

INSPECTION REPORT

DROVE PRIMARY AND NURSERY SCHOOL

Swindon

LEA area: Swindon

Unique reference number: 131566

Headteacher: Dr N Capstick

Reporting inspector: Mr D J Curtis
20893

Dates of inspection: 29th January – 2nd February 2001

Inspection number: 230442

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary and Nursery

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3-11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Drove Road
Swindon
Wilts

Postcode: SN1 3AH

Telephone number: 01793 529009

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Patrick Curtin

Date of previous inspection: March 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
20893	Mr D J Curtis Registered inspector	Information and communication technology Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? (Results and achievements) How well are pupils taught?
9946	Mr M Whitaker Lay inspector		How high are standards? (Attitudes, behaviour and personal development) How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
30976	Mrs K Henry Team inspector	English Religious education	How good are curricular and other opportunities?
13307	Mr I Hancock Team inspector	Design and technology Geography History Equal opportunities	
20671	Mr J Palethorpe Team inspector	Mathematics Physical education	How well is the school led and managed?
22831	Mr C Lewis Team inspector	Science Art and Design Music Special educational needs	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Drove Primary and Nursery School is situated in Swindon and takes pupils from the ages of three to eleven. There are 389 pupils on roll in 14 classes, with 182 boys and 209 girls. This is an above average size primary school. In addition, 47 children attend the nursery on a part-time mornings or afternoons basis. The school takes pupils from a wide range of ethnic backgrounds, with seventeen languages represented in the school. There are 158 pupils from homes where English is not the first language and who are supported by specialist funding; this is above the national average. There are 124 pupils on the school's register of special educational needs; this proportion is above the national average. There are no pupils with statements of special educational need. Forty-five pupils are entitled to free school meals; this proportion is below the national average. The number of pupils entering or leaving the school at times other than the usual time of admission or transfer is high. Children enter the school with standards which are below average for the local education authority. In recent years the school has been amalgamated from separate infant and junior schools. There has been a high turnover of teaching staff and headteachers. The current headteacher was appointed in January 2000.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a rapidly improving school. Although not high enough, standards in English, mathematics and science are improving significantly from a very low base. The leadership and management of the school are now very good and, in Key Stage 2¹, the quality of teaching is now good. Pupils' very positive attitudes, behaviour and personal development are strengths. The outstanding strength of the school is the quality of racial harmony between pupils. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- By the age of eleven standards in physical education are good.
- The attitudes, behaviour and relationships shown by pupils are very good.
- Teaching is good.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- The leadership and management of the school are very good.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language, is good.

What could be improved

- Standards in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT), although improving, are not high enough.
- Pupils' attendance.
- The quality of teachers' marking and the quality of pupils' presentation of work.
- The use of assessment in subjects other than English, mathematics and science.

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 September 1999 when it was placed in serious weaknesses. It was inspected again by HMI² in June 2000 where it was found to be making good progress in four of the six issues. The school continues to make good progress. Standards in English, mathematics, science and ICT are improving rapidly, although significant gaps in pupils' previous learning mean that standards are still not high enough.

¹ Key Stage 2 refers to pupils in Years 3 to 6 aged seven to eleven and Key Stage 1 to pupils in Years 1 and 2 aged five to seven.

² HMI refers to Her Majesty's Inspectors of schools who are directly employed by Ofsted to monitor schools and the inspection process.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Assessment procedures are being used effectively to support pupils' learning in English, mathematics and science (key priority areas for the school) but not in other subjects.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores³ in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	N/A	E	E	E*
Mathematics	N/A	E	E	E
Science	N/A	E*	E	E*

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

very low E*

Similar school comparisons refer to those with between 8 and 20 per cent free school meals.

The results of Year 2000 National Curriculum assessments for pupils in Year 6 were well below the national average in English, mathematics and science. In comparison with similar schools, results were very low (in the bottom five per cent) in English and science and well below average in mathematics. Although not high enough, the school's results in mathematics and science showed a significant improvement over its 1999 results. In English, there was no improvement. Inspection findings show that by the end of Year 6 standards in English, mathematics and science are below average. Standards, whilst not high, enough are improving. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are below national expectations because pupils have significant gaps in their learning. In religious education, standards meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. In physical education, standards are good and exceed expectations for eleven year olds. Standards in music meet expectations. In design and technology and geography, standards are below expectations as the result of important gaps in teaching and pupils' past learning. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about standards in art and design, and history.

By the end of Year 2, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are below average. Standards are improving, although they are still not high enough. Improvements in the quality of teaching and the successful implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are having a positive impact on raising standards. Standards in science remain below average. Standards in ICT meet national expectations. In religious education, standards meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education meet expectations for seven year olds.

By the age of six, standards in communication, language and literacy are below the expectations of the Early Learning Goals⁴. In mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, personal and social development, physical development and creative development, children meet the expectations of the Early Learning Goals.

³ Average point scores refers to the average of pupils' scores weighted by Ofsted for each level attained in each subject.

⁴ QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority) has produced a set of 'Early Learning Goals', comprised of skills, knowledge and understanding that children might be expected to achieve by the time they enter Year 1. There are six areas of learning: personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literature; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; creative development; and physical development.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good, pupils enjoy school and work hard in lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good, pupils behave well in lessons, when moving around the school and at lunchtimes.
Personal development and relationships	Good, pupils relate well to each other and with all adults with whom they come into contact. Racial harmony is a strength.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory, rates of authorised and unauthorised absence are too high.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Satisfactory	Good

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

Teaching in the school is good, although there are variations between the key stages. During the inspection, the quality of teaching was good or better in 57 per cent of lessons, including 18 per cent which were very good, and one excellent lesson. Good teaching contributes successfully to rapidly improving standards and to the very good attitudes and behaviour of pupils.

During the inspection, excellent teaching was seen in numeracy in Year 5. Examples of very good teaching were seen in reception and in Key Stage 1 in numeracy and religious education. In Key Stage 2, very good teaching was seen in literacy, design and technology, geography, music and physical education. Examples of good teaching were seen in most classes and most subjects. Examples of unsatisfactory teaching (three lessons) were seen in art in Key Stage 1 and in numeracy in Key Stage 2.

The teaching of pupils with special educational needs has improved significantly. Teachers and teacher assistants meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs with good and, frequently, very good support, providing a good blend of help and challenge, and a range of graded tasks matched to their needs.

The teaching of pupils with English as an additional language is good and contributes to the good progress they make in learning. The two part-time teachers who receive specific funding to support these pupils provide a very effective level of teaching expertise.

The teaching of literacy is good and contributes to improving standards. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and clear aims are identified at the beginning of each lesson. The teaching of numeracy in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory, and in Key Stage 2 it is good. Teachers' planning is a strength of their work. Lesson objectives are clear and made known to pupils at the start of lessons with positive effects on learning.

Teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory in the nursery and good in reception. Teaching of basic literacy and numeracy skills is good, particularly the teaching of letter sounds (phonics) and counting.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory, the school is concentrating on English, mathematics and science in order to raise standards. Effective implementation of literacy and numeracy.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good and a significant improvement. Individual education plans set clear targets. Pupils are supported effectively by all staff.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good, specialist teachers provide effective support in lessons and in individual teaching; they work well with class teachers and learning support assistants to help pupils make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good provision for moral, social and cultural development; good for spiritual development. These make a strong contribution to pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good, pupils are well cared for.

The school works hard to involve parents in the day-to-day life of the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good, the headteacher is totally committed to raising standards. He is supported effectively by the deputy headteacher and senior management team. Since his appointment, significant progress has been made in the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil all of their duties; they show a good awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good, the school is monitoring its performance in great detail and is setting realistic but challenging targets for improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Good, with strengths in the use of the new 'IT-Suite' and the use of specific grants to support pupils' learning.

The school has adequate staffing, accommodation and resources to support pupils' learning. It applies the principles of best value successfully.

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 school is well led and managed.• The school helps children to become mature and responsible.• Behaviour is good.• Teaching is good.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More extracurricular activities.

Thirty-three parents attended the meeting with the registered inspector prior to the inspection and 53 questionnaires were returned. Consequently, these views may not represent the views of the parent body as a whole. Inspection findings support the positive views of parents. In relation to extracurricular activities, inspection findings judge that the school provides a satisfactory range.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The previous inspection in September 1999 placed the school in 'serious weaknesses' as the result of standards in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT) not being good enough. In June 2000, the school was inspected by HMI and was found to be making good progress in the key issue to raise standards. Current inspection findings judge that the school is continuing to make good progress. However, inspection findings confirm that there are important factors which have contributed to low standards. These are:

- Serious weaknesses in past curriculum planning and teaching which have led to significant gaps in pupils' learning;
- The teaching of pupils in mixed age classes was not successful;
- Significant turnover of teaching staff and headteachers;
- High numbers of pupils who leave or join the school at other than the normal times of admission or transfer to secondary school;
- Children entering school with below average skills in communication, language and literacy.

2. Children start the nursery at the age of three on a part-time basis. They make satisfactory progress in the stepping stones of the Foundation Stage⁵ curriculum. On entry to reception, standards are below average for the local education authority. By the age of six, standards in communication, language and literacy are below the expectations of the Early Learning Goals. In mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, personal and social development, physical development and creative development, children meet the expectations of the Early Learning Goals.

3. The results of Year 2000 National Curriculum assessments for pupils in Year 2 were well below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. In comparison with similar schools nationally, results were well below average in the three subjects. The results of teacher assessments for science were below the national average, but average in comparison with similar schools.

⁵ From September 2000, the term Foundation Stage refers to children's education from the age of three until the end of the reception year.

4. Inspection findings show that by the end of Year 2 standards in reading, writing and mathematics are below average. Standards are improving, although they are still not high enough. Improvements in the quality of teaching and the successful implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are having a positive impact on raising standards. Standards in science remain below average.

5. Standards in ICT meet national expectations. In religious education, standards meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education meet expectations for seven year olds.

6. The results of Year 2000 National Curriculum assessments for pupils in Year 6 were well below the national average in English, mathematics and science. In comparison with similar schools, results were very low (in the bottom five per cent) in English and science and well below average in mathematics. Although not high enough the school's results in mathematics and science showed a significant improvement over its 1999 results. However, in English there was no improvement.

7. Inspection findings show that by the end of Year 6 standards in English, mathematics and science are below average. Standards, whilst not high enough, are improving as the result of:

- Pupils being taught in single age group classes;
- Significant improvement in the quality of teaching;
- The successful implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies;
- Significant improvement in the leadership and management of the school.

