

INSPECTION REPORT

GERMANDER PARK FIRST SCHOOL

Milton Keynes

LEA area: Milton Keynes

Unique reference number: 110375

Headteacher: Mrs J Dean

Reporting inspector: Mr B Mahoney
18175

Dates of inspection: 2 – 5 December 2002

Inspection number: 246990

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First
School category:	Foundation
Age range of pupils:	4 - 8
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	1 Germander Place Conniburrow Milton Keynes Buckinghamshire
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr K Kendall
Date of previous inspection:	2 March 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
18175	B Mahoney	Registered inspector	The Foundation Stage English as an additional language Information and communication technology Music Physical education	What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
31713	S Roberts	Lay inspector	Educational inclusion	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
30243	A Heakin	Team inspector	Special educational needs Mathematics English Religious education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
22180	S Mistry	Team inspector	Science Art and design Design and technology Geography History	How well does the school care for its pupils?

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
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
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	14
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	15
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	18
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	19
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	20
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	22
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	23
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	28

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Germander Park First School is smaller than other primary schools, and pupils are drawn from the immediate area of the city of Milton Keynes. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school is well below that expected for children of this age, and particularly in their personal, social and communication skills. At the time of the inspection there were 136 pupils on roll. There are 51 pupils with special educational needs (38 per cent), which is well above the national average. There are eight per cent more boys than girls. Twenty-two per cent of pupils are from heritages which are other than white, and there are 18 per cent of pupils who receive support in English as an additional language, which is high when compared nationally. The range of languages spoken by children and their parents includes Urdu, Somali, Swahili and Shona. The nature of the area has changed since the last inspection. The school now makes provision for children from families who are refugees and asylum seekers (nine per cent) predominantly from Somalia; the percentage of these pupils is above the national average. There are 55 pupils (40 per cent) eligible for free school meals, which is above the national average. The number of pupils who joined or left the school at other than usual times is well above the national average (59 per cent). The headteacher was appointed in March 2002, following an 18 month period as acting headteacher. The school became a Foundation School in September 2002 and is now assuming more responsibility from the local education authority.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school that has many good and very good features. From a well below average starting point, and due to good teaching, good curriculum with an excellent range of extra-curricular activities, pupils make good progress and achieve standards that are in line with expectations. The leadership and management of the headteacher are good, with a shared commitment from staff, governors and parents to continuous improvement. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The leadership and management of the headteacher are good and she is very well supported by senior staff and governors; together, they effectively promote good achievement and effective teaching and learning.
- From a low starting point, pupils make good progress in English, mathematics and science, and they attain standards that are broadly in line with the national average; pupils achieve above expectations in physical education.
- The quality of teaching is good overall throughout the school and, as a result, pupils learn effectively.
- There is good curriculum provision, which includes an excellent range of extra-curricular activities, and this has a very positive impact upon pupils' learning, attitudes, behaviour and the standards that they achieve.
- There are very good procedures for monitoring and promoting pupils' good behaviour and very good provision for pupils' moral and social development; as a result, pupils have very positive attitudes to school and reflect good behaviour.
- There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language and these pupils make very good progress across the school.

What could be improved

- Marking of pupils' work together with identifying what pupils need to do to improve and communicating this more clearly to pupils and parents.
- Standards in information and communication technology (ICT).
- Teachers' knowledge and confidence in teaching religious education and promoting pupils'

understanding of other cultures and faiths.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in March 1998. It has responded well and has made good progress in dealing with the key issues. Standards have improved significantly since the last inspection, taking into account the attainment of children upon entry to the school, which is now well below expectations. Work is now well differentiated for all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are supported very well and they make very good progress. Pupils' behaviour is now good, with very good attitudes and personal development. Evaluation and monitoring procedures of the curriculum and standards of attainment are now effectively undertaken by subject co-ordinators. Pupils now have good opportunities to reflect on the world in which they live. Standards in religious education have improved although teachers' still lack confidence and expertise in the subject. Although standards of attainment in ICT remain a weakness since the last inspection, there have been recent considerable improvements in provision with the opening of a new ICT suite. This has yet to make an impact upon standards. Although assessment is now used effectively to make judgements about what pupils have learned and can do, the assessment of subjects other than English, mathematics and science is under developed. The information gained from assessment is sometimes insufficiently used to inform what pupils need to learn next.

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
	2000	2001	2002	2002
reading	E*	E	E	C
writing	E*	D	E	C
mathematics	E*	E	E	D

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

In the National Curriculum tests in 2002, pupils' standards were below the national average but when compared with similar schools, their standards in reading and writing were much better. There were insufficient numbers of pupils achieving the higher level (Level 3) and this was due to the very low attainment of pupils on entry to the school and higher than average number of pupils who joined or left the school other than at the usual times. However, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected level (Level 2 and above) is close to the national average. The school's analysis of test data and a clear focus upon areas for improvement have helped to raise standards. Trends over time show improvement for Year 2 pupils, although standards are still below the national average. The introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and the good quality of teaching have had a significant impact upon raising standards. The school's grades for its performance compared to similar schools have been changed. This is to take account of the very high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in last year's Year 2 and those pupils joining the school part way through the year. The current grades better reflect the school's performance.

From a very low starting point, children make good progress in all areas of learning. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 3 attain standards that are above national expectations in physical education. Standards for these pupils are in line with expectations in English, mathematics, science, religious education, art and design, design and technology, geography, history and music. However, standards in ICT for pupils in Year 2 and Year 3 are below expectations. Pupils for whom English is an additional language make very good progress across the school. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. Higher attaining pupils and those who are gifted and talented make good progress.

Although appropriate targets are set for year groups and individual pupils, these are insufficiently communicated to parents and pupils. During the inspection, there were no significant variations observed in the performance between girls and boys.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are very keen to come to school, where they are interested and involved in activities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. This contributes significantly to pupils' learning.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils' personal development is a high priority for the school and this is reflected in their very good relationships.
Attendance	Satisfactory. There is very little unauthorised absence.

The school has introduced a range of very effective strategies for promoting good behaviour and attitudes by establishing lunchtime activities and after school clubs, with a strong emphasis upon physical activities such as ice hockey, football and tennis. Lunchtime supervisors are beginning to play an important role in promoting and supporting these activities. The school is working hard to further improve pupils' attendance.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Year 3
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 and leads to good learning. The quality of teaching for children in the Reception classes is good. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the curriculum required for children of this age. The quality of teaching and learning for pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 is particularly good in English, mathematics, science, ICT, music and physical education. Literacy and numeracy skills are taught well and this has a good impact upon pupils' learning. Strengths in the quality of teaching include good explanations about what pupils are going to learn at the beginning of lessons, and good review at the end of lessons. Teachers match their questions to the individual abilities of pupils in class discussions in literacy and numeracy lessons well and this contributes positively to the standards achieved. Teachers manage pupils very well and have high expectations of their work and behaviour. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are very well supported and are helped to make very good progress. Higher attaining pupils are challenged appropriately in lessons. Pupils' learning is enhanced by their interest in lessons. They respond well to the high expectations and challenges given by teachers and support staff and this has a very good impact upon their learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good overall. The quality and range of learning opportunities is good and is enhanced by an excellent range of extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils are identified at an early stage and effective support is provided.
Provision for pupils with	Very good. Children for whom English is an additional language receive

English as an additional language	very good support.
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Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. There is very good provision for pupils' moral and social development. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory as pupils lack sufficient understanding of other cultures and faiths.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good overall. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance and promoting good behaviour are very good. The good care of pupils is underpinned by the commitment of the school staff to look after pupils and ensure that the school operates as one large family.

The school has a good partnership with parents, some of whom are very involved in supporting the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher and key staff have effective leadership and management skills and they are well supported by staff and governors. Together they have been successful in creating an effective school. The leadership and management of the school give a high priority to raising standards further.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and are very supportive.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school has clear and effective procedures for evaluating its performance.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes good use of available resources.

Provision of staffing, accommodation and learning resources is good. The expertise and experience of staff is very well matched to the demands of the curriculum. The school's accommodation is good. Learning resources are satisfactory and support teaching and learning appropriately. The principles of best value for money are applied well and are closely linked to the school budget.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils like coming to school and the school helps pupils to become mature and responsible. • The teaching is good, and as a result, pupils make good progress. • The school is well led and managed. • The school works closely with parents, and parents feel they are well informed about how their children are getting on. • The school expects pupils to work hard, and it provides the right amount of homework for pupils. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No significant issues were raised.

