

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **GLEBE INFANTS' SCHOOL**

Newent

LEA area: Gloucestershire

Unique reference number: 115741

Headteacher: Mrs Lin Griffiths

Reporting inspector: Fred Ward  
18605

Dates of inspection: 14<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> October 2002

Inspection number: 247586

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Foundation
Age range of pupils:	4 – 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Glebe Way Newent Gloucestershire
Postcode:	GL18 1BL
Telephone number:	(01531) 820700
Fax number:	(01531) 821439
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Judy Harris
Date of previous inspection:	10 <sup>th</sup> November 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
18605	Fred Ward	Registered inspector	Foundation Stage Science Design and technology Religious education	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
11566	Hilary Smyth	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
10808	Alan Britton	Team inspector	Special educational needs Mathematics Geography History Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
22246	Geoff Cresswell	Team inspector	Equal opportunities English Information and communication technology Art and design Music	

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## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>4 - 7</b>
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	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>8 - 10</b>
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>11 - 13</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>13 - 14</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?</b>	<b>14 - 15</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>15 - 16</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>18 - 22</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>23 - 33</b>

## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Glebe is a very popular average sized infant school serving the Gloucestershire town of Newent and the surrounding rural area. The number on roll has increased considerably in recent years and now stands at 202. Nearly all pupils are of white United Kingdom heritage, with a few Traveller children visiting occasionally; no child has English as an additional language. Pupils start school at the age of four with a wide range of attainment. There are nearly twice as many girls as boys in Year 2. Six per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals (well below average). Eleven per cent of pupils are on the register of special educational needs (below average), a significant minority with speech difficulties, and two have statements (average). There are a few gifted/talented pupils in reception.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

Glebe is an effectively managed school as the headteacher, governors and staff have been successful in raising standards in reading and mathematics and are well placed for further improvement. Overall, the quality of teaching is good and pupils are learning the right things. The school gives good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- Standards in reading are well above average and above average in mathematics and singing.
- Children make a very good start to school in the reception classes.
- Pupils like school and behave very well, showing increasing maturity; relationships are very good.
- The teaching is good and often very good.
- The curriculum is interesting and varied; provision for social and moral development is very good.
- Pupils are very well cared for; their strengths and weaknesses are known and used effectively to help them learn in reading and mathematics and develop personally.
- Parents are overwhelmingly appreciative and supportive of the school.
- The school is well led by governors, the headteacher and experienced senior managers.

#### **What could be improved**

- The achievement of more able children, particularly in writing and science, and pupils' confidence in trying out their own ideas.
- Checking pupils' progress in subjects other than English, mathematics, science and physical education.
- Opportunities for spiritual development.
- Checking the quality of teaching and pupils' learning across the range of subjects.

*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 November 1997 and has made good progress, completing all the key issues raised:

- overall the quality of teaching is now good;
- standards in science have risen to around the national average; and
- the school is well managed.

In addition, standards in reading and mathematics have steadily risen and the school has the capacity and potential to continue to improve.

### **STANDARDS**

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
Reading	C	C	A	A
Writing	B	C	B	B
Mathematics	A	A	A*	A*

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

Children in the reception classes make good progress and nearly all are on course to exceed the early learning goals<sup>1</sup> by the time they start Year 1. In the national tests for seven-year-olds, pupils' performance has risen over a four-year period; in reading and mathematics, the rate of improvement is higher than in most schools, while writing follows the national trend. In 2001, results were above average when compared to all and similar schools, notably so in reading and also in mathematics where they were in the top five per cent. Teachers' assessment in science was around the national average. Provisional national assessment results in 2002 confirm standards in mathematics remained well above average, but reading and writing were average and science below average as a number of Year 2 pupils with special educational needs joined the school during the year. The inspection found that in the current Year 2, standards in reading are well above average and above average in mathematics. Standards in writing are still average but have improved to average in science. More able pupils are not achieving as well in these subjects as they are in mathematics and reading. On the limited evidence available during the inspection, standards of work seen in other subjects are as expected, but are above average in singing. The school has set challenging targets for Year 2 pupils to reach in reading, writing and mathematics, based on a thorough analysis of their current achievement.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils enjoy school, work hard and are proud of their achievements.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils generally behave very well in and out of lessons and are courteous and considerate.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils are responsible, helpful and respectful. Relationships are very good. Girls and boys work well together, especially in Year 2 where boys are in the minority.
Attendance	Attendance is above the national average and unauthorised absence is about average. No time is wasted.

<sup>1</sup> Early Learning Goals are the nationally accepted levels in six areas of learning that children should reach by the time they leave reception classes.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The very good teaching in the reception classes is due to teachers' very secure knowledge and understanding of the way young children learn and, as a result, they quickly settle in, developing independence and making good progress. In Years 1 and 2, there is a strong focus on literacy and numeracy in English and mathematics, but these skills are not sufficiently developed in other subjects. The strength of teaching comes from the very good relationships, effective management of pupils and very good use of assistants and resources. Consequently, pupils feel secure and valued, work hard and are well supported. The more able are not always given hard enough work, particularly in writing and science, and generally pupils are not encouraged to discuss and follow up their own ideas. Teachers are beginning to use new technologies more as a result of recent training. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported, particularly in language and numeracy, and make good progress, as do the few gifted/talented children in reception.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is interesting and varied and particularly rich in reception. There is a strong emphasis on literacy, numeracy and healthy living. Effective planning by staff working in teams ensures a good coverage and similar experiences for pupils in parallel classes. Links with other schools and nursery settings are very good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils' needs are identified early and learning is organised to ensure activities are appropriate and that effective support is readily available.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Moral and social development is very good, being a strong feature of the school. Cultural provision is sound but opportunities for pupils' spiritual development are not sufficient.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Pupils are very well cared for. Staff know children very well and use assessment procedures effectively to help individuals improve their learning in English and mathematics and in their personal development, but not always in other subjects. The very young summer born four-year-olds in the reception classes and Traveller children are quickly assimilated and well supported.

Parents and carers are kept very well informed about school activities and their children's progress. Parents are keen to contribute to their children's learning at home and committed teams provide much appreciated help at school. They also raise significant additional funds from social events.



## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school is well led by the dedicated and enthusiastic headteacher with the backing of an experienced senior management team. English, mathematics and science are effectively led and managed, but recent staff changes mean that teaching and pupils' learning in other subjects are not being checked enough.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The core of experienced and long-serving governors is fully involved in considering how to improve the school further; they carry out their duties very well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school analyses its performance in national tests well and has used the information to identify appropriate priorities to raise standards and improve the achievement of the more able. However, the plans for action do not coincide with the school's main planning cycle, resulting in delays in implementation.
The strategic use of resources	The governing body uses funds wisely and applies the principles of best value when making spending decisions.

More assistants have been employed as a result of a governing body initiative and this has been particularly effective in providing pupils with special educational needs additional support to help them make progress. Learning resources are generally good and are used effectively. Accommodation is good and, while the library is small, there is adequate stock. The outside areas are well used.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school is approachable.</li> <li>• Children like school.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>• Staff have high expectations.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The range of activities outside of lessons.</li> <li>• Information about pupils' progress.</li> <li>• The amount of homework and work for the youngest pupils.</li> <li>• Playground space.</li> </ul>

The inspection confirms all the parents' positive views and finds that the range of activities outside of lessons is satisfactory for an infants' school, the information on pupils' progress is good and the amount of homework and level of challenge for the youngest pupils are appropriate. The playground space is just adequate for the current use and numbers.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

**Standards are well above average in reading, above average in mathematics and as expected in other subjects; more able pupils do not achieve as well as they should in writing and science and, overall, pupils do not confidently discuss and try out their own ideas.**