8. Standards in information and communication technology are below national expectations because pupils have significant gaps in their learning. Standards are improving at a good rate of progress particularly through good teaching in the 'IT-Suite'. However, the gaps in learning are too great for the current group of Year 6 pupils to catch up on their learning. Inspection evidence is that if the rate of progress in Years 3 and 4 is maintained, standards will meet national expectations.

9. In religious education, standards meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. In physical education, standards are good and exceed expectations for eleven year olds. Standards in music meet expectations. In design and technology and geography, standards are below expectations as the result of important gaps in teaching and pupils' past learning. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about standards in art and design, and history.

10. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their abilities and their individual education plans. They are supported effectively in lessons and in those sessions where they work away from their own classrooms and are supported by teachers and/or learning support assistants.

11. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress in their learning. They receive very good support from the part-time specialist teachers who are funded to meet the learning needs of these pupils. The specialist teachers work in effective partnership with class teachers in providing a curriculum which is adapted to their learning needs. Pupils with English as an additional language benefit from the good support they receive from classmates and the significant degree of racial harmony in the school.

12. Inspection findings confirm that the school is justified in setting immediate targets to raise standards in English, mathematics and science. The school now has very effective leadership and management and is totally committed to raising standards. In addition, the quality of teaching has improved significantly. Inspection evidence is now consistent with the school having the capacity to reach its targets. The improvements made in the results of Year 6 mathematics and science assessments in Year 2000 confirm this judgement.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

13. Pupils have very good attitudes to their work, which represents a considerable improvement on the satisfactory attitudes noted in the previous inspection report. In the mornings they play or gossip with friends until it is time to come into school when they line up and enter their classrooms in a purposeful fashion. The great majority are evidently happy to be at school. In lessons pupils are diligent. They listen to their teachers, apply themselves to tasks set and participate well in class discussions. In more than three-quarters of lessons seen, pupils' attitudes were good or very good. The presentation of their work, however, is disappointing and does not do justice to the effort which went into the task. Pupils respond particularly well to the inspired teaching of physical activities such as dance. They take advantage of the opportunities the school offers, such as a chess club, a choir and the chance to perform in a musical production. Pupils are proud of their school's achievements and will happily guide the visitor through photographs of various sports teams.

14. Behaviour is very good, an improvement on the good standard seen at the time of the last inspection. Pupils are instinctively polite. They open doors, fetch chairs and ask whether the visitor needs help or directions. They move about the school in an orderly and considerate fashion. When a class is going to the hall for an assembly or a physical education lesson, it is automatic for one child to hold the door open until all have passed through. Behaviour in lessons is very good; at times excellent. Classroom duties are carried out promptly and willingly. At lunch pupils are sociably chatty, but mannerly; mealtime supervisors' instructions are carried out without argument. School resources and premises are treated with respect. Play is vigorous but good-natured. All pupils, regardless of nationality or ethnic origin, play together well. There is no evidence of any sexual or racial harassment. The school is a harmonious place. There have been no exclusions over the preceding twelve months.

15. Personal development, particularly social development, is good. Year 6 pupils have responsibilities for helping to supervise the dining hall and for preparing the hall for assemblies. The pupils themselves organise the rota for these duties. Year 6 has its own recreational area, for which the pupils themselves are entirely responsible. They are required to raise the funds for its furnishings and equipment. In other classes, pupils have duties which they carry out promptly and without fuss. Pupils respond positively to the variety of religions, nationalities and cultures within the school community and happily join in other cultures' celebrations - Chinese New Year for example. There is, however, less evidence of pupils developing as independent learners. Relationships are very good and a strength of the school. Adults offer excellent role models and pupils respond accordingly. Teachers treat pupils with respect and value all contributions. Staff are aware of some pupils' cultural sensitivities: for example regarding jewellery of religious significance. Pupils support each other in lessons: for example in a literacy hour, one Bengali speaking boy with competent English was seen supporting another with little command of the language.

16. Attendance is unsatisfactory. At 92.4 per cent it is well below the average for a school of this type. Unauthorised absence, at 2.5 per cent, is well above the national average for primary schools. There are problems with punctuality. A number of pupils in each year group arrive during the first ten to fifteen minutes of the school day. The matter is being addressed by the headteacher and the education welfare officer.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. The previous inspection judged the quality of teaching to be ‘satisfactory overall for the under fives and Key Stage 1’. Teaching in Key Stage 2 was judged to be ‘unsatisfactory’ where weaknesses were identified in:

- The teaching of English, mathematics and science, with the result that pupils of below average ability, and those with special educational needs made insufficient progress;
- In large and mixed age classes, teachers were not meeting the learning needs of pupils;
- The use of assessment and the quality of teachers’ marking were inconsistent.

Although not a specific key issue, improvements in teaching were linked to the key issues of raising standards and in improving provision for pupils with special educational needs.

18. Inspection findings show that the quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 has improved and that the weaknesses identified have been addressed successfully. Teaching in the school is good, although there are variations between the key stages. During the inspection, the quality of teaching was good or better in 57 per cent of lessons, including 18 per cent, which were very good, and one excellent lesson. Thirty-nine per cent of lessons were satisfactory and three per cent unsatisfactory. The following table gives the breakdown (in percentages) within each key stage.

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Foundation Stage	0	19	44	38	0
Key Stage 1	0	8	36	52	4
Key Stage 2	2	23	38	33	4

19. The improvement in teaching is having a significant impact on raising standards within the school. During the inspection, excellent teaching was seen in a Year 5 numeracy lesson. Examples of very good teaching were seen in reception, and in Key Stage 1 in numeracy and religious education. In Key Stage 2, very good teaching was seen in literacy, design and technology, geography, music and physical education. Examples of good teaching were seen in most classes and most subjects. Examples of unsatisfactory teaching (three lessons) were seen in art in Key Stage 1 and in numeracy in Key Stage 2.

20. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs has improved significantly. Teachers and teacher assistants meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs, with good, and frequently very good, support. They provide a good blend of help and challenge, and a range of graded tasks matched to pupils’ needs. Work is carefully matched to the targets set in pupils’ individual education plans. Learning support assistants work successfully with pupils both in classrooms and in the specialist teaching area for supporting these pupils.

21. The teaching of pupils with English is an additional language is good and contributes to the good progress they make in learning. The two part-time teachers who receive specific funding to support these pupils provide a very effective level of teaching expertise. There is a good balance of supporting pupils in lessons when they work alongside class teachers and time spent in individual teaching when pupils are away from their own classrooms. In reception, the specialist teacher works very effectively in developing children’s knowledge and understanding of the world through exciting and stimulating lessons in which children are taken on a ‘Magic Carpet’ to other countries: for example China.

22. The teaching of literacy is good and contributes to improving standards. Teachers’ subject knowledge is good and clear aims are identified at the beginning of each lesson. The most effective lessons build on prior learning and are carefully planned to include a range of activities to motivate pupils and involve them fully in lessons. Most teachers use plenary or final sessions well to assess the gains in pupils’ learning.

23. The teaching of numeracy in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory, and in Key Stage 2 it is good. This is a good improvement since the last inspection, particularly in Key Stage 2, where teaching was unsatisfactory. Teachers' planning is a strength of their work. Lesson objectives are clear and made known to pupils at the start of lessons. Different work is set for pupils of different ability, although on occasions, it is not sufficiently challenging, particularly for the higher ability pupils. Individual whiteboards are used effectively, particularly for the mental mathematics starter to the lesson.

24. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory in the nursery, and good in reception. Teaching of basic literacy and numeracy skills is good, particularly the teaching of letter sounds (phonics) and counting. Teachers support children's learning well, with good support from learning support assistants. Staff provide a good balance of adult led activities in which children are taught, and those which children choose for themselves.

25. In the best lessons, teachers show confident and secure subject knowledge which is passed on to pupils with enthusiasm and confidence. For example in reception, the teacher's own knowledge of China and the Chinese New Year brought the lesson alive for children with the result that they were totally absorbed in the story and the follow-up Chinese Dragon making activity. Good learning took place, with children making clear gains in new knowledge. At the beginning of lessons, teachers share the purpose of the lesson with pupils which helps pupils to understand their own learning. For example in a Year 5 ICT lesson the teacher set the task that the lesson was intended to develop skills to 'use font sizes and effects appropriately to produce a 'Save Water' poster'. Pupils were very clear as to what was expected, with the result that they achieved well.

26. In the middle part of lessons, group work is managed and organised well. As early as reception, children are expected to work independently in groups and to allow the teacher and learning support assistants to concentrate on the groups they work with. As a result, most children develop good independence in their learning. They are prepared well for Year 1 and the requirements of group work within literacy and numeracy. Teachers use the plenary or final part of the lesson successfully to consolidate pupils' learning, or to assess the progress pupils have made in the session. For example at the end of a Year 5 ICT lesson, the teacher asked, "What did you like about the posters?" and "Can you give any helpful hints as to how we could improve them?" This gave pupils opportunities to develop their evaluation skills and to use their speaking and listening skills with the class as an audience.

27. Teachers manage pupils successfully in lessons and this contributes well to pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour. In 78 per cent of lessons, pupils' attitudes and behaviour were good or better, including 29 per cent where they were very good and six per cent excellent. This is the result of teachers making work interesting and planning successfully to meet the individual learning needs of pupils.

28. Across the school, teachers do not always give pupils sufficient time to make spoken contributions, with the result that speaking skills, in particular, are underdeveloped. However, in most lessons, pupils listen well because of interesting lesson introductions by teachers. There is inconsistency in the quality of teachers' marking in the school and this is linked to inconsistencies in the way pupils present their work. There is insufficient emphasis on expecting consistently high standards of presentation.

29. Teachers make good use of homework to support pupils' learning, especially in Key Stage 2.

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

30. The school provides a satisfactory range and quality of learning opportunities for children in the Foundation Stage and for pupils in both key stages. Statutory requirements are

fully met and satisfactory arrangements are in place for health and sex education. Since the last inspection the introduction of single age classes in Key Stage 2 has made the planning and delivery of the curriculum more effective. The school is aware that the large mixed age classes that existed until recently were unable fully to meet the needs of pupils in Years 3 and 5. Steps have been taken to supplement the curriculum where necessary and to track pupils' progress carefully. Since the last inspection the curriculum for information and communication technology has greatly improved. The school now has the benefit of an 'IT-Suite', which is used by all classes. The use of ICT in the classroom as an integral part of the curriculum is an area, which still requires further development. The school is aware that in English it lacks a planned approach to the development of speaking and listening skills, and that insufficient attention is given to challenging the more able pupils in mathematics. Throughout the school, appropriate use is made of homework to support pupils' learning.

