils' health and welfare and there are good procedures in place to ensure their safety. Pupils are well known to staff and good relationships exist between adults and pupils.

55. Arrangements to support the welfare of pupils in the infant and nursery special educational needs units are good. Staff have a thorough knowledge of the individual needs and circumstances of each pupil. They use this knowledge to plan and support their learning appropriately. All pupils have Individual Education Plans and progress in these is regularly evaluated. Assessment of the whole curriculum is currently under review with a number of different approaches being trialled. Those pupils over the age of five having statements of Special Educational Need are formally reviewed annually. The school has established good links with other agencies such as speech and language therapy and community learning

disabilities teams. Specialist support is available from Local Education Authority Services such as Educational Psychology and the visual and hearing impairment teams.

56. The school has good procedures for child protection. Two members of staff are designated persons; although they are both trained they have been unable to obtain places on recent courses to refresh and update their knowledge. Pupils are well supervised at lunchtimes and during breaks. This means that they can enjoy their playtime with their friends. Accidents and the administration of any necessary on-going medication are well recorded. Staff are trained in the administration of emergency procedures for pupils with specific medical conditions should the need arise. All appliances, equipment and alarms are tested as required and fire drills are held regularly.

57. The school's behaviour policy is good; its intentions are clear, helpful and effective. Parents were consulted about the policy and changes were made as appropriate. Good behaviour is celebrated and used to encourage others to behave well. Class rules are displayed in classrooms and pupils know them. The school has an incident book, but there are few entries, these relating only to minor issues. There is little reported bullying and this is resolved on an individual basis should it occur.

58. Although there is no formal recording of pupils' personal development, evidence from annual reports show that teachers know their pupils strengths and weaknesses in this area well. There are a number of ways in which achievements are celebrated, including a record being made in the 'Golden Book'. These entries are much prized and cover achievements in all aspects of pupils' development, including personal and academic.

59. The school's procedures for assessing and monitoring pupils' academic performance are satisfactory. Baseline assessment is undertaken in the early part of the school year in the reception class and further testing is undertaken at the end of the year and a comparison made. Assessments are made in English, mathematics and science twice each year; those made in December of Year 1 are used to set targets for each pupils to achieve in the statutory tests at the end of Year 2. Results at the end of Year 2 in the statutory tests are analysed to identify any overall weaknesses. For each year group a portfolio of each pupil's marked and assessed work in English is kept, building a picture over the three years in the school. Thus it is possible to track pupils' progress through these pieces of work. Weaknesses are identified in each pupil's work and these are discussed at staff meetings. Teachers' files do not contain records of what exactly each pupil can do, what they are unsure of and what they do not know. Thus, it is difficult to plan lessons that will address pupils' specific needs, to write informative reports or to pick up overall patterns of weakness that can be addressed across all subjects, such as handwriting or presentation. The school does set some targets for classes, groups and individual pupils. It is aiming to develop the marking of work to these targets, where appropriate. Some teachers are not yet sufficiently making suggestions to pupils on how to improve and do not always ask pupils what they think they could do to improve their work.

60. There is an early identification of pupils with special educational needs and relevant targets, which are appropriately reviewed, are clearly stated in their Individual Education Plans.

61. There are good procedures to monitor and promote attendance. The headteacher has a good overview of the attendance of all pupils and also asks that teachers alert her to low levels of attendance or of patterns of absence. Should any concerns not be resolved by contact between home and school the educational welfare officer is involved.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

62. The school works hard to develop and foster good relationships between home and school. The good partnership that was described in the previous report has been well maintained and this has a positive effect upon pupils' learning.

63. There are a number of areas within school with which parents are particularly pleased. What pleases them most is that their children like coming to school. Inspectors agree that pupils are happy in school and are enthusiastic about everything they are offered. Parents are also pleased with the good behaviour and the good teaching their children receive. Behaviour in and around school and outside is all good, but teaching is judged to be satisfactory overall in Years 1 and 2, although it is good in reception. Although parents feel their children make good progress at school, inspection evidence is that they make satisfactory progress.

64. One area about which parents expressed concerns is the information they receive, particularly on the progress their children make. Although the regular newsletters and other communications give parents good information about what is happening in school, the quality of reports is only just adequate. All subjects are covered in the report, but in every subject much of the writing is about what the pupils have covered in the subject. With the exception of the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, the brief comments made are generally about pupils' attitudes to the subject. Occasionally a comment may relate to enjoyment, but there is no indication of what has been learnt. In the three core subjects, some pertinent comments are made about what pupils are able to do, what they are confident about and what they understand and can use. However, none of these areas give a very full picture of pupils' progress nor do they give any indication of how they are achieving in relation to what is expected. Some targets are set, but there is no reference to progress made against previously set targets. The general comments made by both the teacher and the headteacher show that they do have good knowledge of the pupils, particularly their personal development. The school is aware of the need to improve the quality of its reports. Parents are given the formal opportunity to discuss their children with teachers each term and there are regular informal opportunities for parents to look at their children's work and to talk to staff, particularly in Year 2. Information on what pupils are learning is displayed in classrooms, but this information is not sent home. Again, the school is looking into the possibility of providing this for parents.

65. The school has effective links with its parents. They come to school readily to support their children. During the inspection, one of the assemblies was taken by the mixed Year 1/2 class. There was an excellent turnout of parents to watch their children; those spoken to all said how much they enjoyed these occasions and that there are always a good number of parents at such events. From the reception class onwards, parents are encouraged to come into school with any concerns; staff try hard to involve all parents, with good attention given to those who are less happy about approaching school and for those for whom English is an additional language. The school has an active 'Friends of St. Mary's' that raises large sums of money for the school each year.

66. Partnership with parents of pupils in the nursery and infant special educational needs units is good. Some parents are able to bring and collect their own children but for others the school make use of home/school diaries to ensure that parents have day-to-day information about their children. Regular reviews are held and parents have access to Individual Education Plans agreed for their child. Frequent informal contact is maintained to deal with issues such as the consistent management of challenging behaviour. General information about the work of the units is provided through specially prepared leaflets. Parents of pupils being admitted to the nursery class are encouraged to provide information about the child through the completion of 'All About Me' books.

67. The school runs 'Keeping Up with the Children' sessions for interested parents. Parents welcome this good initiative and sessions are well attended. The school intends to develop this idea further to reflect the needs of the school. School governors initiated a questionnaire for parents last year. The results of this have been analysed and the school is looking to improve the areas identified as giving rise to concern. These include information on what is being taught, together with general information. A number of parents come into school to help. During the inspection parents were seen helping by listening to children read, and helping in a design and technology lesson with sewing and woodwork. The school appreciates the effort of these parents; offers of help are always taken up.

