

INSPECTION REPORT

SPELTHORNE INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL

Ashford

LEA area: Surrey

Unique reference number: 125095

Headteacher: Mrs B Findlay

Reporting inspector: Mr P Kemble
7269

Dates of inspection: 31st March – 2nd April 2003

Inspection number: 248654

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 7 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Chertsey Road Ashford Common Ashford
Postcode:	TW15 1SF
Telephone number:	01784 253942
Fax number:	01784 240539
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr C Ashworth
Date of previous inspection:	19 th January 1998

© Crown copyright 2003

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

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
7269	Mr P Kemble	Registered inspector	Science Design and technology Religious education	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
9780	Mr J Massey	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?
23056	Mrs T Manzi	Team inspector	Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage Art and design Geography	How well is the school led and managed?
3855	Mr D Langton	Team inspector	English as an additional language English History	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
30438	Mr R Guest	Team inspector	Educational inclusion, including race equality Mathematics Information and communication technology Physical education	
11624	Ms L Rhead	Team inspector	Special educational needs Music	Speech and language unit

The inspection contractor was:

Bench Marque Limited
National Westminster Bank Chambers
Victoria Street
Burnham-on-Sea
Somerset
TA8 1AN

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

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

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	11
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	15
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	18
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	22
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	24
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	25
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	29
OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES	29
The work of the speech and language unit	
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	32
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	37

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Spelthorne Infant and Nursery School is a larger than average primary school. There are 319 pupils on roll, including the equivalent of 136 full-time children in the nursery and reception classes. There is an almost equal numbers of boys and girls. The number on roll is lower than at the time of the previous inspection, reflecting the declining population in the local area. The vast majority of pupils are drawn from privately owned and local authority housing within the school's catchment area. The socio-economic background of pupils is broad. The area is one of high living costs and low unemployment. Many families have two wage-earners on low incomes and so are not eligible for free school meals. Thirty-one pupils (9.7 per cent) are eligible for free school meals, a below average figure. Pupils' levels of attainment on entry into the nursery vary from year to year but are typically below average, with particular weaknesses in language and communication skills. There are 84 pupils (26.3 per cent) on the register of pupils with special educational needs, a figure which is broadly in line with the national average. Twelve pupils have statements of special educational need, an above average figure. Ten of these pupils attend the attached speech and language unit. Over 90 per cent of pupils are from White British backgrounds. Twenty-five pupils (7.8 per cent) have English as an additional language, and seven of these are at an early stage of language acquisition, an above average figure. The amount of staff turnover has been high in recent times; eleven members of staff have left and six have joined the school in the last two years. This has had a significant impact on the work of the headteacher and governors in managing and organising school improvement.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Spelthorne Infant and Nursery School is a good school with significant strengths. Standards are average in English and science and below average in mathematics by the end of Year 2. Overall, pupils, including those with English as an additional language, make good progress when compared with their levels of attainment on entry. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress. Pupils benefit from high standards of care, good teaching, a strong emphasis on promoting personal development and effective teamwork amongst all staff. The headteacher provides effective leadership. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- By the end of Year 2, standards are above average in information and communication technology, music, physical education and religious education.
- Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to school and their work and behave very well; relationships are excellent.
- Provision for the promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- Pupils benefit from high standards of care for their well-being, health and safety.
- Provision for pupils with speech and language difficulties is very good.
- The leadership provided by the headteacher is good and governors are very involved in the life and work of the school; financial planning is very effective.

What could be improved

- Pupils' achievements in mathematics by the end of Year 2 are not as high as might be expected.
- Not enough use is made of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills to promote learning in other subjects of the curriculum.
- Information gathered from assessment procedures is not used as well as it could be to match work closely to pupils' needs, especially those of higher attaining pupils.
- Senior staff and subject co-ordinators are not sufficiently critical in the way that they monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning and teachers' lesson plans.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made a good improvement overall since the previous inspection in January 1998. As a result of the headteacher's effective leadership, improvements have been made to curriculum provision and teachers' expectations of pupils' academic and social achievements. The high turnover in staff since the previous inspection has hindered the rate of improvement to some extent, particularly with initiatives to make assessment and monitoring and evaluation procedures more effective. However, the majority of weaknesses identified in the previous report have been dealt with successfully. The role and responsibilities of governors and subject co-ordinators in monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of curriculum planning and teaching are better, although there is still work to be done in developing a more critical analysis of the quality of what is seen. Planning of lessons and the implementation of assessment procedures are now much more consistent amongst all staff. The school development plan is now a good working document, guiding governors and staff well in prioritising appropriate courses of action. Pupils' standards in information and communication technology have made a significant improvement from below to above average by the end of Year 2. There have been other significant developments. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics have risen in line with the national trend over the last three years. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour have improved and are now very good. Parents' views of the school, as shown by the questionnaire returns, are more positive.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
reading	D	D	D	D
writing	D	D	D	E
mathematics	E	E	E	E

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

School test and assessment data shows that, when compared with their levels of attainment on entry into the nursery, most pupils make good progress in reading and writing. They make satisfactory progress in mathematics. The reason why standards since 2000, as shown by the results in the above

table, have remained below the national average is mainly because there have been fewer pupils achieving the higher Level 3 than might be expected; these pupils tend to underachieve. However, targets for pupils' achievements set by the school were met in 2002.

Pupils' standards in Year 2 in reading, writing and science are average, and in mathematics they are below average. In information and communication technology, music, physical education and religious education, standards are above average. Standards in art and design, design and technology, geography and history are average. Pupils with special educational needs make consistently better progress than other pupils, largely as a result of the successful focus by staff on provision for these pupils from the nursery onwards. There are no significant differences in the achievements of boys and girls or pupils for whom English is an additional language.

Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress and achieve well in all areas of their development. By the time they enter Year 1, standards are in line with expectations in personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical and creative development. They are below expectations in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development from a low starting point.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils tackle their work with enthusiasm and concentrate very well.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils are polite and courteous to each other and to all adults. They play well together during morning and afternoon breaks and lunchtimes in the hall are sociable occasions.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils co-operate very well in lessons and assemblies. Relationships are excellent.
Attendance	Good. Pupils are keen to come to school and lessons start on time.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching and learning is good overall because of teachers' very good management and organisation of pupils and lessons, good subject knowledge, effective planning and efficient use of time, support staff and resources. The teaching of English is good overall; literacy lessons are often good. The teaching of mathematics is satisfactory. Other subjects of the curriculum are not used as well as they could be to extend pupils' reading, writing and numeracy skills. Pupils achieve particularly well in English in Years 1 and 2 because of teachers' effective use of whole-class sessions at the ends of lessons to review and consolidate what has been learned. In mathematics, not enough use is made of the mental and oral sessions at the start of lessons to stimulate pupils' thinking and improve their recall of number facts. Pupils achieve well in science, information and communication technology and music because teachers take advantage of many pupils' preference for practical rather than written tasks. All pupils benefit from excellent teamwork amongst all teaching and non-teaching staff.

In the best lessons, pupils of all capabilities are challenged by the tasks planned for them. However, this is not always the case for higher attaining pupils, particularly in mathematics, science, geography and history lessons, where teachers' expectations of what these pupils can achieve are not high enough. Pupils with special educational needs receive very well-planned tasks from their class teachers, specialist teachers and teaching assistants. Pupils with English as an additional language receive effective support from all staff and the quality of their learning is good overall. Pupils with specific speech and language difficulties are taught very well and are fully integrated into the life and work of the school. Relationships between teachers and pupils are excellent and make a significant contribution to pupils' very good attitudes to their work.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. It is good in the Foundation Stage. In Years 1 and 2, there is a strong emphasis on provision for the core subjects of reading, writing and mathematics. Planning in other subjects, such as science, geography and history, is not always linked as well as it might be to promoting pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. Pupils benefit from a good range of visits and visitors to school, although there are very few after-school clubs.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Pupils' individual education plans are of good quality. Targets are achievable and linked closely to classroom work.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Pupils benefit from teachers' close attention to correct vocabulary, grammar and spelling in lessons. Pupils who start school with no English are given good individual support.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Very good. Pupils' personal development is promoted very well in lessons through co-operative group activities, and in assemblies by the way pupils' achievements and contributions are valued and celebrated.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. Pupils' benefit from high standards of care and attention. This aspect of school life makes a significant contribution to the calm, supportive and caring atmosphere characteristic of the school at all times. However, assessment information is not used effectively enough to challenge and extend pupils' learning.

Staff and governors work hard to establish and maintain positive links with parents and the local community. As a result, parents provide significant financial support and attendance at school concerts, performances and parent consultation evenings is very good.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher provides effective leadership and is well supported by senior staff. All teaching and non-teaching staff carry out their responsibilities conscientiously. Teamwork is very good. The leadership and management by co-ordinators vary in effectiveness because some of them are relatively inexperienced.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors show a good knowledge and understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement. Involvement in school life is good and this helps them to develop a clear view for the long-term development of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The procedures for gathering information about the school effectively involve all the staff and governors. However, there is not enough critical analysis of the quality of teaching and learning and planning to help raise standards.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Staffing, accommodation, resources and available funds are used effectively and efficiently to support priorities in the school development plan.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school, make good progress and behave well. • Teaching is good, with high expectations of children's academic and social achievements. • Children are helped to become mature and responsible. • The school works closely with parents, deals effectively with questions and problems and keeps them well informed about their children's progress. • The school is well led and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework is not appropriate. • A small minority of parents of children with special educational needs feel that they do not receive enough co-operation or information about their children's achievements. • There are not enough activities outside lessons.

Inspectors agree with virtually all aspects that please parents. However, expectations of what higher attaining pupils can achieve are not always high enough. Inspectors judge that the amount of homework is typical of most other similar schools and is used well to consolidate and extend pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. Provision for pupils with special educational needs, including liaison with parents, is judged to be very good. Inspectors agree that the range of after-school clubs is limited.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

Strengths

- Children make good progress in the Foundation Stage and achieve well.
- By the end of Year 2, pupils' attainments in information and communication technology, music, physical education and religious education are above the nationally expected standards.
- Overall, pupils make good progress from their level of attainment on entry into school.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well.

Areas for improvement

- Recall of number facts is weak for many pupils, affecting their ability to solve problems.
- Higher attaining pupils do not always achieve as well as might be expected.

1. Foundation Stage children make good progress overall. Nursery and reception staff prepare children well for work in Year 1 by establishing very good attitudes to work and play. Children enjoy school and are keen to learn. Children learn at a good pace because activities, planned to extend their academic skills, are particularly well matched to their personal, social and emotional needs. In Years 1 and 2, teachers build successfully on the positive start children make in the nursery and reception classes. Interest and enjoyment are sustained through well-planned, motivating activities, by the raising of pupils' self-esteem and confidence through effective use of praise and encouragement and access to a good range of resources. As a result, pupils achieve well, particularly in reading, writing, science and their personal development.
2. Foundation Stage children vary in their attainment when they start in the nursery at age three or in reception at the age of four. Assessments made in the first term in the nursery show attainment to be typically below average. However, there are variations from year to year, with some groups of children attaining better and some attaining lower than this. The level of attainment of the present nursery intake is below average. Nursery staff are particularly successful at settling children into school routines and establishing good working habits.
3. By the time children enter reception, there are significant improvements for many children in their personal, language and mathematical development. Levels of attainment are slightly below average overall on entry into reception. Reception staff continue to develop children's self-esteem and confidence so that, by the time they enter Year 1, children are likely to have achieved the expected standards, or early learning goals, in their personal, social and emotional development, their knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development. Children make good progress in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development, but achievement is likely to be slightly below expectations in these areas of their development.