31. There are detailed schemes of work in place for all areas of learning. Many of which are based on nationally published schemes. These together with curriculum maps form the basis of the school's long term plans. In religious education the locally agreed syllabus is followed satisfactorily. The format of the school's medium term planning has been carefully thought through so that the breadth and balance of the curriculum can be monitored and appropriate curriculum links identified. Specific learning intentions are stated for each subject area, which enables the progression of skills and understanding to be tracked. Short term planning is monitored using a scheme called 'Let's celebrate'. Every two weeks the headteacher requests teachers from one year group to submit a few pieces of pupils' work alongside the related short term planning. This allows parents, pupils and colleagues to see how the curriculum is delivered and what the outcomes are. One area that is not sufficiently emphasised in teachers' planning is the creation of opportunities for pupils to conduct independent investigations and research.

32. There are good strategies in place for the development of literacy and numeracy. The school has introduced a number of new initiatives in its efforts to raise standards. The local education authority adviser has provided support and guidance to help teachers implement the literacy hour effectively. Literacy lessons are well planned to take account of the need to improve spelling and writing and good additional support is provided for pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 benefit from a programme of additional literacy support. From the time they enter school pupils are monitored closely. Good procedures are now in place to enable the school to identify those needing additional support in literacy and numeracy by the end of Year 1.

33. Arrangements for identifying and supporting pupils with special educational needs are good. This constitutes very good progress since the previous inspection. A detailed and comprehensive register of special educational needs is kept by the co-ordinator. Appropriately detailed and specific individual education plans are provided for pupils on the register, written by class teachers in conjunction with the special needs co-ordinator. There are currently no pupils with statements of educational need in the school. The school complies fully with the DfEE Code Of Practice⁶.

34. A satisfactory range of extracurricular activities is provided for pupils, including an art club, chess club, teams for football, netball and athletics, and a block of sixteen weekly visits to the local study support centre at Swindon Town Football Club. Currently pupils in Key Stage 2 are involved in a production of 'Cinderella', which will be performed for parents. In Year 6, pupils have the opportunity to go on a residential visit to Braeside for a week in April which enriches aspects of the curriculum.

35. The school provides a good range of links with the community. Useful and effective links have been established with a local business to develop a major reading programme in the school. Links have been established with local religious groups to support the teaching of

⁶ The DfEE Code of Practice gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities to ensure that all pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act.

religious education. During the inspection, the school was visited by basketball players from the Para Olympic group. They worked with pupils from both key stages.

36. The school makes very good overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development which is one of its strengths, and this has greatly improved since the last inspection. This has a very significant impact on the very good attitudes, behaviour and relationships of pupils.

37. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. Spiritual development is effectively promoted in acts of collective worship and in religious education lessons. Pupils have the opportunity to engage in prayer and quiet reflection in daily acts of collective worship. Most assemblies are well planned, of high quality and take place in a quiet respectful atmosphere. The school has strong links with various faith leaders, represented by pupils in the school, who regularly lead assemblies. Numerous visits are made to the local church and mosque. There are good opportunities to learn of Christianity and other faiths of pupils attending the school, where major world religious festivals such as Christmas, Diwali and Eid are well celebrated. Good quality displays and artefacts on world religions mounted in corridors and classrooms throughout the school provide very good opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding of several faiths. However, the school does not directly identify opportunities to develop pupils' sense of awe and wonder, and there are limited opportunities to promote spirituality in many areas of the curriculum.

38. Very good provision is made for pupils' moral development. The school has a very good ethos effectively integrating many ethnic groups into an orderly community where all pupils feel secure. The school places very high priority on equipping all pupils with a clear set of moral values. Routine class practices and explicit moral teaching in lessons and assemblies reinforce this high expectation. Older pupils are expected to set good examples of behaviour to younger children. The golden rules are prominently displayed throughout the school, continually reinforced and are fully supported by governors and parents. Staff provide pupils with very good role models and encourage them to be polite, friendly, show consideration to others and distinguish right from wrong. The school successfully promotes a sense of citizenship by encouraging pupils to support children's charities and participate in the 'Healthy School Award'. Older pupils are encouraged to take responsibility and use initiatives such as refurbishing and maintaining their own purpose area.

39. The provision for pupils' social development is very good. Strong emphasis is given to personal and social development from the time children start school. Many opportunities are provided for the successful development of pupils' social skills, including everyday interactions between pupils and adults. The promotion of values such as friendships and care for others forms an important aspect of school life and includes older pupils looking after younger children at lunchtime. Pupils are encouraged to work well together in class and play amicably on the playground. The school has recently introduced a wide range of extracurricular activities, including a production of Cinderella. These are well supported and greatly enhance pupils' social development. Social development is effectively promoted in visits organised to support pupils' learning in the curriculum, including to Swindon Town Football Club, the residential trip to Braeside and the social events organised by Friends of Drove.

40. Provision for pupils' cultural development is very good. Pupils learn to appreciate their own culture and that of others by numerous visitors to the school and explicit teaching in assemblies. Good quality interactive displays including costumes and artefacts on world cultures such as Chinese New Year, are prominently displayed throughout the school to capture pupils' imagination and develop a real understanding of cultures to be found in the global community. Numerous visits are made to local places of interest, including the railway museum in Swindon and Wyvern Theatre to see a production of Macbeth. Pupils have good opportunities to participate in local music festivals and see theatre companies and orchestras in school, effectively to promote cultural awareness. Since the last inspection the school has used the diverse experiences, beliefs and heritages of its pupils as a very good resource to learn and compare the customs of numerous cultures.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

41. The school has good procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare. The headteacher is the designated person for child protection purposes. The school's child protection procedures follow local education authority guidelines. All staff, including support staff, are aware of the procedure to be followed in cases of concern. The headteacher has an effective line of communication to other statutory authorities. The area's community police officer is a frequent visitor to the school. In addition to talking with pupils about 'stranger danger' and substance misuse, he helps in lessons in a practical way, so as to break down barriers between pupils and the police. A Year 6 teacher has the role of informal counsellor for girls. Parents describe school staff as 'very accessible' to children. Pupils spoken to during the inspection agree.

42. All necessary health and safety procedures are in place. A member of the governing body has responsibility for the matter and a teacher has been appointed as staff health and safety representative. Procedures are in place for reporting and dealing with potential hazards. The presence of a resident caretaker ensures that hazards are swiftly dealt with. Contracts are in place for regular safety inspections of electrical equipment, fire apparatus and physical education equipment. Regular fire drills, which include the nursery, are held. There are efficient arrangements for first aid and dealing with pupils' medical needs.

43. The school offers its pupils high standards of care. Staff show due sensitivity to pupils' various religious traditions. Support staff and parent helpers include members of ethnic minority communities whose presence is reassuring for children from those communities. There are careful arrangements in Key Stage 1 to ensure that children are only handed over to known carers. The school's 'red triangle' system for summoning assistance to a classroom was seen in operation; it is effective. Healthy living is promoted in practical ways: for example children are not allowed crisps and sweets for mid-morning snacks.

44. There are satisfactory arrangements for monitoring attendance. There are two problems regarding attendance: unauthorised absence and petty lateness (in each class, a handful of pupils straggle in over the first ten or fifteen minutes of the day). The school, together with the education welfare officer, have identified families from the ethnic minority communities as being responsible for most of the long term absences. The headteacher, in conjunction with other interested parties across the town, is working on producing letters about attendance in a range of minority languages. For those for whom language is not a problem, there are reminders in newsletters about the need for punctuality. The extent of unauthorised absence has increased since the previous inspection, in part because the present headteacher will only accept explanations for absence from responsible adults.

45. The school is very effective in its promotion of good behaviour. Its starting point is the promotion of pupils' self esteem. The school's message is that every child can be good at something and there are displays all around the school celebrating pupils' successes. Staff are quick to praise the positive - on one occasion, the headteacher visited a class to congratulate them on the quality of their contribution to that morning's assembly. On arrival in the reception classes, children are introduced firmly, but gently, to the school's behavioural requirements. Expectations of behaviour are high and throughout the school the staff's approach to discipline is consistent. Lunchtime supervisors have been trained in behaviour management. The school has a set of simple 'golden rules' and pupils negotiate their own class rules at the beginning of each academic year. Consequently they feel ownership of those rules. There are rewards for both individuals and groups, culminating in the public celebration of success - an entry in the 'Golden Book', announced in a whole school assembly. Sanctions are clearly understood; they usually take the form of a loss of privilege time. Where necessary, the school keeps appropriate records. Parents are brought in at an early stage where bullying is concerned.

46. Assessment procedures have significantly improved since the previous inspection, where the school has appropriately focused on improving assessment in English, mathematics and science as part of its strong commitment to raising standards. There are good procedures for assessing the attainment and progress of pupils in these subjects, including very careful analysis of National Curriculum assessments and optional tests, which was highlighted as a weakness in the previous inspection. The wealth of information collected is used well to set targets for individual pupils, organise them into ability groups, and to predict their performance in National Curriculum tests. There are good examples of teachers using their knowledge of pupils to modify their teaching in English, mathematics and science throughout the school. However, assessment is underused as a tool for planning pupils' work in the majority of other subjects. It is therefore a complex task to track what pupils have been taught and even more difficult to identify what pupils know, understand and can do in all subjects. This can lead to inappropriate tasks set for individual pupils and consequently have a negative impact on their learning. Pupils' work is marked regularly, but the quality of teachers' marking is inconsistent and targets to help pupils improve are rarely identified. In the reception classes baseline assessment is appropriately used for assessing the attainment of children under five.