The inspection team supports parents' very positive views of the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children start school with well below average attainment, particularly in their personal, social and communication skills. Children make good progress due to good planning and effective teaching in the Reception classes and broaden and consolidate their learning in all areas. By the time children enter Year 1, most attain standards that are below expectations in most areas of learning, except in their physical development where standards are in line with expectations for children of this age.
2. In the National Curriculum tests for 2002 for pupils in Year 2, standards were well below average in reading, writing and mathematics. When compared with similar schools, standards were in line with the national average in reading and writing, but below average in mathematics. The percentage of pupils achieving the average level (level 2) is close to the national average, and this is confirmed by inspection findings. The school has made considerable progress in raising standards for pupils because of earlier identification and support of those pupils requiring additional help. In addition, the quality of teaching has improved because of high levels of well trained support staff and teaching that is well focussed upon the needs of pupils. As a result, the quality of learning has improved with all pupils making at least good and often better progress from a very low starting point.
3. There are insufficient numbers of pupils achieving the higher level (level 3) and this is due to the very low attainment of pupils on entry to the school and higher than average number of pupils who joined or left the school at other than usual times. The school's analysis of test data and a clear focus upon areas for improvement have helped to raise standards.
4. The school has analysed the attainment and progress of pupils who have attended the school from the Reception classes in comparison with pupils who start in Years 1 or 2, and this information indicates that these pupils make good progress. Inspection findings support the view that where pupils join and leave the school at other than the usual times, their results have a negative effect on the school's national test results.
5. Over a period of time since 1999, National Curriculum test results for Year 2 pupils show a good trend of improvement although remaining below the national average. This is partly due to the effective introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and the good quality of teaching have had a significant effect upon raising standards. Although standards dropped in writing and mathematics in 2002, this reflected the very variable change in groups of pupils such as refugees, asylum seekers and other pupils who joined and left the school at other than usual times.
6. In English, standards attained by pupils in Year 2 and Year 3 are in line with national expectations. Many pupils enter the school with below average communication skills. They make good progress in their speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. The school effectively promotes the development of pupils' speaking and listening skills; for example, through the use of drama and poetry and opportunities for older pupils to answer the telephone and take responsibility in the school office during lunchtimes. The school's strategies for teaching basic reading skills are effective in encouraging pupils to become competent readers. Pupils use their knowledge of phonics well to

help them read fiction and non-fiction texts and have a positive attitude to reading and are keen to share books with adults.

7. In mathematics, standards attained by pupils in Year 2 and Year 3 are in line with national expectations. The National Numeracy Strategy is firmly embedded in the work of the school and, as a result, standards have improved although data handling aspects are weaker. Pupils make good progress throughout the school. Most pupils use mathematical vocabulary well to describe processes of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. In the mental mathematics sessions, most pupils respond well to the quick-fire questioning, discuss their work and describe how they reach their solution to problems.
8. In science, standards attained by pupils in Year 2 and Year 3 are in line with national expectations and pupils achieve well. They develop their understanding of a fair test and the oldest pupils devise and carry out investigations and record their findings in a table.
9. In information and communication technology (ICT), standards reached by pupils in Year 2 and Year 3 are below expectations. However, pupils make good progress. Accommodation, security and resource difficulties have only recently been rectified and pupils have been using the new facilities for a very short time. Although standards overall are similar to those reported at the time of the last inspection, national requirements are now more demanding. Information and communication technology is insufficiently used to regularly enhance work in all subjects across the curriculum. Pupils demonstrate insufficient confidence and knowledge to use the facilities available.
10. Standards attained by Year 2 and Year 3 pupils are above expectations in physical education. They are in line with expectations in art and design, geography, history, design and technology, music and religious education.
11. Pupils who have special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are well supported. Pupils' work is well differentiated and well matched to their needs. Early identification and effective monitoring combined with consistently good teaching result in the overall very good progress made by these pupils. Higher attaining pupils, together with gifted and talented pupils are appropriately identified and challenged in their learning. There were no significant differences in the performance of boys and girls observed during the inspection.
12. The headteacher, staff and governors are well aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses and set realistic targets for year groups and individual pupils, and progress towards achieving these targets is good.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

13. Pupils show very good attitudes to school and their work. They attend school enthusiastically and enjoy participating in all aspects of school life, including activities outside lessons. All parents and carers who returned the questionnaire agreed that their children like school and is helping them to become more mature.
14. During lessons, pupils are well motivated, work hard and respond very positively to encouragement. This was seen in one art and design lesson where Year 2 pupils persevered to achieve a high standard in their work. They shared resources readily, listened to each other and offered constructive suggestions. Tasks are completed with

pride. From the Reception classes upwards, pupils follow instructions carefully, set to work quickly and are willing participants. A small minority in each class, however, find it difficult to maintain concentration throughout some lessons, although this is consistently well dealt with by staff.

15. The behaviour of pupils, in class and around the school is good at all times due to the very effective promotion of pupils' social and moral development. This has improved significantly since the last inspection, when the behaviour of a number of pupils gave cause for concern. The school has a clear policy for achieving good standards of behaviour and this has been successfully implemented to incorporate all aspects of school life and receives the full support of parents. Pupils are clear about what is expected of them and respond well to class and school rules. The good behaviour of pupils positively assists their learning and contributes to the standards achieved. Meals are taken in a calm and pleasant dining atmosphere, pupils being conscious of the good manners expected of them by lunchtime supervisors and catering staff.
16. Relationships within the school are very good and are one of the outstanding strengths of the school. Parents commented how quickly their children had settled on starting school. In the Reception year, children happily integrate in a supportive environment. Pupils respect their teachers and learn from them to be kind and respectful. At playtime, boys and girls are at ease with one another and the different ethnic groups in the school work and play together very well. During assembly, pupils were often noticed linking arms and swaying to the beat of the music. It is evident that they respect the feelings, values and beliefs of others.
17. The personal development of pupils is very good. They quickly learn to distinguish right from wrong and to understand the importance of school rules. Pupils are keen to assume responsibility, and make good use of the opportunities offered to them from an early age. The school constantly encourages pupils to show initiative and most are willing to take responsibility. In one of the Reception classes, the teacher uses a music box to instruct children to put books away and sit on the carpet. The child's name in the box is given activity tasks for the day and given a garland to wear to identify the helpers' role. Children are proud to be given this responsibility and respond enthusiastically' which helps to raise children's self esteem and the feeling that all are valued. Year 3 pupils assist with the overhead projector during assembly and attend to incoming telephone calls on reception during lunchtime.
18. Attendance is satisfactory overall. Although the levels have improved since the last inspection, it remains below the national average, but compares favourably with other similar schools in the area. Unauthorised absence has significantly decreased over the last two-year period. Similarly, authorised absences have reduced significantly since the last inspection. Registration is completed promptly twice a day and the method of recording fully adheres to statutory requirements. Attendance details are fed into the computer weekly and the data is effectively used to monitor individual and group trends of absence. Punctuality at the start of the school day and at the beginning of lessons is good. There have been no exclusions over the past year.
19. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language have very positive attitudes to school and are very well integrated into the school community. Pupils respond very well to the caring and nurturing ethos that typifies this school. In small groups or in full class sessions, pupils relate well to each other and to the adults who work with them and, as a result, they gain in confidence and are keen to learn.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

20. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good throughout the school and has improved since the last inspection.
21. The quality of teaching for Reception children is good in all areas of learning. Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the needs of children of this age, and of the curriculum to meet those needs. The skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well.
22. The quality of teaching and learning in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology, music and physical education is good throughout the school. In religious education and art and design the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The quality of teaching and learning in geography is satisfactory in Year 3 although there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2. Similarly, there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about the quality of teaching and learning in history and design and technology throughout the school. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. No differences in boys' and girls' learning were observed during the inspection. The school has identified pupils who are gifted and talented and appropriate provision is made for them; for example, extension activities in mathematics. This is a school which aims to include all pupils and help them to learn equally well, despite any differences in ethnic groups, pupils' first language or learning abilities they may have.
23. A particularly strong feature in the most successful lessons observed was the way in which teachers explained at the beginning of lessons what pupils were going to learn and reinforced this effectively throughout the lesson. A thorough review at the end of most lessons ensures that pupils make good gains in their learning. A common feature in lessons where the teaching was good, included the use of challenging questions to extend learning. The consistently good or better teaching makes a significant impact on the good progress made by all pupils.
24. Teachers show a good understanding of the National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies. Teachers are successful in matching their questions to the needs of individuals in whole-class sessions. This contributes positively to the quality of learning and standards attained. Other strengths in the quality of teaching include well-focused teaching, based upon good subject knowledge, particularly in literacy and numeracy. Lessons proceed at a brisk pace and include a variety of well-planned activities. Effective behaviour management is a consistent feature across the school and, in the best lessons, is the main reason why learning is effective. When the teaching is particularly good, skilful questioning and good use of support staff ensure that pupils learn well. Higher attaining pupils are also challenged appropriately in the most effective lessons.
25. An occasional weakness in teaching is inefficient use of time. Sometimes pupils are expected to sit for too long and too passively when the whole class are taught together, as observed in a literacy lesson and in a music lesson in Year 2/3, where the pace was too slow to maintain pupils' attention and expectations of what pupils could achieve were too low. The quality of marking is unduly variable across the school. Examples were seen of pupils' work left unmarked, and some with very little comment or guidance for pupils in how to improve. However, there were also examples of marking of better quality, with detailed, constructive comments to help pupils to improve.