4. Results of end of Key Stage 1 national tests and assessments, between 1999 and 2002, show that, with the exception of 1999, pupils' standards in reading, writing and mathematics have risen in line with the national trend. However, reading and writing standards have remained below, and mathematics standards well below, the national average during that time, and are lower than those reported at the time of the previous inspection in 1998.
5. There are two main reasons for standards being no higher. Firstly, results reflect variations in the level of attainment on entry into school from year to year. The 1999 national test and assessment results were better than those between 2000 and 2002, but the overall level of attainment on entry of that particular intake of children was higher than usual. Over 50 per cent of the Year 2 pupils who took the 2002 national tests were on the register of special educational needs. These pupils achieved well, with a high proportion attaining the expected Level 2, but it was likely that there would be fewer pupils overall attaining the higher Level 3.
6. Secondly, the school has focused a large amount of time and resources on raising the attainment of special educational needs, lower attaining and average attaining pupils since the last inspection and has achieved considerable success in helping these pupils to improve reading, writing and mathematical skills. Higher attaining pupils have not had such a consistent and specific focus and so not as many pupils have achieved the higher Level 3 in national tests as might be expected. However, the proportion of pupils achieving this level has steadily risen since 2000. In 2002, Level 3 was achieved by 27 per cent of pupils in science, and 25 per cent of pupils in reading, which was in line with the national average. The percentage of pupils achieving Level 3 in writing was below, and in mathematics it was well below, the national average.
7. The steady rise in reading, writing and mathematics standards since 1999 is largely due to the effective use of national guidelines in literacy and numeracy and good improvement in the quality of teaching and learning. In reading, staff consistently apply a method of teaching letter sounds, or phonics, as the main approach. This is begun in the nursery and continues through into Year 2. Writing standards are better because teachers have encouraged pupils to write more freely and at greater length than they did previously. However, there is still work to be done in promoting the use of these skills in other subjects of the curriculum. Handwriting standards are weak and not enough is expected of pupils in the way they present their work. Standards in mathematics have benefited from consistent application of the nationally recommended format to lessons which gives more opportunities for pupils to talk about and explain their methods. However, the mental start to lessons is not used well enough to help pupils remember and quickly recall number facts.
8. Inspection findings are that pupils make good progress from their original levels of attainment on entry. By the end of Year 2, standards in reading, writing, speaking and listening and science are average. A small number of pupils achieve above average standards in these subjects. Standards in mathematics are below average. Standards in information and communication technology, music, physical education and religious education are above expectations. Standards in art and design, design and technology, geography and history are in line with expectations.

9. Standards in information and communication technology have made a good improvement since the previous inspection from below to above average by the end of Year 2, due mainly to improved teacher expertise and resources. Standards of music are above those expected because of teachers' high expectations of what pupils can achieve, particularly when singing and performing together. Standards above expectations achieved in physical education are the result of regular opportunities to participate in games, gymnastics and dance lessons and teachers' high expectations of pupils' achievements. In religious education, standards are above expectations because of the high priority given to the subject in class lessons and assemblies.
10. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress in relation to their individual targets and prior attainment. The high quality of the provision has been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils are aware of their difficulties but are confident that they will be given help to overcome them. Their needs are assessed carefully and learning and behaviour programmes are drawn up to address the particular individual needs. Pupils' individual education plans and behaviour management plans are very detailed and of high quality. Records of the progress made by pupils targeted for additional support in the academic year 2001/2002 show that almost all of the pupils achieved the national expectation in reading, representing very good progress.
11. Pupils in all parts of the school benefit from committed, caring teaching and non-teaching staff. Teachers' enthusiasm is successfully conveyed to pupils and this leads to all pupils working hard to meet the challenges set. As a result, standards have risen steadily over time. Teachers match work more closely to pupils' needs than at the time of the previous inspection, particularly in English, mathematics and science, but this is not always so for the higher attaining pupils. In information and communication technology, music and physical education, teachers take full advantage of many pupils' preference for practical rather than written activities to set high standards of academic and social achievement and pupils achieve well as a result. Pupils benefit from teachers' increased subject knowledge and expertise, which is used to plan interesting and motivating activities. Well-managed and organised lessons often move at a good pace and keep pupils involved and concentrating on their tasks.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

Strengths

- Pupils' attitudes to school are very good; they are enthusiastic and very interested in their work and play.
- Pupils' behaviour in lessons and at play is very good and bullying is uncommon.
- Pupils' personal development is very good and relationships are excellent.
- Levels of attendance are above average.

Area for improvement

- A few pupils are frequently late.

12. At the time of the previous inspection, pupils' behaviour and relationships were reported to be very good. Their attitudes to school and work were good. The very good standards of behaviour have been successfully maintained since then. Staff have worked hard to improve pupils' personal development and, as a result, pupils' attitudes are now very good and relationships are excellent.
13. Nursery and reception children settle happily into school. Their attitudes and behaviour are very good and there are very few squabbles and disputes. When these do arise, staff help children to achieve an amicable conclusion. Children are good listeners, for example at story time or when they join Years 1 and 2 pupils for assembly. Many children show good levels of concentration and are engrossed in well-planned stimulating activities for significant periods of time. A minority of children are immature, but usually respond well to the example set by their peers and soon learn to build relationships through co-operation and sharing. They receive good quality care and attention and this helps them to gain confidence and independence. They are prepared well for work in Year 1.
14. The very good attitudes established in the nursery and reception classes are successfully maintained in Years 1 and 2. Pupils enjoy coming to school and are happy and cheerful. They are enthusiastic learners, asking questions and offering views and opinions in whole-class discussions. This was characteristic of all the literacy lessons seen during the inspection and made a significant contribution to the standards pupils achieved.
15. Many pupils show a mature ability for their age to sustain concentration and effort in class lessons throughout the school day. Pupils particularly enjoy practical activities when they work co-operatively with others. This was apparent in science, design and technology, music and physical education lessons observed during the inspection. For example, in a Year 2 science lesson, the teacher was able to spend a considerable amount of time working with a small group of pupils who needed her help because other pupils were so involved in working together profitably on their activities.
16. Standards of behaviour are very good. Pupils are very polite and show respect for each other and for the many adults in the school. A calm, purposeful atmosphere is the norm in classrooms and around the school. Teachers know their pupils well, which enables them to identify potential problems and share information with other teachers. This results in a family atmosphere in the school, in which pupils see teachers and other adults as friends and confidants. Those pupils who have behavioural difficulties are skilfully helped by their teachers to adopt the very good behaviour of their classmates. There have been few recent recorded incidents of bullying and, when questioned about this, pupils confirmed that they were not concerned by bullying or oppressive behaviour because, if and when it occurs, it is quickly dealt with.
17. The respect that pupils show for each other and for adults is the result of the excellent relationships that exist throughout the school. Group discussions, called circle time, reveal a positive and caring attitude towards relationships and, as at the last inspection, this is a strength of the school. Pupils try to see things from each other's point of view and this results in respect for each other's feelings. Although the nature of the school community is such that many beliefs and values are shared,

pupils show respect for each other's differences and enjoy studying different people and cultures. Several pupils, who have special difficulties, are helped and treated very well by the other pupils.

18. Levels of attendance are well above the national average. The attendance and punctuality of most pupils is good and this contributes to their good achievements and good standards. A few pupils attend less well and are often late. Unauthorised absence is very low. Registration procedures fully meet the requirements.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

Strengths

- The quality of teaching and learning has improved well since the previous inspection.
- Teachers manage and organise lessons very well.
- Teamwork amongst teachers and teaching assistants is excellent.
- Relationships between teachers and pupils are excellent.

Areas for improvement

- Opportunities are missed in lessons in other subjects of the curriculum to extend pupils' literacy and numeracy skills.
- Work planned for higher attaining pupils is not always sufficiently challenging.

19. At the time of the previous inspection, the quality of teaching and learning was reported to be good overall, with about nine out of ten lessons satisfactory or better. About ten per cent of lessons were unsatisfactory. Teachers' subject knowledge and their relationships with pupils were good, activities planned were often interesting and motivating with work matched closely to pupils' needs. Weaknesses were identified in levels of challenge for higher attaining pupils, teachers' use of assessment and the application of information and communication technology to pupils' learning.
20. There has been a good improvement since then. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall; there is no unsatisfactory teaching and three out of four lessons are good or better. Improvement is reflected in the rise in pupils' reading, writing and mathematics standards by the end of Year 2 over time in line with the national trend, above average standards in information and communication technology, music, physical education and religious education and pupils' improved personal development.
21. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall in English, science, information and communication technology, physical education and religious education. It is satisfactory overall in mathematics, art and design, design and technology and geography. Not enough lessons were seen during the inspection to make secure judgements about the quality of teaching and learning in history and music.
22. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall in the nursery and reception classes. Teachers know their children very well and have a good understanding of their individual needs. Each child's progress is carefully monitored and regularly reviewed so that daily lessons are adjusted to meet children's needs. This is achieved through excellent liaison between teachers and teaching assistants. In the best teaching, children are given many opportunities to express their ideas, work co-

operatively in pairs or in larger groups and benefit from the use of good quality resources. Children become happy and confident in a very caring environment.

23. A significant reason why the quality of teaching and learning has improved since the last inspection is the way that teachers plan interesting and motivating activities. The nature of the intake of the school each year is such that many have weak communication and language skills, and levels of concentration are often poor when they enter school. In order to maintain and sustain pupils' interest and concentration, teachers work hard to plan stimulating activities. In the lessons seen during the inspection, virtually all were successful in that pupils enjoyed the activities planned for them. For example, at the start of the morning and afternoon sessions in the nursery, children are eager to tackle the range of activities prepared for them and they are soon engrossed in indoor and outdoor activities. Year 1 and Year 2 pupils were observed concentrating on their work for considerable periods of time in mathematics, science and information and communication technology lessons. On the few occasions when pupils lost interest and became restless, activities, particularly whole-class sessions on the carpet at the start of lessons, went on for too long. This happened at times in English and mathematics lessons.
24. The management and organisation of lessons is a particular strength of teaching in all classes. From the nursery onwards, children learn to put out and clear away resources and equipment quickly and carefully between activities, making a significant contribution to pupils' personal development. For example, pupils were observed in physical education lessons handling equipment and apparatus very sensibly and, in all lessons seen, pupils treated resources respectfully. Teachers manage and organise available resources well to support pupils' tasks. This was characteristic of the independent group activities in English and mathematics lessons in all classes.
25. In a Year 1 science lesson, the work of four groups of pupils was sustained very well by the teacher's effective use of her own time and that of the teaching assistant, and by the provision of a wide range of appropriate resources to support pupils' learning in each group. Virtually all lessons consist of a whole-class beginning and end with group activities in the middle. The transition between these parts of lessons is consistently smooth and efficiently managed so that very little time is lost in moving pupils on in their learning.
26. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve have improved since the previous inspection, particularly in reading, writing and information and communication technology skills. This is largely due to the school's strong focus on implementing the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies guidelines and its response to weaknesses in information and communication technology identified in the previous report. Pupils respond well to higher expectations because of the excellent relationships that exist in all classes. A class of Year 1 pupils made good progress and achieved well in an English lesson because they rose to the challenges set by their teacher in learning and writing about non-fiction texts. They were keen to tackle their written work and concentrated hard, spurred on by praise and encouragement from their teacher.
27. Teachers' expectations are high in other subjects, such as special educational needs, the speech and language unit, music, physical education and religious education, where pupils achieve standards that are above those expected. However, where expectations of what pupils can achieve are not high enough, this is reflected in pupils, especially higher attaining pupils, not achieving as well as might be expected.