1. At the time of the inspection, pupils in Year 2 were at the beginning of their final year in the school. They are acquiring a firm foundation in the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. In mathematics and reading, this understanding is developed well as pupils have many opportunities to apply their skills in different situations. However, in speaking and listening and writing, pupils are not encouraged sufficiently to extend their thinking to develop their own ideas. This restricts progress and more able pupils, in particular, do not achieve as well as they could.
2. Only a small number of lessons could be observed in other subjects within the time allocated for the inspection. On the limited evidence available, standards in other subjects are generally as expected for the age and maturity of the pupils.
3. Overall, this is a significant improvement since the previous inspection, when standards were well below average in science, below average in speaking and listening, reading and mathematics and average in all other subjects.
4. Children's attainment on entry at four is around the national average and has been for a number of years, with some fluctuation in the proportion of the more able and those with special educational needs. Children achieve well in the reception classes because of the generally very good teaching they receive. At the time of the inspection, children had only been attending full-time for two weeks; these include a higher than average number of very young summer born four-year-olds. However, all have made a very good start to school and already many are attaining better than expected for their age in their personal, social, emotional and physical development. In other areas of learning, they are achieving as expected. This is a result of staff planning a rich, interesting and relevant curriculum and establishing very good relationships. However as a result of the very good teaching, children in the reception classes are well on course to exceed the nationally recommended early learning goals by the time they start Year 1.
5. Pupils with special educational needs are identified early and are given good individual and group support by classroom assistants and teachers. They are generally fully involved in lessons and overall they make good progress, particularly in literacy and numeracy.
6. Test results in 2001, the latest reporting year, for seven-year-olds in reading were well above the national average and above average in writing when compared to all and similar schools. In mathematics, standards were very high and in the top five per cent of schools nationally. Teachers' assessments in science show standards were average when compared to all schools, and below average in comparison to similar schools. Provisional test results for 2002 indicate that standards have been maintained in mathematics but a smaller proportion of pupils reached the higher level three in reading and mathematics; overall standards in science improved slightly. The school reports that five additional pupils with special educational needs joined this cohort during 2001/02 but, generally, pupils achieved as well as predicted.
7. Results in reading for seven-year-olds between 1997 and 1999 rose rapidly to above average, steadied in 2000 and then continued to rise to well above average in 2001. Standards in writing followed the national trend and were generally above average. Standards in mathematics have continued rising to very high levels.

8. Generally, more able pupils do not achieve as well as they could, particularly in writing and science. There are no other significant differences between the performance of other groups in the school. The summer born four-year-olds have adapted well and, apart from being very tired towards the end of the day, are achieving well. Traveller children also achieve well. The attainment of boys in the current Year 2, outnumbered two to one, is as expected and not affected by this gender imbalance.
9. The school has set particularly challenging targets for 2003 to raise standards in writing and maintain the high levels in reading and mathematics. Staff recognise they need to improve the achievement of more able pupils to succeed and are looking at ways of providing them with more challenging work.
10. Currently, standards of speaking and listening are as expected for pupils in Year 2. While most are confident speakers and have an appropriate vocabulary for their age, they do not always show initiative in putting forward their own ideas and opinions. There is also a small but significant minority with speech difficulties, who receive external specialist support that is enabling them to make progress.
11. Standards of reading are well above average in Year 2. This is because pupils have been given a love of books and enjoy reading together and independently. They have many ways of finding out the meaning from new words and difficult phrases, using illustrations, letter sounds and by breaking words down into smaller parts. They have a broad reading diet, using books to support their study in different subjects.
12. Standards in writing are as expected in Year 2. However, most pupils do not write easily. They generally take care with their spelling and are beginning to use full stops and capital letters correctly. However, they do not use writing to communicate their own ideas and thoughts to any degree. The majority of pupils write legibly and letter and word formation is developing appropriately, although letter size is not consistent.
13. Standards in mathematics in Year 2 are better than expected for the age of pupils. Most pupils carry out simple mental calculations well, having a firm understanding of number and place value. They are able to apply their mathematical knowledge and understanding when solving practical problems involving measure, money and data handling. They recognise, name and describe simple geometric shapes and solids appropriately.
14. Standards in science are also as expected in the school. Pupils are generally building a secure foundation in scientific knowledge and understanding, although on occasions they are confused by the misrepresentation of some facts. While pupils undertake a range of appropriate investigations in Years 1 and 2, they are not always encouraged to question and discuss what they observe. As a result, they are not developing their observation and enquiry skills sufficiently.
15. Standards in information and communication technology are as expected. Pupils generally have a range of appropriate skills, often developed at home, but also from the increasing use of new technologies in school.
16. The school has identified a few gifted and talented pupils in the reception classes. Staff are beginning to look at ways of ensuring these pupils are appropriately challenged.
17. Standards have remained high in reading and mathematics and the school is well placed to improve pupils' attainment in other subjects.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

**Pupils enjoy school, generally behave very well and are very responsible. Relationships are very good. There are no exclusions.**

18. Pupils respond very well to their school experiences. Their attitudes to school, relationships, personal development and behaviour are very good, an improvement since the previous inspection. Attendance is above the national average.
19. The very good attitudes and behaviour of pupils are strengths. Almost all pupils are very enthusiastic about school and very keen and eager to learn. They are very interested in their work, very attentive and keen. In a Year 1 English lesson focusing on retelling a story, pupils listened attentively and were excited about acting out the story of Mrs Wishy Washy.
20. Pupils throughout the school have a very positive response when learning about and meeting people from other cultures. This is evident in the interest and welcome they give to the occasional Traveller children, who, as a result, are quickly integrated into the school.
21. Pupils in the three reception classes are very involved in their learning due to interesting, well-prepared lessons and the overall very good teaching. These children were captivated by the imaginative use of two large puppets and responded enthusiastically to questions from the teacher and the puppets. The very young summer born four-year-olds are fully involved in most lessons although towards the end of the day they become tired as the inspection took place a week after they had started full-time education.
22. Pupils show great interest in school life and enjoy being involved in the range of activities provided. They carry out their 'class helper' duties with pride and are very eager volunteers when additional help is needed.
23. Pupils behave very well in lessons, around the school and generally on the playground. The school functions as a very orderly community. Pupils respond very well to the school's clear routines, such as movement from classroom to the hall. On the playground, girls and boys play happily together when using a range of activity games and the adventure playground equipment. In classrooms, pupils' behaviour is very good, which helps their learning. In a Year 2 English lesson about exploring 'ou' and 'ow' words and writing a poem, the very good behaviour contributed towards pupils making good progress as there were no distractions and they were fully involved in activities.
24. Throughout the school, pupils are courteous, polite and respectful to each other. They show respect to all staff, helpers and other adults, politely greeting visitors to their class at the start of lessons. Pupils respect the school's property and use resources with care. The atmosphere is very caring and free from oppressive behaviour.
25. Overall, the personal development of pupils is very good. Pupils are willing to take responsibility for duties such as register, door and bell monitors. They are very aware of the effect they have on other pupils. Even the very young respond positively and show respect for the feelings of others, as seen in circle time discussion activities.
26. Pupils identify with and feel part of the school family; older pupils are also developing a sense of belonging to the wider community. During discussions, Year 2 boys and girls explained why rules were necessary, expressed concern about caring for the environment and were aware that small local shops may be put out of business by a local national supermarket.
27. Throughout the school, pupils show initiative by helping care for one other. A friend accompanied and comforted a Year 1 pupil with a grazed knee, and after treatment offered sensible advice on where the accident note to her parents could be safely kept.
28. However, many pupils do not show initiative in developing their own ideas or take responsibility for extending their learning due to insufficient opportunities being provided.
29. Pupils form very constructive relationships with each other and with adults and this creates a very positive and caring family atmosphere. Girls and boys work well together, especially in Year 2

where the boys are in the minority, as they did in a mathematics lesson on 'doubles' and describing features of common three-dimensional shapes.