26. The use of homework is appropriate throughout the school. Reading books are taken home regularly and reading records indicate a good working partnership between teachers and parents. There are also some examples of older pupils working at home with spellings and using reference books effectively. Information and communication technology is insufficiently used to extend pupils' learning in some subjects. This is because the school is getting used to working in the newly opened ICT suite. Teachers are beginning to use ICT appropriately to demonstrate new skills to pupils.
27. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs and pupils for whom English is an additional language is consistently good and pupils make good gains in learning. They make especially good progress when working on more structured activities targeted to meet their individual needs. Class teachers are familiar with the process of identifying pupils who have special educational needs and follow the existing school procedures. These are in the process of being updated to take account of the new Code of Practice.
28. The high level of adult support and good help by support assistants throughout the school contribute very effectively in raising the achievement of pupils who have special educational needs. The support assistants are well informed and work successfully in conjunction with class teachers to ensure that all pupils gain full benefit from their lessons. The school has successfully addressed the weaknesses in provision for pupils with special educational needs identified in the last inspection.

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

29. The quality and range of learning opportunities throughout the school is good overall and is enhanced by an excellent provision for activities outside lessons. The breadth and balance of the curriculum for children in the Reception year is good and for pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 is satisfactory. Statutory requirements for the National Curriculum and for religious education are fully met. Since the last inspection, the school has successfully addressed the key issues relating to the curriculum. Religious education has an increased status with timetabled lessons and there are increased opportunities for pupils to reflect and talk about the wonder of the world in which they are growing up.
30. The curriculum takes full account of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy and the statutory curriculum is in place for all pupils. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are enhanced by the additional funding used to raise standards for lower attaining pupils. Subject policies are in place, but a number lack reference to a systematic review and update. Teachers' planning shows that all strands of the curriculum are covered, but pupils' knowledge of mathematical skills in data handling are used inconsistently in other subjects across the curriculum. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to use their developing literacy skills in all areas of the curriculum; for example, discussing and recording their scientific investigations or expressing their opinions about assembly themes.
31. The school's approach to teaching the curriculum through a number of topics is effective. However, the school lacks structured monitoring of the curriculum to ensure that all subjects are given appropriate time allocations over a longer term; for example, in the coverage of the curriculum for history and geography. As a result, pupils' learning is sometimes limited, because of a lack of regular opportunities to practice and develop their skills.

32. This is an inclusive school; the quality of learning opportunities is good and staff work hard to give pupils equality of access and opportunity. It is relevant to pupils' experience, providing a strong emphasis on literacy and personal skills. The high number of support staff in the school helps pupils to make consistently good progress, particularly in literacy and numeracy lessons.
33. The provision for pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language is good and these pupils are included in all aspects of the curriculum. The school has already identified that the provision has yet to take full account of requirements to update record forms and the format of individual educational plans. However, the school is committed to supporting pupils who have special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language and these pupils are achieving very well because of the effective monitoring and caring attitudes of staff. Individual education plans are appropriate and identify what pupils need to do to improve.
34. The provision for extra-curricular activities is excellent and the number of activities available is outstanding. There is a varied range of after-school activities and clubs including boys' and girls' gymnastics, country dancing, singing, art, tennis and ice hockey. These opportunities provide a considerable enhancement to the taught curriculum and are a valuable element of the school provision for personal and social development. In addition, there are educational visits for each year group. These include the Recycling Centre, the local church, Teddy Bear Factory, Lunt Fort and Mead Open Farm. Visiting speakers add another dimension to pupils' learning opportunities and include a poet, artist, drama group, coach from Wimbledon Football Club, school nurse and the Badger Man. These examples indicate the strong emphasis placed by the school on enriching the curriculum beyond day to day lessons.
35. Provision for personal, health and social education is very good and is provided through class circle time, and informally throughout the school day. The school has a sensitive and appropriate policy towards sex and drugs education, issues are dealt with as they arise and according to the maturity of pupils. Pupils are encouraged to conform to expected standards of behaviour and a strong emphasis is placed on co-operative work during lessons. Pupils comply with the behaviour management strategies, understanding the consequences if they do not keep to the classroom rules. Firm but kindly class management from teachers encourages pupils to do their best and to acquire 'Well Done' stickers, leading to certificates. The school has made a start in helping pupils to set realistic personal targets for themselves; these were seen to work effectively in making pupils aware of and taking responsibility for their own behaviour. Throughout the school, adults are very good role models and the rapport between adults and pupils means that pupils take their lead in courtesy and conduct around the school.
36. The school has good relationships with the receiving school and the nearby playgroup. Relevant information is passed between the schools so pupils can transfer from one to the other with ease and settle in as quickly as possible. These links include inviting the other schools to Sports Day and to the Christmas play. The chair of the local residents association is a member of the governing body and this helps the school to establish itself as an important feature of the local community. So far, efforts to interest local businesses in the work of the school have been unsuccessful, but the school is persevering in its efforts to attract interest. The school welcomes students from local training institutions and provides effective mentoring support for them.

37. Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has improved since the last inspection and is good overall. Parents agree that the school encourages their children to become mature and to develop positive attitudes and values.
38. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. This is a good improvement since the last inspection when it was judged to be unsatisfactory with a lack of opportunities for reflection. Daily assemblies now allow pupils to develop a reverence for prayer. There is a strong ethos of valuing individuals and pupils show concern for each other; for example, one pupil who was feeling unwell was comforted by a friend who held her hand. Throughout the school, teachers value pupils' thoughts and give time for reflection and for pupils to express their thoughts and opinions. The impact of the literacy strategy is evident, because pupils are encouraged to listen not only to their teacher but also to each other. The good level of focus in drama allows pupils to explore feeling and develop empathy. Circle time is also used well to develop assembly themes, for pupils to express opinions and value each other's views.
39. The school makes considerable effort to invite visiting speakers to assemblies. Pupils responded with enthusiasm to the visitor from an evangelical group who used the sketch-board approach to talk about the New Testament. Pupils watched eagerly as the words paralysed, healed and forgiven appeared on the board and the illustration of Jesus healing the paralysed man was completed. A modern version of the Annunciation of Mary was presented by a local vicar who provided a play script and puppets so older pupils could perform the story for the school. The assemblies combined with Harvest and carol ceremonies contribute well to pupils' spiritual awareness.
40. Provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good and a strength of the school. The school has an established 'Playground Friends' system. The 'Friends' wear yellow caps for identification and they ensure that everyone has someone to play with or talk to throughout the lunch breaks. Year 3 pupils take responsibility as lunchtime dinner monitors, and make a very good job of staffing the reception desk, fully conversant in answering the telephone appropriately. Good opportunities for responsibility are given throughout the school in taking registers and doing helpful tasks. Each class has an expected code of behaviour and this makes for purposeful classrooms where pupils achieve well. Good opportunities are given for pupils to work collaboratively; for example, when they count coins with a partner or discuss their settings for plays-scripts.
41. Good use of stickers and certificates reinforces the high expectation the school has of pupils not only to try hard academically, but to develop appropriate social skills. Pupils generally know right from wrong and this knowledge is well supported by the firm behaviour management strategies seen throughout. Relationships are very good; this is evident from pupils' reaction to the lively hymns during assembly and the natural way in which many link arms as they sway to the music. Pupils are encouraged to have a practical approach to those who are less fortunate and they support a range of charities often particularly relevant to the school such as leukaemia or the NSPCC.
42. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils have regular opportunities to listen to music as they join or leave assemblies. Visiting musicians and artists extend this awareness and appreciation of the arts. At Christmas, pupils sing carols in the main shopping centre. Pupils become aware of their local environment from curriculum visits to the local art gallery, environmental centre and Hazard Alley Safety Centre. However, there are missed opportunities for pupils to celebrate the cultural diversity within the school through art and music, and to

appreciate, accept and understand the differences and similarities that contribute to the school community.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

