

INSPECTION REPORT

LARKRISE FIRST SCHOOL

OXFORD

LEA area: Oxfordshire

Unique reference number: 123053

Headteacher: Mr Mark Chesterton

Reporting inspector: David Owen - 1957

Dates of inspection: 8th – 12th October 2001

Inspection number: 230452

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

© Crown copyright 2001

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Boundary Brook Road
	Oxford
Postcode:	OX4 4AN
Telephone number:	01865 721476
Fax number:	01865 201468
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Helen Osborne
Date of previous inspection:	23rd March 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr F. D. Owen 1957	Registered inspector	Equal opportunities Science History	What sort of school is it? What should the school do to improve further? The school's results and achievements.
Mrs J D Darrington 13418	Lay inspector		Pupils attitudes, values & personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mr Gordon Tomsett 30717	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
Mrs G Wilkinson 2749	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage English Art and design Design and technology	How well is the school led and managed?
Mr V Leary 23319	Team inspector	Special educational needs English as an additional language Information and communication technology Music Religious education	How well are pupils taught?

The inspection contractor was:

NES Educational Services Ltd.
Linden House,
Woodland Way,
Gosfield,
Essex C09 1TH

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6-10
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	11-15
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	16-17
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	18-19
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	20-21
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	22
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	23-25
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	26
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	27-30
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	31-46

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

The terms 'attainment' and 'achievement' appear frequently in this report. Inspectors use the term 'attainment' to indicate standards against national or local criteria. The term 'achievement' is used to describe the progress pupils make compared to their prior attainment.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Larkrise First School serves a diverse community in the eastern part of the City of Oxford. Almost half the pupils are from ethnic minority families and a third have English as an additional language. With 222 boys and girls on roll, aged three to nine, it is average in size compared with first schools nationally. 26 children attend the Nursery part-time and 13 attend full-time. At the time of the inspection, there were no Reception classes. The pupils live in a mixture of rented and privately owned properties. A substantial number are in temporary accommodation. Although the range of abilities of the children entering the school is wide, overall attainment is well below average. The proportion of pupils receiving special educational needs support is 39 per cent which is well above the national average; at the time of the last inspection it was in line with the national average of 20 per cent. The proportion eligible for free school meals has also grown from 20 per cent to 40 per cent since the last inspection.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Larkrise First is a good school. It has improved considerably since the last inspection and it now provides a good education for all the pupils in its care. It is very well led and managed, and the headteacher, governors and staff are thoroughly committed to further improvement. The teaching is good, the pupils learn well and they make good progress in lessons. They have positive attitudes to school and they are well behaved. The school has put a great deal of effort into raising standards in literacy and numeracy and all pupils achieve well. However, despite these efforts standards are still below average in English at the end of Key Stage 1 and by the end of Year 4. At the end of Year 4 they are also below average in mathematics. In other subjects attainment is average. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The quality of teaching is good. As a result the pupils learn well, and their attitudes and behaviour are good.
- Leadership and management are very good and contribute well to the pupils' achievement. A particular strength is the way in which the school monitors its own performance.
- The provision for the pupils' cultural development is very good. Consequently they show a very strong respect for the values and beliefs of others.
- All pupils, including those from minority ethnic groups, achieve well. The achievement of those with English as an additional language is very good.
- The educational provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- The parents think very highly of the school.

What could be improved

- Standards of attainment in English and mathematics.
- The balance between the time devoted to English and mathematics and the time devoted to other subjects.
- The arrangements for withdrawing pupils from lessons for individual and group teaching.
- The opportunities for pupils to learn independently at Key Stages 1 and 2.
- Administrative arrangements to assist the staff in ensuring the health and safety of the pupils, and the governors' fulfilment of their statutory responsibilities in monitoring and evaluating these arrangements.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has improved considerably since it was last inspected in March 1998. Whilst standards of attainment in English and mathematics remain the same, this is in the context of a big drop in the overall attainment of pupils on entry to the school; this is now judged to be well below the national average. There have also been large increases in the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and the number of pupils who have English as an additional language. The arrangements for fostering the high achievement of these groups of pupils have improved and it is now very good; as a consequence, the achievement of the former group is now good and the achievement of the latter is very good. The quality of the pupils' writing has improved, and so too have their mental arithmetic skills at Key Stage 2. Standards are higher in information and communication technology and geography at both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, and the pupils are more successful in design and technology at Key Stage 2. These improvements in performance are underpinned by a massive improvement in the quality of teaching and the fact that the quality of leadership and management is now very good. All the key issues identified in the 1998 inspection report have been dealt with well.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
reading	E	E	E	C
writing	E	E*	E	C
mathematics	D	E*	E	D

Key

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

In 2001, in comparison with schools nationally, the results at the end of Key Stage 1 were well below average in reading, writing and mathematics. In comparison with similar schools the results were average

in reading and writing and below average in mathematics. The school met its target for literacy and exceeded its target for numeracy. The very effective systems for monitoring individual and group performance, and analysing National Curriculum test results in relation to assessments on entry, make it possible to take rapid action to compensate for identified weaknesses. Thus boys' writing was improved last year, and currently the school has made organisational changes to seek to improve reading. Assessments carried out by the teachers in 2001 indicated that standards were also well below the national average in science, although an above average proportion of pupils achieved the higher level in this subject. The results for all three subjects were an improvement on the previous year and, overall, the school's results have improved in line with the national rate over the last five years. Inspection findings indicate that standards are higher for the current Year 2; they are below average for reading and writing, and they are average for mathematics and science.

Despite the good teaching which they receive and the good progress which they make, few children in the Foundation Stage will reach the nationally specified standards in six the areas of learning by the time they are five. Throughout the school the achievement of all pupils, including the most able, is good. The pupils with English as an additional language make very good progress. Those with special educational needs make good progress. The pupils who took the 2000 Year 2 tests, who are now in Year 4, have made substantial progress over the last 18 months. Whilst their attainment is still below expectations in English and mathematics it is average in science. In religious education the pupils reach standards which meet the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus by the end of Key Stage 1, and by the time they leave the school at the age of nine. The same pupils reach standards above the national expectation in music. In all other subjects, but excluding history at the end of Key Stage 1 and physical education at the end of Key Stage 2, where there was insufficient inspection evidence, they achieve average standards.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. The pupils are enthusiastic about all aspects of school life. They are interested in all the activities provided for them.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good in lessons and as the pupils move about the school. The rare cases of bullying or oppressive behaviour are dealt with quickly and well.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are very good throughout the school. Pupils respond well to limited opportunities to show initiative and responsibility. They have a very strong respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of other children.
Attendance	Below average. Satisfactory for most pupils, but there is a problem in relation to long-term absence.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 4
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	Good

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

The quality of teaching is good throughout the school and as a result the pupils learn well. In the Nursery all aspects of the Foundation Stage curriculum are taught well. Apart from history at Key Stage 1, where it is not possible to make a judgement as no lessons were seen, the teaching of all subjects is at least satisfactory and generally good. In English the basic skills of literacy are well taught and good attention is given to developing the pupils' skills of numeracy within mathematics lessons. The teaching of information and communication technology is sound.

The management of pupils is very good and the teachers make good provision for the needs of individuals, including those with special educational needs. Very good provision is made for those with English as an additional language. Generally the teachers have good knowledge of the subjects they teach. They make good use of resources, and they deploy learning support workers and voluntary help well. In Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 many lessons, in subjects other than science and history, are over-directed by the teacher, and thus the pupils make limited progress in developing the skills associated with learning independently. In the Foundation Stage these skills are developed well. As a consequence of the overall good teaching, pupils understand the work they are doing, they behave well and they acquire new skills and knowledge effectively.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good at the Foundation Stage and satisfactory overall at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Although the good provision for English and mathematics is having a positive effect on standards these subjects are allocated a disproportionate amount of time. This inhibits the quality of the work in other subjects, as does the fact that the teaching week is too short at Key Stage 2. The provision for extra-curricular activities is good. Apart from the arrangements for withdrawing pupils from lessons, attention to equality of opportunity is very strong.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very well organised. The pupils are supported by very good individual education plans and there is good teaching throughout the school.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The school supports these pupils very effectively. They are well taught and their achievement is high in relation to their prior attainment.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	There is good provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral and social development. The provision for the pupils' cultural development is very good, particularly with regard to developing their understanding of cultural diversity within Britain.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There are very good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour, and for assessing, recording and supporting pupils' progress. However, there are inadequacies in the administrative arrangements for health and safety, including monitoring and evaluation.

The parents and carers have a very positive view of the school. There are good links with them and the school provides sound information about their children's progress.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher leads the school very well and provides a very clear educational direction. He is well supported by the deputy headteacher, the senior management team and the co-ordinators for subjects and other aspects of school life.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The work of the governors is sound with numerous good features. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and they help to shape its development. However, they do not completely fulfil their statutory duties with regard to monitoring and evaluating health and safety.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The school monitors the performance of individuals, and groups of pupils, and takes very good action to raise standards. There are very good arrangements for monitoring, evaluating and developing the quality of teaching. There is a very strong, shared commitment to improvement.
The strategic use of resources	The school uses financial and other resources well. A very good set of educational priorities is supported through good financial planning. Good day-to-day administrative procedures are in place. The principles of best value are applied well.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The quality of the teaching is good. • The school is helping pupils to be responsible. • Their children like school and they are making good progress. • The school is led and managed well. • They are very well informed about how their children are getting on and they feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There is inadequate provision for homework. • The school does not provide an interesting range of activities outside of lessons. • Some written communication with the parents contains too much jargon. • There are no home-school diaries for reading in use.

The inspectors' judgements support the parents' and carers' positive views. No evidence was found to substantiate the concerns of a minority of parents about jargon, and the school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities and clubs. Overall homework makes a good contribution to the progress made by pupils. Reading diaries in Key Stage 1 and reading logs in Key Stage 2 enable parents to be actively involved in their children's reading development but there is some inconsistency in their use.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The children entering the school have a wide range of abilities but their overall level of attainment is well below average. The teaching in the Foundation Stage is good overall and consequently the children progress well. However, by the age of five few achieve the nationally specified Early Learning Goals in the six areas of learning. In particular, the majority will not achieve the expected standards in communication, language and literacy, mathematics, creative development and some aspects of knowledge and understanding of the world. Overall, standards of attainment have improved since the last inspection. The pupils at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 also achieve good standards in relation to their prior attainment. They make good progress in English, mathematics, science, art and design, and music. In religious education, geography, physical education, design and technology, information and communication technology, and history at Key Stage 2, progress is satisfactory. Pupils from all ethnic groups achieve well and make good progress, and the achievement of those with English as an additional language is very good. Higher attainers make consistently good progress throughout the school and their achievement is sometimes very good. The pupils with special educational needs make good progress.

2. The overall good progress throughout the school is attributable, in the main to strong teaching, and the very good arrangements for assessment; particularly, the system for 'tracking' individuals and groups of pupils. These factors are underpinned by very skilful analyses of test results, the successful introduction of the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy and, above all, very good leadership and management. However, a number of factors limit pupils' achievement. In Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 the pupils are given insufficient opportunities to develop the skills of learning independently. Furthermore, insufficient care is taken to ensure that withdrawal from lessons does not impede pupils' progress in subjects other than English, mathematics, and science. The time allocated to some subjects, for example geography and history, is less than it should be partly because of the excessively long sessions for literacy and numeracy. Finally, the teaching week is too short at Key Stage 2.