30. Attendance is good and above the national average and unauthorised absence is about average. Very few pupils arrive late, lessons start promptly and no time is wasted. There are no exclusions.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

**Overall, teaching is good, with a strong focus on basic literacy and numeracy skills. However, not all teachers provide the more able with hard enough work and lessons do not always give pupils sufficient opportunities to discuss and follow up their own ideas.**

31. During the inspection, 85 per cent of the teaching was good or better and 40 per cent very good. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection, when only 20 per cent of the teaching was good and 16 per cent was unsatisfactory. Nearly two thirds of the teaching in the reception classes was very good and the rest good. In Years 1 and 2, around half the teaching was good, a quarter very good and a quarter satisfactory. Overall, the teaching of English and mathematics was good.
32. The consistently good or better teaching in the reception classes is a result of the three teachers' very secure knowledge and understanding of the way young children learn. They also work very well with assistants, forming an effective team. As a result, they plan very interesting and stimulating lessons, making very good use of the accommodation and wide range of resources. They manage children very well and establish close relationships so that children quickly become confident learners, developing independence and making good progress.
33. Teachers in Years 1 and 2 also work in close partnership with assistants and together manage pupils very well. In particular, pupils who learn at a slower rate benefit from these arrangements as they receive appropriate individual and group support and are fully involved in lessons. Generally, pupils want to learn as teachers choose interesting topics and activities, making effective use of a wide range of resources. However, more able pupils often find activities well within their grasp and are not sufficiently encouraged to extend their thinking.
34. Staff are effectively helping pupils acquire basic skills in literacy, such as spelling, punctuation and grammar, by their effective use of a number of strategies they have acquired as a result of training and professional discussions. However, there are not generally enough opportunities to write for different purposes. In addition, pupils do not often express or develop their own ideas orally as they are mainly required to respond to teachers' questions or carry out specific tasks. On occasions, some teachers in science are not very secure in their subject knowledge.
35. Teachers throughout the school have undertaken appropriate training and are making more use of new technologies to support their teaching and pupils' learning in all subjects, but not extensively as yet.
36. Homework is used effectively to develop reading, spelling and the learning of number facts. Some parents felt there was too much and others too little homework; inspection findings confirm the amount is appropriate.
37. As a result of the good or better teaching, pupils are being well prepared for the next stage of their education when they transfer to the adjacent junior school at the age of seven.

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

**The school provides a broad, balanced and relevant curriculum for all pupils both within and beyond the school day. The provision in the reception classes is particularly rich. There is a good quality and range of learning opportunities provided but work is not always hard enough for more able pupils, except in mathematics. There is very good provision in the reception classes and good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Links with partner institutions are very good and the community contributes well to pupils' learning. Pupils' personal development is also well catered for but opportunities for raising pupils' spiritual awareness are not sufficient.**

38. The school now provides a broad and balanced curriculum that meets all requirements, an improvement since the previous inspection. Long and medium term planning now ensure appropriate progression and continuity of learning in every subject. Standards in science have been raised by the introduction of full coverage of the subject's National Curriculum requirements.
39. There are subject policies and schemes for all subjects, including religious education, and the school follows national and local guidance appropriately. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been introduced successfully and led to the raising of standards in reading and mathematics. However, there are still insufficient opportunities for more able pupils to be challenged, except in mathematics, and for pupils to develop independent learning skills when following up their own ideas.
40. Long-term curriculum plans ensure that all pupils participate in a broad range of interesting and relevant topics enabling them to develop their knowledge, understanding and skills progressively. Teachers plan in conjunction with their parallel year group colleagues for the medium and short term, which ensures that all pupils benefit from similar learning experiences. The time allocated to each subject is appropriate for pupils throughout the school and the total teaching time for the Foundation Stage and infant pupils meets recommendations. The provision for reception classes is particularly rich and appropriate, ensuring children, including the youngest summer born, make a good start to their schooling.
41. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, overall. The special educational needs co-ordinator, teachers and assistants work well together to plan appropriate individual and small group activities that are well matched to the needs of these pupils. The school is well prepared for the occasional short stay of Traveller children.
42. The school works hard to ensure that every pupil is able to take part in all learning opportunities. Nearly all support work takes place in the classrooms, ensuring that all pupils have equal access to the full curriculum. Later in the autumn term, pupils are grouped by prior attainment for literacy and numeracy, which further helps teachers match work more accurately to individuals.
43. The provision for sex, drugs and health education is good. During the inspection, the school nurse visited to talk to Year 2 pupils about the dangers of drugs and medicine misuse. The school's emphasis on personal, health and social education makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development and promotes very positive, socially acceptable behaviour from all pupils. The school meets the statutory requirements for a daily act of collective worship. There is satisfactory provision for extra-curricular activities including visits to local facilities, a supermarket and the seaside. Year 2 pupils use the nearby swimming pool in the summer term. A recorder club and French club are already active and gymnastics and ball skills clubs are likely to be introduced in the future.
44. There are good links with the community, making effective use of the immediate and wider facilities, such as local museums, commerce and industry to enhance pupils' learning. This reflects the findings of the previous inspection.
45. There is very close liaison between the school and the onsite playgroup, nearby private nursery and the opportunities group for children with special educational needs. Shared activities for pupils and joint curriculum discussions play a very valuable part in providing a smooth start for the youngest pupils at the school. Links with the adjacent junior school are very good. There is frequent and regular contact between staff and governors. Visits from junior school staff and induction visits for pupils help ensure a smooth transfer to the next stage of their education. Students from the local secondary school, college and nearby university have regular placements at the school and make an effective contribution to the learning of pupils. These very good links with partner institutions are an improvement since the previous inspection.
46. Overall, the school successfully cultivates the personal development of pupils. The provision for moral and social development is very good and a strength of the school. While pupils' cultural development is satisfactory, there are weaknesses in the provision for spiritual development.

Overall these findings reflect those of the previous inspection, although provision for spiritual development shows a decline.

47. Teachers make insufficient provision within planning to identify instances where spiritual awareness could be raised and sometimes miss opportunities that happen spontaneously within class. For example in a Year 2 information and communication technology lesson generating a picture in the style of Mondrian, the sense of wonder and curiosity amongst pupils when reviewing the work of others was not sufficiently developed by the teacher. Also, opportunities within class and collective worship to allow pupils time for personal reflection are limited. However, religious education lessons provide appropriate opportunities to explore other faiths and beliefs. The school provides an ethos in which all pupils can grow and flourish. Pupils' self-esteem is consistently promoted throughout the school by use of praise and other rewards.
48. The school places a high priority on the promotion of knowledge and understanding about the differences between right and wrong. The school very successfully fosters values of caring, honesty and respect for one another, with staff providing very good role models. The generous support of an annual charity reflects the school's promotion of responsibility for caring in the wider community.
49. Varied and rich opportunities are provided for pupils to develop an understanding of living in a community and for pupils to take responsibility. Staff and all adults set a very good example by treating pupils, visitors and each other with respect and are very good models for working co-operatively. Throughout the curriculum and across all year groups, staff ensure pupils learn to relate to each other by working in pairs and groups.
50. The school helps pupils take responsibility by giving them a wide variety of duties in class and around the school. Visits by pre-school children, use of the junior school facilities, visits by secondary pupils on work experience and visits by members of the Over 60's club effectively foster mixed age relationships. The celebration of special festivals, daily school assemblies, lunchtime in the hall and school productions help pupils develop their social skills when being with or working with large numbers of people.
51. The school satisfactorily helps pupils to appreciate a variety of cultural traditions through the good quality and range of learning opportunities in and beyond the school. Positive contributions particularly come from history, geography, religious education, physical education, art and music, and the annual arts week. Pupils participate in country dancing and maypole dancing. Visits by theatre groups, musicians and dancers support multicultural development.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

**Pupils are very well cared for. Staff know children very well and use assessment procedures effectively to help individuals improve their learning in English and mathematics and in their personal development but not always in other subjects.**

52. The school ensures the health, safety and care of all pupils, doing all that can reasonably be done to protect them from harm. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection.
53. The headteacher, teachers and support staff know their pupils very well and respond to them in a positive and supportive way. Pupils feel that they are cared for and have confidence in staff for advice and support. The school takes particular care of pupils with medical problems. Child protection procedures are in place, and form part of induction information for new staff. The curriculum is used to help pupils protect themselves, for example, through the weekly contribution of the school nurse who supports science topics. The school pays particular attention to the promotion of healthy and safe living. There is a strong personal and social education programme.
54. A few parents raised concerns about the size of the playground and accidents on playground equipment. The inspection found that the playground size is just adequate for current



arrangements. The number of accidents to pupils using the adventure equipment was not excessive