47. There is very good use of assessment procedures to identify pupils with special educational needs. The special educational needs co-ordinator maintains a detailed register of such pupils and there are appropriate procedures for placing pupils on this register. At the time of the inspection, there were no pupils on the school roll with a statement of educational need.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

48. The school works hard at communicating with, and involving, parents through providing information of good quality. School newsletters are written in a lively, parent-friendly style and presented in an interesting, eye-catching tabloid format. The school brochure and governors' annual report to parents are similarly presented. Each class issues a termly newsletter giving advance notice of the topics to be covered in that term. Key Stage 1 classrooms have parents' notice boards with notice of forthcoming events, copies of recent letters and requests for materials such as a cereal box and a sock (for making a sock puppet theatre). Parents are offered two consultation meetings with teachers, in the autumn and summer terms. These are well attended - the school estimates that it reaches about eighty per cent of parents. Parents of children with special educational needs are offered a similar meeting in the spring term. Pupils' annual reports are satisfactory; they contain a description of the child's progress together with observations on personal development and targets for the ensuing year. Reports meet statutory requirements. Both inspection evidence and comment from parents indicate that teachers are readily available to discuss problems. The headteacher is usually present in the playground before school starts.

49. Parents make a satisfactory contribution to their children's work and to the life of the school. A parent-teacher association, Friends of Drove, has been formed to act as both fundraiser and social bridge between school and parents. It has recently held a successful first event. Parents are encouraged to volunteer help in classrooms and a number do so, chiefly in Key Stage 1. Parents help the school through their support for homework.

50. A small minority of the eligible parents took the opportunity to express their views of the school before the inspection. 53 questionnaires were returned - 13 per cent of those issued - and 33 parents attended the pre-inspection meeting. The majority of those expressing a view were satisfied with the school's provisions. There was some discontent at the number and range of out-of-school activities. However, the inspection team's view is that the provision - art, drama, a choir, football, netball (and cricket in summer), chess and recorders - is satisfactory. In addition, Year 6 pupils are offered a residential visit to an outdoor activities centre.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

51. The school is very well led by the headteacher, with good support from senior staff, who all have clearly defined responsibilities. Through the introduction of a new management structure, the school has successfully overcome the weaknesses in management found at the time of the last inspection. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school, and leads very much from the front. He is building a high performing team, and together they are inspiring, motivating and influencing staff. The management team meets regularly to deal with short term and long term strategy. The curriculum co-ordinators are providing a lead in their areas of responsibility, particularly English, mathematics and science, although the monitoring of teaching is at an early stage of development. The governing body is now effectively organised and makes a good contribution to the school's development. The leadership and management of the school are clearly having a positive impact on the standards of education, particularly in teaching. However, although the headteacher has made remarkable inroads, in a very short time, into many of the difficulties the school faced, it will take longer to bring standards of attainment to a satisfactory level, particularly in English and mathematics.

52. The school has a clear 'Vision Statement' which includes a revised set of aims, developed by staff and governors. They clearly indicate a desire to help pupils reach their true potential and to raise standards. The school's thorough monitoring and evaluation of its work enables all concerned to understand its strengths and weaknesses. The school improvement plan clearly identifies appropriate strategies to address these weaknesses. Priorities are identified, with actions, success indicators, key staff, and related costs. Naturally, the raising of standards, particularly in English and mathematics is at the heart of the plan.

53. Target setting for individuals, groups and end of key stages has become an integral part of the school's work. Rigorous analysis of results, and a system which tracks pupils' progress as they move through the school, are enabling teachers to set challenging, but attainable targets for all pupils, and this is often happening. Targets for the end of Key Stage 2, whilst still below national averages, are realistically based on prior attainment. A number of actions have been instigated to help the school reach these targets. Several initiatives funded nationally are used effectively to give extra support to pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language, or for those who need a "boost" to help them achieve the appropriate levels for their age. Furthermore, the school makes good use of additional teacher time and teaching assistants to provide help to small groups of pupils. Whilst this can be a little disruptive to other lessons, the school's short term aim is to enable pupils to catch up on their basic skills. The reasons for this are convincing and well founded. The profile of this work has been considerably raised with the conversion of one classroom into teaching bays, and with many teaching assistants attending courses to gain further qualifications. Temporary teaching allowances have been created specifically to address standards in reading and spelling. There is a good deal of clarity in setting out actions to achieve the desired outcomes.

54. The vacancies on the governing body have now all been filled, and the governors fulfil all statutory responsibilities. There is a sound committee structure enabling governors to exercise their responsibilities, and roles are clearly defined. For example, governors are allocated to oversee curriculum areas, and they attended the curriculum interviews during the inspection. There is a good relationship between the headteacher and governing body, and governors are keen to be involved and support the work of the school. Governors have regular meetings with staff, and through this, have a good knowledge of the school's strengths and areas for development.

55. Teaching was an area for concern in the last inspection, particularly in Key Stage 2. The leadership of the school has initiated several strategies to overcome this, and all are proving successful. The appointment of new teachers, and considerable support for existing teachers, much of it from the local education authority, has had a profound impact on the quality of teaching and learning. New teachers to the school, including newly qualified teachers, are given good support and helpful information. The 'Staff Handbook' provides a

very good basis, with mentors providing daily help and advice. A performance management policy has been drawn up, and is to be considered at the next meeting of the governing body.

56. Sound systems and very effective administration help to keep track of the budget. Day-to-day management of the school's finances is very good. Clear systems are in place and the school's latest audit was very complimentary. Minor issues raised have all been addressed. The school has bought into the local education authority's financial scheme, and makes good use of the 'Accounting Technician'. All finances, including grants for specific purposes, are kept under separate headings, and information is regularly supplied to the headteacher and governors for monitoring purposes. Longer term financial planning is good. The school has a four year plan that clearly identifies costings for future development. Governors are systematic in their budgeting, which has resulted in them making maximum use of funds available. A rather high carry forward has been reduced by careful spending on staffing and resources, to one that is quite acceptable. Spending decisions, and the effectiveness of the school's use of its resources, are closely monitored. All recommended procedures for gaining best value for money are followed.

57. The school cares well for its pupils needing particular care and attention. The special educational needs co-ordinator liaises closely with teachers and support staff and has a very good overview of special educational needs in the school. Amongst a number of significant and positive changes to provision for pupils with special educational needs since the previous inspection is the weekly non contact time provided for the special needs coordinator to undertake her duties.

58. The school is well staffed with teachers and teaching assistants who are used effectively to provide as much support for pupils as possible. Good use is made of teachers and assistants for pupils with special educational needs, and for pupils with English as an additional language. Additional support is given in small group situations, and such pupils are making good progress.

59. The school is a bright, clean and pleasant learning environment, with plenty of little teaching areas to enable small group work to take place. These are used very effectively, and are having a positive impact on pupils' self esteem and learning. The new information and communication technology suite is enabling much better access to computers. There is a well stocked library although some of the organisation is confusing. For example, the alphabetical storage of fiction authors runs from right to left.

60. Resources for learning are good in physical education and religious education, and satisfactory in most other areas. Areas where some improvement would enhance learning opportunities are:

- Electronic construction kits for design and technology;
- Resources to deliver the new curriculum in history and geography;
- Information and communication technology software for mathematics, and art in Key Stage 2;
- Digital cameras for use in information and communication technology;
- Large climbing equipment for pupils under five.

61. When reviewing standards, provision and expenditure it is possible to judge that Drove Primary School gives satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

62. To raise standards and improve the quality of education, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- **Raise** further, standards in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology, by rigorous monitoring of the implementation of current action planning.

Paragraphs: 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 30, 51, 52, 77, 80, 87, 89, 101, 103, 112, 120, 124, 126.

- **Improve** attendance rates by working with pupils and parents to raise awareness of the impact of persistent absence on pupils' learning and progress.

Paragraphs: 16, 44.

- **Improve** the consistency of teachers' marking and the quality of presentation by pupils of their work, by monitoring carefully the school's marking and presentation policies.

Paragraphs: 13, 28, 97, 120, 121.

- **Improve** the use of assessment in subjects other than English, mathematics and science, to ensure that any gaps in pupils' learning are identified early enough and that planning can be adapted to ensure pupils receive their full entitlement to learning opportunities.

Paragraphs: 46, 75, 116, 120.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

89

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

50

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1	18	38	39	3	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	24	389
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	45

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	4	124

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	158

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	33
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	40

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.1
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	2.5
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	30	25	55

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	20	22
	Girls	19	23	22
	Total	37	43	44
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	67 (77)	78 (88)	80 (85)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	23	24
	Girls	21	19	24
	Total	40	42	48
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	73 (77)	76 (83)	87 (90)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	26	23	49

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	15	19
	Girls	14	14	16
	Total	23	29	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	48 (40)	60 (48)	70 (45)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	15	19
	Girls	14	15	16
	Total	23	30	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	49 (52)	62 (58)	70 (47)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	13
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	5
Indian	25
Pakistani	25
Bangladeshi	38
Chinese	7
White	223
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	18
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22
Average class size	28

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	180

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	50

Number of pupils per FTE adult	8
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	99/00
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	£
Total income	672,290
Total expenditure	668,743
Expenditure per pupil	1,737
Balance brought forward from previous year	0
Balance carried forward to next year	3,547

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	413
Number of questionnaires returned	53

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	60	36	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	47	47	2	2	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	32	60	6	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	42	50	4	4	0
The teaching is good.	55	34	9	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	45	40	9	4	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	60	27	9	0	4
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	52	40	6	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	40	39	15	0	6
The school is well led and managed.	57	35	4	0	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	48	46	2	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	18	43	20	2	17

Due to rounding percentages do not total 100.

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

63. Children enter the school at the age of three. They attend on a part time basis for the morning or afternoon. The nursery is funded by the Ethnic Minorities Achievement Grant and priority is given to children who speak English as an additional language. Children enter the nursery with limited speaking and listening skills. They make satisfactory progress in the stepping stones of the Foundation Stage curriculum. By the time they enter reception, standards are just below the average for the local education authority.

Personal, social and emotional development

64. Children settle quickly and confidently into the day-to-day routines of the nursery. Each morning or afternoon they register themselves by matching a name card to their names on the wall. They settle to activities quickly and sensibly and have a good understanding of the tasks for the session. When given the opportunity they work well with adults and show good concentration in completing their work: for example in painting a picture of a baby. Children choose activities for themselves and sustain interest. Many play successfully together, with boys and girls joining in together in the 'Chinese Restaurant' or in 'washing the baby'. Children show independence when working at the computer or, on occasions, sitting alone in the book corner. They enjoy 'snack time' and show good progress in learning the social skills of having a meal together, for example by not starting until everyone in the group has been served.

65. Children transfer to reception very smoothly and happily. They enjoy meeting adults and many were keen to introduce themselves to members of the inspection team. Relationships are good, with children playing together in groups of boys and girls and from the many cultures represented in the school; this is a strength. In lessons, children show good concentration: for example when listening to stories. They work well on their own or in groups. Children enjoy working with adults and respond well to their teachers and learning support assistants. By the end of the Foundation Stage, children meet the expectations of the Early Learning Goals.