This is evident in some mathematics, science, design and technology, geography and history lessons.

28. Teachers plan their lessons conscientiously. They plan together to make sure that pupils in classes of the same age receive similar lessons and that skills are developed progressively between year groups. They generally make effective use of national subject guidelines to prepare activities for pupils. In this way, pupils receive a good coverage of the required areas of learning in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 curricula. This has helped to maintain the steady rise in standards of reading, for example, as teachers work together to make effective use of letter sounds, or phonics, to develop pupils' skills. Where planning is less effective, teachers have stuck too rigidly to the suggestions in the national guidelines and have not adapted these to best suit the particular needs of their pupils. This is particularly evident in art and design, design and technology, geography, history and some aspects of religious education.
29. Teachers often make good use of the start of lessons to review pupils' previous learning and establish what new learning is to be covered. The purpose of the lesson is shared with pupils and displayed in the classroom. These methods are successful in promoting pupils' speaking skills as teachers and pupils discuss the forthcoming lesson. Although well organised, group activities vary in their effectiveness. When tasks are well matched to pupils' different capabilities, all achieve well. This is invariably the case for special educational needs and lower attaining pupils. However, higher attaining pupils sometimes have to work through the same activities as the rest of the class before tackling more challenging activities. This was evident in some mathematics, geography and history lessons. The final whole-class session of lessons is used well by teachers, particularly in English and mathematics, to review the original purpose of the lesson and for teachers and pupils to assess what has been learned.
30. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are taught well. They benefit from the close attention given by teachers to correct pronunciation, grammar and spelling that all pupils receive in English and other lessons. Teachers do not receive any specialist outside support for children who are unable to speak English. However, staff in the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2 work well together to plan individual and group activities that help those pupils to take part in the same activities as their peers. School records show that English as an additional language pupils make similar progress to that of all other pupils in the school and achieve well.
31. The quality of teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs in classes is generally good. Teachers are aware of their needs and plan accordingly. Pupils with statements, including those with autistic spectrum disorders, are very well supported. The needs, as outlined in the statements, are met and annual reviews are carried out properly. A nursery pupil with an autistic spectrum disorder is being well supported and is learning to use the helpful Picture Exchange Communication System. The school's inclusive approach is very effective in meeting different pupils' needs. Pupils with behavioural difficulties are managed particularly well, with a range of good strategies to help them. Teachers are vigilant in anticipating possible difficulties and are skilful in diverting pupils by giving them responsibilities and in praising small successes.
32. The quality of teaching and learning of groups and individual pupils withdrawn from class for support in literacy is very good. Planning is based on assessment of pupils' work in the previous session and is designed to build pupils' knowledge of sounds for

reading and spelling systematically. The pace is fast and many exercises are timed. Pupils are highly motivated by this and respond with hard work and very good concentration. Behaviour in these sessions is exemplary. Teaching and support staff have high expectations and a strong commitment to helping the pupils to achieve as highly as possible. Relationships are very good and pupils show trust in their teachers.

33. Good use is made of homework to extend pupils' literacy skills. Regular reading and spelling activities have had a positive impact on standards. However, there is not such a strong emphasis on numeracy activities in the homework programme. Parents give good support to helping their children at home and teachers have developed positive links between home and school as a result.
34. Overall, teachers promote the school's aims and values well. There is a strong commitment to raising standards. Pupils' contributions are valued in lessons and assemblies and pupils respond very well to the respectful and caring way that they are treated.

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

Strengths

- Provision for children in the nursery and reception classes is good.
- There is very good provision for the promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral and social development.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs, for those in the language support unit and for educational inclusion overall is very good.
- Links with the local community and with the adjacent junior school and local playgroups are very effective.

Areas for improvement

- Skills learned in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology lessons are not used well enough to support other subjects of the curriculum.
- Higher attaining pupils are not always challenged sufficiently.
- More effective use could be made of the time available each week in Years 1 and 2.

35. The school provides a satisfactory inclusive curriculum, relevant to the ages and interests of its pupils. It fulfils the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum, the locally agreed syllabus for religious education, and collective worship. Weaknesses in provision in information and communication technology, identified in the previous inspection, have been rectified.
36. Since the previous inspection, there has been a satisfactory improvement in the curriculum overall. Satisfactory policies and schemes of work are in place for all subjects, and planning has been improved and formalised, although the needs of higher attaining pupils are not always met sufficiently. Teachers have increased pupils' awareness of the importance of the purpose of lessons, called learning objectives, reinforcing and returning to these in whole-class sessions at the end of lessons, and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. The role of the

subject co-ordinator has been developed, although more still needs to be done to introduce a more critical analysis of standards.

37. The weekly time allowance for the curriculum is in line with that found nationally, but the school does not make best use of this. For example, too little time is allocated to science, history, geography, art and design and design and technology. The 20-minute lesson before lunch is inappropriate for effective teaching of some subjects, especially physical education, and is often ineffective. There is no monitoring of teachers' timetables.
38. Children in the nursery and reception classes benefit from a good variety of interesting and motivating practical activities and experiences. Provision is good because all staff have a good knowledge and understanding of how children learn. As a result, children soon develop good levels of concentration and effort, co-operate well and develop very good attitudes to school. There is a good range of outside activities provided throughout the year.
39. The curriculum for pupils in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory overall. Teachers make effective use of the literacy and numeracy hour strategies and this is having a positive effect on standards. Standards in information and communication technology are rising, following the provision of a new suite of computers, although, during the inspection, computers in classrooms were used insufficiently. Provision for the planned teaching of skills, for example in design and technology and history, is inconsistent between year groups.
40. The curricular provision for pupils with English as an additional language is satisfactory and they make similar progress to that of their peers. No external funding is available towards support for these pupils and the school is to be commended for its initiatives in making appropriate provision.
41. There is very good provision for pupils with special educational needs. Pupils have access to the full curriculum. Management across the school is very good, with close co-operation between the special educational needs co-ordinator and reading support teacher, who give good support to all staff. As a result, individual education and personal education plans are of good quality and identify appropriate activities and measurable targets. Commitment to pupils with special educational needs is high at all levels, from the headteacher and governor with responsibility for special educational needs to lunchtime and support staff. A good programme of training has contributed to the effectiveness of the provision.
42. Pupils in the speech and language unit spend a large proportion of the school day working with their peers in main school classes and, as such, have very good access to the full curriculum. In the unit, provision is specific, targeted at the development of particular skills and based closely on work pupils are tackling in their classrooms.
43. The school has satisfactory strategies for teaching the basic skills of numeracy and good strategies for literacy, with additional timetabled sessions for writing workshops and guided reading. The school has identified groups of lower attaining pupils in writing and has successfully raised the standards of these pupils. However, insufficient use is made of other subjects to promote the use of literacy skills, for example in science, geography, history and religious education.
44. The school's provision for extra-curricular activities is broadly typical of what is found in most infant schools. Currently, only short tennis is offered as a club activity, and the

school is aware of parents' concerns in this area. However, the curriculum is enhanced in other ways. For example, during the inspection, an excellent assembly was provided by a regular visitor, promoting good personal relationships and the idea of putting other people first. All teachers attend these occasions and reinforce the ideas expressed in their own teaching. Visits from groups, such as a drum workshop, from storytellers, visits to places of interest related to class projects, and occasions such as a Victorian Day to celebrate the school's centenary, are all well used to enhance pupils' learning and provide stimuli to develop their writing skills further. The regular use of visits and visitors to support pupils' learning in history and geography is less well developed.

45. The school ensures that all pupils have equality of access and opportunity to the curriculum regardless of their ability, gender or background, although the needs of higher attaining pupils are not always sufficiently well considered, and the school has only recently begun to identify higher ability pupils. The practice of grouping Year 2 pupils in literacy and numeracy lessons according to their earlier attainment, called setting, is having a positive effect in helping to raise standards, but here, and in other subjects, there is still insufficient targeting and challenging of higher attaining pupils.
46. The school works hard to provide security, consistency in learning and stability for its pupils. There is good provision for pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education, promoted through an appropriate policy and scheme of work. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning well for this aspect of the curriculum. Weekly lessons are timetabled and supported through circle time, where pupils are given opportunities to share their feelings and opinions, and further develop their speaking and listening skills. Pupils in Year 2 research topics on the Internet independently but, although pupils undertake the usual classroom duties, insufficient opportunities are offered to develop initiative and responsibility.
47. Good provision is made for pupils' safety awareness, drugs awareness and sex and relationships education. The school is involved in the Surrey Healthy Schools project; pupils bring only fruit to school. Pupils in Year 2 research topics on the Internet independently but, although pupils undertake the usual classroom duties, insufficient opportunities are offered to develop initiative and responsibility. A visiting speaker has made pupils aware of environmental issues. The community police officer visits regularly to discuss pupils' safety and the work of the police, and the local fire service has also visited the school. Pupils visit the local church as part of their religious education curriculum.
48. The school has very good links with the local community, especially with its immediate neighbour, British Petroleum, which has helped fund, and given advice for, the Acorn Centre, an excellent multi-purpose building which houses the school's

information and communication technology suite, library and music facilities. This considerably enhances the quality of the curriculum. Pupils' art work has been displayed by the company.

49. The school has very good links with local playgroups and with the adjacent Spelthorne Junior School. Pupils are invited to the junior school to see drama performances, and Year 5 pupils act as reading 'buddies' to pupils in Year 2. Year 2 and Year 3 teachers work well together to ensure a smooth transition for pupils when they change schools. Pupils recently attended a science workshop at another local school. Good and useful links are maintained with the local training college for teachers. The school regularly has a number of trainee students from St Mary's College.
50. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good, and it is good overall for their cultural development. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection. These aspects of the school's provision make a significant contribution to pupils' personal development.
51. Provision for spiritual development is very good. Celebration assemblies, supporting academic, social and behavioural successes, enhance pupils' self-esteem and awareness of values. During the inspection, an excellent assembly on the theme of putting other people first was observed, where pupils were seen to learn well through enjoyment. All teachers were in attendance and thus enabled to develop and emphasise the points made in their own dealings with pupils. Regular opportunities are provided for pupils to reflect on their lives and their learning, in assemblies, through saying the school prayer, and grace before lunch, as well as in sessions at the end of lessons, called plenaries, where many teachers ask pupils what they have learned, re-visiting the lesson's learning objectives. Classroom displays record on 'Wow' boards moments of self-learning and genuine self-awareness. A well-planned programme of topics for collective worship supports pupils' spiritual development, although opportunities are missed to develop their awareness of other religions and cultures.
52. The school's provision for pupils' moral development is very good. All staff are good role models, treating pupils and each other in a supportive and caring way and applying rules consistently. Pupils are made aware of the needs of others and encouraged to support charities such as UNICEF and the Operation Christmas Child appeal. Relationships within the school are excellent. Individual class rules and whole-school Golden Rules are enforced consistently by all staff. There is a high level of care and concern across the school and a strong emphasis on positive aspects of behaviour. Pupils are taught clearly the difference between right and wrong. During a Year 2 personal, social and health education lesson, discussing Mother's Day, a pupil confided: 'I accidentally cut my Auntie's knee' adding emphatically – 'but I said sorry!'
53. Provision for pupils' social development is very good. Pupils work well together, attitudes and behaviour are very good and relationships excellent, throughout the school. Pupils show respect in listening to their teachers and also to one another. They work well together in small groups and in pairs. Attitudes and behaviour at lunchtime, mentioned in the previous inspection report as an area of weakness, have improved significantly through training for all lunchtime supervisors and the introduction of a stepped series of sanctions for dealing with offenders.
54. Year 2 pupils gain in social skills from regular meetings with their buddies from the junior school and forge lasting friendships which they carry with them when they move on. Almost nine out of ten parents think that the school is helping their children

become mature and responsible. Personal development is encouraged through free choice, for instance in activities during the Arts Week. Class responsibilities encourage social development. In one literacy lesson, a higher attaining girl pupil was observed assisting a lower attaining boy on the computer, working harmoniously and effectively.