55. The school has very effective measures to promote, monitor and improve attendance and punctuality. Informal and formal strategies are used and, when necessary, the school works closely with the education welfare officer to raise levels of attendance.
56. The school has very effective measures to promote and monitor good behaviour. All staff consistently use a range of strategies such as stickers, marble jars and certificates to encourage good behaviour; these are appreciated by the pupils. All teachers have very high expectations of discipline and good behaviour, and minimise any disruption through skilful handling of pupils. A high profile is given to intolerance of bullying.
57. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are very good. The school strives to ensure that all pupils feel valued as part of the school family and celebrates far more than academic achievement. The school community celebrates all achievements through praise and the many reward systems, ensuring that occasional Traveller children feel valued and welcomed.
58. Good assessment procedures exist in literacy and numeracy and these are being used well. This is an improvement on the previous inspection and assessment practices are now improving the quality of learning in these subjects. This is particularly true of pupils with special educational needs, where work and support is accurately matched to their prior attainment. Conversely, although good information exists on more able pupils, the activities provided for them do not always take this into account and challenge them sufficiently. Assessment procedures in the reception classes are being reviewed to take account of national guidance but are currently good, particularly in ensuring activities are appropriate for the very young summer born four-year-olds and the few gifted/talented pupils.
59. Detailed tracking of individual pupil performance relating to the national assessment results has been used well to target teaching resources. This is one of the reasons for the recent rise in standards in reading, mathematics and science. However, the individual targets agreed with the pupils with the aim of increasing their involvement in their own learning have not proved successful. Many pupils either cannot read or remember the targets. This is in contrast to class targets that effectively focus the pupils on important and relevant skills and are moving their learning forward. The school is particularly adept at assessing the occasional Traveller children to make sure they can easily fit in to school.
60. The good practice that exists for literacy and numeracy has not yet been applied to many of the other subjects, namely art, design and technology, geography, history, information and communication technology, music and religious education. This was also the case in the previous inspection. Consequently, the learning of pupils is limited because the activities provided do not sufficiently take into account what the pupils already know and can do. This is particularly true of more able pupils. The effects on the less able are countered in part by the good use of assistants, who provide individual support to these pupils.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

**Parents are very supportive of the school and are very satisfied with what the school provides and achieves.**

61. Parents find the school very approachable, feel encouraged to be involved and valued for support and help given. A very small number of parents expressed some concerns. None of these were justified. The range of extra-curricular activities is satisfactory; the amount of homework and the level of challenge for the youngest pupils are appropriate; the open-door policy and the availability of appointments are very good; the quality of the end of year reports is good.
62. The school's links with the parents are very effective, as evidenced by the very large positive response to the questionnaire and their high degree of satisfaction expressed in the parents'

meeting and during the inspection. The quality of information provided by the school is very good, with regular and frequent newsletters and special meetings when appropriate. All parents spoken to during the inspection commented very favourably on the way they were kept informed.

63. Parents are well informed about their child's progress in the annual written report. These reports make clear to parents what children can do well and what they need to do to improve, academically and in their personal development. There are two formal opportunities for parents to meet with teachers, near the beginning of the autumn term and in the spring. The end of year report allows for parental comment and the opportunity to make an appointment with the teacher. In addition, the school has an open door policy and good opportunities for parents to be informed about the curriculum.
64. Parents make a very good contribution to children's learning at school and at home. Parents' involvement in the life of the school is encouraged, and makes a very good start with the induction process. There is a large supportive group, mainly parents, who provide effective help regularly in the school and for school trips. There is a very active friends' association that raises funds to support pupils' learning, such as the out door classroom for reception pupils.
65. The school makes a great effort to work closely with parents, formally and informally. Close liaison is always made with the occasional visiting Traveller families. A recent initiative is an annual letter from a parent governor consulting them as part of the school development plan process.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

**The headteacher is a good leader. Not all co-ordinators are fully effective in developing teaching and pupils' learning. Experienced governors know the school well and have good control of finances. All partners are committed to raising standards higher. Appropriate actions to tackle development priorities are not yet fully implemented as planning was not completed by the start of the new school year.**

66. The school is well led by the dedicated and enthusiastic headteacher with the backing of an experienced senior management team and a committed and efficient governing body. Agreed principles and values place academic, physical and personal development of individual children at the heart of the school. This has created a family atmosphere where pupils and staff know they are valued as individuals and their efforts are appreciated and celebrated. As a result, the school is very popular with parents, resulting in an increase in pupil numbers over recent years to a three-form entry.
67. Leadership and management have been successful in raising standards to well above average in reading and above average in mathematics and in dealing effectively and astutely with the rise in the school roll. Development work to improve the achievement of more able pupils, particularly in writing and science, and raising standards in other subjects overall has not yet had time to be effective. However, professional discussions to improve teaching and learning further are taking place in a climate of openness and trust. The school has the potential and capacity to continue to improve.
68. The headteacher and senior managers work effectively together to ensure procedures and actions to improve staff performance are fully integrated with school developments and the everyday running of the school goes smoothly.
69. The co-ordination of English, mathematics, science and special educational needs is effective as managers have received appropriate training and are well supported in their roles. Increase in staff, including the appointment of two newly-qualified teachers, and the maternity leave of two teachers, has meant the re-distribution of management responsibilities in other subjects. As a result, developments in these areas have not been a priority.
70. The experienced governing body is active and fully involved in considering how to improve the school. Governors have an efficient management structure and work particularly well as a team.

They consider carefully the expertise they need when seeking new governors and ensure all members are kept up to date by organising training opportunities in and away from school.

71. The chair and two vice chairs are frequent visitors to the school and regularly meet with the headteacher to review and discuss issues. In addition, the governing body is given regular informative reports from the headteacher and presentations by co-ordinators and, as a result, governors have an accurate picture of the school.
72. Overall, the school has suitable arrangements to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of its actions as part of its performance management strategy that is being extended to include staff other than teachers.
73. A thorough analysis of pupils' attainment in national and school assessments is regularly undertaken to identify weaknesses. Staff and governors are fully involved in reviewing progress and there are plans to consult more widely with parents and pupils. This has resulted in appropriate priorities for improvement, but these are not fully implemented as the cycle of evaluating progress and setting targets is not usually completed until early in the autumn term; currently, this does not match planning that takes place in the summer preparing for the new school year.
74. Financial planning is clearly focused in support of relevant and agreed priorities. Funds are used wisely as the governing body has been mainly responsible for running the school since 1994, when it became grant-maintained, and has continued to do so under Foundation status. Specific funds are appropriately targeted, for example, to support pupils with special educational needs and for staff training.
75. Recently, governors took the decision to review the level of administrative support and financial systems. As a result of changes and greater efficiency, funds were released to provide more time for assistants. All classes now have a dedicated assistant and their support has been particularly beneficial in providing more individual and small group work for low attaining pupils. The headteacher reports that, despite the reduction in administrative support, this has not put undue pressure on her and she is able to carry out her responsibilities to support colleagues in developing teaching and the curriculum.
76. Induction of new staff, including the two recently qualified teachers, is very well organised, with effective support provided by an experienced member of staff. Similarly, the induction of new pupils, whether when first starting school or entering other than the beginning of term, is well managed and is particularly effective with the occasional Traveller child.
77. New technologies are becoming more widely used as staff become more confident and better equipment and resources are available. Teachers make good use of new technologies to support their lesson preparation and in the production of learning resources; they are also becoming more confident with information and communication technology to support pupils' learning.
78. The school is well looked after by the site manager and cleaning staff. The library is small but well stocked and used extensively by pupils both in school time and before lessons start.
79. The grounds are limited but well maintained. There are two paved playgrounds, including a secure area for reception children, with well-designed play equipment. Some parents were concerned about the amount of available space for play now that numbers are increasing. The inspection found that current arrangements are satisfactory. The wildlife and small grassed area have been well developed and are regularly used in support of pupils' learning.
80. Resources are generally of good quality and sufficient to allow teachers to teach all parts of the National Curriculum and for the youngest children in the reception class.
81. The headteacher and governors are very aware of the need to apply the principles of best value when making major spending decisions. They have been most assiduous in their deliberations

when considering changes and developments, as they were when deciding how best to accommodate the increase in pupil numbers.

82. Taking into account the average attainment of pupils on entry, the maturity and above average standards achieved by seven-year-olds in reading and mathematics as a result of the generally good or better teaching they receive, the school provides good value for money.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The governors, headteacher and senior staff should improve:

- the achievement of more able children, particularly in writing and science, and overall raise pupils' confidence in trying out their own ideas by
  - providing more opportunities, pitched at an appropriate level of challenge;
  - encouraging pupils to express themselves, take risks and learn from their mistakes when presenting their thoughts orally or in writing and carrying out investigations.