68. Many parents help their children with their homework and most feel that what they are given to do at home is about right. Many also comment that it is a good way of involving them with their children's learning. Parents seek clarification of homework requirements from the teachers if this is necessary. Reading diaries are well used in the reception classes, but this dwindles further up the school. Homework books in Year 2 are also used as communication books.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

69. Overall, the quality of the leadership and management of the school is sound. The headteacher provides good leadership, including a clear educational direction for the school. She is very hard working and provides good and supportive leadership and is a very good role model when she is teaching. The present headteacher was appointed after an unsettled period due to the then headteacher's long-term illness. She has set up good systems and procedures but needs to monitor and evaluate what goes on in the classrooms in a more systematic, rigorous and regular way. A good team spirit exists and there is a shared commitment to improve. This creates a positive ethos, which reflects the school's commitment to an effective atmosphere for learning, good relationships and equality of opportunity for all. The school's aims reflect the work of the school. Most subject co-ordinators do not have sufficient non-contact time to monitor the teaching and learning in their subjects. They monitor teachers' planning. However, their monitoring and evaluating of standards within the subjects for which they are responsible are not rigorous enough. Ethnic minority pupils are given specialist support on a regular basis and their attainment and progress is reported. The quality of the leadership and management of the school is similar to that reported in the last inspection.

70. All key issues from the previous inspection have been addressed, but with varying degrees of success. The governors are now more involved in the strategic management of the school. The aims of the school have been agreed and shared with parents. The school development plan, although linked to the budget, still only covers only one year. The school has improved the provision for pupils with special educational needs in the infant special educational needs unit. Levels of staffing in this unit during the afternoon are now good. Schemes of work are now in place for all subjects and there is a greater coherence to the planned curriculum to ensure the continuity in the curriculum and progression from year to year throughout the school. The school now liaises well with the local junior school to ensure there is no repetition of the curriculum. Teaching and learning in information and communication technology has improved. There is now a computer suite with more up to date equipment and the suite is used regularly. However, the computers in the classrooms were often not being used in lessons observed during the inspection.

71. The role of the governing body has improved since the last inspection and governors fulfil all statutory duties. Information that was originally missing from the governors' annual report to parents and the prospectus is now included in these documents. However, the

quality of the annual report to parents needs further improvement. The finance committee now meets regularly and minutes of meetings are recorded and the budget is monitored carefully. Some governors are active in the life of the school and keep themselves well informed about what is going on in school. There is not a programme of planned visits to school with a predetermined and agreed agenda. This would enable governors to have an even clearer picture of how the school performs. The headteacher provides the governing body with an analysis of tests results. The governors have a good understanding of the strengths of the school, but are less sure about where the school needs to focus next to become more effective. While their systems for monitoring and evaluating the performance of the school is sound, taking effective action is too informal and lack rigour. This is an area that requires improvement.

72. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory. All the key issues from the previous inspection have been addressed. Although the overall grade for teaching remains sound there was no unsatisfactory teaching during this inspection. The results in national assessment tests and tasks have remained static over the past three years and are well below the national average in all subjects and very low when compared with similar schools. During these years attainment on entry was significantly below expectations and the percentage of children with special needs was also high. Currently, pupils are achieving expected national standards in mathematics, science, speaking and listening and reading. However, in writing they are below the national average.

73. School development planning is good but only covers one year. There is, however, no long-term strategic view of the school's future development and maintenance of the current staffing levels. This is an area for further development. The current plan clearly identifies appropriate priorities and makes the raising of standards the basis for developments. The carry forward of funds from one year to the next is high, because the school wishes to maintain current staffing levels in the future when the projected number of pupils on roll is set to drop. The school also uses these funds to maintain and replace old resources and equipment. The school effectively applies the principles of best value. The money allocated to the school per pupil is well above the average in comparison with other schools in the country. This is mainly because of the high number of children with special educational needs that are not only in the nursery and infant special educational needs units but also within the mainstream of the school.

74. The day-to-day administration and financial management of the school are good. The recommendations in the latest auditor's report have been implemented. There were very few weaknesses identified. The governors agree appropriate allocations from the annual budget to support priorities and clearly understand the principles of best value and apply them to significant purchases. The school ensures it allocates its grant for staff training to support targets in the school development plan and in this way relates them to pupils' learning.

75. Support for pupils with special educational needs is soundly managed. As a result, these pupils make good progress in the reception classes and satisfactory progress in the two special educational needs units and in Years 1 and 2. Money has been well spent on the provision and training of support staff.

76. The good number, qualifications and experience of teachers and support staff match the demands of the curriculum. The impact of teaching shortages being experienced across the country has not been a significant problem for this school and sufficient staff have been recruited to fill any vacancies caused by promotions. Teachers and support staff are keen to develop their professional skills. Staff are encouraged to attend courses, but the evaluation of courses is too informal. The induction procedures for the newly qualified teacher are good. The support staff are generally used effectively, well organised and make a valuable

contribution to pupils' progress, although on some occasions better use could be made of their time.

77. All staff have job descriptions appropriate to their position. A policy for performance management is in place and staff have individual targets that are reviewed at an appropriately set time.

78. Overall, the adequacy of resources is satisfactory. Provision for information and communication technology is good and includes a mini-suite and computers in classrooms. Resources are good for children in the reception class and there is a satisfactory range of large outdoor equipment for them to play with. The library is rather small and the number of books is barely adequate to meet the needs of the curriculum. However, many books are rather old and need replacing. Good use is made of the locality as a resource; for instance, visits are made to the Priory Gardens and the police station.

79. The quality of the accommodation is adequate for the teaching of the curriculum. A recent alteration to the school to include a computer suite has improved the provision considerably for information and communication technology. Classrooms in the main building are light and mostly spacious for the teachers to move easily and quickly between pupils and resource areas are suitable for the teaching of creative activities. However, the four outside classrooms have less space, especially for teaching creative activities. The school over the past few months has experienced problems with the cleaning of the school. It was not cleaned to an acceptable standard. However, very recently, new staff have been employed and standards of cleaning have improved. Displays around the school value pupils' work and add to the character of the school.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The headteacher and staff, in conjunction with the governing body, should:

1. **Use results from assessments more effectively to improve pupils' writing by:**
 - (a) ensuring all teachers have a consistent approach to the teaching of handwriting and spelling.
 - (b) increase teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve in terms of standards, quantity and presentation of work.
(paragraphs 7,8,18,30,59,94,95,96,97,105,110,117 and 118).
2. **Use results from assessment in English, mathematics and science to accurately match the learning needs of different groups of pupils.**
(paragraphs 7,32,36,59,106 and 111).
3. **Monitor the above key issues at frequent intervals.**

In addition to the Key Issues above, the following area for development should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- (a) Ensure the quality of marking of pupils' work is of a consistently high standard.
(paragraphs 36, 59, 97, 105 and 125).
- (b) Monitor the use of time in the school day to ensure all subjects are taught in sufficient depth.
(paragraphs 34 and 39).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	43
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	29

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number		3	16	24			
Percentage		7%	37%	56%			

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y3
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	2	140
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		10

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y3
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		11
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	44

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	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	1

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.6
National comparative data	5.6

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 (Year 2)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	32	33	65