3. The results of the 2001 National Curriculum tests for pupils aged 7 were well below average in reading, writing and mathematics in relation to all schools nationally. When compared to similar schools the overall results were average in reading and writing, and below average in mathematics. The rate of improvement in standards in reading, writing and mathematics over the past five years is roughly the same as that found nationally. The school sets itself targets in literacy and numeracy, based on the predicted performance of each pupil by the end of Key Stage 1. The school achieved the targets for reading and writing which it set for itself in 2001; it surpassed the target which had been set for mathematics. The teachers' assessments in science in 2001 indicated well below average attainment, although the proportion achieving the higher level was above the national average.

4. The progress of individuals and groups is monitored very well and form the basis for detailed reports on standards to the governing body and the Local Education Authority. These reports include analysis by ethnic group, the performance of different year groups, the progress made by pupils with special educational needs, and the achievement of pupils with English as an additional language. The reports examine in particular the progress of these various groups in relation to the assessments carried out in the Nursery and Reception classes. They clearly specify action to be taken, which includes target setting for cohorts of pupils and priorities for the school development plan.

5. The school's analysis of the 2000 National Curriculum test results on the basis of gender led it to take very effective action to improve the standards reached by boys, particularly in writing. This was achieved partly by forming sets for literacy in Year 2. During the inspection no overall difference between the attainment of boys and girls was observed. A specific weakness in reading comprehension was identified in the 2001 tests and this is being tackled currently.

6. The school has successfully raised the standards achieved by pupils with English as an additional language over the five year period from 1997 to 2001. In 1997 28 per cent of the pupils had English as an additional language; in 2001 it was 49 per cent. Whereas in 1997 0 per cent achieved the expected level in reading, 42 per cent reached the standard in 2001. In writing and mathematics the comparisons were 31 per cent and 67 per cent, and 23 per cent and 58 per cent respectively. The school has identified the fact that few of these pupils achieve the higher level in mathematics and is addressing this problem which, it is believed, derives from difficulties with the language used in mathematics. Arrangements for fostering the achievement of pupils with English as an additional language, particularly through monitoring and evaluating their progress and associated target-setting, have improved since the last inspection and they are now very good. There has been a similar improvement in arrangements for maximising the attainment of pupils with special educational needs.

7. The higher attaining pupils achieved very well in the 2001 tests. In comparison with similar schools a very high proportion achieved level 3 in reading and science, a well above average proportion achieved this level in mathematics, and an average proportion achieved it in writing.

8. The pupils now in Year 4 are the same cohort who took the National Curriculum tests for seven-year olds in 2000 when the results in writing and mathematics were in the bottom five per cent of all schools, and the school's performance in reading and science was also well below average. Although their work is still below average it has shown considerable improvement over the last 18 months. This is due to the hard work of the teachers and the consequent good progress made by the pupils. As judged during the inspection, the pupils at the end of both Key Stage 1 and Year 4 reach standards which meet national expectations, for seven and nine year-olds, in speaking and listening, and science. Standards are below average in reading and writing. In mathematics standards, including those in numeracy, reach the national expectation at the end of Key Stage 1 but the nine year olds attain below average standards.

9. Standards meet the expectations for information and communication technology at the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time the pupils leave the school. Both seven year-olds and nine year-olds reach standards in religious education which meet the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Their attainment in music is above average. It meets the expectations for art and design, design and technology and geography. At the end of Year 4 average standards are attained in history but there was insufficient evidence to judge standards in this subject at the end of Key Stage 1. In physical education no lessons were seen in Year 4 making it impossible to judge standards, but by the end of Key Stage 1 standards meet the national expectation.

10. Standards of attainment in English and mathematics are similar to those found at the time of the last inspection, but this is in the context of the fact that the overall attainment of pupils on entry has dropped considerably; it is now well below the national average. There have also been large increases in the proportion of pupils with special educational needs and the number of pupils who have English as an additional language. The pupils now make better progress in English, and in mathematics their mental skills have improved in Key Stage 2. At both key stages the pupils now reach higher standards in religious education, information and communication technology, and geography. Standards are also higher in design and technology by the time the pupils leave the school. There has been a slight drop in standards in art and music; the latter due in the main to changes in the National Curriculum, which is now more demanding. The school has maintained standards in science, history and physical education.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Pupils enjoy school and are mostly eager to learn. The majority work hard and complete the work set in response to very well managed classes and good teaching. Most pupils are punctual, although a small number of pupils are slightly late each day. Enthusiasm is evident across the wide range of activities provided by the school. It is particularly evident outside lessons in pupils' responses to musical tuition, the school orchestra and the extra-curricular sporting provision.

12. Pupils with special educational needs have positive attitudes to school and their behaviour is good. They work well together and support each other in their learning. During the week of the inspection a pupil with special educational needs worked well, supported by other pupils, in the information and communication technology suite in developing his skills in copying and pasting a text. His success motivated him to learn more.

13. Pupils with English as an additional language have good attitudes to school. They are attentive and follow instructions well. They are confident and show enthusiasm for learning. They work well together and support each other in their learning, for example, in listening carefully while pupils read a shared text. They behave well.

14. There are particularly good behaviour management strategies which are used well in the classrooms and around the school; pupils behave well as a result of these. Where behaviour is less good it is generally found amongst small groups of older children. Pupils are courteous, trustworthy and demonstrate respect for their own and the school's property. A high degree of social harmony is very evident despite a wide range of ethnic groups within the school community, and boys and girls relate very well to one another, demonstrating mutual respect. Bullying or oppressive behaviour is rare and it is dealt with promptly and effectively. Pupils have a clear understanding of the need for rules in school, and in any society or organisation. They know the school rules and expected code of behaviour, and this is reflected in their good understanding of how their actions affect others.

15. Pupils in the main are very polite, caring and friendly towards one another, staff and other adults. They know the difference between right and wrong. Respect for other people's feelings, values and beliefs is very clearly evident and this makes a good contribution to the school's harmonious working environment. It is a direct result of the very good provision made for pupils' cultural development, for example in assemblies. These give time for reflection or prayer in a way that is appropriate to all the diverse faiths and cultures to be found in the school.

16. There are limited opportunities for pupils to adopt roles of responsibility as they move through the school. When opportunities are provided pupils respond very well, such as in the return of registers to the school office after registration. The pupils in the Foundation Stage respond very well to notably good opportunities for developing independence and personal growth. As it changes its status and has Year 5 and Year 6 pupils, the school plans to introduce a school council. This will provide opportunities for all pupils to learn the process of democratic decision-making and demonstrate initiative in problem solving.

17. The school has maintained the good standards of behaviour and positive attitudes towards learning that were evident at the time of the last inspection but the areas reported as underdeveloped, such as pupils' capacity for personal study and the lack of opportunity for pupils to show initiative, have yet to be fully developed.

18. Although the vast majority of pupils attend school regularly, levels of attendance are below the national average and the rate of unauthorised absence is above the national average. A significant number of pupils continue to take extended holidays in order to visit relatives abroad during the school term. This is despite regular written reminders in newsletters advising parents of the importance of continuity in pupils' learning, and informing them of the maximum number of days that can be authorised for family holidays. There is a certain lack of accuracy in the recording of extended family holidays. There have been no exclusions in the last year.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

19. Overall the quality of teaching is good and this has been a significant factor in the improvement in standards since the previous inspection. At that time, weaknesses were identified and the school was required to address, as key issues, a wide range of matters relating to teachers' skills and professional development. It has been successful in doing this.

20. During the inspection the teaching was judged to be good or better in nine lessons out of every ten. It was very good or excellent in a quarter of the lessons seen. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. Strong and effective teaching was observed throughout the school, leading to pupils learning well in lessons and often making good progress. The good quality of teaching represents a very good improvement since the previous inspection when the teaching was unsatisfactory in a quarter of the lessons seen.

21. A key strength is the teachers' very good relationships with the pupils. All teachers expect the pupils to work hard and they ensure that they do. Teachers place a high value on thorough planning and the preparation of materials, the use of practical experiences and working as a team. As a result of the latter, there is a consistency of approach in most lessons.

22. Teaching in the Nursery is consistently good and often of a high quality. This good work at the Foundation Stage helps the children to develop their skills of early learning. The teacher and the Learning support assistant plan, teach and evaluate activities together. The planning is very good, leading to effective deployment of staff and helpers. All the adults promote good learning through their well prepared conversations and questioning, and effective use of time and resources.

23. In both key stages the teaching of English, mathematics and science is good overall and this is helping to raise standards. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. Teachers understand the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies well and as a result they teach them effectively, helping pupils to recognise and develop new skills. Teachers question pupils closely to assess or deepen their understanding. The quality of questioning was a strong feature of many lessons seen during the inspection. For example, a pupil in a mathematics lesson identified a cube as a cuboid. The teacher responded; 'Well it's a special sort of cuboid. Can you tell me what's special about it?' This good quality questioning promotes good learning. Teachers' explanations are of a high quality and show sensitivity and awareness of pupils' varying backgrounds. In an art lesson, where pupils were viewing pictures for perspective, the teacher developed the pupils understanding by describing it as; 'You feel as though you're standing inside it'. In a religious education lesson for Year 2 in response to a pupil's question; 'Did God really divide the water when the Israelites left Egypt?' the teacher explained that there are many ways to interpret the Bible.

24. The quality of teaching in geography and physical education has improved since the previous inspection and is now good. This is also the case with history at Key Stage 2. Teaching remains good in religious education, art and design at Key Stage 2, and music. In geography, history and religious education, teachers create worthwhile opportunities for pupils to engage in extended writing activities so further developing and consolidating new skills acquired during literacy lessons. The teaching of information and communication technology is satisfactory overall but teachers do not use computers sufficiently enough in other subjects. There was insufficient evidence to form a judgement on the teaching of history or art and design at Key Stage 1, or the teaching of design and technology at both key stages.

25. Teachers' planning has improved significantly since the last inspection. There is a consistency across the school which has a very positive impact on teaching and learning. Generally teachers provide work which match pupils' learning needs and challenge them to learn more. This is true for the full range of attainment. Higher attaining pupils in Year 2 were at full stretch in an information and communication technology lesson when using the mouse to create a complex picture in the style of Joan Miro; a pupil with special educational needs was similarly challenged when good questioning by a teacher in a Key Stage 1 English lesson helped to improve his understanding. On a few occasions tasks are not matched sufficiently well to needs, and this results in some pupils not understanding the purpose of the task and becoming restless. On these occasions pupils' progress in lessons is limited. Teachers mark work conscientiously but few pupils are given precise instructions on how to improve their work.

26. Throughout the school teachers use a good range of teaching methods and classroom organisation to maximise the learning opportunities. These include opportunities for pupils to work as a whole class as well as to work individually or in small groups. The school's recent practice of grouping pupils in both key stages by attainment for literacy and numeracy lessons helps teachers to focus on specific levels of skills and results in good progress. Resources are well used, notably in the Foundation Stage, and in mathematics, science, history, art and religious education in Key Stages 1 and 2. This stimulates pupils' interest and focuses their attention on key learning points. However, the opportunities for pupils to be involved in research and independent learning are limited.