55. Provision for cultural development is good overall. Pupils' awareness of their own culture is strongly supported by art and music. Weekly assemblies include a Composer of the Week with music played, identified and referred to by staff. The whole school is to visit the National Gallery as an introduction to its annual Arts Week. However, pupils' knowledge of, and exposure to, other cultures is still underdeveloped. Awareness of other cultures has improved since the previous inspection, through the purchase of costumes from other countries, through visits such as from the native American drum group, stories within personal, social and health education lessons and using the Internet, for example, to 'visit' a mosque. However, there is little focus on multicultural awareness around the school in displays, and no planned provision in the weekly assembly topics for the year. The school's planned provision to prepare its pupils to take their places as adults in today's multicultural society is not as well developed as might be expected.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

Strengths

- Procedures for, and staff awareness of, child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare and safety are very good.
- There are excellent procedures for promoting good behaviour.
- Procedures for assessing the achievements of Foundation Stage children and those with special educational needs are good.

Area for improvement

- Assessment information is not used well enough to match work closely to pupils' needs, especially those of higher attaining pupils.

56. At the time of the previous inspection, provision for pupils' support, guidance and welfare was reported to be very good. These high standards have been successfully maintained. Teachers know the pupils very well and those who have particular problems and difficulties are very well understood and appropriately helped.
57. Procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' safety are very good. There is a very strong family atmosphere, in which pupils readily go to teachers if they need help. The safe and secure atmosphere contributes to pupils' confidence, their very good attitudes to work and play and the excellent relationships which are a strength of the school. Child protection procedures are very good. They are based securely on the local education authority's guidelines and are well understood by staff. Awareness and vigilance by all staff are high and this means that problems when they occur are very quickly noticed and dealt with. Health and safety procedures are

very good. Formal health and safety inspections take place each term. When problems are found, these are properly recorded and acted upon. Fire evacuation procedures are regularly practised.

58. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good, but are currently hampered by software faults in a recently updated computer system, resulting in additional manual effort to maintain control. The main reasons for authorised absence are sickness and holidays taken in term time. Unauthorised absence is rare.
59. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are excellent. Despite there being a high number of pupils with behavioural problems, these are very well controlled and overall behaviour is very good. All staff have received training in behaviour management. Teachers and non-teaching staff use praise and encouragement very effectively, contributing to the calm, purposeful and happy atmosphere that exists throughout the school. Pupils are taught in lessons and assemblies to be aware of the impact of their actions on others, and instances of bullying or unkind behaviour are infrequent. When these do occur, they are dealt with sensitively and firmly. Use of sanctions to control unsatisfactory behaviour is carefully graded and co-ordinated to ensure consistency. Exclusion is very rarely resorted to and only as a very last resort when it is seen to be necessary in the interests of the other pupils.
60. At the time of last inspection, a key issue was to improve planning and assessment procedures to provide greater consistency in all classes. The school has made some progress in obtaining information about its pupils and analyses results well, especially in the areas of English and mathematics. The assessment co-ordinator has worked very hard to gather results from national tests and other sources to build up a picture of pupils' progress. She has analysed this to produce areas for development and fed results to staff. However, systems for staff to use this analysis to adjust lesson planning to ensure pupils are appropriately challenged are not as effective as might be expected, mainly because of the underachievement of higher attaining pupils. Some subjects, other than English and mathematics, notably science, information and communication technology and physical education, have assessment procedures in place but information gained is not used as well as it might be to match work closely to pupils' needs.
61. Marking of pupils' work as a means of assessing and recording pupils' progress and to set future targets for development is inconsistent in its application between classes and year groups. In a study of pupils' work in all subjects of the curriculum, there were very few developmental comments written by teachers to indicate to pupils what they need to do next to improve. In lessons observed, teachers were more successful at making assessments of pupils' achievements and suggesting ways that they could move on in their learning as the lesson commenced. Teachers' planning shows that most carefully evaluate the effectiveness of each day's lessons in order to adjust planning for the next day to meet pupils' needs.
62. Nursery and reception class teachers have good systems for recording what children know, understand and can do and how they achieve. All members of staff know the children well and work hard to meet their individual needs.
63. Pupils with special educational needs are well assessed and supported. Teachers have a good knowledge of their pupils' achievement in classes. Pupils' needs are assessed carefully and learning and behaviour programmes are drawn up to address the particular individual needs. Pupils' individual education plans and behaviour

management plans are very detailed and of high quality. Pupils benefit from effective involvement with outside professionals, such as a speech and language therapist and the local education authority educational psychologist, who provide valuable expertise and advice.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

Strengths

- The school's partnership with parents is good and it continues to find ways to help parents contribute to their children's learning and development.
- Parents' views of the school are good and their help makes a good contribution to the work of the school.
- Information provided for parents about school life and their children's progress is good.
- Parents make a positive contribution to their children's learning in school and at home.

64. At the time of the last inspection, the school's relationship with parents and the local community was judged to be good and this favourable position has been successfully maintained. The vast majority of parents have a high opinion of the school and the education it provides for their children. This contributes in no small measure to the positive view of the school in the local community and to parents choosing this school rather than alternatives in the area.
65. Comments made at the parents' meeting prior to the inspection, and the results of the parents' questionnaire, show that parents highly value the school and are pleased with the education and care provided for their children. Parents consider the school to be well led and managed. When they have concerns, they find that teachers and other staff are easily approachable. Suggestions from parents are welcomed and concerns are sympathetically dealt with. They are pleased that their children like going to school, and that they make good progress, behave well and are helped to become mature and responsible. Most parents are pleased with the information they receive about their children's progress. They are pleased with the quality of teaching and consider that teachers have high expectations of their children. Parents are generally satisfied that their children get the right amount of homework. A few parents feel that their views are not sufficiently taken into account when dealing with their children's difficulties.
66. Inspectors endorse the positive views of parents and consider that the school's approach to the sometimes severe problems experienced by pupils and their parents is sympathetic and professional.
67. The quality of information provided by the school is good. There are regular informative newsletters and much other helpful information sent to parents, including some information about the curriculum. The prospectus and annual governors' report for parents are informative and well produced. Annual reports meet requirements. An effective 'open door' policy operates, with parents receiving a warm welcome. The headteacher and staff see any parents as soon as possible. Parents appreciate this openness. Many parents attend school events and attendance at school concerts and productions is particularly good.

68. Almost all parents help with their children's learning at home, mostly by hearing them read and with spelling and number work. Some help in classrooms where their contribution to pupils' learning is appreciated. The Spelthorne Infants Friends Association is very active in organising social events, which help to maintain good relationships between parents, the local community and the school, as well as raising very valuable funds for the school.
69. The school has suitable and effective involvement with parents of pupils who have special educational needs. Parents have open access to the special educational needs co-ordinator and, with class teachers, are involved in discussing the content of individual education plans.
70. The school has a close and valuable relationship with the nearby junior school which helps pupils and their parents when they move on to the junior stage. Relationships with the management and staff of a nearby large industrial site are friendly and helpful.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

Strengths

- The headteacher provides good leadership and a clear educational direction to the life and work of the school.
- There is a shared commitment by the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and other key staff to school improvement; teamwork is good.
- Pupils benefit from effective use of staffing, accommodation, resources and available finances.

Areas for improvement

- Procedures for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning and teachers' planning do not have sufficient impact on standards.
- Some subject co-ordinators do not have sufficient time to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects.

71. Since the last inspection, the headteacher has worked hard to establish effective procedures for school improvement. She has a clear aim to build pupils' self-confidence to help them to learn and thus reach their full potential. She is very well supported by her deputy and the senior management team in this aim. The success of her work is seen in the general steady improvement in standards and the very good achievement of pupils with special educational needs. Pupils' attitudes to school and their behaviour are very good and relationships are excellent. As a result, the school is making good progress since the last inspection and pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education.

72. The headteacher provides good leadership. She has a good understanding of the needs of the school and the direction in which she wishes it to proceed. The key issues in leadership and management from the last inspection have been addressed, but the rate of improvement has been impeded by high staff turnover. However, with the helpful assistance of the local education authority, procedures for school self-evaluation have been successfully established.
73. Teaching and non-teaching staff are becoming increasingly involved in the establishment of priorities for further development and, as a result, the commitment to raising standards is good. The senior management team has been strengthened and co-ordinators for English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology are now in place, each with a brief to raise standards. Governors are much more aware of their role in school improvement and question decisions with confidence. They are a strength of the school management and they use their expertise well. Good procedures for performance management are in place and are used effectively as a vehicle for staff professional development.
74. Staff, and the deputy headteacher in particular, are very supportive of the headteacher, and appreciate the high priority that she places upon pupils' social development, but not at the expense of their academic progress. Her aim of building a well-managed team in a time when it has been difficult to recruit new staff has been successful. Newly recruited staff are well supported, are effective teachers and are happy to work in the school. This is reflected in the recent award of the national Investor in People status. The headteacher involves all staff and governors in training. She has been responsible for introducing assessment procedures, assisting key staff to analyse data and follow, or track, pupils' progress. The deputy headteacher is aware that effective use of assessment information requires improvement, and has useful plans for identifying more rigorous targets, meeting the needs of gifted and talented pupils and developing consistent ways of sharing information between staff.
75. The impact of procedures by senior staff and subject co-ordinators for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning on standards is not as effective as might be expected. There is insufficient critical analysis of teaching methods and planning, mainly because several subject co-ordinators are new to their posts or are inexperienced. However, effective use is made of the local education authority training programme to develop the roles of subject co-ordinators, and the headteacher and some key staff carry out classroom observations and verbal feedbacks to teachers about their performance.
76. The Foundation Stage is well managed and led. All staff work extremely well together as a team to provide a secure environment where children achieve well and make good progress.
77. The co-ordinator manages provision for special educational needs very well. Teachers are fully involved in identifying, setting and reviewing individual education plan targets. The school's inclusive approach is very effective in meeting pupils' needs. There are good links with outside agencies and referrals are made appropriately where necessary. A local education authority audit of the school's provision confirmed the high quality of the school's management systems and support for pupils with special educational needs.
78. The teacher in the speech and language unit is co-ordinating its work very well. She liaises very well with class teachers and teaching assistants to provide very good

levels of inclusion for her pupils when they join their peers, as well as linking work in the unit with class projects and themes.