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	21	22
	Girls	25	27	28
	Total	45	48	50
Percentage of pupils At NC level 2 or above	School	69 (68)	74 (54)	77 (83)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	21	25	24
	Girls	31	31	27
	Total	52	56	51
Percentage of pupils At NC level 2 or above	School	80 (59)	86 (89)	78 (79)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	2
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	1
White	138
Any other minority ethnic group	2

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y3

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.1
Average class size	28.2

Education support staff: YR – Y3

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	102.5

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery SEN unit

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	10
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	25
Number of pupils per FTE adult	5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2.4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1.4
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	2000/1
	£
Total income	445087
Total expenditure	415432
Expenditure per pupil	2906
Balance brought forward from previous year	19513
Balance carried forward to next year	49168

Infant SEN Unit

Total number of qualified teachers	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	8
Total number of support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	60
Number of pupils per FTE adult	3

Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	143
Number of questionnaires returned	59

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	66	32	2		
My child is making good progress in school.	51	41	3	2	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	49	46		2	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	45	40	9		5
The teaching is good.	66	29	2		3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	31	40	26	2	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	63	27	7	3	
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	44	44	2	2	9
The school works closely with parents.	41	41	12	3	3
The school is well led and managed.	49	32	8		10
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	51	40	2	2	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	21	40	12	2	25

Summary of parents' and carers' responses

98% Their child likes school.

95% Behaviour in school is good.

95% Believe teaching is good.

92% Believe their child is making good progress.

91% Believe that the school was helping their child to become more mature and responsible.

90% Feel they would be comfortable in a approaching the school with a problem.

28% Feel they are not kept informed about their child's progress.

Other issues raised by parents

See notes in the summary.

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

80. The provision for children in the foundation stage is very good. Many children enter the reception class with below average skills in speaking and listening and mathematics. Children's attainment in reading, writing and in their personal, social and emotional development is similar to that of other four-year-olds. Children's understanding of space and shape in mathematics is significantly above that of their peers. This is confirmed by the initial assessments conducted with these young children. Overall, attainment on entry to the reception classes is average. By the time they are ready to start in Year 1 the majority of children achieve well and attain the Early Learning Goals in communication, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development. The overall good teaching is having a positive impact on children's learning. Very good provision is made to encourage children's personal, social and emotional development and almost all children exceed these goals.

81. Reception staff have a very good knowledge and understanding of the learning needs of young children and planning is particularly well considered and carefully reflects the 'stepping stones' of children's learning. Staff plan together to ensure that children's learning builds progressively on what they know, understand and can do. There is a warm and secure atmosphere in which all children are valued and respected. Staff are particularly successful in maintaining and using careful records of children's progress when arranging different learning activities to ensure that a high but appropriate level of challenge is provided. Children are given many opportunities to choose from a wide range of activities alongside well-focussed tasks with a carefully considered level of adult intervention and support to provide a high level of challenge.

Personal, social and emotional development.

82. Children start school with social skills that are similar to those of other four-year-olds. They make very good progress in this area because the quality of teaching is very good. Children very quickly adapt to the organisation of the classes and settle to school routines happily. Staff skilfully encourage children to be independent by encouraging them to help others to put on coats and aprons and to be totally involved in tidying away the equipment. Children are very efficient and effective 'organisers' and tidy the classrooms with vigour and determination. They know exactly where all the resources are stored and take pride and pleasure in putting equipment away carefully. They are confident in selecting their own play activities and share and take turns really well. They play well together, always listening carefully to other children's suggestions. For instance, four boys who were dealing with a fictitious 'leaky pipe' in the sandpit, negotiated maturely with each other as to the best course of action! Children behave very well. They know that there are times when they must sit quietly such as in assemblies or when listening to a story. All the staff provide very good role models for the children. They are kind and caring and infinitely patient and work together very well. The very good teamwork has a very positive impact on children's personal and social development. They have developed very good relationships with the children, manage them well and provide plenty of encouragement to develop their confidence and self-esteem.

Communication, language and literacy.

83. The communication skills of many of the children entering the reception classes are below average. Attainment varies, but initially many younger children confine themselves to one word or short phrases as a means of communication. The small number of pupils who have English as an additional language are initially very quiet and offer little in discussions, but they grow in confidence because of the warm and supportive manner in which they are encouraged to develop. For instance, a teacher has made a special book of photographs for a Cantonese child, who had very little English, to encourage language. All children make good progress in this area and the majority achieve the early learning goals before they move to Year 1. Teachers take considerable time and trouble to provide opportunities to build children's confidence and extend their speaking and listening skills. Role-play areas are interesting, appealing and skilfully organised. For example, there is a specially made phone book containing the names and telephone numbers of all the children in the class. This motivates all children to read their name and phone number. Puppets are also used successfully to encourage children to communicate. Adults ply the children with questions and continually introduce new words to encourage children to think and make connections with previous learning and ideas.

84. Most children make a good start in learning to read and write and the majority achieve the early learning goals in this area by the time they move to Year 1. Children enjoy listening to stories and looking at, and joining in with 'big books'. One higher-attaining child reads Year 2 level books! Most children recognise some initial letters of words and use the terms 'author' and 'title'. Lower-attaining children can 'read' stories from the pictures and many pupils recognise familiar words such as 'and' and 'dog' in books. Children hold their pencils correctly and form letters neatly. All children made good attempts at writing their names. Good opportunities are provided for children to write in the writing area. Higher-attaining children design and make their own cards clearly writing 'to mummy' and 'love from'. Teachers encourage all children to see themselves as readers and writers and praise their efforts at every opportunity. The reception post box is opened every day and children's efforts to write numbers and names and addresses are celebrated and valued by all.

Mathematical development.

85. This area of learning is taught well and by the end of the reception year most children will have achieved the early learning goals for mathematics. Children make good progress in comparison to their attainment in mathematics on entry to the school. Almost all the children in the reception classes can count and recognise numbers to ten and some higher-attaining children can count well beyond ten. Children use mathematical language with confidence such as 'I've made two cubes and four spheres with the playdough'. Teaching is consistently good as the adults treat children like mathematicians. They help children to see mathematics all around them and encourage their growing understanding of how to be problem solvers and thinkers. For instance, children in the home corner decide what day it is and then have to select the correct daily bib to place on the baby. The skilled teachers make learning mathematics fun, children delight in correcting a frog puppet who has problems with counting!

Knowledge and understanding of the world.

86. Children enter the reception classes with a reasonable basic general knowledge. Staff build successfully on this knowledge to help children understand more about where they live and how they have changed since they were babies. Children learn to write their names and addresses to place in the postbox. Children have enjoyed making bread at Harvest and can describe changes to the dough: 'It blew up!' The children use the computer with confidence and use 'First Paint' to design and print their pictures. They can select resources such as 'duplo' to construct and build objects and have a good sense of how things join

together. Teaching is good. Adults support children very well in investigating their surroundings and encourage them to find things out for themselves. Most children achieve the early learning goals in this area by the time they move to Year 1.

Physical development.