27. The very good relationships that teachers establish with their pupils leads to lessons in which pupils behave very well and are eager to learn. It was very noticeable that not one single raised voice was heard during the inspection. Pupils clearly like their teachers and learning support assistants and want to do well for them. Combine this with good subject knowledge and a high level of skill in such techniques as questioning and assessment and it is clear why teaching is having such a positive impact on standards.

28. The quality of teaching for pupils for whom English is an additional language is good throughout the school. The specialist teachers offer good support to these pupils in all classes in both key stages. A learning support assistant and a bilingual instructor provide similar support for children in the Nursery. Bilingual skills are used well to assess children's attainment levels when they first enter school. This enables staff to build effectively on what children know and can do. Staff use their skills well to help children to settle into school and to learn. All staff supporting pupils for whom English is an additional language have high expectations. They set clear and appropriate targets for pupils and as a result most are successful in moving to independent learning. Though emphasis is rightly placed on supporting pupils' development in literacy and numeracy, extra help is also available to enable pupils to extend fully their thinking and understanding in other subjects. However, at times the withdrawal of pupils from lessons for additional work in English or mathematics compromises their entitlement to a full curriculum in other subjects such as art.

29. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good overall. Learning support assistants are well briefed and individual education plans are used well by the staff. All teachers have an appropriate understanding of the curriculum needs for pupils who have difficulties especially in English and mathematics. Targets are set for individual pupils and the staff take care to plan activities which take account of pupils' capabilities. This has a significant impact on learning because it means that the pupils are able to make good progress. The special needs co-ordinator provides assessment advice and resources where needed. The more able pupils make good progress as a result of good teaching. The staff have high expectations of them and ensure that the work they are given is appropriate to their needs.

30. Although concerns were expressed by some parents prior to the inspection, the teachers make good use of homework to reinforce what is learned in school. They are generally well supported by the parents and carers. Homework is having a positive effect on pupils' attitudes to learning and in raising attainment.

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

31. The overall quality and range of learning opportunities are sound with many good features and a few weaknesses. Overall the quality of the curriculum is similar to that reported in the previous inspection. Much good planning and thought have gone into ensuring that the National Curriculum is properly taught. Furthermore, this planning carefully interweaves many good opportunities to enhance the pupils' spiritual, moral, cultural and social development with the teaching of subjects. The impact of this can be seen in the good behaviour and attitudes of the pupils.

32. In Key Stage 2 the teaching time over the school week is about 90 minutes short of the national recommendation. Furthermore, the amount of time allocated to English and mathematics is very high compared with other subjects, and the literacy and numeracy sessions are often longer than that advocated by the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy.

33. The curriculum is appropriately broad and relevant. It is greatly enhanced by extra-curricular provision and enriched by the cultural dimension of activities such as the International Week. The curriculum for all National Curriculum subjects meets statutory requirements. That for religious education meets the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Apart from the issue of the time taken for literacy and numeracy sessions, the national strategies for these subjects are used well and are having a positive effect on teaching and learning in mathematics and English.

34. Long- and medium-term plans are made for all subjects and give a clear indication of what is being taught and how the needs of different groups are being met. The skills taught in literacy and numeracy are used effectively in other areas of the curriculum such as geography, history, design and technology and science. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to practise their skills in information and communication technology within other subjects. In addition, unlike the Foundation Stage, planning for Key Stages 1 and 2 contains a shortage of opportunities for the pupils to learn independently.

35. Provision for personal, social, and health education is good. It is taught through specific lessons and across the wider curriculum. The school has a satisfactorily planned programme for drug awareness. At the moment sex education is not taught, as a result of a decision by the governors. There are plans to review this policy shortly in the light of Larkrise becoming a primary school.

36. There is a wide range of extra-curricular activities available for pupils and the quality of provision has been maintained since the last inspection. There are many sporting activities as well as a choir and an orchestra. This provision has a positive effect on the pupils' learning. The activities are well supported by boys and girls, and all ethnic groups. There are plans to greatly increase the provision and range of extra-curricular activities in the near future, as the school has sought and been awarded funding for this purpose.

37. The contribution of the community to pupils' learning and the relationship with partner schools are very good. Pupils visit the parish church and a local mosque. Visits from the local community provide other valuable links. There is very good liaison with the local middle school. The school has also developed good links with schools in Spain, Germany and Greece, as well as strong links, through the British Council, with a school on the outskirts of Delhi. The headteachers have visited each other's schools and Larkrise pupils are sponsoring pupils in India.

38. Provision for pupils with English as an additional language is very good, an improvement since the last inspection. The needs of pupils are very carefully assessed and they are provided with specific targets,

either in small groups, on an individual basis, or through parallel teaching groups. Plans for their work are reviewed regularly. The specialist staff work closely with the class teachers and as a result the pupils make very good progress.

39. The quality of the provision for special educational needs is very good and this is an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils are identified as early as possible and appropriate steps are taken to assess their needs, write individual educational plans and provide support. The individual educational plans are reviewed on a regular basis. All pupils receive good quality support from the teachers and learning support assistants.

40. In most respects the attention paid to equality of opportunity is outstanding and the school strongly promotes educational and social inclusion. It is strongly committed to raising the achievement of all pupils. As a consequence relationships are very good, there is an absence of bullying, sexism and racism and a very high level of respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others. However, a weakness in this otherwise very good position is the fact that there is some loss of curriculum entitlement as pupils are withdrawn from lessons. This applies in the main to pupils with English as an additional language, the pupils with special educational needs and those who receive instrumental tuition. Apart from this, the pupils with English as an additional language and the pupils with special educational needs have access to a full curriculum and all extra-curricular activities.

41. The provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. This means the school has maintained the quality reported in the previous inspection. All four aspects are suitably and actively promoted through a range of planned activities across the curriculum. The pupils know what is expected of them and are aware of the sanctions and rewards that are in place. The school rules are prominently displayed in classrooms. The pupils are encouraged to be part of the construction of these rules.

42. In most classes pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for routine daily tasks such as collecting books at the end of lessons. They are encouraged to work together and to support each other. The school ethos and the good relationships between adults and children, and amongst the pupils themselves, provide very good opportunities to develop pupils' moral and social skills. There is a high degree of harmony throughout the school.

43. The provision for spiritual development is not only catered for in assemblies which take very good account of the many cultures found in the school, but across the whole curriculum. Examples were seen in art, mathematics and science where thoughts of awe, wonder and reflection were planned into lessons and were realised effectively.

44. Arrangements for pupils to learn about and appreciate their own culture as well as the richness of others is very good. Many planned opportunities across the curriculum have improved this aspect. Work was seen on the cultures, and aspects of citizenship, of peoples around the world including India, Africa, America and Australia. The pupils learn about art, costumes, toys, games, dances and food, not only from Britain, but also from across the globe. Local authors and artists have visited the school and all of this greatly enriches the pupils' experience of their own and other cultures. The International Week held in conjunction with a local carnival greatly enhances the multi-cultural aspect of their learning. The school has recently received an award from the British Council for its work in this field, something of which it can be rightly proud.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

45. Since the last inspection the school has continued to provide a caring learning environment for all its pupils. There are appropriate child protection procedures and the staff designated to manage these have received suitable training. All members of staff are fully informed of procedures to follow in the event of any concern. The general welfare of pupils is the responsibility of caring class teachers with very good support from learning support assistants, midday and administrative staff. Good liaison and support arrangements with appropriate welfare and health services enable all pupils to be supported appropriately. Likewise the recently introduced administrative procedures enable teaching staff to be fully informed and aware of any changes in individual pupils' needs.

46. Some systems are in place for monitoring and maintaining particular aspects of general health and safety and for the overall standards of the school premises and grounds. Most of the school is in a sound state of repair, decoration and cleanliness but with current construction and alterations taking place there are some areas that have yet to be attended to, or completed.

47. First-aid provision is not adequate and does not fully comply with government guidance. In particular, there is no system to ensure the regular maintenance and replenishment of first-aid supplies. There are also inadequate systems for ensuring the regular maintenance and replacement of fire-fighting equipment. Some of the school's fire-fighting equipment is obsolete. Termly emergency evacuation practices are not always accurately recorded and those noted have not been completed within the recommended time limits. Responsibility for organising these is unclear and this makes it difficult to record any difficulties encountered. Overall the school does not have appropriate administrative arrangements and procedures in place to support its staff in ensuring the health and safety of pupils and the governing body does not fulfil its statutory duties in the monitoring and evaluation of provision and procedures. Staff responsible for aspects of health and safety do not receive regular training. Safe storage areas are provided for hazardous substances and equipment and pupils are made aware of good practice and safe working procedures around the school and during lessons.

48. The school continues to work hard to promote good attendance and liaises with appropriate agencies in the event of any concern. There are some very efficient, recently introduced procedures for monitoring and recording pupil absence. If applied to long-term pupil absence from school for protracted holidays they would provide a more accurate record of overall and individual pupil attendance. A particularly good whole school policy, combined with good behaviour management strategies, has resulted in a high degree of social harmony and good behaviour. Positive, caring behaviour is also fostered through classroom provision such as 'circle time', when pupils sit in a circle and discuss a relevant issue which is appropriate to the age and understanding of the pupils.

49. Monitoring of pupils' academic performance and personal development, and the educational and personal support afforded to pupils is good. Teachers are sensitive to pupils' needs and they provide skilled guidance and encouragement. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are very good, and this information is used very well to guide curricular planning. The systems in place to monitor and support pupils' personal development are good. They include, for example, annual profiles on all pupils.

50. Pupils with English as an additional language are very well supported by class teachers, specialist teachers and support staff. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and learning support assistants are deployed effectively to assist them to develop to their full capacity. Records for both groups of pupils are very good throughout the school. There is good provision for pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties which includes arrangements for them to work on social skills activities with learning support assistants three days per week.

51. Children are assessed both when they are admitted to the Nursery and when they leave. In addition 'baseline' assessments are carried out during the first half of the term following admission into the main school and again at the end of the academic year. These assessments support children's progress very well, not only at the Foundation Stage but also throughout the school. Tests, including non-statutory National Curriculum tests in English, mathematics and science, are used regularly at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. The results of these are carefully recorded together with the results of the statutory tests at the end of Key Stage 1. These provide an overview of the standards and progress made by all pupils, particularly in relation to the 'baseline' results. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

52. The results of tests, particularly the statutory ones, are closely analysed and the information is used very well in planning to meet the academic needs of all pupils. They form the basis of regular reports to governors on the progress of boys and girls, pupils with English as an additional language, those with special educational needs and the performance of each year group as a whole. This information is used very well to support the progress of different groups and to raise standards in specific aspects of subjects. For instance, in 2000/2001 the school concentrated on boys' writing, and this year it is focusing on improving reading comprehension.

53. Records of individual pupil progress are kept in all subjects and are passed on to each new class teacher. Thus teachers have a good understanding of the potential of their pupils and plan their work appropriately. Targets are set each half-term for pupils in literacy, numeracy, science and information and communication technology. The individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are very good

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

54. The school has maintained its sound partnership with parents and carers which was evident at the last inspection. Those who attended the meeting held by the Registered Inspector prior to the inspection said that the staff work very hard to encourage participation but that, despite these efforts, there are still a considerable minority of parents who do not become involved. Overall parents are very pleased with the standards that the school achieves, believing that these have improved considerably since the last inspection. They are particularly impressed by the school's work in connection with 'world citizenship', speaking very highly of the International Week and its contribution to pupils' understanding of the multi-cultural nature of Britain today. They say that school newsletters are very informative and accessible but other written material often contains jargon and is consequently difficult to understand. Overall parents have very positive views of the school.