*(paragraphs 1, 10, 12, 14, 28, 33, 34, 39, 95, 96, 98, 99, 105, 111, 119, 125, 128, 140, 149)*

- assessment procedures and the use of information on pupils' achievement in subjects other than English, mathematics, science and physical education by:
  - devising manageable ways of checking and recording individuals' progress;
  - effectively linking these to planning appropriate learning activities.

*(paragraphs 58, 60, 134, 142, 146, 158)*

- pupils' spiritual development by:
  - identifying appropriate opportunities in and beyond the planned curriculum where pupils can reflect upon and wonder at the world and their place in it.

*(paragraphs 46, 47, 93, 107, 112, 119, 124, 146)*

- the way teaching and pupils' learning is developed by:
  - supporting all subject co-ordinators in extending their role in identifying appropriate priorities;
  - having development plans completed in time for the start of the new school year.

*(paragraphs 67, 69, 73, 120, 134, 142, 151, 158)*

The governing body may wish to consider including these minor shortcomings in their development plans:

- individual pupil targets (paragraphs 59, 106);
- handwriting (paragraph 94);
- teachers' subject knowledge in science (paragraph 113)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	42
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	36

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	17	19	6	0	0	0
Percentage	0	40	45	15	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	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	202
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	12

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	22

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.7
National comparative data	5.6

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.4
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	32	18	50

<b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	28	30	32
	Girls	18	18	18
	Total	46	48	50
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (84)	96 (92)	100 (96)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

<b>Teachers' Assessments</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	28	32	28
	Girls	18	18	17
	Total	46	50	45
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (94)	100 (98)	90 (98)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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



**Ethnic background of pupils****Exclusions in the last school year**

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	200	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	0	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	0	0

*The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

### **Teachers and classes**

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Average class size	25

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y2**

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	162.25

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2001/02
	£
Total income	391,543
Total expenditure	386,567
Expenditure per pupil	2,128
Balance brought forward from previous year	13,475
Balance carried forward to next year	18,451

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
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**

Number of questionnaires sent out	202
Number of questionnaires returned	139

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	68	30	0	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	48	29	1	0	11
Behaviour in the school is good.	55	29	1	0	9
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	39	32	4	0	15
The teaching is good.	62	25	1	0	6
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	42	37	5	0	8
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	77	20	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	64	28	1	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	58	34	3	0	1
The school is well led and managed.	74	20	0	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	53	35	0	0	6
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	24	25	11	4	27

### **Other issues raised by parents**

A few parents were concerned about the amount of work the youngest pupils were expected to do and others about the size of the playground now that numbers have increased.

## **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**

83. There has been considerable improvement in the provision for children in the reception classes since the previous inspection, when three quarters of the teaching was only satisfactory. Children now experience a rich and varied range of learning opportunities, with nearly two thirds of the teaching being very good. Staff work very well as a team, with teachers being particularly secure in their knowledge and understanding of this stage of education. Most children enter reception aged four with attainment overall as expected for their age. There are a few gifted/talented children whose needs are currently being assessed and appropriate learning activities planned. At the time of the inspection, all children had only been attending full-time for two weeks. However as a result of the very good teaching, they are achieving well and are on course to exceed all of the early learning goals set for this stage by the end of the year, as did pupils now at the start of Year 1.

#### **Personal, social and emotional development**

84. Children have already made rapid progress in their personal, social and emotional development and most are in advance of where they are expected to be for their age. This results from the consistent and sensitive way teachers and assistants have introduced and reinforced simple routines ensuring that children have settled in quickly and are confident and secure. They are interested and excited by the activities set out for them and those they choose for themselves. They work and play together well in small groups, moving around safely and orderly. This is especially apparent, as classes have to change areas daily to make the best use of space and resources, which they do with the minimum of fuss. Staff, through the very good role models they provide, ensure that children develop respect for each other and the world around them. They develop a good level of independence, such as when changing for physical or creative activities and going to the toilet. The maturity of the current Year 1 pupils indicates that all children in the reception classes will exceed the personal, social and emotional development goals for this age group.

#### **Communication, language and literacy**

85. While nearly all children are achieving as expected for their age and maturity in this area, a small number have specific speech problems. These children are given specialist help as well as being effectively supported by staff. However, all enjoy listening to stories and can sustain their attention well. They talk and listen well to each other and to adults, such as when role-playing or carrying out practical activities. Most are confident talking one-to-one with adults and are able to explain, for example, how to borrow a book from the library. Short class literacy sessions are used daily to introduce sounds and how they relate to building words. Most know that print carries meaning and can identify their own written names. A few more able pupils are able to read a number of key words and can use illustrations to make sense of stories. Nearly all children are supported at home by parents looking at books that are regularly sent home. Children are encouraged to attempt writing for themselves through games and activities, with staff giving sensitive and encouraging support. As a result, most children make marks easily and will say what they have "written". Children's appreciation of the value and importance of the written word is reinforced through effective use of attractive displays and labelling and examples of their recorded work. Nearly all children in the reception classes are on course to exceed the early learning goals in communication, language and literacy by the time they start Year 1.

#### **Mathematical development**

86. Most children are at an appropriate stage of their mathematical development for their age. They enjoy learning and thinking mathematically and are familiar with number activities linked to class themes such as "ourselves," counting their body parts – fingers, toes, eyes, arms and legs. Most

can count objects up to ten and some more able children can count to twenty. They are beginning to use mathematical language as when “counting on one” in a practical session in the hall. They can group sets of objects by colour, for instance, and some can identify “largest” and “smallest”. Many children can recognise different shapes and some can name “circles”. They are effectively encouraged to develop their mathematical thinking when engaged in other activities, such as counting the number of children present at the start of the day and how many are absent. There are regular short sessions to develop numeracy and creative use is made of the hall to give children practical experience using number and measure. They also enjoy singing counting songs and rhymes that staff are introducing and use to round off sessions. As a result, nearly all are on course to exceed the learning goals for mathematical development by the time they leave the reception classes.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

87. The programme for the reception classes covers an interesting range of themes that build on and extend children’s experiences. Wherever possible, these involve first-hand practical activities, as are currently being introduced as part of the topic on “ourselves”. Children enthusiastically investigated using different materials to carry safely the “cracked” Humpty Dumpty egg to hospital. Other topics cover exploring light and shadow, making toys and models, looking at clothes for different activities and weather and plant and animal life. Effective use is made of the local area as groups of children often explore and visit the town. The school has a well-designed and safe wildlife area, where children are helped to recognise the changes that occur over the year. Already children confidently use new technologies, such as the computer, listening centres and calculators. They also use mobile telephones and electronic models in role-play, as when taking turns to staff the “library” and lending books to each other. These experiences help children to develop a good awareness of their world and nearly all are on course to exceed the early learning goals in this area by the time they start Year 1.

### **Physical development**

88. Children’s physical development is already in advance of what is expected for their age. Although during the inspection appalling weather restricted the use of the outdoor area, generally efficient use is made of the well-designed and resourced secure playground. Children are able to develop their awareness of each other and control their movements when playing on large equipment and wheeled toys, such as tricycles. They also have regular set times in the school hall and develop good co-ordination by handling small equipment, such as balls and bean bags, and moving on large apparatus. In the classroom, there are many activities where children develop control and precision such as they did when using scissors, pencils and paste brushes to construct a safe box to carry Humpty Dumpty. Children also have many opportunities to play constructively with a good range of games and toys requiring fine movements, such as jigsaws and toys. As a result of these activities, nearly all children are on course to exceed the early learning goals in physical development.

### **Creative development**

89. The classrooms are attractively arranged with examples of children’s creative work and adults’ displays. This creates a welcoming and colourful environment. In addition, the school benefits from the help of volunteers that enables children to develop creative skills in small groups. Some of these helpers also offer specialist skills, such as weaving, to further enrich children’s experiences. Children handle a wide range of different material, including clay, dough, cloth, paper, paint and junk to create models and pictures. They sing familiar songs with enthusiasm. They also have many opportunities for playing creatively with shadow puppets and in the role-play areas, which are set up to reflect the different themes. Consequently, nearly all are in line to exceed the early learning goal in this area by the time they start Year 1.