87. This area is taught particularly well, and all the children attain the early learning goals by the time they leave the reception classes. In a very good physical education lesson, it was evident that many children would exceed the early learning goals by the end of the year. The teacher joined in enthusiastically, made very good use of language to encourage children in their physical responses and had high expectations of children's movements. The children responded well to this skilful teaching and worked hard to improve their performance demonstrating that they can move with control and co-ordination with a very good awareness of space. There is an interesting outdoor play area with a wooden climbing frame, tyres and wheeled vehicles where children can run, jump, balance and climb.

Creative development.

88. Teaching in this area is good and the wide variety of opportunities offered ensure all children make good progress and achieve the early learning goals by the end of the reception year. The enthusiasm of the adults in role-play and music making has an infectious impact on the children. During the morning introductory sessions staff participate enthusiastically in role-play situations and as a result children use props and other resources with great imaginative skill. Staff work extremely hard to devise and organise exciting and stimulating play activities to promote the children's creative development. For instance, the new Christmas cards, which appear in the home corner each morning, excite the children and they wonder 'who sent them?' Vibrant and stimulating interactive displays in all areas encourage pupils' creativity and all their artwork is of a good standard.

ENGLISH

89. Standards in English have declined since the last inspection when they were judged to be above the national average. The results of the 2001 national tests indicate that standards in reading and writing were well below the national average. Standards in reading and writing were very low when compared to pupils in similar schools. Teacher assessments match the national tests and show that pupils achieved below average standards in speaking and listening. Over the last three years, attainment in reading and writing has been below the national average for both boys and girls. Girls attain better results than boys do and high-attaining pupils reach expected levels in reading. Several factors have to be considered when analysing these results. Firstly, pupils taking the tests in 2001 achieved very low scores for reading and writing in baseline assessments taken on entry to the school. Secondly there were a considerable number of pupils with special educational needs taking the tests in 2001. Therefore, these results indicate satisfactory progress.

90. Inspection evidence indicates that the current Year 2 pupils attain standards in speaking and listening and reading, which are the same as those of pupils of a similar age. All pupils make satisfactory progress. Standards in writing are below average, apart from higher-attaining pupils who achieve the expected levels. The school is very aware of the decline in writing standards and has put much-needed incentives in place to try to improve results with the help and support of the local education authority. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in relation to targets in their Individual Education Plans, although these plans were not evident in all classes.

91. By the age of seven, pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is average and they make satisfactory progress. Pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is begun very effectively in the reception classes where children's opinions and ideas are listened to with sensitivity and interest by all staff during class and group discussions. In the Year 1 class, pupils make appropriate progress in developing and extending their speaking and listening skills during 'sharing time'. The teacher skilfully encourages reluctant pupils to communicate. Higher-attaining pupils give detailed accounts of their experiences to their friends, speaking in complete sentences. There are several additional staff in this class to support the large number of pupils with special educational needs. During 'sharing time' they sit and watch the teacher, rather than interacting with the pupils in smaller groups to encourage communication skills.

92. Pupils' confidence in speaking in front of the whole class is consolidated and developed further through pupils in the Year 2 classes having the opportunity to give oral explanations of their learning in subjects such as science. In the Year 2 classes, most pupils pay close attention to what the teacher is saying and reply to questions with thoughtful comment and detail. However, teachers do not target questions to all pupils to check comprehension and drama is not used sufficiently to encourage speaking skills. Higher-attaining Year 2 pupils are confident, coherent and sensible when discussing aspects of school life with the inspection team. For instance, one pupil said, 'Robert Peel created the police force'.

93. Pupils' attainment in reading is in line the national average and pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils understand the difference between fiction and non-fiction books and know and use terms such as 'author, blurb, illustrator and contents' correctly. The home-school partnership is a successful feature, although reading records do not clearly indicate what parents need to focus on when listening to their children reading. Strengths and weaknesses in pupils' reading are not shared. A focus on the teaching of the letter sounds raises attainment and accelerates progress for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. However, many lower-attaining pupils were not able to put sounds together to make words. By the time that they are seven, the higher-attaining pupils read with accuracy and fluency, and can competently discuss the characters in a familiar story. Pupils are introduced to a wide range of authors and stories. Consequently higher-attaining pupils show a good understanding of a range of texts and can refer to passages in books to support ideas.

94. Year 2 pupils' attainment in writing is below the national average. Higher-attaining pupils make satisfactory progress but many average and lower-attaining pupils do not appear to make the progress of which they are capable. The school is working hard to raise pupils' achievement in writing to match the average standards in reading and speaking and listening. For instance, Year 2 pupils have individual literacy targets to attempt to raise attainment and accelerate progress. This is a very recent initiative and has yet to have an impact on standards. Handwriting and spelling are not always taught regularly in some classes and pupils attain very low standards in the national spelling tests. Written tasks are not always matched to pupils' different levels of ability, and in some cases, all pupils receive the same tasks. Occasionally, worksheets are set that require one word answers and limits pupils' progress. Some pupils' presentation of written work is very untidy.

95. Children receive a good start to their writing in the reception class, where they are encouraged to write independently and to use their knowledge of phonics in their writing. This good achievement is extended in Year 1, where work sampling shows that the higher-attaining pupils write clear and logical sentences using capital letters and full stops. However, the average and below average attaining pupils receive exactly the same work as the higher-attaining pupils, which is not appropriate and work is not always sufficiently matched to their learning needs.

96. Pupils in Year 2 produce a suitable, though not extensive, range of work, which includes fiction, procedural writing and poetry. Some of this work is of a below average standard and many pupils in the Year 2 class do not present their work carefully. Work sampling indicates a difference in teachers' expectations. For instance, some pupils write on lined paper, which enables their writing to be neater, whilst other Year 2 pupils' presentation is not so neat as they write on plain paper. At times, worksheets presented to pupils are insufficiently challenging. Pupils are given sufficient opportunities to word-process their English work. However, computers were not seen being used in literacy lessons during the inspection. Pupils with special educational needs receive appropriate support with their English work. Targets for literacy are set in Individual Education Plans but there was little evidence of these being used to plan work during the inspection.

97. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with one lesson in the Year 1 class being good. Teachers have a sound understanding of how to teach reading and writing. Teachers make sure pupils know what they are expected to learn and how this links to what they have covered previously. Some, but not all, teachers make good use of question and answer sessions to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills. Expectations of what pupils can do varies from low to high and work is not always planned for different needs. Most teachers maintain a brisk lesson pace and keep pupils busy. This is particularly evident in the literacy hour lessons where pupils waste no time in settling to group activities after sharing a class discussion. Marking is always completed but too frequently there was little evidence of comments to help the pupils improve on their next piece of work. The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and the National Literacy Strategy. Assessment of reading and writing is thorough and regular, although results from assessments are not used rigorously enough to target groups of pupils to raise attainment. The school is aware of the importance of practising reading and writing in other subjects. For instance, Year 1 pupils used their developing literacy skills to good effect to describe their vehicles in design and technology. However, there is scope for this good practice to be developed by all teachers in all subjects.