55. The inspection finds that the school provides a range of opportunities for parents to be fully informed and works hard to include all parents. There are regular and informative newsletters written in a friendly and easily accessible style. No evidence of written material containing jargon was seen during the week of the inspection. Regular, formal consultation evenings are provided but only sixty per cent of parents currently attend despite the school's best efforts to encourage attendance. In Key Stages 1 and 2 no information is provided for parents on topics to be studied each term. However, the Nursery shares information about planned activities with parents and this makes a very good contribution to the full involvement of parents in their children's education at the Foundation Stage. Throughout the school informal access at appropriate times of the school day is encouraged. In the Nursery this is particularly effective; parents are warmly welcomed when bringing and collecting their children. They are familiar with routines, for example borrowing books from the Nursery library to share with their children at home.

56. Annual reports comply with statutory requirements but are inclined to be descriptive of the areas of work covered rather than providing detailed information on pupils' achievements, attainment and progress. There is very little identification of pupils' strengths and weaknesses and likewise only a few reports provide targets. Parents are invited to be involved fully when their children are identified as having special educational needs. Despite the school's best efforts in this regard not all parents respond to the regular opportunities provided to discuss their children's progress. The school plans to make adjustments to the very good individual education plans, so as to make them more accessible for parents and, thus, increase home support. The links with parents of pupils with English as an additional language are good. There is regular contact both informally and formally.

57. The school makes use of homework to support and reinforce learning. Homework is set in literacy, numeracy, spellings, reading and some occasional research in history. The provision of home-school diaries for reading is not consistent in all classes.

58. The home-school community committee of the governing body is effective in raising concerns that relate to the varied community that the school serves, and also in proposing solutions. The parent teacher association raises money for the school each year through a range of fund-raising and social events that are chosen to appeal to everyone in the school community. These funds are used to good effect to enhance and extend resource provision. Parents and members of the local community support school events and productions very well. A few parents and volunteers help regularly in the school. The staff and governors work extremely hard to promote mutual understanding of the many faiths and cultures within the community.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

59. The energetic, enthusiastic and thoughtful headteacher provides very good leadership and a very clear vision for the school's development. He is a good role model for staff and pupils alike. He is well supported by the deputy headteacher, the senior management team and the co-ordinators for subjects and other aspects of school life. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The vast majority of parents believe that the leadership of the school is good and the value of the headteacher's leadership is recognised by the staff and governors. The school's aims are very well reflected in its everyday life such as the commitment to the creation of 'a stimulating and attractive working environment that fosters a keen desire for learning'.

60. The management of the school is very good. The headteacher and senior staff work closely together to develop the school's provision and share a strong commitment to improving standards. This is reflected in the good improvements that have been made since the previous inspection. For example, the role of the subject co-ordinators has been developed significantly, and there is now an effective system in place that supports their monitoring of teaching and learning, with a specific and appropriate emphasis on English, mathematics and science. They are responsible for drawing up subject action plans and have full management of their subject budgets. Pupils' progress is taken very seriously and monitored very carefully. As a consequence they receive good teaching in lessons. Well-trained learning support assistants provide further good quality inputs to help pupils understand their work. However, some groups of pupils, either with English as an additional language or with special educational needs, are regularly withdrawn from lessons in subjects other than English, mathematics or science so that they miss some work. Pupils receiving instrumental tuition also miss some work in subjects other than music. This withdrawal of pupils inevitably has a negative effect on the otherwise good progress which all groups make.

61. Funding is administered appropriately to provide staffing and resources for the pupils with English as an additional language. The co-ordinator manages and organises the provision to a high standard supporting well the very good quality of education provided for the pupils. She works closely with her specialist colleagues and the other teachers and learning support assistants and this has a positive affect on raising standards.

62. The deputy headteacher, who is the co-ordinator for special educational needs, manages and organises the provision to a very high standard. He has developed substantial records that are very well maintained and comply fully with statutory requirements. Policies provide detailed support for both teachers and learning support staff. However, the time spent on reviews is extensive and limits significantly the opportunities for the co-ordinator to influence the quality of teaching by regular and active participation in lessons. A special educational needs governor liaises well with the co-ordinator.

63. The headteacher monitors rigorously teaching and the curriculum. His regular formal visits to each class are followed up by both discussion and a written evaluation in which areas for the development of teaching skills are noted. As a result of this high quality monitoring, the teaching has improved considerably since the previous inspection. This work is very well supported by a document, 'The Quality of Teaching Framework', which is the main tool for the monitoring and evaluation of teaching. All teaching staff have responsibilities as co-ordinators and are given regular time to review planning and support their colleagues in the classrooms. They have a very good understanding of, and commitment to, what needs to be done to move the school forward. The procedures for performance management, which are closely linked with the headteacher's monitoring of teaching and the curriculum, as well as the school development plan, are very well implemented. The governing body has set appropriate targets for the headteacher.

64. The headteacher and senior management team systematically assess test data to analyse strengths and weaknesses and use the information very well to inform future planning. Assessment activities have included a systematic and comprehensive monitoring of boys' achievement, particularly in writing, following the 2000 national tests. This initially involved the deputy headteacher, the Key Stage 1 co-ordinator and the co-ordinator for English as an additional language, all of whom made recommendations to the senior management team. A school action plan was developed and shared with all staff and, as a result, in the 2001 tests, boys' achievement has been raised. This exemplifies well the high quality of the school's approach to raising standards. In addition the headteacher looks at samples of work from each class on a weekly basis and this contributes well to the identification of areas for improvement.

65. Governors support the school well and, through their good relationships with the headteacher and staff, make a significant contribution to the school's achievements. They are committed to the success of the school. They are well organised and carry out the majority of their statutory duties, although there are gaps in relation to health and safety. They take their responsibilities seriously, working closely with the headteacher and staff to support and monitor the effectiveness of the school's work. Individual governors are attached to each teacher, they visit the school regularly to see the provision and report back at governors' meetings. The headteacher keeps them fully informed about issues relating to standards and the evaluation of national tests. As a result they have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.

66. The school development plan is of very good quality and provides detail about long- and short-term priorities. Staff, governors and parents are fully involved in agreeing the school's priorities. The current priorities are appropriate and generally on target. Costings, and criteria for evaluating success, are carefully built in. There are good procedures for the induction of staff new to the school. Good arrangements are made for ensuring that staff receive proper training, for example, in relation to the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy. However, the staff responsible for health and safety do not receive appropriate training.

67. Financial planning is good, as is the day-to-day management of finances. Administrative procedures are well managed. In the last audit conducted by the Local Education Authority, some minor suggestions were made about the school's procedures and these have all been dealt with. All grants are used very effectively for their intended purpose. The school has good systems for prioritising and monitoring spending. The school is applying the principles of best value well, for example, on building projects. Every effort is made by the staff to purchase supplies and services at the most cost effective level.

68. The school is satisfactorily resourced in all areas of the curriculum. There is a sound range of materials and equipment to support teaching and learning in each classroom, and the central storage of resources is well organised and materials and equipment are accessible to both staff and pupils. Accommodation is satisfactory overall and it is well cared for. Access to some classrooms involves walking through others and this can be distracting for pupils and staff. As part of the change of status to a primary school, building modifications have recently been undertaken to create new reception and administrative areas, and when completed these will considerably enhance the school buildings. Attractive displays of pupils' work enhance all areas of the school.

69. There are sufficient teachers and learning support assistants to ensure that all aspects of the National Curriculum and religious education are taught effectively, and that proper provision is made for the pupils with English as an additional language, and the pupils with special educational needs. There is

a good balance of teaching experience and subject co-ordinators are generally well-matched to their specific responsibilities. Appropriate systems are in place for staff to support each other as, for example, in the joint year group planning. Ancillary staff, such as kitchen staff and mid-day assistants fulfil their roles to good effect. Office staff are appropriately qualified and trained to fulfil their roles and they make a significant contribution to the caring and welcoming atmosphere of the school.

70. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is well below average. The expenditure per pupil is very high. Attainment is below average in English and mathematics. However, in response to the good teaching they achieve well in relation to their prior attainment, and their attitudes to work and school life are good. The school is very well led and managed. Taking account of all these factors, the school is judged to provide sound value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

71. In order to develop and improve the existing high quality of educational provision at Larkrise First School the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- ◆ as indicated in the school development plan, raise standards of attainment in English and mathematics;
(Paragraphs 3, 8, 85, 86, 89, 90, 91, 92 and 98)
- ◆ devoted to other subjects particularly by:
 - ensuring that the literacy and numeracy sessions are nearer in length to those recommended in the national strategies;
 - reviewing the length of the teaching week at Key Stage 2 to bring it in line with national recommendations.
(Paragraphs 2, 32, 33, 87, 105, 134 and 140)
- ◆ ensure that withdrawal from lessons does not compromise pupils' entitlement to a full curriculum;
(Paragraphs 2, 28, 40, 60 and 151)
- ◆ building on existing good practice in the Foundation Stage, provide increased opportunities at Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 for pupils to learn independently;
(Paragraphs 2, 16, 17, 26, 34 and 145)
- ◆ establish more appropriate administrative arrangements to support the staff in ensuring the health and safety of the pupils; furthermore, monitor and evaluate these procedures regularly so that governors fulfil their statutory duties. In particular improve the arrangements for:
 - the maintenance and replenishment of first aid supplies;
 - maintaining and replacing fire-fighting equipment;
 - the recording of evacuation procedures;
 - the training of the staff responsible for health and safety.
(Paragraphs 47, 65 and 66)

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

72. The school should also consider the need to:

- ◆ improve attendance, particularly in connection with long-term absence from school;
(Paragraph 18)
- ◆ improve the use of information and communication technology in other subjects.
(Paragraphs 24, 34, 123, 138 and 147)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

63

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

48

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	16	37	8	0	0	0
Percentage	3	25	59	13	0	0	0

Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one percentage point.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	Y1 – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	183
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	8	70

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	Y1 – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	13	88

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	70

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	14
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.8
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.4
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	28	21	49

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	22	22
	Girls	13	16	16
	Total	31	38	38
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	63 (65)	78 (63)	78 (63)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	23	23	23
	Girls	15	18	17
	Total	38	41	40
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	78 (65)	84 (60)	82 (60)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	4
Black – African heritage	4
Black – other	4
Indian	2
Pakistani	49
Bangladeshi	8
Chinese	0
White	99
Any other minority ethnic group	13

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: Y1–Y4

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	15.8
Average class size	22.9

Education support staff: Y1– Y4

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	196

Qualified teachers and support staff: Nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	50
Number of pupils per FTE adult	13

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2.9
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3.6
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than a term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	00/01
----------------	-------

	£
Total income	563666
Total expenditure	575219
Expenditure per pupil	2397
Balance brought forward from previous year	4198
Balance carried forward to next year	-7355

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	278
Number of questionnaires returned	45

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	68	30	0	0	2
My child is making good progress in school.	51	42	2	0	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	39	50	2	2	7
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	22	45	25	2	5
The teaching is good.	56	40	2	2	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	62	27	7	2	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	64	24	4	2	4
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	50	36	9	0	5
The school works closely with parents.	31	58	9	2	0
The school is well led and managed.	62	29	2	4	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	51	38	7	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	20	33	18	9	20

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

73. Children are admitted into the Nursery on a termly basis usually at the beginning of the term following their fourth birthday. They transfer into the main school at the beginning of the term following their fifth birthday. At the time of the inspection there were no children in the Reception year and all the under-fives were in the Nursery.