## ENGLISH

90. Standards in English have risen since the previous inspection. This is especially true of reading where standards are now well above average. The standard of writing has remained average but the standard of speaking and listening has improved from below average to average. This improvement is driven by the effective leadership of the English co-ordinator, the overall good teaching and the building up of stimulating and valuable resources. In the six lessons observed, the teaching in two was very good, in three good and in one satisfactory.
91. The very good performance of pupils in reading is consistent across Years 1 and 2 and is also borne out by national test results in recent years. Boys and girls perform equally well and read with confidence and enthusiasm. They are not put off by words they find difficult to read because the teaching has provided them with a number of effective strategies for working out the meaning. The school identified the need for a structured approach to the teaching of phonics and has successfully overseen the introduction of a scheme to run alongside the teaching of the recognition of common words. As pupils progress, they demonstrate an ability to recall the main point of what is being read and express opinions about the content. These skills are clearly identified by teachers and are well taught in small groups, where very effective use is made of assistants.
92. Pupils' positive attitude to reading is fostered by the provision of a carefully structured reading scheme that allows all pupils to progress at their own level. This right level of challenge is maintained by thorough tracking of pupils' progress that also involves parents in the use of a home-school link book. In addition, they have learnt to appreciate a wide variety of styles and genres in fiction and non-fiction, as every classroom is equipped with a stimulating and varied collection of fiction and non-fiction books. The well-organised and well-equipped library is also a valuable resource, broadening pupils' reading experience. Pupils make good use of the interesting selection of books because they have been effectively taught to use the contents and index pages, applying their knowledge of the alphabet to find topics being studied.
93. The overall effect of the good teaching, stimulating and well-structured resources and pupils' very good attitudes to learning to read has created a culture that values books and the printed word. A prime example was the comment of a Year 1 boy who chose to sit in the reading corner with a friend whilst waiting for school to start. He paused in his reading to comment to his friend, "*Did you know there was such a thing as a water scorpion?*" However, opportunities are missed to stimulate pupils' spiritual awareness through literature.
94. In writing, pupils are gaining a sound grasp of the grammar and vocabulary needed to write as they progress through Year 1 and Year 2. This is equally true of boys and girls. Most are learning to form letters correctly and are well prepared for joining the letters. However, the majority are not yet maintaining a consistent size of letters, even when provided with lines to guide the writing.
95. The most able are writing in sentences and consistently use capital letters and full stops, but are often not producing work of sufficient breadth and interest. The teaching does not always challenge pupils sufficiently and, as a result, the gains made by these pupils are limited in comparison with the rest of the class. For example, in a Year 1 lesson the most able group was not expected to extend the skill of writing appropriate adjectives to any new context or in any open-ended way that challenged their thinking.
96. In Year 2, most pupils are beginning to show an understanding of full stops, but skills practised successfully in isolated exercises during literacy sessions are not being consistently transferred into their everyday writing. The standard of spelling is appropriate for the age of pupils. There has been an improving trend in spelling recently as the co-ordinator has introduced an initiative that has taught pupils to spell the most commonly used words correctly. As with reading, pupils with special educational needs made good progress in learning basic skills with the help of skilful support from assistants working effectively with class teachers.

97. In speaking and listening, pupils from both Year 1 and Year 2 are very good at listening carefully to the teacher and making suitable responses. This is a consequence of mature attitudes to the need to learn, respectful behaviour towards the teacher and good relationships promoted by staff.
98. Pupils do not show that they have developed the same responsiveness in listening to each other or in discussing ideas together. This is largely due to the fact that they are given fewer opportunities to discuss issues with one another and develop the ability to respond to the view of another or explain with an appreciation of the needs of the listener. This is an example where greater opportunities could be given to develop pupils' thinking skills. However, they are acquiring an appropriate vocabulary for their age. This is enhanced by the good quality reading material and good teaching that emphasises new vocabulary as it arises.
99. Overall, in writing and in speaking and listening, pupils are not applying their skills sufficiently in subjects apart from English. They are used to completing prescriptive activities and rarely explore their own ideas. The school has recognised this and has plans to improve aspects of pupils' writing as the result of thorough monitoring of their performance. The school is tackling these issues with commendable commitment and skill, is well placed to continue improvements in English and has the capacity to succeed.

## **MATHEMATICS**

100. Standards in mathematics for Year 2 pupils are above the national average, overall. Good progress has been made in raising the attainment of seven-year-olds since the previous inspection, when standards were average but below expectations in problem solving. Although the investigation and problem solving aspect of mathematics is still less developed, the vast majority of pupils are achieving as expected in this aspect.
101. Generally, pupils achieve well throughout the school but they do not follow up their own ideas sufficiently. There is no significant difference in attainment between boys and girls, although girls substantially outnumber boys in Year 2. Pupils with special educational needs progress well as a result of the good support from teachers and assistants working effectively together.
102. Current Year 2 pupils are able to write numbers up to 100 and count reliably beyond a 100. They have good knowledge of place value and can use this understanding to order numbers up to 100 and beyond. Most are able to use their addition and subtraction skills to solve simple problems mentally and they are beginning to develop the ability to explain methods of working. Some pupils are able to subtract a one digit from a two-digit number, but most find this difficult. In their work on fractions, pupils are able to identify halves and quarters in shape and number, for example, 'Eight sweets, give half away, how many left?' In their work on shape and space, they have good knowledge of two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes and are able to identify and name them by considering the number of faces or corners.
103. The quality of teaching and pupils' learning is always at least good, with examples of very good teaching and learning. In the five lessons observed, teaching was very good in two and good in the other three.
104. Teachers, overall, have a good knowledge and understanding of mathematics and plan well for the needs of pupils of all abilities. Pupils are managed and organised very well and work in groups or individually on differentiated tasks. Time, resources and support staff are also used very well to give all pupils the opportunity to participate in 'hands on' practical mathematics. Support staff, including the headteacher, are organised very well to help groups of pupils, especially those with special educational needs. The quality and use of ongoing assessment are also good. Teachers in parallel age-group classes work well together to ensure that individual pupil tracking is well recorded to pass on to the next age-group classes. Although the use and application aspect of mathematics is less developed, teachers are working hard to ensure that problem solving is included in their lessons. They are also emphasising the use of appropriate mathematical vocabulary and encouraging pupils to explain their methods of working in mental numeracy sessions.

105. All teachers are familiar with the National Numeracy Strategy and it is applied well in order to raise standards as teachers are now more confident, particularly in building on pupils' first hand experiences. In a Year 2 lesson observed on the recognition of three-dimensional shapes, the teacher related the shapes very well to everyday, well known items such as ice-cream cones, chocolate bars, crisp cylinders and various shaped packaging. However, the opportunity for pupils to participate in following their own lines of enquiry and to work with a partner is not always provided.
106. Assessment information is carefully analysed and used to set class and pupils' targets. However, the present, experimental system of using small plastic cards for individual targets is not working effectively. Pupils find the targets difficult to read and they are not really individual. Pupils' work is marked regularly for accuracy, usually with individuals so that they know what they need to do to improve their work.
107. Mathematical and numeracy skills support pupils' learning in other subjects; for instance, in geography when pupils used a block graph to record the different ways that pupils travel to school. Information and communication technology is beginning to be used to support pupils' learning in mathematics. However, pupils are not sufficiently encouraged to recognise how number, shape and pattern have affected human spiritual development.
108. The experienced co-ordinator gives very clear educational direction to the subject and has been instrumental in the rising trend in standards. There is a good range of resources, which are well used in all classes. Displays of pupils' work in classrooms are bright and colourful and help to illustrate the high profile given to mathematics throughout the school. There is a strong commitment from all staff for further improvement in the subject and their capacity to succeed is very good.