79. The co-ordinator manages provision for pupils with English as an additional language well. She is new to the post, but has a good knowledge and understanding of each pupil's achievements and requirements. She liaises well with parents, and family members help on occasions when there are communication difficulties. Some displays in classrooms are dual-language. The school development plan includes a target to improve procedures for monitoring and evaluating these pupils' progress.
80. The governing body is led by a knowledgeable and hardworking chair, who manages an effective programme of meetings and governor visits to school. As a result, governors are developing a good knowledge and understanding of the school's strengths and areas for improvement so that decisions about priorities, action to be taken and budget allocations are well informed. Governors' expertise is used well. Priorities for school improvement are well documented in the school development plan, which clearly identifies responsibilities, targets, success criteria and some costs. It is a helpful working document. Each curriculum co-ordinator contributes to this plan, although many are given insufficient time to monitor the quality of teaching and learning in their subjects. The key issue from the last inspection regarding future planning has been addressed and the governors are to further improve the development planning process. The issue of the school pond is remedied as this has been removed and replaced by the Acorn Centre.
81. The overall efficiency of the school is good. The finance committee has established good standards of financial planning and monitoring. The very competent school administrator ensures that the spending of specific grants is carried out and is able to support the governors' financial monitoring in an efficient manner. She carries out the everyday monitoring of all finance in a most effective manner. The governing body is well informed about the school's finances. Governors have taken account of educational priorities in their financial planning and focused allocations to meet these priorities. They have an efficient system of analysis, which allows for movement of funds between budget headings to deal with an unanticipated surplus.
82. Governors understand the principles of best value and effectively act upon them. They challenge the appropriateness of spending, compare costs carefully with other schools and obtain competitive tenders. They consult with a range of people.
83. Taking into account below average unit costs per pupil, the progress which pupils make and the overall good quality of provision, the school provides good value for money.
84. The number of teaching and support staff within the school is appropriate for its size and meets the needs of the curriculum well. The local area is a difficult one for attracting teachers, and the headteacher works hard to appoint staff of good quality. New appointments include a registered, a newly qualified, a graduate and an overseas teacher, all of whom were observed working well with the pupils. To compensate for the inexperience of staff, significant in-service training has been provided, to good effect. The frequent changes of teachers has inevitably had an adverse effect on the continuity and progression of pupils' learning and on standards. The headteacher has managed this situation well so that the more settled staff this year is beginning to have a positive impact in lessons and on the good quality of teaching provided.

85. Well-trained lunchtime supervisors contribute positively to the very good attitudes and behaviour of the pupils, organising play activities and joining in games with the pupils. Good systems exist for these staff to rotate their indoor and outdoor duties and to meet regularly. Within the classroom, teaching assistants are used effectively and work well with teachers. Staff working with pupils with special educational needs, and within the speech and language unit, are particularly effective. The individual expertise of support staff is often put to good use, as witnessed in one dance lesson. Administrative, clerical and premises staff contribute positively to the efficient day-to-day running of the school.
86. All staff are good role models, although the only male example for pupils in this large staff is the school caretaker. Appropriate performance management and appraisal systems are in place for teachers and support staff. Induction and support procedures for teachers new to the school and for newly qualified teachers are good, enabling close contact with trained mentors and good support from senior managers. Further support is provided by a wide range of visiting specialist staff. All staff work very well as a team, with good co-operation within year groups. The school is an effective provider of initial teacher training. There are good links with St Mary's College and the willingness of the school to help in this way is much appreciated by college staff.
87. Accommodation is of a good standard and makes a positive contribution to the quality of teaching and learning and pupils' achievements. Classrooms are of a good size, with activity areas accessible in and outside classrooms. Nursery children benefit from a covered area so that they can work and play outside in most weather. There is no similar covered area for reception children. A good-sized hall provides good facilities for physical education and assemblies and is used well at lunchtime as a canteen. The multi-purpose Acorn Centre is used very well to house a computer suite, library and audio-visual equipment. Externally, there are reasonably-sized hard play areas, although with some uneven surfaces. A small grass area is currently in the process of being levelled and re-turfed in order to make it a safer play area for pupils. Internal accommodation is very clean and well maintained, providing a good environment for learning.
88. Overall, learning resources are good and are used effectively and efficiently to help pupils learn. There is a satisfactory quality and quantity of fiction and non-fiction books in the central library and in classrooms. Resources for the Foundation Stage are good. The information and communication technology computer suite contains a good number of computer workstations and there is at least one computer in each classroom. Design and technology is not well resourced because there is not a wide enough range of consumable materials for pupils to use in lessons. Pupils benefit from the recently established environmental areas, which are developing into a valuable resource to support learning. Good use is made of visits to places of interest and visitors to school to extend learning.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

89. In order to raise standards further, the headteacher, staff and governors should:
- (1) Raise standards in mathematics by:
 - i) introducing more pace and challenge into whole-class mental sessions at the start of lessons;
 - ii) planning more demanding tasks for higher attaining pupils.
(Paragraphs: 4, 7, 43, 134, 136, 140)
 - (2) Make more effective use of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills to promote learning in other subjects of the curriculum such as science, geography, history and religious education.
(Paragraphs: 7, 27, 29, 43, 142, 151, 175, 181, 213)
 - (3) In Years 1 and 2, make more effective use of the information gathered from procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress by:
 - i) matching work planned for pupils more closely to their levels of attainment;
 - ii) ensuring that higher attaining pupils in particular are regularly challenged by their tasks;
 - iii) altering and adjusting subject schemes of work to meet the needs and characteristics of pupils in each class and in each year group;
 - iv) assessing the samples of pupils' work collected in subject portfolios against national criteria to help teachers set consistently high standards for pupils to achieve in lessons.
(Paragraphs: 6, 29, 36, 45, 60, 61, 74, 124, 129, 130, 134, 136, 141, 148, 151, 153, 162, 164, 167, 168, 174, 180, 204, 211)
 - (4) Introduce into the monitoring and evaluation procedures of the senior staff and subject co-ordinators a more critical analysis of teachers' planning and the quality of teaching in order to raise expectations of what pupils can achieve.
(Paragraphs: 36, 37, 75, 80, 153, 168, 175, 180)

OTHER SPECIFIED FEATURES

The work of the speech and language unit

Strengths

- Pupils benefit from the very good expertise and experience of staff.
- The quality of assessment procedures and lesson planning is very good.
- Pupils achieve very well.

Area for improvement

- Access to the unit is through a reception classroom.

90. The school has a ten-place unit for pupils with severe speech and language difficulties. Pupils are placed in three 'host' classes in the main school, in reception, Year 1 and Year 2. The high quality of the provision in the unit has been maintained since the last inspection. The very experienced teacher in charge manages and

monitors the overall provision. Together with the part-time speech and language therapist, she provides very focused specialist programmes in the unit to address specific aspects of pupils' needs.

91. Pupils make very good progress as a result of the expertise of the unit staff, the high quality of observation and assessment and the very well-focused programmes targeted at each of the pupils' needs. Lessons are highly structured and very well planned and prepared. The pace of lessons is well judged, allowing sufficient time for pupils to respond but not wasting any time at all. The effective focus on pupils' attention and listening skills is so successful that they are able to use these skills better in their mainstream classes than many other pupils in the school.
92. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. For example, in a Year 1 literacy lesson, every short activity contributed to the final outcome. Pupils rolled large letter dice in a prescribed order to make three letter consonant-vowel-consonant words. They said the sounds and blended them to make words. They learnt specific words to help them write a sentence, with the teacher writing a two-sentence caption to photographs of puppets they had made to demonstrate what was expected. The teacher very clearly and deliberately outlined each component of the process and her methods provided a good basis for pupils starting to write. Every pupil in the small group successfully wrote two sentences. For a pupil with fine-motor difficulties, a word-symbol program on the computer allowed him to achieve this success. The pupils were delighted that the computer spoke the sentences written. At the end of the session, they read each other's writing and showed great pleasure as their peers read what they had written.
93. Staff identify key learning outcomes and share these with pupils so that they know what skills they are particularly trying to remember to apply. Pupils are encouraged to set their own targets for the session, helping to develop their independence and self-reliance. All the component skills in communicating effectively are addressed, with signing used where appropriate to support individual pupils.
94. Pupils' physical, emotional, social and psychological needs are taken into account when planning. An effective reward system is consistently applied and regularly reviewed to ensure it continues to motivate the pupils. Individual pupils have a visual timetable and a 'wobble' cushion to support their specific needs. New strategies are frequently introduced. For example, a technique for teaching mathematical and scientific concepts to improve pupils' capacity to learn these subjects in their mainstream classes is proving successful. Another strategy, called imaging, is helping pupils to visualise and express on paper what the teacher describes in words. At the end of lessons, each pupil evaluates how well they have done against their personal targets and contribute to each other's achievements.
95. The unit is very well managed. Support for teachers in mainstream classes is provided regularly, with three-weekly review meetings with the teacher in charge, who also monitors pupils' success in the main school. The unit classroom is very well

organised with appropriate and attractive displays, intended to support the pupils' learning and motivate them to work hard and improve. Staff are well deployed, with the two teaching assistants used to support pupils in their mainstream classes.

96. The resources used are good and are constantly being reviewed. The small unit classroom is adequate, given the inclusive practice of placing pupils in mainstream classes for most of the time. It is well placed next to the speech and language therapist's room. However, both rooms open into a reception classroom. The disadvantages of this arrangement are minimised because of thoughtful timetabling, with pupils generally entering when all classes are starting and finishing.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	53
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	48

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	15	24	14	0	0	0
Percentage	0	28	45	27	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 one percentage point.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	47	272
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	31

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	11
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	82

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	13
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	17

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3

National comparative data	5.2
---------------------------	-----

National comparative data	0.5
---------------------------	-----

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	57	57	114

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	47	48	48
	Girls	51	50	46
	Total	98	98	94
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	86 (91)	87 (92)	83 (88)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	47	51	51
	Girls	50	46	53
	Total	97	97	104
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	85 (93)	85 (91)	91 (86)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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	250	5	1
White – Irish	1	0	0
White – any other White background	1	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	4	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	1	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	2	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	3	0	0
Black or Black British – African	2	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	3	0	0
Any other ethnic group	2	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)	11.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.5
Average class size	24.6

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	14
Total aggregate hours worked per week	255.25

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	48
Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	142.5
Number of pupils per FTE adult	12

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
----------------	-----------

	£
Total income	2,944
Total expenditure	628,960
Expenditure per pupil	1,834
Balance brought forward from previous year	13,791
Balance carried forward to next year	74,821

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	11
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	6

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than 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	320
Number of questionnaires returned	84

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	68	29	1	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	58	35	5	2	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	40	50	2	2	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	42	39	12	1	6
The teaching is good.	58	38	4	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	46	38	8	7	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	61	31	1	7	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	48	45	5	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	43	43	6	7	1
The school is well led and managed.	40	37	6	7	10
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	45	46	4	4	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	20	31	22	11	16

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

Strengths

- Children make good progress in all areas of their learning.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good with all staff working well as a team.
- There is a warm and caring atmosphere which helps children to explore and learn well.
- Teachers plan for and use the outside area well and provide a broad, appropriate curriculum.
- There are good links with all areas of the curriculum so that time is used well.

Area for improvement

- The reception classes do not have a covered area so that outside play and learning can take place all year round.