Communication, language and literacy

66. By the time they leave the nursery, children's speaking and listening skills are still below expectations. Although they listen well, many are reluctant and lack confidence in speaking. For example, whilst they know the actions to accompany familiar rhymes, such as 'Old MacDonald' few join in with the words. Most children understand that the marks they make represent writing; they do this successfully in their 'Chinese Restaurant' when taking 'orders' from 'customers'. However, during the lessons observed, children showed little interest in books or in the 'Book Corner' in the classroom.

67. In reception, progress in speaking and listening is satisfactory although standards are still below expectations. Children are encouraged to ask questions and in their weekly trip on the 'Magic Carpet' all are encouraged to take their turn in making a spoken contribution. Children know their initial letter sounds as the result of good teaching of basic skills including the 'fast track phonics' lesson. They apply these skills successfully when reading; they use their knowledge of letter sounds and picture clues to read new words. Children know about the 'front cover' of books and are happy and confident to talk about the pictures and characters. More able children are established on the early stages of the school's reading scheme. Most children write their own names unaided and are confident in copying sentences written for them by an adult. More able children make good attempts at writing their own sentences. However, by the end of the Foundation Stage, children do not meet all the expectations of the Early Learning Goals.

Mathematical development

68. In the nursery, children learn to count to 10 accurately: for example when counting the number of plates on their tables in 'snack time'. They learn to recognise and match shapes when completing jigsaw puzzles. Children recognise and match colours in 'snack time' when they count the number of red and orange plates.

69. In reception, children are confident in counting to 30 when they help the teacher count the number present each morning. Children read and recognise numbers to 31 when they complete the daily chart that shows the day, month and weather. Most know the days of the week and their order, with some knowing the months of the year. In lessons they count to 10 accurately and enjoy it when the teacher uses a puppet who 'cannot count'. They take great delight in telling the puppet where 'she goes wrong'. Children recognise and name accurately common two-dimensional shapes, including squares, rectangles, circles and triangles. By the end of the Foundation Stage, most meet the expectations of the Early Learning Goals.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

70. In the nursery, children learn how to use the computer. They are confident in using the mouse to 'click and drag' items across a screen: for example to put wheels in the correct place on a car. Children develop an understanding of past and present by looking at babies and seeing how they grow. During the inspection, children enjoyed the visit of two young babies and in finding out what they could and could not do. Children enjoy playing with large and small construction kits: for example in 'building' and 'running' a farm.

71. In reception, children develop their computer skills successfully and are confident in using a graphics program to paint self portraits. They know how to change colours and brush sizes. Children develop their sense of history by comparing 'old' and 'new' ways of cleaning and washing. In science, they develop an understanding of forces by looking at toys that can be 'pushed' and 'pulled'. Children develop a good understanding of the wider world through their weekly trip on the 'Magic Carpet' where they visit 'foreign countries'. During the inspection they 'went to China' as part of work linked to the Chinese New Year. Children develop design and technology skills successfully when they make finger puppets and 'theatres' from cereal boxes. Large construction kits are used when children enjoy playing the part of 'Bob the Builder'. By the end of the Foundation Stage, children meet the expectations of the Early Learning Goals.

Physical development

72. In the nursery, children develop good skills in outdoor play, particularly in riding large toys. They develop successfully skills in control and steering to avoid 'crashing'. Children learn how to control pencils and paint brushes, and develop the skills needed to build using the small and large construction kits.

73. In reception, children make good progress both through regular outdoor play and through lessons in the infant hall. They show a good awareness of space. Children respond well and know the importance of a warm up and why they should follow the teacher's 'freeze' command. They show good representations of how toys move, including being a 'Jack in the Box', a 'spinning top' and a 'yo-yo': By the end of the Foundation Stage, children meet the expectations of the Early Learning Goals.

Creative development

74. In the nursery, children are confident in exploring shades of green and they show good skills in paper weaving using black and white. They enjoy painting and use bright colours, and use a range of colours to paint pictures of babies. In reception, children use six colours imaginatively to create pictures of parrots, butterflies and fish. During the inspection, children used cutting and sticking skills successfully in making 'Chinese Dragons'. This was a follow

up to their 'Magic Carpet' trip to China, as part of their celebration of the Chinese New Year. By the end of the Foundation Stage, children meet the expectations of the Early Learning Goals.

75. Teaching in the nursery is satisfactory, with that in reception good. During the inspection, the nursery had a temporary nursery nurse and a temporary learning support assistant; both were covering illness. In the nursery, staff work effectively and relationships are good. Determined efforts are made to develop children's knowledge, skills and understanding through a range of adult led activities and those which the children choose for themselves. The recording and assessment of what children do each day and over time needs to be further developed to ensure progress is matched to each area of learning within the Foundation Stage curriculum.

76. The strength of teaching in reception is the teaching of basic literacy and numeracy skills, with the result that children make good progress in their learning. Time and resources, including learning support staff are used effectively to support children's learning. Teachers have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and provide a good balance of adult led activities and those which children choose for themselves.

ENGLISH

77. In Year 2000 National Curriculum assessments in reading and writing at Key Stage 1 the percentage of pupils achieving the expected Level 2, or above, was well below the national average. When a comparison is made with schools in a similar context the results are well below what could be expected. At Key Stage 2 the percentage of pupils reaching the expected Level 4 or above was well below the national average. A comparison with similar schools shows results to be well below the expected levels. This represents a downward trend in Key Stage 1 when compared with results in 1999. However, at Key Stage 2 the trend shows an improvement on the last reported figures.

78. Whilst attainment in English is still below the national expectation, inspection evidence shows an improving picture at the end of both key stages. A high priority is given to literacy throughout the curriculum. Particular emphasis is placed on spelling and writing which have been identified as the two main areas of weakness. Pupils whose achievement is marginally below what could be expected for their age, benefit from booster classes, and the school prides itself on the range of assessments it now has in place to identify pupils with potential problems, at an early stage in their education.

79. The successful implementation of the literacy hour is beginning to have an impact on standards. Pupils are made aware of learning intentions at the beginning of each lesson and teachers make their expectations clear. A strong feature of literacy lessons is the quality and range of well prepared resources to support pupils' learning.

80. At the end of both key stages, standards in speaking and listening fall below national expectations. At present, there is no planned provision for the development of spoken English skills. Whilst pupils listen carefully to the teacher and to each other in group situations they do not speak confidently in front of the class and when reading aloud. Many have difficulty articulating complex ideas as they have a limited vocabulary. Pupils with English as an additional language experience difficulty understanding the use of language in some texts and lack the language skills to express their sometimes limited understanding. Pupils enter school with poor expressive language. In the reception classes, pupils are given a range of activities and experiences to promote their speaking and listening skills. However, this is not built on in a progressive way as they move through Key Stage 1. At the end of Key Stage 2, although pupils can answer questions relating to the texts they are studying, many do so using only single words or phrases. In a significant number of classes, teachers often use closed questions and do not allow pupils time to explore and express their ideas fully. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop their debating skills or to speak in more formal contexts. Some teachers are aware of the need to develop this aspect of English and

use a range of strategies to encourage pupils to explore how language is used to convey meaning. For example, pupils in Year 4 collected and read out 'strings' of adjectives to describe how chocolate looks, smells and tastes.

81. Although standards in reading are below national expectations at the end of both key stages pupils are making good progress throughout the school. Recent efforts to raise the profile of reading are paying dividends. The variety of texts used to support learning in the literacy hour has an impact on pupils' interest in books. For example, Year 6 pupils make evaluative comments about the range of group reading books they have read. Pupils are encouraged to take books home regularly and they have the opportunity to take part in the reading support groups. These take place at lunchtime and are organised by a local business. At the end of Key Stage 1, more able pupils discuss the theme of a story and comment on the actions of the main characters. At Key Stage 2 there is a good emphasis on the critical appraisal of texts. Pupils in Year 6 identify the key features of suspense writing through their study of 'Great Expectations' and 'A Christmas Carol'. In Year 5, pupils study different styles of poetry and analyse the language used to create mood and evoke a response.

82. The school has a large spacious library with an appropriate range of non fiction books. Pupils learn about the Dewey classification system and by the end of Key Stage 2 they can use it effectively to two decimal places. A librarian is available twice a week at lunchtime to support pupils when they are selecting books.

83. Pupils make good progress in writing at Key Stage 1 and satisfactory progress at Key Stage 2. The teaching of grammar and punctuation is developed systematically throughout the school in line with the framework for the National Literacy Strategy. Pupils write for a range of purposes, although often not at any great length. At the end of Key Stage 1 pupils write short descriptive pieces and accounts of events. Their writing shows an improvement in their understanding of story structure since the beginning of the school year. Pupils are beginning to write with some understanding of simple punctuation, and spellings are plausible. More able pupils are beginning to use speech marks. Pupils have target cards in their books to remind them of aspects of their work that they need to improve. Whilst there is a suitable range of writing at the end of Key Stage 2, there are very few examples of extended writing. The school is currently taking steps to develop this area of writing by the introduction of extended writing sessions. There is good evidence of literacy being used across the curriculum: for example in history Year 6 pupils write accounts about the Second World War from the perspective of people who were involved.

84. Pupils enjoy their work in English and their response in lessons is good. This is having a positive effect on their learning.

85. The quality of teaching is good overall but ranges from satisfactory to very good. Teachers' subject knowledge is good and clear aims are identified at the beginning of each lesson. The most effective lessons build on prior learning and are carefully planned to include a range of activities to motivate pupils and involve them fully in the lesson. Most teachers use plenary sessions well to assess the gains in pupils' learning. In all the lessons seen pupils were kept on task and responded positively to the high expectations of behaviour. The presentation of work, particularly at Key Stage 2, is an area which showed a lack of appropriate guidance in terms of teacher expectation. This was highlighted in the last inspection.

86. Two teachers currently share the co-ordination of English. They have worked well together to bring about the implementation of a range of new initiatives to support pupils' learning and raise standards. The introduction of spelling journals throughout the school has already had a good impact on standards. An analysis of Year 6 work identified the construction and use of complex sentences as an area in need of further development and a programme of monitoring and assessment in Years 2, 4 and 6 led to the identification of year group targets. It is acknowledged by the co-ordinators that rigorous monitoring of all aspects

of English is a priority if the significant gains made in a relatively short time are to be sustained and built on.