43. The support, guidance and the provision the school makes for pupils' welfare is good. The school provides a close knit, secure and happy environment in which pupils are well protected and their individual well-being is effectively promoted. Teachers are very sensitive to the needs of pupils and work hard to ensure that the best interests of all pupils are met. They have a good knowledge of pupils and their families and respond appropriately to pupils' personal, social and academic requirements.
44. The school's procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and eliminating oppressive incidents are effective and supported by parents and governors. The behaviour policy contains an appropriate range of rewards and sanctions to encourage good behaviour. Positive behaviour is rewarded through praise and encouragement and the headteacher ensures her presence is seen in all areas of the school, taking the lead in discussing with pupils about acceptable and unacceptable conduct. During lunchtime, supervisors are present to organise and participate in games. Parents have expressed satisfaction with the standards of behaviour in the school and with the way that incidents of misbehaviour have been handled.
45. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are good. Class teachers monitor pupils' personal development well and readily identify and evaluate strengths and weaknesses including qualities such as application, persistence and self-confidence. Relevant information is recorded and used for the school's assessment when identifying pupils with special educational needs. However, details of pupil's personal achievements are sometimes not given sufficient recognition in the annual progress report to parents.
46. The procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are very good. All pupils with below 85 per cent attendance are monitored in liaison with the support agencies and local authority. Parents are made aware of this arrangement by letter and the level of co-operation continues to improve. Parents now advise the school at the earliest opportunity if a child is to be absent and the reasons are recorded. There has been a significant reduction in authorised absence since the last inspection. Pupils who are absent for any extended period of sickness will, if appropriate, have work sent home to them and will be re-integrated back into school on return.
47. The school complies with the local authority child protection procedures. The deputy headteacher has overall responsibility for child protection and is fully aware of the services offered by the support agencies. This is a strong feature of the provision for pupils' welfare within the school. Current liaison arrangements with the education social worker are, however, not effective due to long-term absence and this has made it difficult for the school to pursue some absences effectively. Due to recent staff changes not all staff have received formal training, but they are know to alert the schools representative at the earliest opportunity if identifying indicators of possible abuse or changes in pupils' personality.
48. The governing body has taken a responsible attitude to health and safety, but much of the school's written policy is out of date and requires review. The senior management team have completed a risk assessment of the school and grounds and identified potential hazards. The level of risk in each case has been assessed and prioritised. First aid provision is good.

49. The school has good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress in English, mathematics and science although those for other subjects are less well developed. All pupils are regularly assessed in these subjects and results are kept in 'Week 7' assessment books, which are passed on to the next teacher. Pupils' progress is tracked and analysed by the headteacher against baseline assessment, and also with reference to those pupils who join or leave the school at other than usual times.
50. Assessment of children's academic and personal performance are good in the Reception classes, but monitoring procedures for other subjects in the main school are not yet fully implemented. Teachers have yet to develop formal procedures for monitoring and recording in some subjects. The use of assessment information is satisfactory but is not consistently used to set targets for pupils, or to inform future planning. There has been some improvement since the last inspection as the use of day to day assessment has improved. The school makes effective provision for pupils who have special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. Individual education plans identify appropriately what pupils need to do to improve.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

51. Partnership with parents is good and standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Parents have a high regard for the school and particularly the work of the headteacher. The school takes an interest in the home life of the pupils and plays an important part in the life of the multi-racial community.
52. The quality of information provided is good, and parents appreciate being kept well informed. The governors' report to parents for the last academic year and the school prospectus, provide comprehensive information and the contents meet the statutory requirements. Parents receive a regular newsletter from the school, which includes details of forthcoming activities and pupils' achievements both in and out of school. However, insufficient information is provided about the curriculum being taught. The school is aware of this requirement and is currently considering the provision of a topic chart for each school year. The annual written report for pupils provides a clear understanding of what has been achieved, but lacks detail as to what needs to be done next.
53. Parents are always welcome at the school. They find the staff very approachable and always willing to discuss any issues relating to their child's education and welfare. All the parents who returned the questionnaire agreed that they felt comfortable approaching the school and that the school is well led and managed. Many parents help in the school by listening to readers, painting and arts and crafts. The school values parents as a rich source for supporting and developing children's learning and results have had a positive impact on education. Parents always show a willingness to supervise on school trips. The Friends of Germander Park link parents and staff through joint fund raising activities and recently supported the purchase of the new library facilities.
54. Parent evenings held each term provide a good opportunity for teacher-parent consultations. During the meeting in July the written reports are discussed with parents. Although parents have signed a home-school-pupil agreement, some parents do not have a clear understanding of the amount, regularity and purpose of homework given.

55. Parents of pupils who have special educational needs are well involved from the time the school has an initial concern and are kept fully informed about their child's progress. Parents of these pupils are regularly involved in identifying their needs and in reviewing their progress. The school has good links with parents who are welcome to discuss their child informally whenever they might have a concern.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

56. The quality of leadership and management is good overall and has improved since the last inspection. The headteacher provides good leadership and has established positive relationships between all members of the school community. Since her appointment in March 2002, the headteacher, staff and governors have effectively identified and implemented the main areas for immediate improvement. The deputy headteacher has also very recently been appointed. The school became a Foundation School in September 2002, and is now assuming more responsibilities from the local education authority.
57. The headteacher is well supported by an effective senior management team, and together they have identified areas for improvement and are developing a range of appropriate strategies to continue to move the school forward. The school has analysed assessment data to identify strengths and weaknesses in order to improve standards, and is using the analysis appropriately to set targets to improve pupils' performance. They have good support from staff, governors and parents.
58. A team approach is well developed and there is a shared commitment to improvement and the result of this can be seen in rising standards. All teaching staff have responsibilities for co-ordinating areas of the curriculum. The monitoring role of co-ordinators is mostly effective and particularly in English and mathematics. There have been a number of recent changes in the subject co-ordination responsibilities of staff and at the time of the inspection staff were coming to terms with their new responsibilities.
59. The governing body gives generously of its time and has increased its involvement in the school since the last inspection. A planned programme for visiting the school, as well as frequent informal visits made by several governors, provides them with first-hand information about how well the school is doing. Overall, governors are making a good contribution to the life of the school and are supporting the school well. Governors are well aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses. A range of its responsibilities is delegated to committees that effectively support the work of the school. The governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities appropriately and are successfully involved in the overall monitoring of the work of the school.
60. The school has clear aims that are supported by pupils, parents, staff and governors. These include creating an environment that effectively promotes pupils' learning and positive attitudes, together with the development of self-confidence, self-worth, and the skills and qualities required to be caring and fulfilled members of society. These aims are appropriately incorporated into all aspects of the school. The school's development plan is appropriate and clearly identifies the areas for development. The planning process is effective; the document is clearly laid out and identifies resource implications, key personnel and time scales, together with costings. The planning process involves staff and governors. Participants feel that their contributions are valued and form a significant part of future school improvement and, as a result, there is strong commitment to the priorities identified.

61. Financial planning is good, and special grants, such as allocations for special educational needs, are used appropriately. The full governing body agrees the budget allocations annually, and governors monitor expenditure regularly in order to check that actual expenditure is in line with the agreed budget. Good quality financial information is made available to all governors. Governors ensure that spending decisions are appropriately linked to educational priorities. There are appropriate procedures to review and evaluate the effects of financial decisions, and governors have a good understanding of best value principles and apply them appropriately. The school budget is well managed on a day-to-day basis by the school's administrative officer, and financial control and administration effectively support the endeavours of teachers.
62. The school shows a high commitment to meeting the educational needs of all pupils. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language is well managed. Good use is made of funds for these pupils in providing well-focused and appropriate support. Support staffing levels are well above those seen in similar schools. All pupils have equal opportunities for learning throughout the school.
63. The governor with responsibility for special educational needs is well informed and conscientious in visiting the school regularly to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs benefit fully from the school's provision. The school complies with the Code of Practice for special educational needs and fulfils its statutory requirements.
64. There have been good improvements in the school's approach to staff development in line with national requirements. There has been an appropriate emphasis upon literacy and numeracy. Performance management strategies are now in place for all staff and operating well. The school is appropriately staffed and there is a good balance of experience and expertise. Learning support staff are deployed well and make a good contribution to most lessons.
65. The accommodation good and has a good impact upon pupils' learning. A computer suite has very recently been established and a new, well-stocked library enhances learning facilities and effectively promotes pupils' reading skills. Views of the surrounding countryside and some planting near the school give the location a pleasant aspect. The classrooms and corridors are clean and bright and good displays of pupils' work enhance every display space in the school to good effect. The hall is also used as a means of getting from one end of the building to the other, sometimes causing disruption to activities.
66. The newly completed and well equipped ICT suite is a very good resource. However, as yet it is an underused facility, but the school intends to review timetabling of its use shortly. The ICT suite lacks adequate ventilation and when occupied quickly becomes overheated and unpleasant to work in.
67. The quality and range of resources to support learning are satisfactory overall. However, the school lacks appropriate resources in some areas; for example, resources for religious education are insufficient to promote the understanding of other cultures and faiths.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

68. In order to improve the standard of education further, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- (1) Raise standards in information and communication technology * by:
 - providing pupils with more direct teaching of ICT skills; (paragraphs 9, 66, 123, 124, 125, 126)
 - using ICT in other subjects across the curriculum; (paragraphs 26, 88, 100, 106, 124, 134)
 - further increasing the confidence and skills of teachers so that they make better use of the existing facilities; (paragraphs 9, 66, 123, 124, 125, 126)
 - developing an effective system of assessing pupils' competence in ICT, identifying and recording what pupils know and what needs to be taught next. (paragraphs 9, 66, 123, 124, 125, 126)
- (2) Ensure the quality of marking of pupils' work is consistent throughout the school, and that what needs to be learned next is clearly identified in target setting and communicated to pupils and parents. (paragraphs 25, 45, 50, 52, 54, 87, 94, 95, 104, 117, 121)
- (3) Improve teachers' knowledge and confidence in teaching religious education and more effective promotion of pupils' understanding of other cultures and faiths. (paragraphs 39, 42, 67, 134, 146)

* Already identified by the school as an area for development.