## **SCIENCE**

109. Overall, standards in science for the current Year 2 pupils are as expected for their age. More able pupils are not sufficiently challenged and they do not attain as well as they do in reading and mathematics. However, this is an improvement since the previous inspection when standards were below average overall.
110. Pupils in Year 1 and 2 are given a firm foundation in scientific facts. Consequently, pupils just starting Year 2 know some of their body functions, such as the heart pumping blood and lungs breathing air, and what their five senses are. They know the key parts of a plant and that water and sunlight are needed for growth. They know about light and sound sources and how to make a simple electrical circuit. They can describe how materials can change, such as water into ice, that salt and sugar are soluble and that wood and paper burn.
111. While pupils undertake a range of simple investigations, they are not sufficiently encouraged to question and discuss what they observe. As the class is generally given the same task, more able pupils quickly finish their work and are not given enough activities to extend their scientific thinking. However, pupils with special educational needs benefit fully from practical work as they are given sensitive and appropriate support from staff and parent helpers and as a consequence make good progress.
112. In the three lessons seen, the teaching was good in two and satisfactory in the other. The strengths of the teaching are in the very good management of pupils and the very effective use of assistants and parent helpers and the well chosen resources. In a Year 1 lesson on the characteristics of living creatures, large African land snails were borrowed from the local pet shop. As a result, pupils' interest and curiosity were sustained as they examined and discussed the different parts of the clearly visible body, the teacher ensuring that in their excitement they did not harm or disturb the snails. However, there are insufficient planned opportunities for pupils to wonder at the marvels of the world around them.



113. Some teachers are not confident in their subject knowledge and can on occasion plan activities which confuse pupils. In another Year 1 lesson on identifying living and non-living things, pupils did not realise that to be alive, something need have only one of the given characteristics. As one more able boy confidently remarked, *“A flower is not living because it can’t move about and can’t see.”*
114. The co-ordinator has been successful in helping staff introduce more practical activities into lessons. While standards have risen as pupils’ knowledge and understanding have developed through this first-hand experience, she is aware that more training is needed to make investigations more open-ended. This will also provide opportunities for more able pupils to follow their own lines of enquiry. She has been able to observe science lessons and as a result has identified and begun to tackle shortcomings in pupils’ learning about light and electricity. New technologies are beginning to be used more and library and other resources are good. The wildlife area in the school grounds is effectively used to support science.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

115. During the inspection, only one lesson of art could be observed. Judgements have been made based on this Year 1 lesson, an examination of displays around the school, curriculum plans and discussions with pupils and teachers. The evidence indicates that standards are as expected. This is the same as in the previous inspection.
116. Pupils are making sound progress in both Year 1 and Year 2 in learning to use a range of materials and processes. This is due to planning that covers a broad range of experiences for pupils over a two-year cycle. The co-ordinator has been effective in producing this guidance and her practice provides very good modelling of the quality of work that can be produced.
117. Another factor that contributes to pupils’ effective learning was seen in the Year 1 lesson observed. The teacher’s clear explanation of how to use pastel crayons was particularly effective. It was also clear from the skilful way that pupils used tools to produce a spiked effect on model hedgehogs that previously learnt techniques had been well taught. The enthusiastic attitude and very attentive listening of pupils also have a very positive effect on the quality of learning.
118. Evidence of work of pupils in Year 2 shows them to be competent in detailed observational drawing, working with water colours, using fabric pens to create pattern and designs, using printing techniques and working with pastels. Although there is evidence of work in three dimensions in Year 1 with clay modelling and pinecone sculpture, this aspect is relatively under-represented at present. However, teachers’ plans show appropriate activities later in the year.
119. The current work in art shows limited evidence of opportunities for pupils to be creative and try out their own ideas. The work tends to be prescribed. Pupils are not often encouraged to reflect upon and discuss their own and others’ creativity. This is partly due to the fact that the good subject expertise of the subject co-ordinator has not been used to develop staff in this area.
120. The co-ordinator has rightly prioritised the production of relevant and balanced guidance and the organisation of sufficient resources. This includes some stimulating books in the library. Monitoring of teaching, learning and standards and the place of assessment in moving the learning forward has not yet taken place to any degree. Consequently, learning experiences are not based on detailed knowledge of what the pupils can already do and this limits the progress made by individuals.
121. New technology is being applied well to enhance learning. Art packages are regularly being used to create styles of art and different artistic effects. Drawing in Year 2 was based on photographs taken by the pupils themselves.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

122. During the inspection, no lessons of design and technology could be observed. Judgements have been made based upon an examination of pupils' models on display and in photographs, curriculum plans and discussions with pupils and teachers. This evidence shows that standards of work seen are as expected for the age of pupils. This is a similar picture to the previous inspection.
123. Pupils experience an appropriate range of designing and construction activities when completing tasks linked to themes covering other subjects. This is an effective way of helping pupils see the relevance of their work. For instance, in Year 1 to support the topic on growing, pupils look at different ways of preparing fruit and vegetables as part of healthy eating. As a result, pupils just starting their final year in the school easily recall the practical design and making activities they completed in Year 1.
124. Year 2 pupils know how to cut and join card to construct a flexible joint for making pictures move with levers and understand that flexible materials, like paper, can be made stronger by folding. They can describe how to prepare fruit salad, peeling, coring and cutting apples and oranges for a healthy dessert. They can give verbal instructions to guide another person making a product, such as a paper aeroplane, and refine their design after testing the prototype. Generally, they have a sound understanding of the way technology has made living easier, particularly in the home, knowing for instance that washing machines and dishwashers are far more efficient than doing the same jobs by hand. However, they are not aware of the misuse of technology and how people feel when their lives are blighted.
125. Teachers have found national guidance helpful in choosing appropriate design and technology activities but some do not have the confidence to adapt their planning to give pupils more opportunities to try out their own ideas. As a result, some of the products produced are very similar as pupils are given rather prescriptive instructions. This can be seen in many of the multi-coloured coats designed by Year 2 pupils for the Bible character Joseph where the same template was used to mark out the material.
126. The co-ordinator has plans to encourage more flexibility and intends to work with teachers trying out different approaches. Another development priority is considering how to make judgements about pupils' work more consistent and accurate while at the same time, manageable. The co-ordinator has been effective in ensuring a good range of appropriate resources is readily available and is aware of the need to use new technologies more to support teaching and pupils' learning.

## **GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY**

127. Standards in geography for the current Year 2 pupils are as expected, as they were in the previous inspection. As only one lesson was observed during the inspection, this judgement has been made by looking at pupils' work, discussion with teachers and pupils and an analysis of curriculum plans.
128. Pupils in Year 1 show a good ability to recognise and talk about the human and physical features of places and buildings in their locality. By the use of photographic evidence, they are able to show the relationship between the school and other nearby buildings. They can then produce a 'distance line' and understand the principle of buildings being either near or far. Their ability to ask questions about the topic is less well developed.
129. Year 2 pupils are able to discuss the good and bad features of the introduction of a national supermarket to the town. Their understanding was helped by a visit to the supermarket and a talk from a parent who works there.
130. In the Year 1 lesson observed, pupils successfully developed their understanding of 'near' and 'far' by studying a large scale photograph of local buildings and identifying their location. Independent learning is encouraged by pupils sorting photographs to form their own 'distance line'. Teachers provide a good balance between providing information, photographic evidence and encouraging pupils' enquiry skills.

131. Judgements about history are based on one lesson observation, an analysis of pupils' work, classroom displays and teachers' planning. The evidence indicates that standards in history are as expected for this age group, which is similar to the previous inspection.
132. Pupils in Year 2 show an ability to compare similarities and differences between their own time and that of others, such as Florence Nightingale, Louis Braille and Henry VIII. Year 1 pupils have used artefacts from the local history library to compare the difference between old and new dolls in their development of enquiry skills. They are able to use simple observation techniques to answer questions about the past when comparing their own houses and toys to those in past times. The opportunity for pupils in both Year 1 and 2 to participate in independent research is limited.
133. In the Year 2 lesson observed the lesson was managed and organised well, with the teacher and some pupils acting as Florence Nightingale. The class enjoyed asking questions and discussing what it must have been like to live in that period.
134. Geography and history are managed temporarily by the headteacher, pending the redistribution of subject responsibilities. As a result, the development of teaching and the curriculum has not been a priority. In addition, teachers do not have a sufficiently accurate picture of pupils' progress in both subjects as assessment judgements are not compared and checked for consistency. Geography and history are enhanced by various visitors and field trips in the locality. Information and communication technology is being used more to support learning in both subjects.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