98. The co-ordinator is committed to raising standards of attainment, particularly in writing. The school, with the help of the local education authority, has spent considerable time and expense on analysing why writing skills have been so low for the past three years.

99. Resources are satisfactory. The library is small and was not used during the inspection. Some of the books are old and unappealing and require replacing. The school has the capacity to succeed and raise standards.

MATHEMATICS

100. Currently, by the end of Year 2, pupils attain standards expected for pupils of a similar age in mathematics. This shows a decline in standards with that reported at the time of the last inspection when standards were judged to be above the national average.

101. The 2001 National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds show that the performance of pupils attaining the expected level, Level 2, was well below the national average, and the higher level, Level 3, was also well below the average. When compared with similar schools, based on the take up of free schools meals, results were very low. In the 2001 National Curriculum tests girls performed better than boys. Teacher assessments match the national tests and show that pupils achieved below average standards in mathematics. Trends over time show little improvement since the above average results in 1998 and continue from then to be well below the national average. Several factors have to be considered when analysing

these results. Firstly, when the pupils who took the 2001 national tests entered school the results of the county's baseline assessment showed that in all aspects of mathematics their performance was significantly below the national average. Secondly, there were a considerable number of pupils with special educational needs taking the tests in 2001 including those from the special educational needs unit (Infant). Therefore these test results although low indicate satisfactory progress has been made. Currently, pupils aged seven attain standards in line with the national average. This represents a significant improvement from national test results. This is because the quality of teaching is good. Children who leave the reception classes and enter Year 1 now attain more highly than they used to do. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs make sound progress, as do pupils for whom English is an additional language.

102. The school has implemented the National Numeracy Strategy since the autumn term of 1999 and this builds on the good quality of work on mathematical education at the Foundation Stage. The effectiveness of strategies for teaching numeracy skills is satisfactory.

103. Pupils are provided with an appropriately broad range of mathematical activities, but with an emphasis on work in number. Pupils make satisfactory progress in all aspects of the mathematics national curriculum. By the age of seven, pupils use mathematical language appropriately and with confidence. For instance, they know 'more than', 'less than', 'total', 'larger' and 'smaller'. They know that to add or subtract nine it is easier to use ten and add or subtract one appropriately. The more able pupils extend this strategy to add or subtract nineteen from a given number. Pupils present numbers in figures and words and know and understand the terms for addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. They add single digits to double digits and make given amounts of money up to 50 pence and more able pupils much further. Some pupils know their multiplication tables from two to five and the ten times table. However, the majority of pupils are unsure of them and therefore do not have this knowledge to use when completing problem solving activities. They understand odd or even numbers and can explain why a number is either odd or even; for example, that even numbers always end in two, four, six, eight, or zero. Most pupils recognise and identify the properties of a range of two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes. They produce simple block graphs. Their response to mental calculation is improving in quantity and speed as a result of mental mathematical sessions at the beginning of lessons. Pupils make use of resources to aid their learning. However, there was little evidence of the use of information and communication technology being used, for example, in the use of graphs and tables to record their work.

104. Pupils aged five to seven years have good attitudes to their learning and behave well in lessons. They often sit for a considerable amount of time on the carpet but continue to be interested in the lesson. Relationships between teachers, support staff and pupils are good throughout the school. Most teachers value the pupils' responses and ideas, when pupils are given the opportunity to do so, and create a good climate for learning in which the pupils feel confident. Most pupils are able, without fuss, to carry on working independently when the teachers move to another group. This is good practice and enhances pupils' social and moral development. Some pupils are less independent and frequently need to be reminded to get on with their work.

105. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. The good teaching is characterised by good expectations and learning objectives being shared with the pupils. Towards the end of lessons, teachers effectively establish what pupils have achieved. If teachers were to identify

and share aspects of the good teaching seen in these classes this would improve standards overall. Some, but not all, teachers make good use of question and answer sessions to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills. Teachers manage the pupils well especially for those pupils who have challenging behaviour. Their knowledge and understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy is sound. Lesson planning is generally sound and frequently good and covers all aspects of the mathematics curriculum. However, some higher-attaining pupils are insufficiently challenged and this has a detrimental effect on their rate of progress and attainment. Tasks for less able pupils are not always matched to their needs and they really struggle with the activities presented to them. Too frequently teachers' expectations are too low; for example, in the amount of work the pupils can achieve, what pupils can do and the presentation of their work. Marking is always completed but is of variable quality, with the best marking giving comments on how the pupils can improve their work.

106. The co-ordinator is very enthusiastic and well experienced. She has attended many courses to increase her personal knowledge in the subject. She has had the opportunity to work with colleagues in both support and demonstration roles over the past two years. Numeracy is a high priority in the current school development plan. Assessment has been mainly up to individual teachers how they should do it. However, the co-ordinator has, this term, introduced Key Assessment Tasks booklets that were initiated by the Wiltshire Numeracy Team. The school is trialling this system throughout the school in an attempt to determine how planning for individual pupils can be informed by focussed assessment. Pupils' individual records of achievement have also recently been set up to record their achievement, allowing for the use of all levels of objectives including 'P' levels (levels prior to the Early Learning Goals) for pupils with special educational needs. Resources are good and most of them are in the classrooms and are easily accessible to the staff and pupils. Links with parents are good. Parents give a good level of support on curriculum evenings and open afternoons. The school also ran two very successful sessions last term for 'Keeping Up with the Children' and more sessions are planned for next term. Pupils' annual reports to parents record the course of study and targets are set for future learning. The school has the capacity to succeed and further raise standards.

SCIENCE

107. Overall, standards in science in the work seen at the end of Year 2 are broadly average. This indicates a decline in standards since the previous inspection but an improvement since the previous teacher assessments. Results of teacher assessments for the summer of 2001 show that the attainment of this cohort of pupils was poor compared with national average and with similar schools. This cohort of pupils entered the school with attainment that was significantly below the national average. Progress for this summer 2001 cohort was satisfactory. The current Year 2 pupils entered the school with broadly average levels of attainment. The progress of all these pupils, including those for whom English is an additional language and for pupils with special educational needs, is satisfactory. The pupils' performance in experimental and investigative science is average and pupils can explain their work clearly. For example, when pupils were identifying objects wrapped in a cloth, they drew on their previous work on materials to identify such objects as an apple, an old-fashioned-door key, and a plastic ball with knobs on. They picked out such individual features as the stalk, the hole in the handle of the key and the hard smooth surfaces of the ball, to confirm their findings. While pupils can talk knowledgeably about what they have found out they do not record their findings clearly and so demonstrate their understanding and knowledge of scientific concepts at the higher National Curriculum Level 3.