OTHER ISSUES THAT SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

- Ensure that all school policies and schemes of work are reviewed and updated on a regular basis. (paragraphs 30, 31, 33, 48)
- Complete the review of documentation relating to special educational needs. (paragraphs 27, 33)
- Further develop assessment procedures in subjects other than English, mathematics and science. (paragraphs 49, 50, 104, 117, 121, 128, 134, 146)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	39
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	17

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	10	19	10	0	0	0
Percentage	0	26	49	26	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than two percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y3
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	-	136
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	-	55

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y3
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	-	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	-	51

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	25

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	51
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	39

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1

National comparative data	5.4
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National comparative data	0.5
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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
	2002	13	16	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	9	8
	Girls	11	13	12
	Total	19	22	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	66 (72)	76 (78)	69 (84)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	9	7
	Girls	12	11	10
	Total	21	20	17
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	72 (66)	69 (78)	59 (84)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3
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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 one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 25%

Number of questionnaires sent out	136
Number of questionnaires returned	34

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	65	35	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	56	44	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	44	44	3	0	9
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	21	56	21	0	3
The teaching is good.	71	29	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	59	41	0	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	76	24	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	71	29	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	44	50	0	0	6
The school is well led and managed.	74	26	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	71	26	0	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	68	26	3	0	3

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

69. Children start school in the Reception classes at the beginning of the autumn term, initially for mornings only. Before children start school, there are good opportunities for children and their parents to familiarise themselves with the life and work of the school. This, together with home visits from the home-school link teacher, ensures that children are well prepared for school. At the time of the inspection, all children attended school full-time.
70. A significant number of children start school with levels of attainment which are well below those expected for their age, particularly in their personal and social development and communication skills. Children make good progress in the Reception classes, and broaden and consolidate their knowledge in all areas of learning. However, by the time children enter Year 1, most are on course to attain standards that are below expectations in most areas of learning, but having made good progress, particularly in their language, literacy and communication skills. Children achieve standards in their physical development that are in line with expectations for children of this age. Overall, provision for children in the Reception classes is good and standards in this area of the school's work have improved since the last inspection.
71. Overall, the quality of teaching for children in the Reception classes is good in each of the areas of learning. Class teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the needs of children of this age, and of the curriculum to meet those needs. Teachers and support staff work well as a team and children benefit from this consistent approach to their learning. There is a good emphasis upon activities that will promote speaking and listening; for example, through the appropriate introduction of elements of literacy and numeracy lessons, role-play and the skilful intervention of adults. Planning is good and includes appropriate references to national guidance for children of this age. There is effective monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning and of the progress made by children. Expectations of children's behaviour are high, and relationships are secure. Provision for children with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language is good and they are well supported.
72. There is a good range of resources available, including provision for children's physical development; for example, large wheeled toys and apparatus for climbing and balancing. Class teachers provide an attractive and stimulating environment for children. Very good use is made of the small outdoor area to extend children's learning and it is used very well in all but the worst weather. Children's work is attractively displayed and valued. There is equal access to learning for boys and girls.

Personal, social and emotional development

73. Children in the Reception classes attain below what is expected for their age. However, they make good progress through well-planned opportunities to establish constructive relationships with other children and adults. Planning for sessions provides good opportunities for children to work alone, in small groups or as a whole class. There is a good balance between activities led by the teacher and those activities that children select for themselves. Children are responsive, interested in what they are doing, and are beginning to concentrate and persevere on their learning.

Children understand that other children come from different backgrounds and cultures than themselves and that all are valued. Children are successfully encouraged to take responsibility; for example, for registering themselves when entering the classroom in the morning and helping to tidy away at the end of activities.

Communication, language and literacy

74. Children are beginning to understand the importance of listening, and some are happy to contribute their own ideas during discussion; for example, when discussing letter sounds or when sharing a book together. Although children successfully broaden and consolidate their use of language, they attain below what is expected for their age. Good opportunities are provided for children to communicate their thoughts, ideas and feelings, although many children lack confidence and skills to do this. Progress in communication, language and literacy is good, and is well matched to children's learning. There are good opportunities for children to experiment with writing; for example in writing "letters" to adults and they enjoy getting replies to these. They are taught how to form letters with increasing accuracy and how to write words. The classrooms are thoughtfully planned to promote the importance of language; for example, through signs, notices, books and a listening centre. Children successfully use the good opportunities for role-play to extend their language and literacy skills. They use the good range of resources effectively.

Mathematical development

75. Mathematical development is effectively promoted and there are good opportunities for children to count, sort, match, seek patterns and recognise relationships when working with numbers, shapes, space and measures. Children enjoy counting, particularly when using "big numbers", with a few children counting to 20 and beyond. Children have many practical opportunities to experience number; for example, by spending pennies in the 'Toy Shop'. They know that coins are needed to buy toys and that some toys need more coins than others. There is good intervention during these role-play activities and adults successfully encourage children and extend their use of language. Although attainment in mathematics overall is below expectations, children make good progress in colour, shape and number recognition. Some children are beginning to identify written numbers to 10, create patterns and compare, sort and count objects.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

76. Children attain standards that are below expectations for their age. However, they make good progress from a very low starting point. The activities provided help children to develop their understanding of the world around them. Very few children talk about where they live, their families and their immediate environment, but some recall their experiences through a range and variety of role-play; for example, in the 'Toy Shop'. Children effectively develop the skills of cutting, joining and building using a good range of materials. They have access to a good range of construction materials and small world toys. Children plant bulbs and grow plants. Computers are used successfully to engage children's interest and are used throughout the day, often with individual support from adults. Children are beginning to use the mouse well and know that it controls movement on the screen. Teachers use questioning skills effectively to develop children's knowledge and understanding in this area of learning.

Physical development

77. Children's physical development is in line with expectations for their age, and they make good progress. They handle scissors, glue, paintbrushes and crayons appropriately. Several children were observed demonstrating considerable care when drawing, painting, cutting and sticking. Children have regular access to their playground to extend their physical development. There are good opportunities for children to have physical education lessons in the school hall, as well as good opportunities for children to use large wheeled toys, and to climb and balance. Children use space well in the school hall. Children were observed carefully carrying out teachers' requests very successfully; for example, walking briskly around the school hall whilst rolling a ball or bean bag around their bodies, or passing a ball around their bodies whilst hopping. Teachers use, and children respond well, to key words such as "tired, heavy steps".

Creative development

78. Children's creative development is below expectations for their age, although they make good progress. Children enter a creatively rich environment when they enter the school, to which some respond with enthusiasm. They are beginning to show an appropriate appreciation of the effects of different textures, colours, shapes and patterns. There are well-planned opportunities to promote creative development and good opportunities for children to express their ideas, although many lack the confidence to experiment with media and materials without support. The classrooms provide a stimulating environment and children are supported well by the sensitive intervention of class teachers and learning support assistants. In one very good music lesson observed, children responded very well when passing round a tambourine without making any sound. They listened carefully to the teacher, and enjoyed clapping the sound pattern of their names and then used percussion instruments to make sound patterns. A skilful and sensitive approach by the class teacher ensured that all children took part, enjoyed the activity and made very good gains in their learning.