74. All children attend the Nursery initially on a part-time basis, usually for three terms, and attend full-time in the term in which they become five. At the time of the inspection there were thirteen full-time children. The school has good induction procedures to support children and their parents on entry both to the Nursery and to the Reception classes.

75. Assessments carried out in the Nursery show that the attainment on entry of the majority of children is well below that expected in English, personal, social and emotional development and mathematics. By the end of their time in the Nursery the majority of children make good progress in all areas of experience and particularly in their personal, social and emotional development. However 'baseline' assessment shows that attainment on entry to the main school is still below that expected nationally, particularly in communication, language and literacy. By the end of the Foundation Stage some of the children will attain all of the nationally recommended standards, or Early Learning Goals. However the majority will not achieve the expected standards in communication, language and literacy, mathematics, creative development and some aspects of knowledge and understanding of the world.

76. The quality and range of the curriculum in the Nursery is good. The good policy and scheme of work, that take account of government guidance for the Foundation Stage, are very well used by the teacher to inform planning. The curriculum is appropriately provided through a balance of free-choice play and well chosen focused activities planned around termly themes. The teacher, the nursery nurse and the bilingual instructor plan and work very well together, and this makes a significant contribution to the quality of the provision, which includes, for example, the clear identification of assessment opportunities. The adults relate very well to one another, and this makes a good contribution to the children's progress.

77. The quality of teaching in the Nursery is never less than good and is sometimes very good. The management of children is good. In addition to the initial assessment profile made on all the children the staff regularly observe, assess and record examples of children's learning across all aspects of the curriculum. These assessments provide early identification of pupils with special educational needs as well as being used to track and support individual children's progress and to inform further planning.

Personal, social and emotional development

78. By the end of their time in the Nursery the children make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development and, by the end of the Foundation Stage, a majority attain the standards expected. The quality of teaching is good. Children settle quickly into the Nursery and show a good understanding of daily routines as a result of the good induction systems and relationships that are established. This sense of security helps them to become more confident, and those children who had attended the Nursery for some time were observed to talk readily and confidently to adults and each other about what they were doing. They show considerable independence as they select activities and

resources for themselves. The adults have high expectations of children's behaviour and concentration. The children respond well to these expectations and the good role models provided by the adults. They behave well, persevere for extended periods of time, and play happily with their friends. They are learning to be sensitive to, and caring for, one another. They willingly take responsibility for themselves and the environment, for example by tidying up.

Communication, language and literacy

79. By time they leave the Nursery the children have made good progress, although the majority do not attain the standards expected. Teaching is good. The adults participate and intervene in the children's play, actively encouraging speaking and listening skills. The pupils have regular access to a tape recorder and headphones so that they can listen to stories and rhymes. Focused activities are used well to introduce new vocabulary related to aspects of the theme. Children with English as an additional language are well supported in their first language and this is helping them to understand and learn English. Traditional and modern stories are used well to foster the enjoyment of books as well as helping children to understand how stories work. These are supplemented by a variety of rhymes and songs. The children are encouraged to read with the teacher and to predict events from the pictures. Using the story 'Each Peach, Pear, Plum' the teacher helped the children to notice rhymes as a strategy for prediction as well as contributing to their knowledge of letter and word sounds. The children are developing an understanding of phonics by learning the sounds and shapes of individual letters, and some can relate this understanding to letters in their names which they write legibly and correctly. The writing area provides all children with the opportunity to experiment with writing, and in addition there are regular opportunities for shared writing activities. A small number of children use their knowledge of letter sounds to write simple words and are developing a sound understanding of the purpose of writing. The adults demonstrate writing regularly by recording words and stories dictated by individual children. The children read to their parents at home or in the Nursery and this makes a good contribution to attitudes towards reading.

Mathematical development

80. By the end of their time in the Nursery children have made good progress, although the majority do not attain the standards expected of them. Teaching is good. Number rhymes are used well; the children act these out with the adults encouraging them to work out the new number as children are either 'added' or 'taken away'. The teacher also provides regular structured activities that focus on aspects of mathematics, such as counting, shape recognition and making sequential patterns. Many daily activities and routines involve the children in mathematics. The adults model mathematical language well and they encourage children to talk about mathematical aspects of their play. For example, shop play provides good opportunities for counting and matching as well as the opportunity to develop an understanding of 'heavier' and 'lighter', as fruit and vegetables are sorted and weighed. Some of the children match and count to twenty and beyond; for example, when they pace out a variety of distances and record their findings correctly. Others can write numbers to ten and make mathematical patterns and name some shapes. They can use weighing apparatus correctly.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

81. Although the majority of the children do not attain the standards expected they make good progress in the Nursery. The teaching is good, and the children's learning is enhanced by the linking of different areas of learning through the use of a termly theme. There are a wide range of interesting and motivating activities both indoors and outside. For example, children used a variety of found materials to make boats and then tested them in water to see if they floated - a result which led to great excitement

and pride in achievement. Some children talk confidently about themselves, their families and events in their lives. They are beginning to develop a sense of present and past through the use of photograph albums that help them to recall events in the Nursery. They explore the properties of different materials such as flour and water, seeing how these change during cooking. They learn about growth by planting seeds. As they play outside they notice features of the environment, including the new school buildings. They use the computer independently and have acquired some simple skills. They use tools and equipment purposefully and safely.

Physical development

82. The children make good progress and a significant number attain the standards expected by the time they leave the Nursery. The good teaching ensures daily opportunities for vigorous physical movement in the secure outside area. The children are beginning to learn about their bodies and they use space well showing an awareness of others around them. They play with a variety of wheeled toys confidently and safely and respond to instructions quickly. They move well to tape-recorded music, action rhymes and songs. They use a range of construction toys to build models, and they develop co-ordination through activities such as drawing, painting and modelling with dough. They use tools such as scissors, pencils, brushes and glue spreaders safely and appropriately.

Creative development

83. Despite good progress the majority of the children do not attain the standards expected for children of this age. Good teaching provides a range of activities that allow the children to express themselves creatively. They enjoy singing and opportunities to play untuned percussion instruments; a small proportion show a developing awareness of different rhythms. They have daily opportunities to paint from their own experiences as well as using a variety of materials and techniques to illustrate in both two- and three-dimensions; for example, painting their favourite food and printing with fruit and vegetables. They have regular opportunities for imaginative role-play where they can act out different characters and events within a given theme or from their own experience.

84. The co-ordinator, who has an appropriate background in the Foundation Stage, is knowledgeable and enthusiastic. She has regular meetings with the Nursery teacher and she has a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage provision at Larkrise. Although she has monitored teaching and learning in the Reception classes, she has not yet monitored the Nursery provision and practice. Parents are warmly welcomed and supported; they are relaxed and confident when bringing and collecting their children. They are familiar with Nursery routines, for example borrowing books from the library to share with their children at home. Termly themes and other information about planned activities are shared with the parents, and this makes a very good contribution to the full and continuing involvement of parents in their children's education.

ENGLISH

85. The overall attainment of pupils in English is below national expectations by the end of both Key Stage 1 and by the end of Year 4. Nevertheless all groups of pupils make good progress and their achievement is good. This finding is in the context of the very high percentage of pupils speaking English as an additional language and the high number of pupils with special educational needs. The former group of pupils, despite making good progress, have not developed the full range of English language skills that are needed to meet national expectations. Overall there has been an improvement since the previous inspection when pupils were judged to make uneven progress.

86. At Key Stage 1, in the 2001 National Curriculum tests, the performance of pupils in reading and writing was well below the national average but it was average in comparison with similar schools. When compared to similar schools the percentage of pupils achieving the higher level 3 was average in writing but it was very high in reading suggesting good achievement by more able pupils. The trend of the school's results has been steadily rising over the last few years, apart from a dip in 2000. The results in 2001 show a considerable improvement on those of previous years, with pupils achieving the targets set by the school.

87. Literacy hour sessions are sometimes too long. This additional time does not make a significant contribution to progress and it reduces the time available for other subjects. However, the whole class and group activities that are a regular part of the literacy hour and other English lessons are well-planned, and together with the setting of pupils in Year 2 and Year 4, contribute significantly to the good progress made by pupils throughout the school. The achievement of pupils with English as an additional language is very good and they make very good progress in relation to their prior attainment. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.

88. By the end of both key stages attainment in speaking and listening is satisfactory overall and pupils make good progress. At the beginning of Key Stage 1, when pupils start the National Curriculum, their speaking and listening skills are still generally well below the national average. Many have restricted vocabularies and have difficulty in using grammatically correct sentences when speaking. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils listen most attentively to their teachers, other adults and each other and many are ready to share ideas during class and group activities where they show good oral skills. For example, Year 1 pupils, sharing the book 'Dear Zoo', were eager to identify the animals in the story and could express an opinion about their suitability as pets. However, whilst some pupils express themselves clearly and confidently, a significant number are less confident in speaking in a more formal and structured manner. By the age of nine good progress is sustained, as pupils respond to the many opportunities provided in literacy and other lessons for them to speak and listen. They express themselves confidently using a wider range of vocabulary and technical language and listen with interest to the contributions made by other pupils.

89. The school has identified reading comprehension as a priority in its development plan and an appropriate emphasis is placed on reading for meaning in both key stages. By the end of Key Stage 1 attainment overall is below the national expectation, although all groups of pupils make good progress. Pupils enjoy reading and respond well to the shared and guided reading activities. Higher attaining pupils in Year 2 can name the title, author and illustrator of a book, and they understand the purpose of the contents and index pages. Most pupils can use the illustrations in stories to predict what is happening. Phonic skills are taught systematically and most pupils understand how to use letter sounds to sound out unfamiliar words. However, many pupils, including those with English as an additional language, have restricted vocabularies and limited experience of stories and this limits their ability to predict unknown words, know when the word they have sounded out is right or not, and to read with understanding. These factors are significant in preventing these pupils from developing reading fluency. Pupils borrow library books to read at home but do not take their reading scheme books home to practice.

90. The attainment of the nine year-olds is below the national expectation for reading. However, this is the same year group whose performance was very low when they took the National Curriculum tests for seven year-olds eighteen months earlier. All groups of pupils in this cohort, including the high proportion with special educational needs, and the pupils with English as an additional language, have made good progress over this period. The most able pupils read a variety of texts with reasonable fluency and expression taking appropriate account of punctuation. Some can recall books read previously, and their authors, and a minority belong to the public library. However, a significant number of pupils have limited comprehension skills and sight vocabularies and this impedes their reading

fluency. Many pupils rely upon phonic strategies to read unfamiliar words and rarely use other strategies such as syntax or context. All pupils are developing their study skills and most understand how to use the contents and index pages in books to locate information. They make appropriate use of dictionaries and thesauri to support their work. Pupils borrow both fiction and non-fiction books from their class libraries to read at home. Reading diaries in Key Stage 1 and reading logs in Key Stage 2 enable parents to be actively involved in their children's reading development. However, there is some inconsistency from teacher to teacher in the way these are used.