108. By the end of Year 2, pupils appreciate the need to ensure that any scientific tests need to be fair if their results are to be reliable. They extend their understanding of fair testing

to other subjects such as information and communication technology, insisting for example, that small robots are always returned to the same place and tested over the same course so that each pupil's program is tested against the same conditions. Pupils in Year 1 can discern between activities that are good for the heart and those that do not strengthen the heart. They enter into lively debate about whether skipping or running upstairs are the best exercises to do. Drawing on their knowledge from previous lessons they appropriately conclude that skipping is safer than running upstairs.

109. Pupils' attitudes towards science are good. They look forward to carrying out investigations, behave sensibly when doing so and willingly take part in debates about their findings. It is these mature attitudes that enable teachers to set up a range of investigations or explore complex subjects such as healthy exercise and so enable sound learning to take place.

110. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall; in one lesson it was good. In this lesson, the teacher revised the work done previously on senses and then set well-structured activities to extend this work. She used open-ended questioning well to enable pupils to think through their reasoning, for example why a brown liquid may be coffee rather than gravy. Teachers use interesting ways of presenting a topic. For example, a teacher had obtained a well-illustrated book called 'Arty Heart'. The pupils were enthralled by the simple but clear illustrations and responded appropriately to the questions being asked. Some questions did not have an answer and these engendered much discussion and debate, which the teacher skilfully handled drawing out pupils understanding and ideas about health, diet and exercise. Such debate enables pupils to learn at a satisfactory pace. Teachers' expectations of the quality of recorded work are insufficiently high and do not enable pupils to set out in a clear way what they have found out.

111. The curriculum is broad and balanced. Resources are adequate. The co-ordinator is well qualified in the subject and provides a satisfactory level of leadership for the school. She acts as a consultant to help other teachers set up activities. The subject makes a sound contribution to the spiritual development of pupils and a good contribution to their social development through working together and moral development in the care of living things. Assessment procedures are satisfactory but are not used well enough to identify specific skills or areas of learning where improvement is needed. For example, insufficient use is made of recording to practise different aspects of literacy. This is an aspect that needs to be addressed, if pupils currently entering the school are to achieve standards in writing that may be expected of them. Appropriate links are made with other subject areas, for example work on sound was further developed through a Year 2, music workshop. Work on living organisms is developed through a science visit to a local forest as well as visitors to talk to the pupils. The use of information and communication technology is limited and is not, for instance, used by pupils to record their results or sufficiently to display results in the form of graphs or tables.

112. The school has the capacity to succeed and further raise standards.

ART AND DESIGN

113. Due to timetabling constraints only one lesson was observed during the inspection. However, additional evidence gained from discussions with pupils, analysis of past and present work and displays, indicate standards are in line with that expected at seven years of age and is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. Overall, pupils are making satisfactory progress, as do pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is not the first language.

114. Pupils are provided with good experiences to use and apply paint and crayons in a variety of ways. Many of their pictures show a good understanding of colour mixing. This was seen to good effect in the Year 2 class when pupils were using water-colours to produce the shades and tones in their collage of autumn leaves. The teacher gave a good demonstration of how to use pastels and watercolours to achieve the different shades of autumn. She showed paintings by William Morris and Matisse to reinforce what could be achieved. The original stimulus came from a visit to the Priory Gardens when pupils had collected twigs and leaves to make a collage. During the summer term, pupils in Year 1 completed a project on sculpture.

115. Pupils talk positively about their art lessons. In the lesson observed, pupils enjoyed the practical activities, concentrated on what they were being taught and took care of their own and other's work. They talked enthusiastically with each other whilst working and showed a pride in having their work praised and admired by their teacher. They work together well and this enhances their personal and social development.

116. The quality of teaching and learning in this lesson was good because planning was effective, management of pupils was good and the learning intentions shared with the pupils. Pupils were extending their knowledge and skills in the use of paint and pastels. One group of pupils were sewing a collage. They had previously designed their ideas on the computer. All pupils during this lesson were interested and sustained their concentration. The pupils also used the computer to give a title to their finished paintings, for example, 'The Robin in the Rain'. However, in all year groups there was no evidence of the use of sketchbooks, which means pupils do not have the opportunity to develop drawing techniques of painting and sketching.

117. The co-ordinator has only been in post since the beginning of this term. There is an art policy and the school uses a published scheme of work to support this. There is a two-year cycle of work to ensure coverage of the curriculum, especially in the mixed age class. Currently, there is no formal monitoring of teaching and learning or portfolios of pupils' work to inform teachers about standards and to assist them in planning for the development of skills, knowledge and understanding. There is a portfolio of work in the Rainbow Room (the reception classes) that gives an indication of progress over time. The use of assessment does not yet adequately inform teachers' planning to ensure the work becomes progressively more difficult as pupils move through the school, or breadth and balance of experience. Opportunities are found for art to contribute to the spiritual, social and cultural development of pupils. However, it is less developed in the multi-cultural aspect. Resources are adequate to teach art and design.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

118. Standards are in line with expectations at the end of Year 2. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those pupils with English as an additional language, achieve satisfactorily. This is a similar picture to that found at the time of the previous inspection in 1998. More should be expected of the most-able pupils but some of the teachers are unsure what to do about this because of their own lack of confidence in the subject. This was also the case at the time of the previous inspection and the co-ordinator recognises the need to extend teachers' expertise. The policy has been revised and there is a scheme of work based on national guidelines.

119. The standards achieved in Years 1 and 2 result from satisfactory teaching. In all classes, the teaching promotes and encourages the pupils to design. In a lesson in Year 1, pupils are motivated and keen to add the finishing touches to their 'vehicles'. One pupil said, 'We must get on, I want to finish mine'. The vehicles are made of recycled materials and are of a reasonable standard. Pupils use their literacy skills effectively to record their work. The lesson has many good features and the teacher and support staff provide effective feedback to individual pupils to improve their work. However, more could be expected of the higher-achieving pupils.

120. Year 2 pupils learn to design and make a vehicle that moves by rolling. They also learn how wheels and axles fit onto a vehicle so that they turn. Teaching is effective and pupils are able to progress with their work, as the teacher has given good guidance in previous lessons. Pupils work hard and share equipment and resources well. They evaluate each other's work sensibly. Work sampling indicates that pupils have covered a suitable amount of work. Computers are used to design ideas for tapestries.

121. Pupils enjoy the subject, work sensibly and safely together and support each other effectively when they work as part of a team. Resources are satisfactory and stored appropriately. Resources for food technology are not clean and need to be kept separately from other resources. The co-ordinator has considerable knowledge and expertise in design and technology. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory. However, the use of assessment to guide future planning to the needs of the pupils is unsatisfactory. Monitoring and evaluation of the pupils' performance in the subject is also unsatisfactory. Sharing the most effective practice more widely to help less confident teachers has been usefully identified as a priority for development.

HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY

122. Only one lesson in history and geography was seen during the inspection due to the constraints of the timetables. Judgements on pupils' progress, therefore, are made on these limited observations, on analysis of pupils' past and present work, displays, review of teachers' planning documents and discussions with staff and pupils. Attainment in geography and history, by the time the pupils are aged seven, is judged to be in line with expectations of pupils of a similar age and similar to the findings of the previous inspection. Pupils in both subjects make satisfactory progress. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is not their first language make similar progress.