ENGLISH

79. Standards achieved by pupils in Year 2 and Year 3 are in line with national expectations. This is an improvement upon the National Curriculum tests in 2002 for Year 2 pupils, where standards were well below the national average in reading and writing. In comparison with similar schools, standards in reading and writing were in line with the national average. This is because of well focussed teaching and high quality support for all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are identified early and effectively supported. Trends over time show a steady improvement since 1999. There are now many more pupils joining or leaving the school at other than usual times since the last inspection and this has had a negative impact upon standards achieved in the National Curriculum tests. There were no differences observed in the performance of boys and girls during the inspection.
80. The school works hard to meet the challenges presented by pupils who join or leave the school at other than usual times, pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. From a low starting point in Year 1, pupils make good progress in the subject and attain standards that are in line with expectations in Year 2 and Year 3. The school has successfully introduced the National Literacy Strategy, with consistent use of literacy skills across the curriculum. Drama and poetry now have an appropriate emphasis and a further improvement is the creation of

the new library providing a stimulating reading area for use by all pupils. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

81. Pupils in Years 2 and 3 attain standards in speaking and listening skills that are in line with national expectations and pupils make good progress due to good teaching and effective support. This is evident in religious education when pupils enthusiastically talk about what they have learned, recalling with amazement that a Christmas pudding needs to steam for eight hours and discuss the pictures they have included in their Advent calendars. In mathematics lessons, Year 2 pupils happily discuss the number of coins they need to make different amounts of money and explain to their teacher how they have used their number lines for addition work. Pupils in Year 3 have similar good opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills when they work in pairs to investigate the strengths of different types of magnets. During lunchtime, Year 3 pupils take turns to answer the telephone in the school reception area and this is successfully developing their speaking and listening skills.
82. Year 2 and Year 3 pupils attain standards in reading that are in line with national expectations and make good progress. The school's strategies for teaching basic reading skills are effective in encouraging pupils to become competent readers. Pupils enjoy sharing big books and are becoming familiar with books, words and punctuation and enjoying the experience. Pupils use their knowledge of phonics well to help them read fiction and non-fiction texts and have a positive attitude to reading and are keen to share books with adults. Higher attaining pupils read with expression and make simple predictions about what might happen next in a story. Pupils in Year 3 build on their earlier skills and continue to enjoy reading. They read fluently from their reading books and delight in the opportunity to discuss a new story giving plausible reasons as to why a character might be feeling anxious and appreciating the atmosphere created by the writer. Pupils in Year 3 are aware of the contents and index sections of non-fiction books but most are unsure of how to use them.
83. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 3 attain standards in writing that are in line with national expectations and make good progress. Pupils use story frames to help them write their own stories based on known traditional tales. They learn to consider the characters and setting for their stories and know that a sentence must have a capital letter and a full stop. Higher attaining pupils learn to use question marks appropriately. Pupils attempt to create their own poems, initially based on known nursery rhymes and then on their own original ideas. They make lists and label drawings such as their own 'Fantasy Creature', using their knowledge of adjectives to label a 'slimy arm' and 'pointy ears'. Pupils learn to write factually as they write about their own experiences, and consider reasons why The Three Little Pigs, Cinderella and Snow White are not real.
84. A strong emphasis is placed on handwriting and pupils in Year 1 are beginning to print clearly and pupils in Year 2 start to write in a joined script. Handwriting improves during Year 3 with more pupils using a joined up style. Year 3 pupils use notes made from a video on road safety to provide information for a booklet. They imagine themselves as Grace Darling convincing her father to attempt a rescue in stormy weather and write persuasively using speech bubbles. The majority of pupils learn to use speech, question and exclamation marks appropriately when they write. Factual writing is further developed as pupils write instructions for making sandwiches. Pupils make good progress in their imaginative writing, based on the story plan structure they create a ghost story, concentrating on the effective use of adjectives to make their work interesting. Pupils are aware of past and present tense and use a thesaurus to

help extend the vocabulary in their written work. Pupils are also learning to use their word processing skills when they redraft their written work.

85. The quality teaching and learning is good for pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of the teaching of literacy. Teachers have high expectations that pupils will concentrate and work to the best of their ability. Very good relationships are established in all classes and teachers manage pupils with praise and caring encouragement. This is reflected in pupils' efforts and the good progress they make in their lessons. Year 1 pupils are well motivated by the postcard to Barnaby Bear from 'his cousin in Australia', and having found Australia on the class map they work well together to make a list of all the things Barnaby will need for his holiday. The strengths in this lesson were the planned opportunities for collaborative work and well-organised class activities.
86. Teachers reinforce pupils' knowledge of phonics very well by careful questioning and prompting; for example, pupils in Year 2 enjoyed recognising the sounds of rhyming words as they shared Morse's Horse, realising that 'Jake' and 'snake' rhymed but even though 'Clare' and 'bear' are rhyming words the spelling is different. Literacy is used well to support learning in other subjects; for example, Year 2 pupils learned about Neil Armstrong, the first man on the moon, and in their literacy session listened to relevant extracts of music from Holst's Planet Suite and then re-enacted the space journey and moon landing.
87. Teachers and support staff work very well together involving all pupils in lesson activities, including those pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. Teachers' planning is effective and work is closely matched to the needs of all pupils. As a result, these pupils make very good progress in developing their literacy skills. At the time of the inspection, teachers were in the process of finalising a school marking system to give a greater consistency across the school, as there is currently considerable variation in practice. Assessment procedures are good with teachers using ongoing assessment well.
88. The subject is well managed and has benefited from national initiatives to help raise standards and these have proved to be very successful. The school makes good use of the library loan service to provide reference books to support topic work. The co-ordinator has already identified the need to review the quantity and quality of resources to support the teaching and learning of literacy skills. Information and communication technology is underdeveloped in the subject. However, the school is aware of this and has plans to use the new computer suite to further develop pupils' skills in the subject.

MATHEMATICS

89. Standards achieved by pupils in Year 2 and Year 3 are in line with national expectations. In the National Curriculum tests in 2002 for Year 2 pupils, standards were well below the national average in mathematics when compared to all schools. However, when compared to similar schools standards were below the national average. Trends over time show an improvement since 1999. There are now many more pupils joining or leaving the school at other than usual times since the last inspection and this has had a negative impact upon standards achieved in the National Curriculum tests. Improved standards are because of well focussed teaching and effective support for all pupils.

90. From a low starting point, pupils make good progress across the school. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language make very good progress because work is specifically planned for them and there is consistent good quality additional support from support staff. Since the last inspection the school has successfully introduced the National Numeracy Strategy and this has impacted well on teaching and learning. There were no differences observed in the performance of boys and girls during the inspection.
91. Higher attaining pupils in Year 2 recognise odd and even numbers and accurately add two-digit numbers. They understand simple symmetry and identify a half or a quarter of a regular shape. They estimate and then measure the length of classroom objects, judging if metres or centimetres are the most appropriate unit of measurement. Lower attaining pupils successfully use non-standard measures such as cubes or rubbers when they check the length of lines. Pupils gain a good understanding of shape as they learn to identify two-dimensional shapes such as squares, rectangles, triangles and circles. Pupils learn the basics of data handling as they sort items according to their cost and produce block graphs based on the numbers of letters in different words.
92. Year 3 pupils know about three-digit numbers and use their knowledge of subtraction appropriately in solving simple money problems. Pupils extend their skills of estimation and measurement and become more accurate. Most pupils use mathematical vocabulary well to describe processes of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. In the mental mathematics sessions, most pupils respond well to the quick-fire questioning, discuss their work and describe how they reach their solution to problems.
93. The quality of teaching and learning in mathematics is good, which is an improvement since the last inspection. Teachers plan their lessons well, taking account of the varying needs of pupils in their class and, as a result, pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language make very good progress. Some classes have mixed ages, but good planning and the careful use of support staff means that all pupils are well supported and included in all activities. The school has also identified pupils who have particular skills in mathematics and plan appropriately for those pupils. Where teaching is particularly good, it is characterised by good subject knowledge, confident teaching of the numeracy strategy and a reassuring classroom atmosphere where pupils enjoy the challenges of the lesson. Teachers make sure that pupils clearly understand what they are going to learn and at the end of the lesson progress is reviewed to see if the aims have been achieved. This results in pupils understanding the objectives of the lesson and being motivated to succeed.
94. Pupils' learning is enhanced by good use of computer programs to support the subject and to encourage pupils to work independently. The use of mathematical skills across other subjects is satisfactory, but there is little use of graphs and data in other subjects. One example of mathematics being used in other subjects was the use of Roman numerals by Year 2 pupils as they worked out the cost of a Roman feast. Marking of work is inconsistent across the school and does not inform pupils of their success and subsequent targets for learning. However, this is currently under review.
95. The co-ordinator with responsibility for mathematics is comparatively new in post but manages the subject well and has a very clear idea of the areas for development. Teachers' planning is monitored regularly and this ensures an appropriate coverage of the curriculum. There are good assessment procedures in place, which show what

pupils have achieved. However, the setting of individual targets for pupils and the tracking of their progress are underdeveloped.