91. The standard of writing is below the national expectation by the end of Key Stage 1, despite the good progress which the pupils make throughout the key stage. This is because there is such a high proportion of pupils who have started Key Stage 1 with very limited skills. Higher attaining pupils show a good understanding of the purpose of capital letters and full stops and use these consistently in their writing. They are able to write stories and poems that are appropriately organised and their handwriting is well formed. For example, some Year 2 pupils were successful in writing a three verse, rhyming poem using 'Walking through the Jungle' as a model. They use their phonic knowledge to make plausible attempts at writing unknown words. However, the majority of pupils are at an early stage in developing their writing skills. Their use of capitals and full stops, and letter size and formation, is inconsistent. Spelling is often weak, including that of frequently used words. Sentence structure frequently reflects their spoken language skills and is not always grammatically correct. The majority of pupils present their work satisfactorily.

92. By the age of nine pupils' attainment in writing is below the expected standard overall, although, as with reading, these pupils have progressed well since they took the National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1. The most able pupils plan their work and can write at length using complex sentences with words carefully chosen for particular effect as, for example, when a pupil writing about a favourite secret place wrote 'It wasn't a secret place, in fact it was quite the opposite!' They use a range of punctuation accurately. Many pupils, whilst organising their writing appropriately, still have difficulties with some aspects of grammar; for example choosing the correct tense. Their spelling is inconsistent, including words that are used regularly. The very high proportion of lower attaining pupils still have difficulty in maintaining consistent letter size. Their spelling is poor. Most pupils present their work appropriately using cursive writing. Pupils have appropriate opportunities to draft, revise and edit their work.

93. In both key stages there are good opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy skills. Pupils read and write for a range of purposes in subjects other than English; for example, when completing written evaluations of work in design and technology. Speaking and listening skills are appropriately developed in discussion activities in all subjects. Pupils use computers to word-process their work in English and other subjects and in Key Stage 2 pupils use books to research information for classroom work.

94. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good in both key stages. They are well behaved in lessons and apply themselves with good concentration and interest even when not directly supervised. They work well together in pairs and small groups, and also help each other informally during lessons, as they discuss different aspects of their work. Their response in lessons is always positive and they clearly enjoy their work.

95. The quality of teaching is good and sometimes very good, and consequently pupils make good progress. Teachers make effective links between previous work and new learning, making it interesting and relevant. They make the purpose of lessons very clear and this helps the pupils to understand what they are doing and why. In whole class discussions they continually check that pupils understand the meaning of words being used as well as introducing new vocabulary. During group activities pupils complete tasks that are well matched to their individual needs and as a result they make good progress. At the end of lessons teachers use the sharing and celebration of pupils' work to reinforce the intended learning objectives. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve, and of their behaviour, and this

means that lessons proceed smoothly and at an appropriate pace. The good relationships between teachers and pupils promote pupils' good attitudes to their work. Teachers have good subject knowledge and this helps them to plan and teach with confidence. Work is regularly marked but this does not always include comments to help pupils understand what they need to do to improve. The learning support assistants and the specialist teachers for the pupils with English as an additional language are closely involved in planning and they have a good understanding of the purposes of lessons. This, combined with their skilled support makes a valuable contribution to pupils' attainment and progress. Helpful homework in reading and spelling is set regularly in both key stages.

96. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic and through monitoring procedures she has a good knowledge of what needs to be done to raise standards. She supports her colleagues well. Assessment procedures are very thorough and are used very well to track the progress of individual pupils and groups, setting targets for them, and to help the teachers plan future activities.

97. Resources are satisfactory and they are used well thus making a positive contribution to pupils' learning. However, the unavoidable and temporary re-location of the library has adversely affected its use by pupils. Good use is made of visits by authors and illustrators to work with the pupils and there is a termly book fair. Pupils are also taken to the theatre. These activities make a good contribution to pupils' progress.

MATHEMATICS

98. Inspection findings are based on evidence from lesson observations, work seen in pupils' books, discussions with pupils and teachers, and the results of national tests. From this evidence standards meet what is expected by the age of seven, but are below expectations by the time the pupils leave the school at nine. This is similar to the position at the time of the last inspection although the pupils' mental skills are now better. Although the work of the Year 4 pupils is still below average, it is better than it was when they took the Key Stage 1 tests in 2000. This is because of the hard work of the teachers, which has meant that all groups of pupils in Year 4 have made good progress over the last 18 months.

99. In Year 1 most of the pupils can add and subtract any two numbers that make 10. A few pupils can add and subtract numbers to 20. They are learning to recognise and identify common two-dimensional shapes, and to be able to describe the number of sides and corners; nearly all of the pupils are able to achieve this.

100. Year 2 pupils can count up and down in twos and fives and know odd and even numbers; some are able to count in tens. The pupils are starting to be able to explain their thinking and how they work out a problem. Most pupils understand the work that they do in measurement, shape, capacity, money and time, and they appreciate how two-digit numbers are recorded. All pupils make good progress throughout Key Stage 1.

101. In Year 3 pupils can sort and describe two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes; they can also, for example, carry a mental picture of a square pyramid. They know some of the properties and the mathematical language that is used to identify different shapes. They can round-up and round-down numbers to the nearest 10. Some can add 3 numbers to make 20 and can explain their thinking and ways of working out a problem. Many know the meaning of individual digits in numbers such as 87; some of them can deal in a similar way with a number such as 462. Division problems have been taught but few have grasped the idea of remainders.

102. In Year 4 pupils can explain methods of measuring length. Most know the relationship between millimetres, centimetres and metres, and can use a ruler or metre stick confidently. Many can add 3 digits to make 100 and they know the connection between addition and subtraction. Most have a good knowledge of shape, mathematical patterns, time, and they can measure weight and capacity successfully.

103. Overall the quality of teaching and learning is good, with no unsatisfactory lessons seen; this represents an improvement on the previous inspection when some unsatisfactory features were observed. In the lessons observed teaching was good in six out of ten and very good in four out of ten. The mental sessions are lively, have a sense of urgency and all pupils participate fully. In the best lessons the teachers have a clear idea of their objectives and set realistic, achievable and challenging targets. They use the correct mathematical language and lessons are conducted at an appropriate pace. The satisfactory range of resources are well used and this has a good impact on teaching and learning. Homework is set and this supports learning well.

104. The teachers ensure that there is proper provision for the pupils with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language. As a result both of these groups of pupils achieve very well and make very good progress.

105. Planning across the school is good and there is a very good system of assessment, tracking and targeting pupils' progress. There has been extensive monitoring of mathematics teaching and this has had a positive impact on standards. However, some numeracy sessions take more time than that recommended in the National Numeracy Strategy. This does not facilitate the learning of mathematics to any great extent; in fact in some cases it is counter-productive, as the pupils start to lose interest.

106. The National Numeracy Strategy is used well. Most of the numeracy sessions have an effective warm-up and all have an appropriate plenary section at the end. Particular contributions are made to literacy, through speaking and listening, and through the correct use of vocabulary. Some use is made of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning.

107. Pupils experience full coverage of the mathematics curriculum, and there is now a good emphasis on understanding and the ability to explain and apply calculations. The subject is well led by an enthusiastic and experienced co-ordinator.

SCIENCE

108. In 2001 the teachers' assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 indicate that the proportion of seven year-olds reaching the expected level was well below the national average, but the proportion reaching the higher level 3 was well above the national average. When comparisons are made with similar schools an average proportion achieved the expected level, with a very high proportion reaching level 3. From lesson observations it is anticipated that the pupils will meet national expectations by the end of both Key Stage 1 and by the end of Year 4, thus matching the standards reported in the last inspection. All pupils make good progress in lessons and both boys and girls, the higher attainers, and the pupils with special educational needs achieve well. The pupils for whom English is an additional language achieve particularly well.

109. Pupils in Year 1 have a satisfactory understanding of the senses, and the sense of smell in particular; they are reasonably successful in identifying and describing what they are smelling. In Year 2 the pupils can, with the support of the teacher, set up an experiment to examine which is the best material to provide a waterproof tent for their 'Travel Bear'. All pupils have some understanding of what constitutes a 'fair test', and the higher attaining pupils have a good grasp of how to set up a scientific investigation.

110. In Year 3, the pupils extend their knowledge of materials and they are able to explain why some materials are suitable for a particular purpose. In doing this they use a good range of words to describe the properties of materials; for instance, 'flexible', 'waterproof' and 'transparent'. In Year 4 all the pupils have a sound knowledge of the function of muscles in the human body, with some of the more able demonstrating an extensive knowledge of this topic.

111. The quality of teaching is good at both key stages and, as a result, the pupils enjoy their lessons and learn well. The teachers have good knowledge of the subject and how to teach it. They use good teaching methods and they make effective use of other adults, including the learning support assistants and parents. In particular, the good teaching provides the pupils with opportunities to learn effectively through activities that are directly related to their everyday experiences, or the tasks are set in a context likely to capture the interest of young children. For example, in Year 3 the pupils discussed the characteristics of materials used to make rulers, chairs and handbags. In activities such as this there is often a good contribution to literacy. For example, when considering the handbag the following discussion took place. Pupil 1; 'It's flexible - it will expand'. Pupil 2; 'It's rigid'. Pupil 3; 'No its not! Its flexible - that's the opposite of rigid!' Other activities support the pupils work in numeracy. For example Year 1 pupils measure water very carefully in order to pour the same amounts on to different materials. There is some use of information and communication technology in science lessons. For instance, in a lesson for Year 4 the teacher used a CD-ROM to assist the pupils' understanding of muscles.

112. The teachers are skilful in assessing the pupils' current knowledge and using this as a starting point for further teaching. To help them do this they employ good questioning techniques, encourage the pupils to contribute, and respect what the pupils have to say. They often start lessons with 'brainstorming' sessions which enable them to establish what the pupils already know. These factors foster the pupils' skills in speaking and listening well. At times the teachers use well what they have discovered about the knowledge of groups of pupils in an earlier lesson. If, for example, there are general misconceptions the teachers ensure that this ground is covered again, often using a different tack and weaving it into the current lesson.

113. The pupils are well behaved in response to good class management, the high expectations of the adults working with them, and interesting activities. Good resources are used effectively. For example, in two lessons for Year 4 home-made models made a significant contribution to the pupils' understanding of the ways in which muscles work.

114. The subject is well managed by the co-ordinator. In particular, she has a good knowledge of the quality of teaching and attainment throughout the school, and this contributes well to the pupils' learning and to their achievement. All the requirements of the National Curriculum are met.

ART AND DESIGN

115. During the inspection it was not possible to observe lessons in Key Stage 1. Judgements are based on the observation of lessons in Years 3 and 4, a scrutiny of pupils' work at both key stages, teachers' planning and other evidence of past work. These indicate that, by the end of Key Stage 1 and by the end of Year 4, pupils have made good progress in a range of techniques, and achieve the standards that are expected nationally for their age. This reflects a slight fall since the previous inspection when standards were reported as good. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language make good progress.

116. At Key Stage 1 pupils are given the opportunity to explore and experiment in a range of media, as for example in Year 1 where they use different materials and techniques, such as pen and line drawings, collage and paint, to make self-portraits. As part of this work, pupils have looked at the work of artists from a range of cultures. In Year 2 they have developed satisfactorily their understanding of line, colour and pattern by printing repetitive patterns and studying the work of Mondrian. They have used pen to record their close observation of the school and other buildings in their environment and they have used chalk pastels to make sound still life compositions.