123. By the end of Year 2 in geography, most pupils can name the four home countries of the United Kingdom and are developing a geographical vocabulary to answer questions about different places. More-able pupils find some countries on a world map, for example, America and France. Pupils explain how to get from one part of the school to another using vocabulary such as 'take a left or right turn' and 'walk straight on' past a particular feature. They make simple maps on how to get to the Leisure Centre in the town or how to get to the

Police Station. Less-able pupils are frequently confused about which is a right or left turn. In the one lesson observed in Year 1, pupils drew the buildings they saw on their way to school. They could explain how to get to the pedestrian crossing, which is on the main road close to the school. Less-able pupils were very unsure about left and right but with the support of the teaching assistants made progress and more were then able to show by the end of the lesson, which were their left and right hand.

124. In history, pupils by the age of seven have developed a satisfactory understanding of life in the past studying old and new artefacts. Pupils could explain the differences between the present day uniform of the police and in the past. One pupil knew that it was Robert Peel who 'created the police force'. Pupils could discuss why Guy Fawkes tried to blow up the Houses of Parliament and some knew it was James I on the throne at that time. They worked together in pairs looking at photographs and then discussed the differences between the uniforms of today and in the past. This co-operation between pupils enhances their social skills. Pupils had used computers to produce pictures of the 'Bow Street Runners'.

125. Pupils have good attitudes to both subjects. They sustain concentration and interest during lessons. Their behaviour is good. From discussions with pupils they obviously enjoyed the topic 'People who help us' that included elements of history and geography.

126. The quality of teaching and learning in the one lesson observed in both history and geography was satisfactory. In both lessons, planning was sound and the learning objectives shared with the pupils. The management of pupils was good in the geography lesson and satisfactory in history. The support assistants, while giving good support during group activities, could be more effective and better organised during whole class discussions. Pupils' work is marked but there was little evidence of written comments to help the pupils improve on their next piece of work. Teachers' expectations are often not high enough in what pupils can do and achieve and pupils' presentation is often untidy. These issues apply to both subjects.

127. Resources are satisfactory in both subjects. The co-ordinator is the same for both subjects. There is a policy for history and geography. In history, the scheme of work has been simplified and a new policy written in October this year to include the modified scheme of work. The school decided that the needs of the pupils could be best met if history and geography were part of a whole-topic approach. A topic cycle was drawn up in the summer term of 2001. The topic for this term is 'People who help us'. Teachers assess the pupils' achievements against the levels detailed in the national curriculum. However, there was no record of observations of pupils' work. Annual reports to parents include the programme of study for each subject.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

128. By age seven, pupils' attainment is in line with that expected for pupils of this age. The standards identified by the previous inspection have been successfully maintained. All pupils, including those who speak English as additional language and those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. All pupils are fully included in learning in information and communication technology.

129. By the end of Year 2, pupils can confidently re-order a set of jumbled instructions. They use the left mouse button to accurately drop down a menu, select cut and then position the cursor and paste the instruction in the requisite place. Older pupils are able to enter instructions in a small tabletop robot to make it move across a plan of the school and make a noise to signify that it has completed its task. Younger pupils build a model town from plastic bricks and using a simpler robot think out the moves they want it to make and then devise a

program to make it travel from one building to another. They record their program on a wipe off board and check its accuracy after the robot has completed its task. With the help of a learning support assistant, pupils are able to record on a tape recorder what they have found out about a topic in a book the class have been reading. For example, they recorded the fact that fire fighters wear hard helmets to protect their heads and that they would like to climb a ladder from a fire engine. By the end of the session, they understand how to retrieve not only their comments but also those made by their classmates the previous day.

130. They can enter simple data, for example on the number of pupils who keep particular pets in their class, into a database. They are then able to print this information as a simple graph. With help, they access the Internet and download relevant information on topics of interest. For example, one class following a visit from the local police officer were gathering information on the history of the police and accessed various sites to find out about the type of uniforms and the early names for police officers. Pupils are competent at entering text directly into a word-processing package although insufficient use is made of this facility to extend pupils' writing skills.

131. Pupils are keen to use the various computer programs available. They listen carefully to their teachers, ask sensible questions to check what they have to do and then willingly work with the mouse and keyboard to achieve the task they have been set. From time-to-time the program does not respond as it should and pupils confidently attempt to troubleshoot the problem themselves before asking for help. This level of confidence means that pupils learn procedures on the computer commensurate with those they should learn at this age.

132. The teaching observed was satisfactory overall, in one lesson it was good. Able learning support assistants effectively support teachers. As a result, pupils learn at a satisfactory rate. Overall, subject knowledge is adequate and teachers set up an interesting range of activities to practise information and communication technology including, for example the use of the photocopier. Some training for teachers has already taken place and further training is booked for the immediate future. The school has updated all the computer resources and there is now a satisfactory ratio of good quality computers to pupils across the school. This has significantly improved access to quality technology since the previous inspection.

133. The breadth and range of the information and communication technology curriculum are satisfactory. The use of information and communication technology to support standards in other subjects is underdeveloped. Reporting observations and presenting findings in graphs or pie charts, for example in mathematics and science, is still limited. The subject contributes well to the development of pupils' social skills as they work closely together to solve problems and enter text and program the small robots. The subject co-ordinator has a sound understanding of the range of software available and acts as a consultant to other staff, helping in planning activities and ensuring appropriate software is available to support the activities. She has an appropriately broad view of information and communication technology and seeks to ensure pupils understand its many uses. Resources are now adequate. The school is developing a computer suite. Currently there are too few computers in the suite to make half-class teaching viable and some pupils have to undertake paper activities while their class mates use the computers, this is inefficient. The suite is in a room off the reception class. It does not have a separate entrance and this means classes often have to walk through the middle of group activities interrupting the teachers' and pupils' work, this is unacceptable. The school has recognised this and is exploring possibilities to improve the suite. Assessment procedures are satisfactory. Pupils in both special educational needs units have adequate resources that are used appropriately to support their learning.

MUSIC

134. Attainment for seven-year-olds is in line with the national expectation for their age. The school has maintained its standards since the previous inspection. Pupils are able to create musical patterns and suggest simple symbols to record the pattern. For example, some pupils used drawings of people clapping or tapping to show what actions should be taken and when. Others drew on their knowledge of a computer program to use coloured dots to represent different sounds. They learn to tap out a rhythm and distinguish this from a pulse. As their experience grows they begin to recognise how musical elements can be used to create different effects. By the age of seven, pupils are appropriately aware of the variety of sounds made by percussion instruments and can use these as a backing when their class mates are singing.

135. Pupils throughout the school, including those for whom English is an additional language and those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. All pupils are fully included in musical activities. They participate enthusiastically and listen well. Behaviour is good and pupils concentrate well in group activities. Most pupils listen attentively to the range of music played as they enter and leave assemblies. They begin to recognise the instruments played. Their interest and good behaviour enhances the depth of their learning.

136. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. In one lesson, it was very good. In this lesson the headteacher led the whole school in learning about pulse and beat. She set different classes, under the direction of their teachers, the challenge of maintaining one pulse while another class adopted a faster or slower pulse. Such a level of challenge resulted in very good learning by the pupils. Such activities and the scheme of work, cross-referenced to a published scheme of work, provide good support for teachers who do not have specific skills in the subject. However, the staff has not yet gained sufficient confidence to extend the good quality teaching by the headteacher into more creative activities in the classroom. All pupils have the opportunity to be involved in musical productions and experience performing to a variety of audiences.

137. The subject co-ordinator acts as a consultant to other staff and ensures an adequate range of good quality instruments are available for their use. There are no assessment strategies or record-keeping systems in place for music and this is unsatisfactory. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' social skills as they learn well how to work together, share instruments and listen to each other's and visitor's performances. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution to spiritual development as pupils explore the various moods of music, the way it makes them feel and the sheer enjoyment of taking part in musical performances both in the classroom and in the hall. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution to cultural development although greater use of non-western music would extend this contribution further. Pupils make satisfactory use of information and communication technology to generate music. The school makes good use of visitors to extend the curriculum. For example, during the inspection a clarinettist gave a good demonstration of the instrument and pupils were able to identify the clarinet in a piece of orchestral work recorded on a CD.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

138. Standards in physical education at the end of Year 2 are in line with those expected for pupils of this age. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. Progress of all pupils, including those for whom English is an additional language and for those with special educational need, is satisfactory. All pupils are fully included. Younger

pupils demonstrate competence in balance, supporting their body weight on various points of the body, for example one hand and one foot with the other hand and foot raised in the air in the shape of a star. Older pupils extend such muscle control to turning cartwheels on a floor mat. They can demonstrate twisting motion both in floor work and on apparatus such as the ladder frame suspended horizontally above the floor. Younger pupils can create an appropriate dance sequence demonstrating feelings such as sadness or happiness, walking with slow heavy steps or skipping lightly to display the feeling, in addition to using appropriate facial expressions. The majority of pupils can swim an adequate number of recognisable strokes and some can already swim 25 metres.

139. Pupils' attitudes are good and they are keen to take part in physical activities. They strive hard to execute carefully controlled body movements in gymnastics and to be inventive in dance. They listen carefully to the comments of the teacher as they constructively criticise their performance. They try hard to improve the performance. They listen with care to the teacher's instructions in country dancing and work hard and thoughtfully to carry out the complex moves required, working well together to achieve a successful performance. Their behaviour is good and this means that teachers can set interesting exercises and need rarely to stop the groups, which means that the maximum time possible can be used.

140. Teaching is satisfactory and in one lesson it was good. Teachers have sound subject knowledge and understand how to ensure safety throughout each lesson. Teachers expect to be listened to and have appropriate expectations of the pupils' ability to work hard and share equipment sensibly. In one lesson, where teaching was good, the pupils were required to make clear evaluations of each other's performance. This meant that they had to think carefully about the good points of a partner's performance as well as analyse points for improvement, this was observed to greatly improve individual's performance. Such careful partner criticism is an area for development within the school. Pupils are constantly reminded to work safely and very effective warm up routines help them develop an understanding of heart rate and the importance of stretching and warming up muscles.

141. The physical education curriculum is broad and balanced to include all elements required. Pupils in the infant special educational needs unit benefit from the use of a hydrotherapy pool and go horse riding each week. The subject co-ordinator keeps an appropriate overview of the subject but does not have a formal monitoring role. Procedures for monitoring pupils' performance and assessment to guide future planning are satisfactory. Strong links between physical education and the pupils' personal and social development enhance the curriculum as pupils are learning how to work with others and become part of a team, especially in working together to get out and construct the apparatus for gymnastics. Elements of personal and social education are often identified in plans where such aspects may be appropriately promoted. For example, happy and sad actions in dance and the things that make pupils feel this way. Dance and gymnastics contribute satisfactorily to spiritual education as pupils demonstrate emotions and to cultural development through dance, although these are mainly western-European dances. There is no evidence of information and communication technology being used as a tool for learning in physical education through; for example, recording how many pupils can swim five strokes, a width or a length. The resources and equipment for physical education are good and enable pupils to attain the standards expected of their age group and to learn appropriate skills.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

142. Only one lesson in religious education was observed. From discussions with pupils and looking at a small sample of work, standards by the age of seven are judged to be broadly in line with the expectations of the Agreed Syllabus of the Local Education Authority. The standards identified by the previous inspection have been maintained.

143. By the end of Year 2, pupils know some of the stories that Jesus told. They also know some of the stories from the Bible. For example, in one class the pupils studied the story of Zacchaeus, the tax collector, of how he climbed a tree to get a good view of Jesus, of how Jesus befriended him and how he became a changed person afterwards. Younger pupils begin to be able to retell the Christmas story and talk about the message the Angel Gabrielle brought to Mary. They begin to write about the feelings Mary may have experienced during this visit.

144. Pupils, at the end of Year 2, know that the church is a place for Christian worship and that other religions have different places of worship. They study the lives of an imaginary Christian child called Sarah and a Muslim child called Isma'il. They understand that the Bible is important to Christians and in this Church of England school opening the Bible and lighting the Advent candle are important features of assembly. Parents at the parents' meeting commented on how significant this was for their children. Young children in the reception class often act out this ceremony in their role-play area. The pupils understand that prayer is important and put their hands together and close their eyes to help them concentrate. They say prayers, including the school prayer in assembly, with great sincerity and prepare thoughtfully for lunch by saying Grace in a quiet and respectful manner. Good links with the local community have been established through visits to the local church, visits from the vicar and a visit to a mosque in a nearby city. These contacts enhance the religious education curriculum well.

145. Insufficient observations were made of teaching to make an overall judgement about teaching. In the one lesson observed, the teacher had taken great care to follow the syllabus and to collect together an interesting range of resources. One of these was an Advent calendar that consisted of a range of small books gradually taking the pupils through the Christmas story as the Advent season progresses. Such care with preparation is judged to provide pupils with sound learning opportunities and engender interest in religious education. Another teacher followed up a lesson from a previous week with a play in assembly in which her class recounted the story of Zacchaeus.

146. The religious education curriculum meets the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. There is an enthusiastic and keen subject co-ordinator who has raised considerable funds from charitable organisations to provide resources for the subject. The school is now well resourced. She has worked hard to encourage staff in the delivery of religious education. The school presents pupils with a personal Bible, which, they take on with them when they leave the school and this makes a good contribution to pupils' knowledge of the Bible and demonstrates the school's overall ethos of care. The monitoring of pupils' performance and assessment procedures are satisfactory. The subject makes a good contribution to spiritual, social and moral development through encouraging through Bible stories the care and respect shown for each other and through the periods of sincere and peaceful prayer. It makes a satisfactory contribution to cultural development through its study of Islam.