97. Children in the Foundation Stage receive a good start to their schooling, and the good standards reported at the time of the previous inspection have been successfully maintained and strengthened.
98. Children start school in the nursery when they are three years old. They attend part-time for a year, for either morning or afternoon sessions. After a year, most children move full-time to the reception classes. The youngest children attend part-time for a while. Children are welcomed into a warm and caring atmosphere, which enables them to explore independently, and with others, so that they learn well. The quality of accommodation and resources is good, helping children to develop a good range of skills. Outdoor play facilities have improved since the last inspection. Good use is made of all the available space to promote learning. Children are prepared well for their entry into the nursery or reception classes as a result of good links established with playgroups. Reception pupils attend school assemblies with Years 1 and 2 pupils and this helps to become familiar with the main school.
99. By the time children enter Year 1, good teaching helps them to achieve above the nationally expected standard in their personal, social and emotional development. Achievement in their knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development is in line with expectations. However, despite making good progress, the majority do not achieve the national standard in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. Standards are just below the expectations for children of their age. Overall, achievement is good for all children, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language.
100. Children make good progress in the nursery class. A significant number enter with below average skills, particularly in communication, language and literacy and in their personal development. The good teaching and support that they receive helps them to make good progress and good gains in learning. Children continue to make

good progress in the reception classes in all six areas of development. They benefit from well-organised accommodation that promotes active learning so that they achieve well in their lessons.

101. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. No teaching observed was less than satisfactory and most was good. Relationships are strong and children feel secure and confident, showing high levels of interest and excitement in their lessons. The teaching assistants support teachers well. They work very skilfully with individuals and groups of children. Lessons have a clear focus and the good resources are well used. Behaviour is very well managed so that children develop good working strategies and become independent learners. They are polite and courteous and help each other to succeed. A strength of the teaching is that all staff work well as a team and have developed good systems to ensure that children benefit from the broad curriculum offered by carefully monitoring their free choice activities. For example, staff know which children do not choose to go outside and take steps to encourage them to do so.
102. The good curriculum is planned well so that all six required learning areas are covered. Regular assessment of children's achievements, particularly in literacy and mathematical skills, is a strength of provision and helps to inform staff about each child's progress in these areas. For instance, children are given choices in order to build independence and responsibility and these choices are skilfully guided by staff to make sure that children make good progress and achieve well.

Personal, social and emotional development

103. By the time they enter Year 1, children achieve above the standards expected in their personal, social and emotional development. Both in the nursery and in the reception classes, children make good gains in learning about how to get on with others. They co-operate and play very well together, even when undertaking activities that are unsupervised. For example, in the nursery, children were observed playing in the playground, sharing the bikes and trikes and waiting their turn.
104. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers provide good activities that successfully encourage children's personal development. For example, in the outside area, some reception children were required to work in groups, to discover which items rolled and which did not. Good guidance was given to the parent helper supervising this group. The children worked well together and were happy to wait for their turn to undertake the activity. Generally, children have good personal and social skills and this is largely because of the good role models provided by the teacher and staff for children to follow.
105. Children dress themselves for physical education lessons and are prepared to show others what they can do. They are confident. Children are given good opportunities to develop their imagination. Dressing up for role-play is encouraged. As one girl said: 'I am a princess, you may curtsy.' Teachers take good care of their children, for instance by placing a sunshade outside on sunny days.
106. Throughout the Foundation Stage, children show good awareness of the needs of others, and they behave well. They are encouraged to take on responsibilities. In the nursery, children were observed confidently tidying the play area and putting toys

away. Teachers use every opportunity to celebrate different cultures and lifestyles. Nursery children have celebrated one of their friend's culture by seeing her dressed in Chinese costume.

Communication, language and literacy

107. Children's progress in communication, language and literacy is good. When they enter the nursery, many children have underdeveloped skills, for instance they do not listen well, but, during their time in the Foundation Stage, they make good progress so that, by the time they enter Year 1, they attain standards that are only just below those expected for children of this age. Their reading skills are good.
108. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers make good use of resources to promote interest and encourage interaction. For example, nursery children are encouraged to bring in things from home to show their friends and talk about them. One child showed the inspector her puppet saying: 'This is Kitty and Mummy found her.' Teachers listen carefully to their children and extend their vocabulary. Good guidance is given to parents to help them assist their children read and a good range of suitable books are sent home. These arrangements help children make good progress.
109. Good emphasis is placed upon teaching the sounds in words so that the children have several strategies to help them make sense of stories and decipher new words. In reception classes, the literacy hour is adapted appropriately to meet the needs of the children. Teachers read poems and stories fluently and with good phrasing to help children listen attentively. They also provide writing materials in role-play areas such as the office and library. These encourage children to write and talk on the telephone.

Mathematical development

110. Children's progress in mathematical development is good. When they enter the nursery, many children have limited mathematical skills, but the good provision and range of exciting activities and games lead to good improvements so that, by the time they enter Year 1, the vast majority achieve standards that are just below those expected in this area of learning.
111. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Nursery children count daily and undertake many interesting activities to develop their skills in number, shape, space and measures. They learn to sort things by colour, shape and size. For instance, during break time, children give out drinks according to the colour of the cup. Thus, children quickly learn colours. They know and sing nursery rhymes which include numbers. They are beginning to identify groups of numbers to ten and match numbers to the objects. They find difficulty in judging bigger and smaller. Children name a variety of shapes such as circle and oblong. In the reception year, children know that an oblong has four corners ('points') and that a circle has no corners. Many can count to 20.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

112. Children's progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world is good, and they achieve standards in line with those expected by the time they enter Year 1.
113. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers make good provision for this subject. Pretend telephones are provided, as are listening posts to listen to stories. These, together with the computer programs, help children understand the use of

technology. Added to this, reception children pose for the digital camera as they know that it will show their 'wonderful' castle made from different shaped wooden bricks. Children in the nursery were observed making good gains in understanding about magnetism, and close observation when they sorted different keys, using a magnifying glass and tried to find the right key for each padlock. They are given opportunities to grow plants such as cress and beans.

114. In the reception classes, children have regular opportunities to develop their awareness of the world around them. Teachers' good questioning prompts them to have a lively discussion about the differences between dry and wet sand. The children predict what will happen when water is added and say that dry sand 'will fall through your fingers' and that wet sand will be 'rough and cold'. Their prediction and observational skills are being well developed.

Physical development

115. Children make good progress in their physical development and achieve the expected standards by the time they enter Year 1. This is because of good provision and teaching which enables children to practise their skills on a daily basis.
116. Children in the nursery were observed playing well together as they ran around the outdoor play area. They ride bikes and trikes, pushing and pulling each other around the playground successfully. They use a range of small apparatus and many use scissors, glue and crayons satisfactorily.
117. During a physical education lesson in the reception classes, children showed good levels of skill in co-operation and awareness of space. They moved safely around the hall, changing directions and stopping quickly on request. They move in many different ways, sliding backwards and pushing with their hands and sliding underneath chairs using their feet. They are keen to demonstrate and show their friends what they can do. A few children can make a forward roll. Very good demonstrations by the teacher helped them to improve during the lesson. Also, all pupils and staff are appropriately dressed for physical activity and teachers make good links with science. Children know that hard physical work increases the heartbeat. Teachers show great care towards the children. They ask for children to point out those who have worked well. Thus, the children's self-esteem is built and those who are finding work difficult are not identified.

Creative development

118. Children make good progress in creative development and, by the time they enter Year 1, have achieved the expected standard.
119. The quality of teaching and learning is good. From their earliest days in the nursery, children are successfully encouraged to explore paints and three-dimensional materials through making models out of boxes. They know their colours and choose appropriately as they paint flowers as part of observational painting. They use chalk and crayons well to create their own pictures. In reception classes, children have many opportunities to develop their creative style. Generally, they explore what happens when they mix colours and make collages by mixing different materials and experimenting with textures. Especially good work was produced by a child with special educational needs and the work was prominently displayed. Children in both the nursery and reception classes enjoy singing and making music, and they are beginning to build a good repertoire of songs. Reception children enjoy assembly

where, for instance, they sing the main tune while the rest of the school sing an accompanying part.

ENGLISH

Strengths

- The quality of teaching and learning is good.
- Pupils benefit from well-planned, interesting lessons.
- Pupils bring good and sometimes very good attitudes to their lessons.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- Assessment is well used to identify needs and raise standards.
- The practice of teaching pupils of similar levels of attainment together (setting) is a strength.
- The subject is well led and managed.

Areas for improvement

- Standards of spelling are below average.
- Opportunities are missed to develop literacy skills in other subjects.
- Pupils' work is often poorly presented.
- More use could be made of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning.
- Higher attaining pupils are not always challenged sufficiently.

120. Pupils enter the school with levels of language skills just below average, make good progress during their time in school and, at the end of Year 2, are attaining overall at average levels. In the 2002 end of Key Stage 1 national tests, the number of pupils achieving the nationally expected standard of Level 2 was above average in reading, and average in writing. However, although targets were achieved, the school was below average nationally, and in comparison with similar schools. The reason for this is because an insufficient number of pupils achieved the higher Level 3 in both aspects of the subject, and the group of Year 2 pupils contained a very high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. At the time of the previous inspection, standards were reported to be above the national average in reading and writing, but the level of attainment on entry into the nursery of that particular group of Year 2 pupils was untypically high.
121. Trends over the last three years, as shown by end of Key Stage 1 national tests, indicate that standards are being maintained at just below average but, from a low point of entry, pupils achieve well over time. Good and very good teaching, combined with the very good attitudes pupils bring to their lessons and the effective support given by teaching assistants help pupils to make good progress. Pupils identified as having English as an additional language achieve equally well. Pupils with special educational needs are making even better progress and are catching up with their peers.
122. Standards of speaking and listening at the end of Year 2 are average, and this is a recent improvement. All pupils listen very well in lessons to their teachers and to one another. Teachers question well, posing open-ended questions requiring well-considered answers from pupils in full sentences. Pupils themselves ask good, relevant questions, and are given opportunities to develop their speech through assemblies, circle time, personal, social and health education lessons, drama and

other subjects. Those pupils spoken to during the inspection were articulate and confident with adults.

123. Attainment by the end of Year 2 in reading is average. The school uses a commercial course, carefully graded and supported by other material, and pupils benefit from good assessment and targets being set by which to measure improvement. The practice of a daily 20-minute lesson for guided reading enables teachers to hear individual pupils read regularly. The reading diary is an effective means of communication with parents and a detailed record of what and how pupils have read.
124. Year 2 pupils use their knowledge of letter sounds, called phonics, to build words and tackle words of which they are unsure. All show good awareness of the difference between fiction and non-fiction and know terms such as author, index and its alphabetical order and blurb. They understand stories that they read and talk easily about the plot and characters. Higher attaining pupils make good use of punctuation, such as speech and exclamation marks, to read with expression. All know that a full stop means that they pause and take a breath. Reading books are taken home every night and parents support their children's reading practice well. They are provided with helpful guidance by the school for ways of helping their children read. However, more than one of the pupils heard to read were reading books that were too easy for them. Much time is given to developing reading comprehension skills within literacy hour sessions, to good effect.
125. The newly provided library area is an attractive facility, and an improvement since the previous inspection. Most pupils spoken to knew how to access information. All classes are timetabled to use the library, but teachers do not always take advantage of this. Consequently, library skills are underdeveloped, and insufficient provision is made for pupils to develop ways of gathering information from reference books. There is a need to extend the stock of non-fiction books, especially for history, geography and books about other religions and cultures.
126. Standards of writing by the end of Year 2 are average, and most pupils are achieving satisfactorily. Pupils with special educational needs, who are very well supported, achieve well. Year 1 pupils learn to improve their sentence writing through the increasing use of appropriate vocabulary and grammar. For example, a lower attaining pupil writes: 'A pig grunts when it is hungry', and a higher attaining pupil makes use of adjectives to write: 'The three little pigs sat down to have their tea'. Pupils learn a good range of interrogative words, such as how, who and why, to help them pose better questions. All are well aware of the need to use capital letters and full stops in their sentences. Year 2 pupils use speech marks correctly when writing dialogue. Pupils receive much practice in comprehension work and know that answers must be in full sentences.