117. Pupils in Key Stage 2 continue to develop their understanding of a variety of techniques and to apply these to different aspects of their work. For example Year 3 pupils selected one element from their drawings of a Yucca plant and reproduced it, in either pencil or a variety of other media, to make repetitive or symmetrical patterns. Many pupils gave careful consideration to the positioning and arrangement of the chosen abstract shapes. In Year 4 pupils created imaginative pictures using a variety of media as part of their work on perspective. Some pupils were most imaginative in the way they combined materials and techniques, such as scratching out, to create particular effects. They looked closely at the illustrations in a literacy text they were studying to stimulate their own ideas. They have studied Aboriginal art as a stimulus for their own creative work in which they represent journeys symbolically, using paint and pastel.

118. Pupils' attitudes to art and design are good. In the lessons observed pupils showed a lively interest in the activities and were keen to get on with their work. They applied themselves well and showed good levels of concentration. In Years 3 and 4 pupils listen attentively to their teachers and take pride in producing their best work. Their relationships with one another are good, and they co-operate well as they share ideas and talk about both their own work and that of others.

119. The quality of teaching in the lessons observed - all at Key Stage 2 - was never less than satisfactory and more often good. It is not possible to judge the quality of teaching at Key Stage 1. Teachers plan and organise their work well and use a variety of appropriate activities and resources to enthuse the pupils. Skills are taught systematically with clear instructions and good exemplification, and techniques are further promoted through the good use of questioning and the individual support given to pupils during lessons. Teachers are careful to recap previous learning at the beginning of lessons, and make effective use of plenary sessions to reinforce learning objectives through the sharing and celebration of pupils' work.

120. The subject makes a valuable contribution to pupils' spiritual and cultural development. Pupils' observational drawings of natural forms and the careful display of finished work by teachers stimulate a sense of awe and wonder at the marvels of the natural world. The links between art and other subjects, including literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology are used well by teachers as a stimulus for pupils' artwork. For example, Year 4 pupils developed their drawing skills when making careful interpretations of the skeleton of a bird in science. Books are used well as a source of inspiration, as for example, in Year 2 where pupils painted favourite story characters, and in Year 1 where they painted pictures that show key aspects of the story 'The Lighthouse Keeper's Lunch'. This type of work makes a good contribution to literacy. Good use is made of visits to support learning; for example, pupils regularly visit local art galleries, and a range of artists visit the school. The attractive art work displayed around the school makes a significant contribution to its welcoming atmosphere, as well as contributing to the climate for learning fostered by the school.

121. The subject co-ordinator is well informed and enthusiastic. She has a good knowledge of the quality of the work throughout the school, particularly through her monitoring of teaching, learning and standards of attainment. She provides good support for the staff; for example, by organising and improving resources, arranging visits and visitors, and through the useful policy and portfolio of pupils' work she has developed. The curriculum is consistent with National Curriculum requirements.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

122. Because of the way in which design and technology is timetabled, it was only possible to observe one lesson in Key Stage 1. Judgements are based on this lesson, a scrutiny of pupils' work, photographic evidence and teachers' planning. On the basis of this evidence, National Curriculum requirements are fulfilled, and pupils' attainment in design and technology meets expectations by the end of Key Stage 1 and at the end of Year 4. All pupils make sound progress including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when attainment by the end of Year 4 was reported as below average.

123. Planning shows a sound balance of experiences. Pupils study structures, mechanisms, textiles and food technology, and their work involves a range of materials and a variety of tools. Proper attention is paid to designing and evaluating, as well as making. Skills are taught systematically and the work undertaken takes account of topics being studied, enabling pupils to make good links with other subjects and to use their mathematical and literacy skills. However, little use is made of information and communication technology.

124. In Key Stage 1 as part of their work on healthy eating, pupils were observed handling, smelling and tasting a variety of fruit and vegetables, and this active exploration helped them to identify correctly to which set each belonged. They were encouraged to use the correct vocabulary, introduced by the teacher, to help them to describe what they could see. Most pupils could correctly name fruits such as apple, banana and orange, and vegetables such as carrot and potato, although few could identify a melon and pineapple. They showed a good understanding of the need for careful hygiene when preparing food. All pupils were able to draw and correctly label fruit and vegetables of their choice. They showed good attitudes to their work and presented it well. The good support given to pupils with English as an additional language helped them to show what they understood and knew. The work was well linked to the book 'The Lighthouse Keeper's Lunch' that pupils were studying in literacy. Pupils in Year 2 were able to evaluate their work on textiles, noting which parts they felt were good and what they would do to improve other parts. The quality of teaching in the one lesson observed was good.

125. In both Years 3 and 4, pupils make detailed plans, and show what materials they intend to use to complete their designs. In Year 3 they have studied different forms of packaging and evaluated how well they match their intended purpose. Pupils in Year 4 have designed and made packaging for a specific purpose, linked with their work on food, and made written evaluations of their finished work.

126. The co-ordinator started teaching in the school only five weeks before the inspection. She has settled well to her responsibilities in design and technology; managing the budget, carrying out a preliminary audit of resources, and monitoring medium-term planning. She will be evaluating teaching and learning in the term following the inspection as part of the school's cycle for monitoring subjects.

GEOGRAPHY

127. Inspection findings are based on the work seen in pupils' books, displays, the samples of past work kept by the school, the four lessons observed, and interviews with teachers and pupils. The standards achieved by the pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 4 are satisfactory, and meet what is expected nationally for seven and nine year-olds. This represents an improvement on the previous inspection when the standards were found to be below expectations.

128. Year 1 pupils study weather and how it influences daily life. They have a good knowledge of the different types of symbols that can be used on a weather recording chart. In Year 2 the pupils study routes used to get to school using maps of the locality; this includes a consideration of the mode of transport used. Their knowledge of scale, map symbols and direction is good. They have recently walked around the area, conducting a traffic survey, as well as looking at the pattern of the local roads and types of housing.

129. Year 3 pupils study the weather both locally and nationally, including work related to television forecasts. Previous work on 'Travel Bear' includes climate elsewhere in the world, village life in India, how the local area could be improved, and transport around the globe. As a result the pupils have a sound understanding of parts of the world far removed from Oxford.

130. Teachers' planning indicates that good use is made of local resources and visits. There are also good planned opportunities for links between geography and literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology. This includes graphical and tabular recording of traffic surveys, reading about the work in hand, and writing and talking about findings. There are also links with other subjects; for example, design and technology as the pupils make geographical models.

131. The teaching is good overall. Where the teaching is very good, the pupils were well aware of the lesson objectives, the teacher displayed very good questioning techniques, and gave very clear instructions and explanations. As a consequence of the good teaching the pupils enjoy geography and work well together.

132. The recently revised pattern of topics to be studied has ensured continuity and progression of the skills and work to be taught. Because of this, most pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school; this is an improvement since the last inspection where the learning was found to be very narrow, repetitive and unsatisfactory. Those with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs make very good progress.

133. The subject makes a significant contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and their knowledge of the world and its peoples. The 'International Week,' held by the school, is a very good opportunity for in-depth geographical study and a chance for pupils to understand what it is like to live in other parts of the world.

134. There is a satisfactory range of resources in the school that are well used. However, there is a tendency for the same aspects of the subject to be taught at the same time in different years. This puts an unnecessary pressure on resources. The subject is led by a keen and enthusiastic co-ordinator who has monitored planning, resources and the teaching of the subject; this has been effective in raising standards. The overall allocation of time to geography is somewhat low and this is a constraint on the progress which pupils make.

HISTORY

135. By the end of Year 4 standards of attainment are similar to those reported in the last inspection, and are as expected nationally. Findings are based on the four lessons observed during the inspection, work seen in pupils' books, displays, samples of work and discussions with pupils and teachers. An insufficiency of evidence made it impossible to judge standards, or the quality of teaching, at Key Stage 1.

136. In Year 3 the pupils have a satisfactory understanding of how to conduct historical research, and they work hard and behave well. They also have sound factual knowledge. For example, they know why some members of Columbus' crew cried when they left the Canaries. They also know why tar was a necessary part of the ship's stores. In Year 4 their research skills are more advanced as they examine aspects of John Lennon's life, relating it to world events and constructing their own time-line. Virtually all pupils at Key Stage 2 achieve well, especially those who have English as an additional language.

137. The quality of teaching is consistently good at Key Stage 2, and in response to this the pupils learn well and make good progress in lessons, and from year to year. The teaching, particularly the good planning, the interesting activities, the very good management of classes, and the good contribution made by learning support assistants and parents, ensures that the pupils have positive attitudes to the subject. Whilst, for individual pupils, behaviour varies from excellent to unsatisfactory, it is good overall.

138. History makes a good contribution to the pupils' developing skills in literacy. They have substantial opportunities to discuss, to 'brainstorm', to develop their historical vocabulary, and they practise their skills of reading and writing in lessons. Contributions to information and communication technology are limited. There are some as, for instance, the pupils consider modes of communication from the past when studying an automatic record player from the sixties. Time-line work in Year 4 enables the pupils to develop their understanding of how the number system works, as they decide which came first, 1976 or 1967.

139. The teachers plan interesting activities for the pupils. Often these have a 'grown-up' purpose such as preparing to interview the headteacher about his life at the time of the Beatles. Alternatively, 'grown-ups' contribute to history lessons. For example, a parent governor played Beatles' tunes on his guitar for one Year 4 class. In these ways the interest of the pupils is captured. Whatever methods are used the teachers take a deep interest in what the pupils have to say. Thus the latter are encouraged to contribute because they know that what they say will be valued by adults and the other children. As a result the pupils concentrate during discussions and think hard about the work in hand. In one Year 3 lesson, focused on modes of transport used by explorers, a pupil said to the teacher; 'You've told us that Roald Amundsen travelled by sledge - but he must have gone across the sea by boat'.

140. Good use is made of visits and visitors to support the work in history. The subject is well led by an experienced and keen co-ordinator who has a good grasp of the work that is taking place throughout the school. Although the work is well planned and there is effective integration with other subjects, the overall allocation of time is less than it ought to be. Although statutory requirements for the subject are met, this shortage of time limits the progress that pupils make throughout the school.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

141. The previous inspection found that the school was not covering the National Curriculum in sufficient depth, that there were limited opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology skills in other subjects, and that some teachers lacked confidence in the use of computers. As a result of these weaknesses attainment was low and pupils' made unsatisfactory progress. Since that inspection there have been a number of improvements. The school has bought more equipment and all classes have at least one computer. Ten computers have been used to create an information and communication technology suite. To compensate for the gaps in the teachers' knowledge and skills, the school has used national funding to provide training. This has had a satisfactory impact on pupils' progress in acquiring a working knowledge of a number of programs.

142. Pupils' standards of attainment at the age of seven and nine match the levels expected nationally. Pupils in both key stages, including those who have special educational needs, make sound progress and the work they produce is generally of a satisfactory quality, an improvement since the last inspection. This is largely due to three factors. Firstly, the pupils benefit from working with up-to-date equipment. Secondly, most pupils learn well, remember what they are told and are confident when they try things out. Their high enthusiasm and good concentration contribute much to the success of their learning. Thirdly, most teachers, working with the learning support assistants, introduce new programs and skills in a well-planned logical sequence.