135. Only one lesson of information and communication technology and pairs and individuals working in class could be seen during the inspection. Judgements have been made based on these observations, talking to pupils and looking at their recorded work, discussions with teachers and examining their plans. This evidence indicates that standards are as expected for the age of pupils, as they were in the previous inspection.
136. Both boys and girls in Year 1 and Year 2 are making sound progress in all aspects of information and communication technology. This is because work is planned to cover the right things and resources are in place to enable the activities to go ahead. The teaching observed made good use of these resources. For example, in a Year 2 class, the interactive whiteboard was used to give a clear demonstration of how to use drawing tools on an art package as well as how to print work.
137. Teaching has been effective in enabling pupils to learn file management skills appropriate for their age. Most know and can recall how to save their work, whilst pupils with special educational needs understand that the computer can save work in a file. Pupils throughout Years 1 and 2 have learnt to appreciate the way the computer can be used to convey ideas in lots of different ways. Year 2 pupils showed genuine awe as they saw their artwork run off the printer. Year 1 pupils confidently word-process labels for a wall display.
138. All pupils are able to discuss the use of new technologies and have developed appropriate skills. For example, all pupils are able to use listening centres and explain how they work. Year 2 pupils have understood the way the security access system to the school operates and can explain what to do.
139. Information and communication technology skills are beginning to be introduced across the breadth of the curriculum but not extensively as yet. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils were designing a pattern for a coat as part of the design and technology topic. Graphs have been produced on the computer to teach data handling in mathematics and labelling in Year 1 as part of a science lesson. A mathematics program provides practise at number work whilst pupils are also developing their ability to explore imaginary situations.
140. Pupils with special educational needs were making appropriate progress in the Year 2 lesson observed. This was because the teacher skilfully directed the assistant to ensure that pupils could

work at a level they could manage. More able pupils have not progressed as far as they could as planning has not systematically identified how these pupils could be stretched. In the same lesson, more able pupils were engaged in a colouring activity that offered little challenge.

141. Provision in the subject has been improved recently. The subject co-ordinator has been pro-active and effective in establishing detailed, realistic plans for improvement that have rightly prioritised the most important areas for development. As a result, teaching expertise has developed through training targeted appropriately at important skills and is being used more to support teaching and pupils' learning in other subjects.
142. The absence of consistent assessment procedures to inform planning, as well as procedures to monitor teaching and pupils' learning, mean that teachers do not have reliable information to judge the performance of individuals. This is an important factor in the limited progress of the more able pupils.
143. A significant positive factor in the progress made by pupils is their enthusiasm and motivation for the subject. This, along with recent improvements and the commitment of the leadership to seeing them continue, mean that the school has a good capacity to succeed.

## **MUSIC**

144. During the inspection, only one lesson of music and pupils' singing in assembly could be observed. Judgements have been based on these observations, looking at teachers' plans and discussions with staff and pupils. This is insufficient evidence to make secure judgements about overall standards in music. However, pupils are singing better than expected for their age; the same finding as during the previous inspection.
145. Pupils throughout Years 1 and 2 sing tunefully, even when the only accompaniment is the pitch of the teacher's voice. Their performance is greatly helped by the good modelling of singing displayed by teachers and pupils' responsive and willing attitude that makes them put good effort into singing. Most pupils in Year 2 can keep a steady beat when accompanying singing using percussion instruments. Again, this is well modelled by the teacher and aided by an appropriate choice of song at the right level of difficulty. In the Year 2 lesson observed, progress in performance was limited because there was not high enough expectation placed on pupils to respond to each other or improve their own performance.
146. There is only limited evidence of pupils' creative involvement in music making and planned opportunities to reflect and appraise their compositions and others. The co-ordinator identified this weakness in planning and has recently introduced a scheme of work that covers the breadth of curriculum more appropriately. This has not had time to have a significant effect on pupils' learning but feedback from teachers on the new material confirms that this is an improvement. However, planning is not based on detailed knowledge of pupils' previous attainment because consistent assessment procedures are not yet in place. This limits the progress pupils make.
147. The application of music across the curriculum is well established. For instance, pupils' musical performance is playing a central role in the harvest service. Outside expertise is also being used to enhance learning in music – a professional percussionist has been booked to do workshops with all classes.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

148. No overall judgement on standards in physical education is possible as only two lessons of gymnastics could be observed. This evidence indicates that pupils' attainment is as expected for their age in this aspect; this is similar to the previous inspection.
149. Year 1 pupils enjoy their gymnastics work, behave well and concentrate on their activities. They are beginning to understand the effect of exercise on their bodies and the need for 'warm up' and 'cool down' sessions during their lessons. Most pupils are able to formulate their own gymnastic

movements when asked to touch the floor in a balance using one, two or three parts of their bodies. They show a good awareness of space and are developing the ability to practise their gymnastics skills independently to improve their performance. Pupils are beginning to develop a short, balancing sequence both on the floor and on small apparatus. Year 2 pupils have progressed from simple balances and are able to perform more sophisticated movement with greater control and co-ordination. However, their ability to explain the effect of exercise on their bodies is limited.

150. In the very good Year 1 lesson observed, the teacher's quiet manner and insistence on sensible and safe behaviour was very appropriate for this early time of the school year and enabled all pupils to gain as much from the lesson as possible. In the Year 2 lesson, the teacher effectively demonstrated movements but little opportunity was given for pupils to watch and learn from each other.
151. The subject co-ordinator is experienced and enthusiastic and has been instrumental in producing an updated subject policy and ensuring appropriate apparatus and equipment is available. However, little planned monitoring of physical education has taken place and as a result the co-ordinator does not have a clear picture of what needs to be done to improve pupils' performance further. Pupils in Year 2 attend swimming lessons at a nearby pool for one session a week during the summer term. No extra-curricular sport is offered at the moment but there are plans to introduce gymnastics and a ball skills club in the future. Accommodation for the subject is good, with a large hall and the use of the adjacent junior school playing field.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

152. During the inspection, only one lesson of religious education and a school assembly could be observed. Judgements have been made based on these observations and an examination of pupils' recorded work, curriculum plans and discussions with pupils and teachers. This evidence shows that standards are as expected in the locally agreed syllabus for the age of pupils. This is the same as at the previous inspection but there has been considerable improvement in the quality of curriculum guidance and support.
153. While county guidance is used to inform planning, the school has produced a scheme of work based on topics teachers have found successful. A further recent adaptation has been the substitution of Judaism for Hinduism as staff felt more confident and better able to make links with the study of Christianity.
154. Pupils just starting Year 2 can recall parts of Bible stories from the Old and New Testament and describe what happens at some of the principle Christian festivals, such as Christmas and Easter. They know that some people go to church for important family events, such as Christenings, weddings and funerals. They have a good sense of themselves and what makes them feel happy and sad. They understand that their parents love and care for them and that it is important to be kind and considerate to others. They can explain why rules and laws are needed as they are consulted about guidelines for their classrooms.
155. In the Year 1 lesson observed, many pupils found role-playing attendance at a church harvest festival a novel experience as few had been to such a religious service before. The teacher took the part of vicar and arranged the chairs in rows, while pupils became family members bringing their harvest gifts. This created an appropriate atmosphere but the teacher did not sufficiently prepare the class and some low attaining pupils found it difficult to concentrate. However, overall, pupils gained much from this role-playing approach. Indeed, current Year 2 pupils described with evident enjoyment and accuracy religious education lessons in Year 1 where they had acted out Bible stories.
156. Assemblies are also used effectively to reinforce topics covered in religious education, where drama and pupil involvement are much in evidence. During the inspection, the story of creation was well presented in this way by the headteacher and, as a result, this appealed to the wide range of ages and maturity.

157. The enthusiastic co-ordinator is part time and has been successful in ensuring that teachers have a wide range of appropriate resources to support religious education lessons. She has benefited from attending training and contact with specialists from the local diocese. She has made good use of visiting speakers, including parents, to raise pupils' awareness of others' beliefs and practices, such as Jehovah's Witnesses. While new technologies are under-used, the co-ordinator is developing her own expertise and intends to further enrich teaching and learning resources from the Internet, beginning with Hanukah later this term. There are few displays of pupils' recorded work in religious education to celebrate and raise the profile of religious education in the school.
158. As yet, the co-ordinator does not have an informed view of the strengths and areas for development in teaching and pupils' learning. However, she has plans to help staff become more confident in assessing pupils' progress in religious education so they can be more effective in planning lessons. She is aware that opportunities to raise pupils' spiritual awareness are not taken often enough in other subjects and is considering how to help teachers in this area.