127. Pupils write in a wide variety of styles, including instructional writing, such as how to make a sandwich, use of bullet points, simple book reviews, letters and cards, and the re-telling of traditional stories. They write simple colour poems such as: 'Red is an apple, Red is a school jumper, Red is a book'. Pupils in the top set reveal a wider and more mature vocabulary in their writing. For example: 'The message becomes invisible when the paper becomes completely dry'.
128. A joined, cursive style of handwriting is taught from an early age, but is not always enforced by teachers. Standards of presentation of written work generally are less than satisfactory. Pupils' writing indicates a lack of care and pride. Spellings are taken home regularly. Pupils in the top set in Year 2 correctly spell words such as surprise, colour, knife, thoughtful, but words set for pupils to learn are not always planned to match the needs of pupils of differing levels of attainment.
129. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection, and is helping to raise standards. Teachers deliver the literacy hour effectively, consistently displaying, discussing and reinforcing learning objectives. They manage their pupils well, but not all have sufficiently high expectations, especially for the higher attaining pupils, whose work is often insufficiently challenging. In a Year 2 lesson, the teacher made good use of a duck hand-puppet to encourage pupils' line of questioning: 'What can the duck do to make his life better?' This lesson supported pupils' social and moral development strongly, and pupils responded well to the imaginative approach.
130. Teachers include all the pupils in their planning, their questioning and their use of plenary sessions when reinforcing learning objectives, for instance one asking: 'How has our learning gone today? What have we learned?' Marking, however, is inconsistent, and does not always sufficiently advise pupils how to improve their work, or ensure that spelling corrections are completed. Opportunities are sometimes missed to explain grammatical terms such as verb, noun, suffix and antonym.
131. The subject is well led and managed. The co-ordinator is newly appointed. She has been absent through illness for a considerable period of time, during which the deputy headteacher has led the subject to good effect, and many good practices have been established, particularly the provision for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. Lower attaining pupils have been identified and targeted with additional support to raise their expected levels of achievement. Reading and writing are assessed regularly, and a helpful portfolio of pupils' work is kept.
132. There is very good awareness of the subject around the school, with high quality displays in classrooms and corridors, reinforcing learning and celebrating good writing. All teachers provide literacy boards, welcoming reading areas and listening posts in their classrooms, but not all classrooms have tables set aside for writing activities. Computers are well used to support the learning of lower attaining pupils but, generally, pupils make insufficient use of their information and communication technology skills within literacy hour lessons. The subject strongly supports pupils' moral, social and cultural development. The co-ordinator has monitored teachers' planning and their lessons, and this is an improvement, and the practice is having a positive effect in raising standards.

MATHEMATICS

Strengths

- Pupils with special educational needs and lower attaining pupils often make good progress.
- Information and communication technology is used well to support pupils' learning.
- Pupils benefit from the use of resources of good quality.

Areas for improvement

- Assessment information is not always used well enough to match work closely to pupils' capabilities, especially those of higher attainers.
- Mental sessions at the start of lessons are often too long and are not mentally stimulating or challenging enough.

133. Standards by the end of Year 2 are below the national average. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress overall. At the time of the previous inspection, standards were reported to be average, but the level of attainment of pupils in Year 2 at that time was higher than usual. Since then, succeeding intakes of pupils have been typically below average. Results of end of Key Stage 1 national tests over time show standards are improving in line with the national trend, with more pupils achieving the higher Level 3 or above each year. Steady improvement is due to good teaching and the enthusiasm and effective leadership of the subject co-ordinator.
134. The co-ordinator and staff are working hard to improve standards in mathematics and the National Numeracy Strategy guidelines are being closely followed. Many pupils are now making good progress, especially those with special educational needs. However, higher attaining pupils are not always provided with enough challenge and so there are fewer pupils working at the higher level than might be expected. Mental activities at the beginning of lessons are not used well enough to stimulate pupils' thinking and recall of number facts.
135. By the end of Year 2, pupils have experienced a broad coverage of the required curriculum, including some basic data handling. They confidently count in 1's, 2's, 5's and 10's and have the ability to count accurately in 3's and 4's. They count forwards and backwards in groups of 2's, 5's and 10's. Most pupils carry out investigations and problem solving competently, and higher attaining pupils are developing a good knowledge and understanding of simple strategies to tackle problems. Most pupils show a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of simple properties of two- and three-dimensional shapes. Higher attaining pupils estimate well and refine their estimations as a result of further knowledge.
136. However, despite these positive achievements, standards are below average for two main reasons. Firstly, many pupils do not retain knowledge of number facts and find difficulty in applying them to problem-solving situations. Secondly, tasks are not always sufficiently demanding or pitched at a high enough level to move pupils on in their learning, particularly higher attaining pupils.

137. Pupils' attitudes towards mathematics are positive and behaviour and response in lessons are always good or better. Teachers always share the purpose of lessons with pupils, and this means that, when pupils move to the main activity of the lesson, they are clear about the task. They sustain concentration and effort very well, even when tasks are sometimes repetitive and unchallenging. It was noticeable that, in one very good lesson, when pupils had quickly achieved the set task, the teacher had prepared further extension work. Pupils tackled this work with confidence and achieved much more than was originally expected of them.
138. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. In Year 2, the quality of teaching and learning in the lessons seen was very good overall, whilst in Year 1, it ranged from satisfactory to very good. In the best lessons, teachers' subject knowledge and understanding is good. Pupils benefit from clear explanations and demonstrations as a result. Expectations are high.
139. Teachers and teaching assistants work very well as a team, sharing information and providing good support for pupils of all capabilities. For example, in a very good lesson for a Year 2 set of special educational needs and lower attaining pupils, the teacher had planned an interesting variety of games for pupils to tackle, which were closely related to the main purpose of the lesson. Many of these pupils were immature for their age and had limited concentration spans, but the teacher and the teaching assistant successfully re-focused pupils' attention to their tasks and maintained a good pace to their learning. The teacher's planning showed that the previous day's lesson had been carefully evaluated and her plans had been adjusted to make sure that aspects of pupils' learning that required further coverage were revisited to consolidate learning.
140. Where teaching is less effective, but is at least satisfactory, mental activities at the start of lessons are not used as well as they could be to practise and recall number facts such as multiplication tables. Pupils are not encouraged to answer quickly or explain how they achieved their answers. These sessions are sometimes too long and reduce the time available for other activities, particularly whole-class sessions at the end of lessons to review learning.
141. The main reason why teaching is judged to be satisfactory overall, despite some good or very good individual lessons, is because of underachievement by higher attaining pupils over time. The school is aware of this and the present system of teaching mathematics to ability groups drawn from each class is making a significant contribution to improved standards. Consequently, higher attaining pupils from each Year 2 class are taught together, providing greater opportunity for teachers to plan challenging tasks to extend their learning. However, information gathered from assessment procedures is not used as well as it might be to make sure that these pupils are consistently challenged. Also, the National Numeracy Strategy guidelines, the local education authority's version of which has been implemented well, are intended as a framework for all schools nationally and have not been adapted over time to best suit the characteristics and needs of pupils at Spelthorne.
142. The co-ordinator has been in post for two terms. She provides good leadership. She recognises fully the need to raise standards in mathematics throughout the school and has useful plans to do so. She has introduced improved assessment procedures and, together with her colleagues, is working to make more effective use of assessment information to plan lessons and to set demanding but achievable targets in the end of Key Stage 1 national tests. The co-ordinator monitors and evaluates the quality of teaching and learning and teachers' planning well, but has yet to spread the

good practice evident in some classes to all parts of the school. Information and communication technology is used well to support pupils' learning. Opportunities are missed to use other subjects of the curriculum, such as science, design and technology and geography, to extend pupils' numeracy skills. The subject is used well to promote pupils' spiritual, moral and social development, especially in group activities and whole-class discussions.

143. Resources are of good quality and quantity and support all aspects of the curriculum well. Each class has a mathematics corner with a selection of basic equipment and this is effective for aiding pupils' learning. Number squares, number lines, counting rods and other counting equipment are in good supply in all classrooms.

SCIENCE

Strengths

- Pupils are developing good skills of scientific enquiry in all classes.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and pupils make good progress and achieve well as a result.
- Teachers provide good coverage of the required curriculum and basic skills are taught well.
- Year 2 pupils are given good levels of responsibility to make decisions for themselves.
- The subject is used well to promote pupils' spiritual, social and moral development.

Areas for improvement

- Pupils' ability to make simple predictions and draw conclusions is not well developed.
- Lesson plans do not always contain a wide enough variation in the activities for pupils of differing capabilities.

144. At the time of the previous inspection, standards by the end of Year 2 were reported to be in line with national expectations, with the percentage of pupils achieving the expected Level 2 or above and the higher Level 3 or above about average. The current picture is very similar. Standards have, however, risen in line with the national trend since the previous inspection. This is due to improvements to the subject scheme of work, to teachers' planning and in the use of assessment procedures to match work to pupils' needs. Overall, pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make good progress when compared with their levels of attainment on entry into school.
145. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make good progress in knowledge and understanding of materials and their properties and physical processes. Activities are generally interesting and motivating, successfully maintaining pupils' concentration and effort. Teachers' subject knowledge is particularly good in these aspects of science and this helps them to confidently encourage pupils to learn and understand. For example, a class of Year 1 pupils benefited significantly from their teacher's good subject knowledge as they investigated which of several materials would make the darkest shadow. She skilfully moved them on in their learning with well-judged questions and the introduction of useful knowledge at key moments as the experiment progressed. Year 2 pupils showed a good knowledge and understanding of forces, such as pulling

and pushing, as they described how they had made model vehicles which moved in response to those forces.