143. Although National Curriculum requirements are covered, pupils in both key stages have limited experience of those parts relating to control and monitoring. There are limited resources for this aspect of information and communication technology but opportunities are also missed for pupils to use the technology available and this is a weakness. The school is aware of this and teachers are currently developing their expertise in this area.

144. By the age of seven, pupils are competent in using the mouse and are beginning to develop typing skills using the keyboard, identifying letters, using the space bar, capitalising and using 'delete' and 'insert'. Pupils save their work, use the computer to generate pictures and are able to 'log on' and 'log off' in order to start and finish their work. They represent findings using mathematical techniques such as 'pie' and 'bar' charts and they are developing skills in 'cut and paste' techniques.

145. By age nine, pupils use word processors competently to organise and present their work. However, a significant number of pupils are still unfamiliar with the keyboard and this slows their progress. While some use two hands to type, one finger, hesitant typing by many of the older pupils indicates a lack of progress in previous years. Pupils experiment with the style and size of letter fonts. To a limited extent their research skills are being developed through the use of CD-Roms and 'logging on' to the Internet.

146. Attitudes to information and communication technology are good. Pupils are keen to demonstrate their skills, and talk confidently about their work. They help each other very well and pupils with special educational needs benefit from the support of other pupils as well as support from adults. Pupils talk about trying things out at home, especially using CD-Roms and the Internet. They carefully follow the laid-down procedures for operating the computers and take their work seriously.

147. The overall quality of teaching at Key Stages 1 and 2 is satisfactory. However, there is considerable variation and not all of the pupils are given appropriate opportunities in the classroom to use and apply the skills gained in sessions in the computer suite. During the inspection, few teachers or assistants were seen working with individuals or small groups using information and communication technology equipment, although relevant programs were loaded onto the computers. In particular, although some teachers now provide more opportunities for pupils to use their skills in other subjects, and this is an improvement since the last inspection, this aspect of teaching information and communication technology is still relatively weak. In mathematics in Year 4, pupils recorded measurement data straight onto the computer. In English, the pupils used 'copy' and 'paste' techniques to enhance their writing on environmental issues. In science, in Year 1 pupils used picture and text to create simple labelled diagrams of the body. The most successful teaching occurs in the lessons where the teacher spends time ensuring pupils understand these programs and demonstrates how to use them. For example, in a Year 2 lesson the pupils used a variety of computer techniques to produce graphic designs of fish, based on the work of Joan Miro.

148. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and a sound awareness of what needs to be done to improve the school's provision. There is sound planning, based on National Curriculum guidelines and the curriculum covers all areas of information and communication technology, an improvement since the last inspection. Assessment is of a good quality and includes regular tracking of a sample of pupils in each year group.

MUSIC

149. In the previous inspection standards of attainment were judged to be well above national expectations at the end of both Key Stage 1 and by the time the pupils leave the school. The school has not been able to maintain these very high standards, due to the increased demands of the National Curriculum. Currently, pupils by the age of seven and by the age of nine attain standards above the national expectations. Pupils with special educational needs and the pupils with English as an additional language, in common with all other pupils, make good progress in the subject.

150. By the time they are seven the pupils sing clearly and in tune. They keep good time and change pitch and tempo appropriately. The majority of them can remember and repeat a simple pattern by clapping correctly and keeping to the beat. Using untuned percussion instruments they make up their own rhythms and sound patterns. In one lesson they were able to recognise the difference between pulse and rhythm, and they could accurately identify high and low notes. However, skills in composition are relatively underdeveloped. The pupils are able to talk well about the sounds they hear, thus making a contribution to literacy.

151. Pupils in Key Stage 2 are developing listening skills, being able to identify some of the instruments being played in a piece of orchestral music. They are able to perform their own rhythmic patterns, to a good standard, using a range of percussion instruments. However, the quality of this work is inconsistent. A minority of pupils find it difficult to judge the pace of music and how it changes from loud to soft. However, in singing progress is rapid and by the end of Year 4 the pupils sing with good expression, clear diction and good voice control. A significant minority of boys and girls from Years 3 and 4 learn to play instruments and their attainment is good. They can sight read standard notation skilfully and play their chosen instrument with a degree of competence. Skills developed during instrumental tuition have a positive impact on class lessons. In particular the more skilled pupils provide a good model for the rest of their class. The Key Stage 2 orchestra performs to a good standard. However, when pupils are withdrawn for individual tuition they sometimes miss important work in other subjects.

152. The teaching observed at both key stages was good and had a positive impact on the pupils' learning which was also good. Lessons are suitably planned and the pupils are given opportunities to listen to and respond to music from different times, places and cultures, for example, Afro-Caribbean and Asian music. Pupils' previous knowledge and understanding are used well. In a Year 4 lesson the teacher ensured that the pupils used existing knowledge to extend and develop skills in holding a steady pulse and creating a rhythmic pattern. Performing skills, particularly singing are taught well. There is a sound pace to lessons and good opportunities are provided for pupils to be involved practically. Teachers skilfully evaluate what pupils are able to do and then ensure that they improve on this. Pupils enjoy their lessons and have positive attitudes to music. They behave well and are attentive and interested. They persevere to improve their individual and group performances. They are confident when performing in front of an audience, knowing that their work is valued. For instance, in an assembly for Key Stage 1, pupils lead the singing with competence and enjoyment. The pupils generally handle and select instruments with care.

153. Pupils benefit from the high profile given to music. A significant minority take part in extra-curricular activities, including the orchestra and recorder groups. All pupils perform in Christmas and Easter concerts; the latter being linked to the school's International Week at which visiting musicians involve the pupils in a range of multi-cultural performances. Year 4 pupils are also involved in a local singing festival. These high quality experiences make an excellent contribution to developing the pupils' musical skills and their appreciation of the diversity and richness of music to be found in Britain and across the world. The satisfactory range of resources is used well and the use of information and communication technology to support music is developing. The school provides the full range of experiences required by the National Curriculum.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

154. Levels of attainment are what might be expected for pupils at age 7. This means that the school has maintained the standards seen at the last inspection. No lessons were seen in Year 4 because of the nature of the timetable and therefore it was not possible to judge the attainment of nine year-olds.

155. The pupils improve their control and show appropriate accuracy when throwing, aiming and catching using bean-bags or small balls. They have a satisfactory understanding of the need for a correct warm-up, the effect physical exercise has on their bodies and the need for cooling down at the end of the session. In gymnastics, dance and games lessons all pupils make satisfactory progress in the development of their skills and in the way in which they work together. Progress is also sound from year to year. In dance, pupils learn to move around the hall with increasing control, balance, co-ordination and poise; they are beginning to be able to put together short sequences. Many pupils are agile, well co-ordinated and are learning how to use space correctly. They use the physical education equipment in the hall well.

156. The teaching was good overall in the four lessons observed. The teachers place good emphasis on the need for safety in the hall, and this is respected by the pupils who behave responsibly. Although few of the teachers provide a good role model by changing for physical education lessons, all pupils change and wear suitable clothing. In response to the teaching the pupils work well together in pairs or small groups and thoroughly enjoy their lessons.

157. The teachers provide a range of activities in line with National Curriculum guidance. Swimming is part of the curriculum, with lessons taking place in Year 4. There are well attended extra-curricular activities, that are open to all, in football, netball and cricket. The school runs an annual sports day where the emphasis is on improving one's own performance, as well as providing competitive team games.

158. The satisfactory resources are regularly maintained and are used well. The headteacher is the co-ordinator. He is keen and enthusiastic, has good knowledge of the subject and provides very good leadership. He has monitored work in physical education and he has carried out staff training. These factors have helped maintain standards.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

159. Most pupils by the age of seven and nine attain standards which meet the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus for their ages. The previous inspection found the school was not covering this syllabus in sufficient depth. An examination of the teachers' planning, observation of lessons, a scrutiny of past work and discussions held with the co-ordinator show that it is now covered. The school focuses on

other world religions as well as developing pupils' knowledge and understanding of Christianity. It employs sound strategies to improve pupils' awareness of what religion can teach them.

160. Pupils in Year 2 develop their understanding of similarities and differences between the stories in Muslim and Christian holy books. They know that Muhammad is the leader of Islam and that Jesus founded Christianity. They know the difference between a cross and a crucifix. By the end of Year 2, pupils have developed a satisfactory understanding of what makes holy places 'special'. Their work shows a satisfactory understanding of the basic beliefs and practices of world faiths such as Christianity, Islam, Hinduism and Judaism. For example, they know that religions usually involve a celebration. They understand that Harvest Festival is a Christian festival and that Jewish people give thanks for the harvest by celebrating Sukkot.

161. Pupils express their understanding well through reflecting and writing about the importance of giving thanks for the harvest, and being generous to others in their own lives. This makes a good contribution to developing their skills of literacy, and some pieces of work are very moving. For example, in her Harvest Festival prayer one pupil wrote, 'Dear God thank you for everything. I wish I could speak to you.....Please reply. I live in Oxford'.

162. As is the case in Key Stage 1, pupils of all levels of attainment make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 2. They show a developing knowledge and understanding of Hinduism. They are able to discuss the differences between the holy books, buildings and customs of the major world religions. Pupils in Year 4 know about the places of worship in their neighbourhood and that Christians worship in churches and pray and sing hymns. They are developing their knowledge of the Islamic faith and are able to reflect on the teachings and stories of Muhammad. Some pupils see the relevance of his teachings in their own lives. For example, one said; 'We should treat every body, even animals with kindness'. Another said; 'We love all our family'. Pupils of all levels of attainment develop their awareness of the various signs and symbols of world religions. One Islamic pupil discussed his holy book, the Qur'an, and how it is kept in a special place. At the same time he showed a respect for the cultural traditions and holy books of the other faiths.

163. The subject is making a sound contribution towards the development of pupils' knowledge and understanding in other subjects such as mathematics, information and communication technology, geography and art. For example, pupils in Year 2 have located and drawn their neighbourhood church and mosque on a class map. They have also taken photographs of 'Barnaby Bear' visiting a mosque. In art, pupils have sketched sequenced pictures of the Christmas story.

164. Due to timetabling arrangements, only two lessons were observed during the inspection in Key Stage 1, both in Year 2. Analysis of pupils' work and discussions with pupils were also taken into account in judging the impact of teaching on pupils' learning and the standards they attain. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is good overall. The teachers provide pupils with interesting information about Judaism, thus developing their understanding that religions usually involve a celebration. In a Year 2 class the pupils were asked to compare how Jews celebrate Sukkot with the Christian Harvest Festival. Pupils respond well to their teacher and listen carefully to the views and opinions of others. A notable feature of the teaching is its effectiveness in helping pupils' spiritual development. In their written prayers they show a strong sense of belief in a God, a Supreme Being, and his power to help them in their every day life. Pupils are very secure and enthusiastic in their beliefs and value the work they do in this subject. Behaviour is good. Religious education contributes significantly to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education.

165. The subject is well led by the co-ordinator who knows the strengths and weaknesses of the present provision and supports her colleagues well through, for example, the development of a scheme of work which provides a good basis for teachers' planning. This represents a good improvement since the last

inspection. The provision of learning resources has also improved and there is now a satisfactory range of artefacts which are used well. Assessment procedures are very good.