SCIENCE

96. Standards achieved by pupils in Year 2 and Year 3 are in line with national expectations. Standards achieved by pupils in Year 2 in the National Curriculum teacher assessments in 2002 were very low when compared nationally and below average when compared with similar schools. Both results compare unfavourably with the results of the findings in the last inspection report when pupils were assessed as attaining the national average. The drop in standards can be explained in terms of high mobility, the higher number of pupils on free school meals, and the low achievement base at which pupils begin the National Curriculum.
97. Lesson observations, discussion with pupils, and scrutiny of pupils' work shows that pupils make good progress throughout the school. Pupils in Year 1 successfully carry out a fair test and find out that sound is louder nearer the source. They record their findings in simple words with some adult help. Pupils in Year 2 extend their understanding of a fair test and record their results in a table. Pupils in Year 3 carry out a fair test to find the strongest magnet. Pupils discover that it is the force, and not the size of the magnet, which makes it stronger or weaker.
98. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall; it ranges from good to very good. Lessons are characterised by lively approach, good planning, clear objectives and skilled use of questioning. Pupils are encouraged to use scientific language such as fair test, experiment, attract, repel, and hypothesise. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop their literacy and numeracy skills in the subject; for example, pupils practice through measuring and completing tables. Most teachers are confident in planning and teaching science. Lessons are well organised and a variety of methods and resources are used effectively. Teachers ask probing questions to check understanding and to extend pupils' learning. There is a friendly but firm atmosphere, to which pupils enjoy and respond well. Teachers and support staff provide effective support and encouragement for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. Planning is effective and work is well matched to pupils' prior attainment. Teachers share learning objectives with pupils, and they are reinforced throughout the lesson.
99. Teachers' planning is good. The pace of lessons is brisk and this maintains pupils' interest. As a result, behaviour in lessons is good and sometimes very good. Most pupils are motivated and remain focussed on the activity for considerable lengths of time. They enjoy and get very involved in practical activities. Most find the subject interesting and talk about what they are doing. They handle materials and equipment safely. When opportunities are given, pupils work well in collaborative tasks, taking turns to make suggestions.
100. Resources are sufficient and easily accessible despite of being kept in several places. The school makes good use of the school grounds and nearby woodland. The co-ordinator has been in post for a very short period. She is in the process of reviewing the policy and has set an action plan for improvement. There is satisfactory monitoring and assessment of pupils' performance. Information and communication technology is insufficiently used to extend pupils learning in the subject.

ART AND DESIGN

101. Due to timetabling arrangements only two lessons were observed during the inspection. However, judgements are based on pupils' work, displays around the school and discussions with pupils and staff. Standards achieved by pupils in Year 2 and 3 are in line with national expectations.
102. In Years 1 and 2, pupils use bubble painting techniques to good effect in producing an image of the moon for their calendars. Pupils show excitement when they see their paintings, which look as real as the pictures of the moon surface in the books they have been looking at earlier. They successfully fold, draw and cut semi-circles in order to have a circular window on their card. Pupils in Year 3 use wax-resist techniques to draw and decorate candles to be used as Christmas decorations. Year 3 pupils study a range of art by different artists such as Monet and Van Gogh. They understand that artists have different styles and techniques and media.
103. Pupils' progress in the subject is good throughout the school. Pupils often make good progress in quite short spaces of time during lessons when they are required to work with increasing accuracy. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language also make good progress, particularly when they are provided with additional support. There were no differences in the performance of boys and girls observed during the inspection.
104. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Lessons are well planned and meet the needs of all pupils. Time is generally used well, and lessons are broken down into a sequence of smaller units, which helps to maintain the pace of the lesson and concentration of pupils. Support staff make a positive contribution to learning by helping pupils to master techniques in drawing or painting. In well planned lessons, teachers make frequent use of praise and encouragement and have high expectations of all pupils. The procedures and the use of assessment of pupils' work to support planning of challenging activities are under developed.
105. Pupils' enjoy the subject and work with enthusiasm throughout the school. They mostly behave well and concentrate on the task. Pupils share materials with other members of the class well and show respect for each other's work. Pupils take responsibility for clearing up sensibly, which they usually complete quickly and efficiently.
106. The co-ordination of the subject is good. The co-ordinator has recently taken up responsibility for the subject after a three-year break. Teachers use national guidance to plan their lessons. The subject is well supported by an appropriate range of good quality materials and equipment. While pupils study the work of European artists, art reflecting the multicultural nature of the school is limited. Information and communication technology is insufficiently used to extend pupils learning in the subject.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

107. Standards achieved by pupils in Year 2 and 3 are in line with national expectations. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are supported well and make good progress. Standards overall have been maintained since the last inspection.

108. Due to timetabling arrangements, no lessons were observed during the inspection and therefore no judgement has been made concerning the quality of teaching and learning. However, there were many examples of pupils' work throughout the school, and judgements have been based on this evidence, together with a review of planning, and discussions with staff and pupils.
109. Year 1 pupils develop their skills of designing, making and evaluating effectively when using scissors, glue and materials such as card, paper, wheels, axles and wood. Year 2 pupils carefully design, make, and evaluate moon buggies. Year 3 pupils design and make attractive wrapping paper for Christmas presents, with the use of ICT. Pupils in all classes design and make Christmas decorations and cards. Pupils' learning in religious education is extended by designing and making Divali lamps and learning about their significance.
110. Work on display, in photographs and in books indicates sound coverage of all aspects of the subject. Display is used well to support and celebrate learning and achievement. All year groups enjoy their work. Their work demonstrates a satisfactory understanding of investigating, planning, making and evaluating.
111. There is a satisfactory range of resources which are well organised and these support teaching and pupils' learning effectively. The co-ordinator is new to the post and has not had the time or opportunity to formally monitor pupils' work as yet, but the arrangements for assessing pupils' performance are satisfactory.

GEOGRAPHY

112. Standards achieved by pupils in Years 2 and 3 are in line with national expectations. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are supported well and make good progress. Standards overall have been maintained since the last inspection. There were no differences in the performance of boys and girls observed during the inspection.
113. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection, but additional evidence was obtained from pupils' work, displays around the school, teachers' planning, school documentation and discussions with staff and pupils.
114. Pupils enhance their map reading and location skills; for example, Year 1 pupils learn about 'Barnaby Bear' and an imaginary island. Pupils in Year 3 increase their knowledge of the wider world by locating opposite countries on a globe; for example, United Kingdom and New Zealand, North and South poles. Pupils learn about people, homes and transport in other countries and compare them with their own. Information and communication technology is not regularly identified in teachers' planning.
115. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about the quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2. The quality of teaching in Year 3 is sound and pupils make satisfactory progress. In the one lesson observed, the teacher made the objective of the lesson clear to pupils at the start, and there was good classroom management. The teacher made good use of the final part of the lesson to assess how much pupils had learned. Pupils' learning is enhanced by visits to places such as Great Linford and Bradwell village.

116. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in the lesson observed was good, especially when they were given the opportunity to locate opposite countries on a globe. They worked well collaboratively, shared equipment sensibly and helped each other. They listened carefully to each other and to the teacher.
117. Teachers use national guidance to support their planning for the subject. Assessment in the subject is insufficiently developed. The newly appointed co-ordinator has yet to implement procedures for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning. Resources are appropriate and adequate to support teaching and learning. They are centrally stored and are easily accessible and used well. Information and communication technology is insufficiently used in the subject.

HISTORY

118. Standards achieved by pupils in Years 2 and 3 are in line with national expectations. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are supported well and make good progress. Standards overall have been maintained since the last inspection. There were no differences in the performance of boys and girls observed during the inspection.
119. No history lessons were observed during the inspection and there is insufficient evidence to make judgements regarding teaching and learning. Judgements are based on evidence obtained from a limited range of pupils' work, displays around the school, teachers' planning and school documentation, together with discussions with staff and pupils.
120. Pupils in Year 1 extend their skills in the subject by comparing their holidays with holidays taken by people in the past. They learn about famous people in history and why they are remembered today; for example, Guy Fawkes. Year 2 pupils learn about the history of space, astronauts and the moon landing. Pupils understand and use a time line to explain the passing of time; for example, the development of space exploration. Pupils in Year 3 continue to develop their knowledge and skills in the subject effectively by learning about James I and the Gunpowder Plot.
121. Marking of pupils' work is unduly variable across the school and opportunities are often missed to inform pupils how to improve. Pupils' literacy and numeracy skills are insufficiently extended in the subject. However, the curriculum is enriched by visits to places of historical interest such as Lunt Fort.
122. The newly appointed co-ordinator is well aware of areas for development in the subject but has not yet had time to monitor and evaluate standards and the quality of teaching and learning. Resources are appropriate and adequate. They are centrally stored in different places and are easily accessible.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

123. Standards achieved by pupils in Year 2 and Year 3 are below expectations. However, pupils make good progress. Accommodation, security and resource difficulties have only recently been rectified and pupils have been using the new facilities for a very short time. Although standards overall are similar to those reported at the time of the last inspection, national requirements are now more demanding. There was no difference in the performance of boys and girls observed during the inspection.