MATHEMATICS

87. Results of Year 2000 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1 were well below average at Level 2, the expected level, compared with schools nationally and when compared with schools in similar circumstances. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 was well below the national average, and below average compared with similar schools. These results are worse than in 1999. The school has analysed the results and found that three factors are significant, namely:

- The high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language meant that their poor use of mathematical vocabulary was a disadvantage;
- One class in this year group of pupils had suffered from the lack of a permanent teacher with training in the National Numeracy Strategy;
- The small improvement in results of some pupils was not recognised in the statistics.

These reasons are convincing and well founded.

88. In Year 2000 National Curriculum test results at the end of Key Stage 2 were well below the national average at Level 4, the expected level, compared with schools nationally and when compared with similar schools. At the higher Level 5, the results were in line with the national average, but below those of similar schools. Whilst remaining well below the expected levels, the results do show a marked improvement from those of 1999, with an increase of 11 per cent in the number of pupils reaching Level 4.

89. Inspection findings show attainment to be below national expectations at the end of both key stages. Much of the pupils' work seen in mathematics lessons was in line with national expectations. However, when talking to pupils about their previous work, it was apparent that they do not remember work that they have successfully completed a few weeks earlier. For example, one group of pupils had been using an inverse operation to check their answers, and indeed many of them had this written on their bookmark as their 'Target'. Several of these pupils could not remember what an inverse operation was. In addition, it is apparent that many pupils have gaps in their knowledge and understanding from the curriculum and the teaching they received in previous years.

90. There are no marked differences in the performance of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language are supported very well and make good progress. Good systems and strategies are in place to identify these pupils' needs and to give them the support they need. Teaching assistants and extra teachers to enable smaller teaching groups are used effectively.

91. By the end of Year 2, most pupils understand the place value of digits and order numbers to 100. They recognise number sequences such as odd and even. Most accurately add and subtract to 10, with some to 20 or more. Pupils are beginning to find which operation to use when solving problems, but language difficulties often hinder progress in this area. For example, many find it difficult to understand that to find the difference between two numbers, they need to subtract. Many pupils remember the names of common two-dimensional shapes, but they are less confident when describing their properties.

92. By the end of Year 6, most pupils are competent when using the four operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. Good emphasis is placed on pupils finding a variety of strategies to do these calculations, and many pupils are able to describe what they have done and why they chose that method. However, with a significant number of pupils, calculations are too often incorrect, sometimes through carelessness, and often through poor recall of multiplication facts. Many pupils can add and subtract decimals to two places, and order decimals to three places. Most can calculate the perimeter and area of simple

shapes, with the more able pupils calculating the area of irregular shapes, and of rectangles and triangles, using formulae.

93. The teaching of mathematics ranges from excellent to unsatisfactory. Overall, in Key Stage 1 teaching is satisfactory, and in Key Stage 2 it is good. This is a good improvement since the last inspection, particularly in Key Stage 2, where the teaching was unsatisfactory. The school has worked hard to achieve this improvement, largely through a concentrated staff development programme. In particular, there has been:

- Numeracy training for 2½ days for all staff;
- 5 days intensive training for a teacher in Year 2 and another in Year 6;
- Training given by the local education authority numeracy consultant;
- Demonstration lessons given by the numeracy consultant;
- Lesson observations by the consultant and the school's co-ordinator;
- Observation of a leading mathematics teacher;
- Additional teachers' resources.

94. Teachers' planning is a strength of their work. Lesson objectives are clear and made known to pupils at the start of lessons. Different work is set for pupils of different ability, although on occasions, it is not sufficiently challenging, particularly for the more able pupils. Individual whiteboards are used effectively, particularly for the mental mathematics starter to the lesson. However, when they are used for the main part of the lesson, the fact that pupils rub out what they have done makes it difficult for teachers to correct any mistakes that have been made, or to track progress. Pupils are very well managed, and good working relationships are formed. For example, in the excellent lesson observed, excellent relationships gave pupils confidence and an enthusiasm for the subject, and they obviously wanted to do well. Good strategies are employed to gain pupils' attention in a calm manner, for example with rain sticks. Co-operation is encouraged, and asking pupils to discuss answers with a partner before they give them to the teacher is particularly effective in encouraging pupils to think before they give their answer. On occasions, teachers need to think more about setting tasks which challenge all pupils, especially the more able, by planning suitable extension activities rather than giving just more of the same work. There are times when teaching is not thorough enough, and tasks are not made sufficiently clear to pupils. On these occasions, pupils struggle with their work and make unsatisfactory progress.

95. Numeracy skills are well used in other areas of the curriculum. In science, pupils observe and measure accurately in their experiments. In history, pupils can order numbers to 2000 on their timeline, and in geography, they use co-ordinates in their mapwork.

96. Pupils' ability to use information and communication technology to develop their mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding is underdeveloped. The school is aware of this deficiency and has plans to improve in this area.

97. A variety of formal assessments is used well to identify strengths and weaknesses in pupils' attainment, and to track their progress from year to year. National Curriculum test results are analysed thoroughly, and used to help plan future work to eliminate gaps in pupils' knowledge. Marking varies in quality, some being very good with helpful comments showing pupils how they can improve, with other work having an occasional tick from the teacher, when most is self marked.

98. The school operates a variety of systems for grouping pupils for their mathematics lessons, all of them being carefully considered according to staffing possibilities and pupils' needs. The introduction of single year classes and setting for mathematics has already had a positive impact on teaching and learning in Year 5 and Year 6. Similarly, the targeting of particular underachieving groups by using extra teachers or teaching assistants is proving beneficial. The headteacher and senior management team monitor teaching, with some monitoring by the co-ordinator, and there are plans for this to be developed further.

99. The school has made good improvements since the last inspection in:

- Organising the teaching of mathematics in single year classes, smaller teaching groups and setted groups;
- Effective support for lower attaining pupils;
- The implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy;
- Ensuring that all staff are conversant with the scheme and strategy.

However, much of this improvement is very recent, and has not had time to have a significant impact on standards. Although the issue of ensuring that potentially more able pupils are given sufficient challenge has been addressed, there are still inconsistencies from class to class.

100. The systems and strategies now in place, together with the determination of the headteacher, co-ordinator and whole school staff to raise standards, bode well for the school's future development in mathematics.

SCIENCE

101. Attainment in science is below expectations at the end of both key stages. Although pupils are now making satisfactory progress as they move through the school due to recent significant improvements to the curriculum, these changes have not been in place for sufficient time to overcome the gaps in pupils' knowledge identified during the previous inspection. However, the changes put in place, with science lessons now timetabled on a weekly basis and considerably more attention being given to investigative science in both key stages, have clearly had a positive impact on the quality of both teaching and learning in science throughout the school. A scrutiny of work undertaken during the school year indicates that pupils have covered a range of appropriate science activities of all attainment targets, studying life processes and living things, materials and physical processes.

102. In Key Stage 1, Year 1 pupils learning to explain and record their findings demonstrates an overall level of understanding of the concept of pushes and pulls and prediction below expectations for their age. For example, a significant number of pupils, predicting whether a range of toys are push or pull toys, while watching a child pull a wheeled toy across the carpet, put up their hands to say she was pushing it. This is due to the high percentage of pupils in the year with English as an additional language whose literacy and language skills are below expectations for their age. In Year 2, pupils exploring the factors having an impact on the distance a vehicle can travel and considering how to ensure a fair test enjoy rolling and pushing toy cars down ramps. However, they need considerable assistance to conclude which factors are having an effect on the distance the cars travel. Nevertheless, throughout the key stage, pupils are beginning to ask questions about their science work and learning to use focused exploration and investigation to acquire knowledge, skills and understanding and are making good progress from their low level of understanding on entry to the school.

103. In Key Stage 2, Year 4 pupils exploring the conductivity of various materials demonstrate appropriate understanding for their age. They are able to use the correct scientific language and make sensible predictions as to which materials will conduct electricity and which will not. In Year 5, pupils studying sound understand that sounds are made when there is a vibration and that the pitch and loudness of some vibrating objects can be changed. For example, one child offered: "If you hold it (a cymbal), the sounds stop because, if you touch it, the vibrations stop." Most pupils, however, are working below expectations for their age and need considerable assistance when planning an experiment. In Year 6, pupils studying 'Forces' understand that it is gravitational attraction which pulls objects down towards Earth. A minority know that gravity is "a bigger force" than air resistance and that the gravity on the Moon is less strong than on Earth. A small minority understand that when objects are pushed or pulled an opposing force can be measured. Pupils' understanding of the topic currently under study, 'Forces', is approaching that expected of pupils at this age, and pupils are making good progress in overcoming

shortcomings in the curriculum for science in previous years. However, the breadth of their understanding is below expectations for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2. This was confirmed during discussions with Year 6 pupils where significant gaps in their scientific understanding were revealed.

104. The quality of learning in all lessons observed at Key Stage 1 was satisfactory. In Key Stage 2, the quality of learning ranged from good to satisfactory and was good overall. In the best cases, pupils made good progress due to well planned and well paced lessons with opportunities for practical, 'hands on' tasks. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in Key Stage 1 were satisfactory and, in Key Stage 2, where attitudes and behaviour ranged from very good to satisfactory, good overall. Most pupils enjoy their science lessons, work together appropriately and try their best.

105. The quality of teaching in science lessons during the inspection ranged from satisfactory to good at both key stages and was satisfactory overall in Key Stage 1 and good overall in Key Stage 2. Teachers give clear explanations and are confident in their subject knowledge. They plan lessons well, with clear links to the National Curriculum requirements, and good links with other curriculum areas such as English and mathematics.

106. Most teachers have appropriately high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour and provide appropriate work and support for the range of abilities within their classes.

107. The subject co-ordinator has developed a good overview of science in the school and has analysed test results very carefully to pinpoint areas of weakness. The school has made the development of investigative and experimental work a priority following the previous inspection and regular opportunities are now provided for pupils to undertake investigative work. Pupils are set targets for science which, in the best lessons, are regularly referred to by class teachers. Significant improvements have been made in both the quality and quantity of resources for science and there is now a satisfactory range of resources.

ART AND DESIGN

108. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are working at appropriate levels and are attaining standards expected of their age group. No art lessons were observable during the inspection in Key Stage 2, providing insufficient evidence on which to make secure judgements about pupils' attainment, attitudes and behaviour or, on the quality of teaching in the subject at the end of the key stage.