124. The school has very recently completed work on renovation of an existing classroom to provide an ICT suite with 15 computers and much work has taken place to improve the planned provision for this subject. The school has retained computer provision in all classrooms to supplement the facilities in the ICT suite and this is appropriate. Planning also indicates that although there is appropriate overall coverage of the subject, as yet, teachers are insufficiently using ICT regularly to enhance work in all subjects across the curriculum. However, examples were observed of good use of ICT to support work in mathematics and art and design.
125. In one lesson where the teaching was good, a group of higher attaining pupils were using a program successfully to enhance their understanding of clocks and time. Pupils showed a satisfactory understanding of the use of the program. In another good lesson observed, Year 3 pupils used ICT appropriately to finish and improve the appearance of Christmas packaging, using a “paint” program during a design and technology lesson. Several pupils demonstrated good use of “drag and drop”. A few pupils used a “flood” technique to fill their designs with a colour wash. Most pupils demonstrated insufficient confidence and knowledge to use the facilities available in the program and were unwilling to experiment, and most produced work similar to each other. However, most pupils made good progress during this lesson because of the sensitive intervention of adults.
126. In a good Year 2 lesson observed, pupils designed Christmas cards using a “paint” program. Most pupils knew how to “point and click” and one or two knew how to “scroll”. Pupils were new to the program and required much help and support in using the basic facilities. Good, patient intervention by the class teacher and other adults ensured good learning. Several opportunities were taken to show pupils what others had achieved; for example, in the use of the “brush”. Most pupils required help in saving and printing their work. In all lessons observed, the ventilation of the ICT suite was unsatisfactory and made working conditions unpleasant.
127. The quality of teaching is good overall, leading to good learning. Pupils are well supported, both by class teachers and other adult helpers. Many pupils have the opportunity to be supported individually during the week by learning support assistants. Pupils for whom English is an additional language, those with special educational needs and higher attaining pupils are well supported. These pupils make good and sometimes better progress, because of effective planning, matching work to pupils’ prior attainment and support from class teachers and learning support assistants.
128. The ICT scheme of work is appropriately linked to national guidelines. The subject leadership is in a period of transition with the co-ordinator gradually handing over responsibilities to a newly appointed member of staff. The co-ordinators are providing good leadership. There is a clear understanding of what still needs to be done to ensure that pupils’ learning is effective. Strategic development for the subject is appropriate. Training for teaching staff has recently taken place. Systems for assessing and recording pupils’ progress are currently being developed. The school has worked hard to provide good, new facilities and is well aware of the need to ensure this good provision is now fully used by staff and pupils.

MUSIC

129. Standards achieved by pupils in Year 2 and Year 3 are in line with expectations. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

130. In one satisfactory lesson observed in Year 2/3, pupils played percussion instruments that they had made during a design and technology lesson to accompany a song. Pupils responded well to the teacher's instructions for loud and quiet responses. Good, open-ended questioning helped pupils to successfully recognise and explore ways in which sounds can be made and altered. However, the pace of the lesson quickly slowed, pupils became restless and this inhibited effective learning.
131. All pupils in Year 3 learn to play the recorder. In one good lesson observed, most pupils made good progress in making a clear sound with their instrument. Most pupils understood the purpose and value of a crotchet and knew that a minim is twice as long as a crotchet. Pupils clap out the tune and enjoy playing along with the recorded music. The class teacher demonstrated high expectations by insisting upon creating a good quality sound with a correct beat and to which pupils effectively responded. Effective class management ensured that all pupils were involved and were well supported by adults.
132. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. Planning indicates that provision throughout the school is satisfactory overall. Teachers' expertise is enhanced by a local scheme and the use of nationally recommended guidelines for the subject. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are well supported and all are successfully included in activities. There were no differences in the performance of boys and girls observed during the inspection.
133. Pupils enjoy singing during worship and assemblies, where one or two hymns and songs are included, and they sing with enthusiasm. Teachers sometimes include opportunities for musical appreciation at the beginning of other lessons; for example, after lunch play and this is successful in giving pupils the opportunity to listen to music as well as providing a "calming down" period.
134. Pupils also have the opportunity to listen to a range of recorded music at the beginning and end of assemblies. Visiting musicians also occasionally visit the school; for example, to demonstrate the playing of the trumpet and trombone. However, opportunities are missed to enhance pupils' understanding of culture, other than their own, through music. The school is at the early stages of developing assessment procedures for the subject. The subject is well led and there have recently been opportunities for planned monitoring of the subject across the school. Information and communication technology is insufficiently used to extend pupils' learning in the subject.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

135. Standards achieved by pupils in Years 2 and 3 are above expectations. Although not all aspects of the subject were seen during the inspection, a range of photographic evidence and discussions with pupils, subject co-ordinator and other teachers indicates that pupils make good progress. High standards have been maintained in the subject since the previous inspection. Teachers are well aware of the benefits to all areas of the curriculum, including pupils' attitudes and behaviour, that the subject can bring.
136. Pupils throughout the school know the importance of warming up before physical activity and of cooling down at the end of the lesson. They know that if the warm up has been effective, their breathing will become faster and that their hearts will be beating faster. Pupils use space well and show consideration to the needs of other

pupils. In the best lessons, pupils are encouraged to evaluate the quality of their work and that of others.

137. In one good lesson seen in Year 1, the class teacher's very high expectations, with a strong emphasis upon safety issues, ensured that pupils made very good gains in their learning. Floor work was successful, because of clear explanations and much encouragement. Pupils showed great responsibility when taking out and putting away large apparatus. This was done quickly and quietly. Pupils showed examples of high quality sequences of movement, which they enjoyed demonstrating to others. Pupils who were watching showed much appreciation of the work of others. Very good teamwork was a key feature of this lesson. In a good lesson for Year 2/3, pupils showed that they could follow instructions well. They completed one movement correctly before starting in another position. These individual movements were then successfully linked into a sequence of movements.
138. Pupils of all ages and abilities, boys and girls, enjoy the subject and approach lessons with enthusiasm and try very hard. They listen well and are becoming good at evaluating their work. Pupils work effectively with their partners. The quality of their co-operation, which was seen in all the lessons observed, makes a significant contribution to their moral and social development.
139. The quality of teaching is good overall and leads to good learning. Lessons are carefully planned and most teachers have high expectations of work and behaviour. Teachers assess pupils' progress in lessons to advise and encourage them to improve, and good assessment procedures are used to match work to pupils' prior attainment. Teachers are vigilant about safety, and teach pupils how to organise themselves and to use the space and apparatus safely.
140. Pupils in Year 3 walk to the local ice skating rink each week for lessons and take part in ice hockey. Pupils in Year 2 receive weekly football coaching and pupils in Year 3 receive weekly tennis coaching from a local club. These activities are enthusiastically supported by pupils and their parents, and very successfully enhance the physical education opportunities for pupils. Pupils look forward to these sessions and talk about them with great enthusiasm. There are very successful gymnastics clubs and a country-dancing club after school. Other opportunities for physical education include folk dancing and athletics during the summer months.
141. The headteacher is providing very effective leadership for the subject. The commercial scheme of work is linked to national guidelines for the subject. The subject is monitored effectively through lesson observations, looking at long-term planning, lesson plans as well as working alongside staff. Resources are good and enable effective teaching of all aspects the subject. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are well supported and all are successfully included in activities.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

142. Standards achieved by pupils in Years 2 and 3 are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. All pupils in the school make satisfactory progress in improving their religious knowledge and understanding. This is an improvement on the last inspection when there was insufficient coverage and religious education did not have designated time within the taught week. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are supported well and make good progress. Standards overall have been maintained since the last inspection.

There were no differences in the performance of boys and girls observed during the inspection.

143. Year 1 pupils know about Christian celebrations such as Easter and Christmas. They know features of a celebration can include a party, singing and sending cards. Through circle time as well as religious education lessons Year 2 pupils explore feelings, what makes someone happy or sad and how this is expressed. This is linked with the Christian story of Zaccheus and feelings associated with being 'left out'. Pupils compare the Jewish festival of Succoth with a Christian Harvest festival and know the importance of Hanukkah candles to Jewish people. They gain an understanding of the significance of religious symbols to members of different faiths, and of the story of Rama and Sita as part of Hindu tradition.
144. Year 3 pupils increase their knowledge of faiths other than Christianity as higher achieving pupils use a CD-ROM to research Divali. Pupils learn that Divali is celebrated with fireworks and special food. Good use of design and technology lessons means that pupils understand the significance of Divali lamps and how to make them. Similarly pupils make Mehndi and Rangoli patterns to support their awareness of different faiths. A good opportunity was taken to gain an understanding of the traditions associated with Muslim beliefs because in preparation for Ramadam one little girl was able to show her painted hands and talk with her class about how the patterns were created and the significance of this to her family. Knowledge of Christian traditions is increased as pupils learn about the Christingle ceremony and understand the symbolism of the orange, dried fruit, ribbon and candle.
145. Teaching of religious education is satisfactory. Teachers link their planning with the locally agreed syllabus, but this is under review and a new syllabus is expected soon. The subject is appropriately identified for review in the school improvement plan. Strengths of teaching include the good use of ICT to research the history of Advent calendars. Year 2 pupils learned about the traditions associated with Christmas puddings before making Advent calendars. Pupils throughout the school are interested and have positive attitudes in religious education lessons.
146. Where teaching is less successful, teachers' demonstrate a lack of confidence and knowledge of other faiths. Resources to support teaching and learning are satisfactory although the school plans to extend these in the near future. The headteacher has taken on the responsibility for the subject and monitors teachers' planning regularly. Assessment is through discussion with pupils and observation during assemblies; however this is not formally recorded.