109. Pupils in Key Stage 1 printing with fruit and vegetables demonstrate a level of skill and understanding appropriate for their age. In Year 2, pupils exploring the use of line, colour and shape were using firsthand direct observation, utilising hand magnifying glasses to look carefully at the detail, to create pencil studies of natural materials. A scrutiny of work on display around the school confirms that pupils have appropriate opportunities to undertake a variety of art activities: printing repeated patterns, making collages, drawing in a variety of materials including chalk and charcoal, and making pencil studies of their friends, of a satisfactory quality. Although no art lessons were undertaken during the inspection in Key Stage 2, pupils have:

- Made printing blocks and produced paisley patterns in pen and ink in Year 3;
- Made monochrome studies in paint of a still life in Year 5 after looking at prints of work on a similar subject by Giorgio Morandi, Georges Braque and Georgia O'Keeffe;
- Year 6 pupils have undertaken printing exercises making string and sponge printing blocks and using these to make repeating patterns.

However, although sketchbooks have recently been introduced, in most cases these are not being used effectively, if at all.

110. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour during art lessons in Key Stage 1 ranged from good to satisfactory and were satisfactory overall. The quality of learning in the two lessons seen was unsatisfactory in one lesson and good in the other. Where learning was unsatisfactory, this was due to unsatisfactory behaviour management by the teacher. Where learning was good, pupils made good progress due to the teacher's enthusiasm and good lesson management skills.

111. The quality of teaching in the two lessons observed ranged from good to unsatisfactory. Where teaching was good, the teacher prepared the lesson well with relevant artefacts for the pupils to study, made good reference to the lines and shapes she wanted the pupils to be aware of and provided purposeful firsthand experiences for pupils which led to good progress in their learning. Where teaching was unsatisfactory this was because, despite encouraging pupils' observational and speaking skills and reinforcing the idea of repeating patterns well, during the practical activity, the teacher failed to ensure satisfactory control of the lesson. This resulted in children milling around, some with paint-covered hands and, in a number of cases, no real gains in learning were achieved.

112. The school is currently 'trailing' the government recommended scheme of work for the subject, a significant change to the art curriculum, which was 'topic based' until the start of the current school year. Although basic paint and paper resources for the subject are satisfactory, the school did not, at the time of inspection, have the appropriate resources to undertake all of the units of work required by the new scheme of work. Most importantly, it lacks a digital camera or appropriate software to undertake image manipulation at the end of Key Stage 2.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

113. Standards in design and technology are in line with national expectations and have been maintained since the last inspection. Due to timetabling arrangements it was not possible to see any lessons at the upper end of the school. Observations are based on information from other sources, including planning documents, previous work and discussions with staff.

114. Infant pupils make simple lever mechanisms using a split pin to make the jaw of a dragon's head from a template. They use their skills in cutting and joining to design and make a vehicle using recycled materials. More able pupils design and make a moving vehicle using a fixed axle and wheels. Younger junior pupils use literacy skills well to prepare a sequence of tasks to produce their own sandwich as part of food technology. They appreciate the importance of hygiene and safety to prepare various sandwich fillings, using appropriate tools and techniques. More able pupils effectively evaluate their products, but many pupils lack appropriate vocabulary when describing and evaluating their work. Older pupils design and make their own air raid shelters using card, paper, glue and junk materials to a prescribed size as part of their history work on World War II. They use their scientific skills of designing a fair test to analyse the strength of the shelter and effectively evaluate their findings to discuss how it could be improved.

115. Pupils' attitudes to their work in design and technology are good. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, clearly enjoy practical design and technology lessons and have positive attitudes towards learning. They sustain concentration, behave well, share equipment and co-operate well when working in group situations.

116. The quality of teaching in the few lessons observed was good overall and has improved since the previous inspection, when teaching was reported to be satisfactory. In the lessons observed there is appropriate attention to safety issues and teachers manage pupils very well. Teachers have high expectations of work and use limited resources well. Planning is detailed and often linked to the current topic or theme. However, although plans identify what

pupils will do, they do not always identify the skills and knowledge pupils are required to learn. Tasks are often prescriptive and there is little opportunity for pupils to experiment and develop their own creative ideas. Consequently many older pupils lack the necessary skills in design and technology by the time they leave the school. Although most teachers have secure basic subject knowledge, not all are confident in teaching more advanced skills such as providing opportunities to use more complicated construction equipment involving motors and gears. This has a negative impact on pupils' learning. No effective assessment procedures are in place and as a consequence many pupils including the more able are underachieving. There are good cross-curricular links established in many curriculum subjects, but insufficient use is made of the potential of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning. Displays around the school including the gallery in the hall effectively celebrate pupils' achievements and greatly help to promote the subject.

GEOGRAPHY

117. Standards in geography are in line with expectations at the end of Key Stage 1, but below those expected nationally at the end of Key Stage 2. During the inspection due to timetabling arrangements it was only possible to see a limited amount of geography teaching with no lessons at Key Stage 1. Observations are based on information from other sources including policy documents, discussions with staff and pupils, examination of work and displays. Progress was reported to be satisfactory at the end of both key stages in the last report. Since that time the subject has taken a low profile. The scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that geography teaching has been fragmented with too little attention given to developing a systematic acquisition of skills to support pupils' learning. Consequently, standards have declined. However, a new co-ordinator has recently been appointed and has produced new guidance to help teachers plan their work more effectively to raise standards of attainment throughout the school.

118. Infant pupils develop a sound understanding of their own environment by making a simple plan of the area around the school, and how different buildings are used. They appreciate that some people live in a less populated environment by studying Struay in Scotland, inspired by a Katie Morag story. Junior pupils extend their learning by a comparative study of Swindon with the local village of Uffington and are beginning to appreciate the differences between living in an urban and rural community. They are able to use secondary sources, including holiday brochures, to suggest the most suitable holiday destination for different groups of people. They consider ways to improve the environment by studying the effects of rubbish on the community. Older pupils locate famous rivers in the world and have good opportunities to use their geographical skills when they attend the annual residential trip to Braeside.

119. Most pupils have positive attitudes towards their work in geography. They are able to work co-operatively in groups, sharing resources and enjoy practical activities. They appreciate opportunities for local visits and residential trips which successfully promote pupils' social development. Although the majority of pupils are interested in the subject and behave well, they have limited geographical vocabulary when answering questions.

120. The quality of teaching has been maintained since the last inspection and is sound overall with one very good lesson seen during inspection. Most teachers manage their pupils well and effectively use resources and visits to support pupils' learning. However, work is not always planned or marked effectively to challenge and stimulate all pupils, here learning is unsatisfactory. Assessment procedures are underdeveloped and assessment is not used effectively to plan future work. As a result, work is not always matched to the ability of all pupils, including the more able, those with special educational needs, and pupils with English as an additional language. This has a negative impact on pupils' learning. The new co-ordinator has identified the need for more resources to supplement the new scheme of work and to develop cross-curricular links more effectively in information and communication technology to improve the quality of pupils' learning. She has no opportunity to monitor teaching and learning across the school to raise standards. Good cross-curricular links have

been established with many curriculum subjects, but there is little evidence of extended writing to support pupils' learning.

HISTORY

121. Standards in history meet national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and have been maintained since the last inspection. During the inspection, due to timetabling arrangements, it was not possible to see any history lessons at Key Stage 2. There was insufficient evidence gained to make a judgement on standards by the end of Year 6. However, scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that junior teachers use many worksheets, with insufficiently challenging tasks to extend the learning of more able pupils. Many older pupils' work is untidily presented, the quality of teachers' marking is inconsistent and targets to help pupils improve are rarely identified, which has a negative impact on standards achieved by the end of Key Stage 2.

122. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils are developing a sense of chronology and an awareness of differences between the ways of life now and in the past. They are able to compare household items and rooms of bygone ages with those of the present day. Pupils learn about the everyday life of famous people such as Florence Nightingale. Key Stage 2 pupils' knowledge of daily life and customs of various periods in the past is extended by studies such as Tudors, Victorians and life during World War II.

123. All pupils including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language clearly enjoy history lessons and have positive attitudes towards learning. They listen attentively, behave well and show a lively interest in history. They show high levels of interest when they handle artefacts to gain first hand experiences.

124. The quality of teaching in the two lessons observed was satisfactory overall and has been maintained since the last inspection. However, insufficient attention is given to providing sufficient opportunities for the development of older pupils' skills in writing structured narratives and descriptions, as highlighted as a weakness in the previous report. Teachers manage their pupils well and effectively use resources and good questioning techniques to support pupils' learning. The policy and scheme of work have recently been revised and updated by the new co-ordinator to help teachers plan more effectively. However, monitoring has not had an impact on standards of attainment and the co-ordinator has no opportunity to monitor teaching and learning across the school. Assessment procedures are not well developed and consequently it is a complex task to track what pupils have been taught and even more difficult to identify what pupils know, understand and can do. Teachers lack this important information when planning their work which can lead to inappropriate tasks set to challenge all pupils. This has a negative impact on their learning. There are good cross-curricular links with other subjects such as geography and design and technology. Many good quality interactive displays throughout the school not only enhance the environment, but improve pupils' awareness of different periods in history.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

125. The previous inspection report judged standards in information technology in Key Stage 1 to be 'meeting national expectations', with those in Key Stage 2, 'below national expectations'. In addition, the school was judged not to be meeting the National Curriculum requirements for the teaching of the subject. This resulted in a key issue which was to raise standards and to meet the requirements for teaching the subject. The HMI inspection in June 2000 reported that good progress had been made in addressing the key issue. Current inspection findings confirm that further good progress has been made, particularly as the result of good teaching in the school's 'IT-Suite'. Planning shows that the school is now meeting requirements for the teaching of the subject.

126. By the age of seven, standards in ICT meet national expectations. By eleven, standards are below national expectations because there are too many gaps in learning for the current Year 6 pupils to catch up. However, the quality of teaching and progress being made in Years 3 and 4 is consistent with standards meeting expectations when these pupils are in Year 6.

127. Pupils have good opportunities to apply their skills in information and communication technology in other subjects, including literacy, numeracy, art, history and geography. In literacy, pupils have good opportunities to apply their skills in word processing stories, poetry and in factual accounts.

128. By Year 2, pupils are confident in the key skills of 'logging on' and 'logging off' the computers. Skills in the use of the keyboard and mouse are good and pupils know how to load, save and print their work. Pupils show good skills in working in the style of the artist Mondrian when they create two-dimensional shapes (squares and rectangles) and use the 'fill' technique to make representations of his work. In good work linked to literacy and design and technology, pupils in Year 3 use a word processing program successfully to write recipes for their sandwiches. Pupils in Year 3 have used the Internet successfully to locate, download and print maps showing where they live as part of their geography work on contrasting localities.

129. In Year 4, pupils create eye-catching posters using a good range of fonts, font sizes and colours to create newspaper headlines to stress the importance of recycling. In Year 5, pupils build on these skills when they create effective posters on the theme of 'Saving Water'. Skills in editing text are good and pupils are confident in the use of the 'highlighting' feature. In Year 6, pupils develop good skills in preparing for a multimedia presentation by exploring and experimenting with how sounds can be linked to stories. Successful use is made of the Internet to locate and download suitable sound files. Boys (and girls) wrote stories which contained a considerable amount of guns shooting! Teachers are highly skilled and very quick to turn the volume down.

130. The quality of teaching is good and is contributing to the raising of standards in the subject. Teachers are enthusiastic and confident in the use of the 'IT-Suite' and use it regularly and successfully to teach pupils key skills and then provide opportunities to apply those skills through effective links to other subjects. Teachers show good demonstration skills either themselves or by using pupils to explain and demonstrate. The plenary or final session is used well to check pupils' understanding and for pupils to share each other's work. Good teaching results in pupils being enthusiastic learners and lessons are productive for all pupils. Teachers, learning support assistants and classmates support effectively pupils with special educational needs, and those for whom English is as an additional language. In lessons, pupils work successfully in pairs including boys and girls, and pupils from the many cultures represented in the school.

131. The enthusiastic subject co-ordinator has written a clear and detailed action plan to raise standards and improve the quality of teaching in the subject. She accepts that the subject is in its infancy within the school. Resources are good, with the 'IT-Suite' being a strength. The co-ordinator recognises the need for more consistency in the use of computers to support pupils' learning in classrooms, particularly in literacy and numeracy.

MUSIC

132. Two music lessons were observed during the inspection in Key Stage 1, and four lessons were observed in Key Stage 2. In addition, written evidence was provided of pupils during the year beginning to create and develop their musical ideas and composing skills by producing visual material to indicate musical patterns. A number of assemblies and singing assemblies were observed where a judgement on pupils' singing abilities could be made. Based on this evidence, pupils' attainment in music is satisfactory overall at the end of both key stages and pupils make appropriate progress in music as they move through the school.

133. In the Year 1 lesson observed, pupils were exploring and beginning to develop an understanding of how musical patterns are created using simple notation, inventing symbols to represent sounds and performing musical patterns from these 'graphical scores'. Most Year 2 pupils are able to copy and sing a three note sequence of notes played on chime bars, internalising and recalling sounds appropriately. Although pupils' understanding of how sounds can be described with symbols is barely satisfactory for their age, pupils sing with appropriate expression and enthusiasm in assemblies and overall attainment in music is satisfactory by the end of the key stage. In Key Stage 2 in Year 4 most pupils understand that the term pitch means high and low, although some pupils with English as an additional language have some difficulty with the subject vocabulary, and demonstrate appropriate pitch control when singing. Pupils are analysing and comparing high and low sounds, listening attentively and organising musical ideas into structures. In Year 5 pupils are creating and developing musical ideas, structuring sounds to represent a jungle atmosphere in response to a previously studied poem. They know that piano means quiet and forte means loudly, and are developing their understanding of how pitch, tempo, and dynamics can be used to create varying moods and effects. In Year 6, in a link with the geography curriculum, pupils are identifying the musical elements used to represent different parts of a composition 'The Moldau' by Smetana, and most, in undertaking this, demonstrate skills and understanding that are, overall, in line with expectations for their age. Pupils' singing in the whole key stage assemblies observed during the week was tuneful, enthusiastic and, in Key Stage 2, of a good standard.

134. The attitudes and behaviour of pupils in Key Stage 1 were satisfactory overall. In Key Stage 2, pupils' attitudes and behaviour ranged from satisfactory to very good and were good overall. Pupils enjoy music lessons, particularly the singing activities, and most respond appropriately to teachers' instructions. Where response was very good, in Year 5, the pupils offered their own ideas willingly and confidently and worked together well throughout the lesson. The quality of learning in lessons was satisfactory overall in Key Stage 1 and good overall in Key Stage 2. The quality of teaching ranges from good to satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and is satisfactory overall. In Key Stage 2, teaching ranges from very good to satisfactory, and is good overall. Where teaching was good or very good, the teachers demonstrated good subject knowledge and had good classroom management skills. They used appropriate subject vocabulary, motivated pupils well and set learning targets, and the progress towards them, clear to pupils.

135. The co-ordinator for the subject is currently in the process of reviewing and revising the scheme of work for music, adopting some aspects of the nationally recommended scheme of work. A school musical performance is held annually and well attended, rehearsals for this were underway during the inspection. A number of pupils receive musical tuition from peripatetic music teachers during the school day.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

136. Standards in physical education are average at the end of Key Stage 1, but above average at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils thoroughly enjoy lessons, and take part in all activities with enthusiasm. They are very well behaved, and show good sporting attitudes.

137. Pupils in Key Stage 1 show good control of their movements in gymnastics. They mostly transport apparatus sensibly and safely, although this is not consistently so in all classes. Pupils practise their movements on the apparatus with initiative, and develop simple sequences. In games, pupils are developing sound skills of throwing and catching, practising with bean bags, quoits and balls.

138. In Key Stage 2, pupils show a particular ability in dance. This is largely due to the recent visit to a dance company, followed by the company visiting to give workshops in school. It has inspired both teachers and pupils, and some good quality work is being produced. Of

particular note is the pupils' enthusiasm for dance work. Boys and girls, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, participate keenly and show very good, and sometimes excellent, attitudes. In games, pupils have sound skills when sending and receiving a ball, using feet or a bat. A significant number of pupils have developed these skills to a higher level. No gymnastics or swimming lessons were observed, although the information provided indicates that nearly all pupils leaving Year 6 can swim 25 metres or more.

139. Teaching in physical education was never less than satisfactory, and in the dance lesson in Key Stage 2 it was very good. Overall, in Key Stage 1 teaching is satisfactory and in Key Stage 2 it is good. Lessons are planned well using published schemes and teachers mostly have a sound knowledge and understanding of the subject. However, on occasions, limited knowledge means that insufficient teaching points are made to enable pupils to make better progress. For example, sometimes pupils are encouraged to find different ways of travelling in gymnastics, but not enough emphasis is placed on the quality of the movements. The management of pupils is consistently good. Safety is obviously of paramount importance, but on occasions, teachers play too safe, and do not allow the pupils to challenge themselves sufficiently. For example, when performing on benches and the floor, only about one third of the pupils were allowed to work at a time, with two thirds just watching. This denied the pupils the opportunity to co-operate with others in finding their own working space, and to practise their skills. On occasions like this, pupils do not reach their full potential.

140. Lessons usually begin with a brief warm up, but rarely are any stretching exercises undertaken, and seldom is the purpose of a warm up mentioned. Opportunities for links with science by talking about the heart rate, and what happens to the body during exercise, are missed. Good attention is paid to correct clothing, although sometimes, inappropriate garments are worn, and too often long hair is not tied back. Items of jewellery are often worn. Whilst some of these are of religious significance, it is not always the case, and the jewellery posed a danger to the individual pupil and to others around.

141. The school has good provision for physical education with two halls and some use of a gymnasium. The playgrounds offer adequate opportunities for work on hard surfaces, but the field is very small for this size school and age of pupils. Some use is made of a nearby field in the summer months. There is a good supply of small equipment for games lessons, and these pieces are well stored.

142. The only negative comment about physical education in the last report concerned the lack of sports clubs and the opportunity to compete against other schools. This has been addressed successfully. This term, there are clubs for football and netball, and matches are arranged against other schools.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

143. Standards in religious education are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus at the end of both key stages. As only three year groups were observable during the inspection this judgement is supported by a scrutiny of pupils' work, displays, teachers' planning and discussions with pupils.

144. Throughout Key Stage 2, pupils make good progress in their understanding and interpretation of Christianity and Islam. They are developing the ability to reflect in depth on how religious beliefs guide people's actions. However, at the end of the key stage, there are gaps in some pupils' understanding of Christianity, particularly in relation to key elements of worship. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils know about Christian festivals such as Christmas and Easter and some of the key festivals in other faiths such as Diwali and Eid. In Year 1, pupils learn about the significance of the story of Ishmail integrating the knowledge and personal experience of pupils from the Muslim faith into the lesson. The story was used well

to encourage pupils to reflect on the feelings of the mother who was compelled to leave the baby Ishmail in the desert. In the autumn term the focus of pupils' learning was Christianity. An annotated, photographic record of a visit to a local church shows pupils growing understanding of how the church is used by Christians.

145. A scrutiny of work by Year 4 pupils shows a good awareness of the world in which they live. This is linked to the study of Creation stories. Pupils write thoughtfully about their vision of a perfect world and list what they would retain in the world, as it is today and what they would like to leave out. In Year 6 pupils from the Muslim faith enjoy the opportunity to tell other pupils about the importance of the Qur~an in their religion. They show how prayer mats are used and willingly answer questions about when and where they pray.

146. Pupils' attitudes are good. At both key stages pupils listen well and are keen to learn. They show a high level of interest in the artefacts and symbols of other religions. They support each other when researching answers to questions raised about the significance of certain aspects of different religions.

147. Teaching ranges from satisfactory to good. Teachers show a secure understanding of what they are going to teach and support pupils' learning using a good range of resources and artefacts. Planning for the subject is good and shows progression in the development of pupils' ideas, values and beliefs.

148. The recently appointed subject co-ordinator has worked hard to put the newly adopted scheme of work in place as quickly as possible. The staff were consulted about the most appropriate way to develop the scheme of work, bearing in mind the multi-faith nature of the school. The co-ordinator has considerable subject knowledge and a firm commitment to developing the subject. At present she is unable to monitor teaching in classrooms, but teachers' planning is scrutinised each term and colleagues are well supported.

149. The last report highlighted the lack of a spiritual dimension in many lessons. This area is being addressed and although it is not specifically planned for, it is evident in pupils' responses and the many high quality displays around the school. The good progress seen during the inspection reflects the high profile the subject has been given.