146. Progress made by Years 1 and 2 pupils in learning about life processes and living things and experimental and investigative science is satisfactory. Pupils tend to know quite a lot about themselves as humans but are not so knowledgeable about plants and animals. This partly reflects pupils' local environment, which is predominantly urban. In response to this, staff and governors are developing the school grounds to create environmental areas, such as a butterfly garden and a natural hedge, in order to extend pupils' experiences of the living world. In this way, pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is being promoted well. For instance, pupils benefit from a satisfactory range of investigations and experiments in both year groups. However, teachers' confidence in managing and organising activities that promote pupils' scientific enquiry skills varies. As a result, pupils' ability to make simple predictions as to possible outcomes and to draw simple conclusions from results is not as well developed as might be expected.
147. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Teachers are keen on the subject and their interest and enthusiasm is conveyed to pupils, helping them to develop very good attitudes towards their work. Lessons generally move at a good pace. Good use is made of teachers' own time and that of learning support assistants to focus on individuals and groups of pupils, and this is of particular benefit to pupils with special educational needs and lower attaining pupils. The management of pupils' behaviour is very good and this contributes significantly to the consistently good levels of pupils' concentration and effort.
148. Teachers plan lessons with care and make effective use of national guidelines to plan activities that match the expected standards of pupils of particular ages. However, a study of pupils' past work shows that there is often little difference in what is demanded of pupils of different capabilities. This is particularly apparent in the tasks set for higher attaining pupils, where expectations of what they can achieve are sometimes too low.
149. However, this is not the case in all lessons. For example, a class of Year 2 pupils were observed working on a range of activities related to forces. A significant aspect of the success of the lesson was the high level of responsibility given to pupils to make decisions for themselves to manage their learning. After an initial whole-class discussion, in which the teacher outlined basic information and targets, pupils moved quickly to their groups and set about deciding how best to carry out their investigations. Challenges had been carefully planned by the teacher to meet the needs of the differing capabilities of pupils, who responded well by working sensibly and co-operating very well with each other. As a result, the quality of learning was very good and all pupils made good progress.
150. Teachers put a strong emphasis on discussing with pupils how to make investigations fair so that results are valid. Consequently, pupils in both year groups show that they are developing their knowledge and understanding of fair testing well. For example, the Year 1 pupils observed carrying out the investigation into which

materials would make the darkest shadow, accurately assessed before the investigation which aspects would need to remain unchanged and which one aspect could be altered to make the investigation fair.

151. Satisfactory use is made by teachers of other subjects of the curriculum to extend pupils' learning, especially in the use of arithmetic, measure and skills learned in design and technology. Information and communication technology is being used increasingly to produce effective results in simple graph form and to search for information. However, opportunities are missed to promote pupils' literacy and numeracy skills, especially in respect of what is demanded of higher attaining pupils in the way they record results, make predictions and draw conclusions.
152. The co-ordinator is experienced and knowledgeable and provides good leadership. She has worked hard since the previous inspection to strengthen the scheme of work, improve teachers' subject knowledge and help teachers with planning their lessons. For example, she has introduced the use, in all classes, of a very helpful guide, in the form of a whiteboard, for planning investigations. It begins with the question: 'What are we trying to find out?' and boxes are completed by teacher and pupils together before investigations begin and provide a helpful reference when results are being discussed later on in the lesson.
153. The co-ordinator has limited opportunities to see her colleagues teach. She has access to teachers' planning, which helps her to maintain an overview of how the subject is being taught, but her analysis of the quality of teachers' planning is not sufficiently critical to help, for instance, raise teachers' expectations of what higher attaining pupils might achieve.
154. Assessment procedures are satisfactory. Information gathered from assessments at the end of units of study each term is mainly used well by teachers to plan what pupils need to do next, although the information is not shared with pupils themselves as effectively as might be expected. Science activities promote the aims and values of the school well and successfully promote a desire to learn and a positive attitude to work amongst pupils. Resources are satisfactory in quality and quantity, and are well maintained and stored by the co-ordinator.

ART AND DESIGN

Strengths

- Pupils' attitudes to the subject are good and they particularly enjoy drawing and painting.
- The work of pupils with special educational needs is valued and displayed well.

Areas for improvement

- Sketchbooks are not used well enough to develop pupils' skills.
- Too little time is given to this subject and some class timetables have very short lessons.

155. Standards in art and design by the end of Year 2 have been maintained since the last inspection and are in line with nationally expected levels. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress.
156. In Year 1, pupils use the term 'tone' and understand that, by adding white to a colour, it becomes lighter. In Year 2, pupils look closely at shells and make good observational drawings with pencils. They then add suitable colours. Some pupils add good shading to show the curved shape of an object. By the end of Year 2, pupils work competently in a suitable range of media such as collage, clay, painting and pastels. When completing portraits, higher attaining pupils manage good detail of facial features and colour mixing to achieve skin and hair tones because they are encouraged to observe closely.
157. In Years 1 and 2, pupils enjoy experimenting with computer software to produce pictures. However, the use of sketchbooks to prepare sketches and practise techniques is underdeveloped. Some pupils with special educational needs show special talents in art and design and benefit from knowing this is something they do well and from the fact that their work is displayed prominently.
158. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. It is most effective when teachers have good subject knowledge and encourage pupils to use their own ideas and evaluate and suggest improvements for their own and others' work. The best work is produced when pupils make pictures using the illustrations of a famous artist as a guide, and when they are given paint and allowed to make their own patterns.
159. Generally, teachers organise their class well and use teaching assistants efficiently to encourage and promote creativity. However, some lessons are too teacher directed and pupils' own ideas are not used or extended. Pupils are not given enough opportunities to work in three dimensions and opportunities to link with other subjects, such as design and technology, are missed in this respect.
160. In a good Year 2 lesson, pupils benefited from their teacher's good subject knowledge. Pupils responded well to being given opportunities to make choices and decisions for themselves. The lesson moved at a good pace because the teacher imposed time limits for the completion of work. This was successful in focusing pupils' concentration and effort on the task and, along with well-directed praise, encouragement and developmental comments from the teacher, pupils achieved a good standard of observational drawing. Pupils were encouraged to evaluate their work and make improvements and this led to good discussions and exchanges of opinion amongst pupils.
161. Teachers base their lesson plans on national guidelines and these help them to provide a satisfactory coverage of the required areas of learning. However, not enough time is allocated to the subject in class timetables and lessons are not sufficiently long to allow for projects to be followed up in enough detail. Teachers sometimes plan helpful links with other subjects for pupils to extend their skills. For instance, Year 1 pupils painted colourful and expressive pictures of a storm in response to music. Art and design makes a satisfactory contribution to the promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Recently, good

opportunities to broaden pupils' experiences and extend their appreciation of works of art have been developed by the introduction of an Arts Week. This year, all pupils will visit the National Gallery.

162. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable, enthusiastic and provides effective leadership. She is well aware of the strengths and areas for improvement throughout the school. Appropriate priorities for action have been identified; for example, raising the profile of art, improving resources, developing cross-curricular links and improving the use made of assessment information to match work more closely to pupils' needs.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

Strengths

- Pupils are good at making models.
- Pupils are familiar with the process of evaluating their models and deciding how they might be improved.
- Effective links are made with other subjects of the curriculum.

Areas for improvement

- Not enough emphasis is given to the design process.
- Procedures for monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning and of standards in the subject are unsatisfactory.
- There is not a wide enough range of resources and equipment available for teachers and pupils to use.

163. At the time of the previous inspection, standards were reported to be in line with expectations. Weaknesses were identified in the progressive development of skills between year groups and assessment procedures. Current standards are similar. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress and achieve standards that are in line with those expected nationally by the end of Year 2. Effective improvement has been made to the scheme of work and the progression of skills is better. However, there has been very little improvement in the way standards are assessed and so pupils, especially higher attainers, are not always sufficiently challenged by their tasks.
164. Year 1 pupils experience a satisfactory range of opportunities to develop their making skills of fixing, joining, cutting and sewing. Examples of past work show pupils involved in making, with help from their parents at home, costumes of favourite characters to wear during a Book Day. They learn how to make fridge magnets using salt dough. Cutting and joining skills were used well when making moving pecking birds, applying knowledge of levers learned in science lessons. In another science link, pupils made kites, making adjustments to the frame and tail length to improve their airworthiness. Pupils develop a keen interest and enjoyment in using these practical skills and, as a result, make satisfactory progress throughout the year.
165. This rate of progress is maintained in Year 2, as teachers provide pupils with activities that are linked closely to class themes. For example, pupils made models out of newspaper of Zacchaeus in a palm tree and designed and made cards as part of their work on the Easter story in religious education. In an effective link with science work on forces, pupils made moving models, using axles and wheels. They spoke knowledgeably about how they had designed their models and explained how they could be improved. A recent visit by a puppeteer inspired some good quality designing

and making of puppets using socks and boxes, with the successful addition of rods in some puppet models so that they could be manipulated.

166. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Its strengths lie in teachers providing pupils with relevant activities, very good management and organisation of lessons and the largely successful inclusion of pupils of all capabilities. In the best lessons, these good qualities are all apparent. For example, a class of Year 1 pupils were observed designing and making models of playground equipment as part of a project to determine what might be included in forthcoming improvements to the school's outside facilities. Pupils worked enthusiastically, concentrating hard on what they were doing. They used commercial construction kits, as well as paper, card, string and sellotape to make slides, swings, climbing frames and Ferris wheels. Interest in their work was evident in the good levels of discussion amongst pupils as they tried to improve their models. Teamwork amongst the teacher and other adults in the classroom was very good and support for pupils of all capabilities was well organised. Pupils from the speech and language unit were given effective guidance by a teaching assistant and achieved well as a result.
167. Where teaching is less effective, but is nevertheless satisfactory, not enough use is made of design books to record original designs and how and why improvements are made. Higher attaining pupils are sometimes not sufficiently challenged, for example, to label their designs and to record how models are intended to work, rather than just list the materials to be used in construction. This is mainly because there are no formal procedures for assessing pupils' achievements to help teachers decide appropriate levels of challenge for individuals and groups of pupils.
168. The subject co-ordinator has only been in post since September and so has not had a significant impact on standards so far. She is aware that there are shortcomings in the assessment procedures and that pupils' making skills are more advanced than their designing skills. She has very few opportunities to observe her colleagues teach. A useful start to assessing standards has been made in gathering samples of pupils' work in a portfolio for teachers to study when planning lessons. However, these have not been assessed against national criteria and so they are of limited value.
169. The use of information and communication technology skills is an area that is developing well throughout the school. Design and technology makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral and social development through shared appreciation of each other's efforts and co-operative group activities. Levels of resourcing are unsatisfactory. Teachers rely too heavily on pupils bringing from home materials for model making. There is a very limited stock of consumable materials such as a balsa wood, and equipment such as saws and hammers.

GEOGRAPHY

Strength

- Pupils have very good attitudes to the subject and behave well in lessons.

Areas for improvement

- The subject is not used well enough to promote pupils' literacy skills and there are not enough links with other areas of the curriculum.
- Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are unsatisfactory.
- Too little time is given to the subject in class timetables.

170. Standards of pupils' attainments by the end of Year 2 are in line with national expectations. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
171. Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of basic mapping skills. They recognise simple features of localities. Teachers make effective use of a storybook about a Scottish island, studied in literacy lessons, to promote pupils' mapping skills and further their geographical skills. For example, Year 2 pupils place various buildings on their map of the Isle of Struay. When comparing this island with their home town, they say: 'They have fields and mountains and their homes are not close together. We have traffic jams and noise.' They use a computer well to create their own island picture, and graphs to record the results of a traffic survey.
172. Pupils are beginning to recognise how people affect the locality. For example, in Year 1, they write letters trying to persuade people to walk rather than drive. In Year 2, many pupils understand that changes to the environment may change jobs. For instance, as a result of the creation of a long pier on Struay, the ferryman will no longer be needed. Most pupils have good ideas to improve the school grounds. Pupils with special educational needs venture further afield. For instance, pupils from the speech and language unit walk to the local Post Office and record their route. Most pupils use appropriate geographical vocabulary. Despite their interest in this subject, pupils do not make better progress because less time than is nationally recommended is allocated to geography in the timetable.
173. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers have good relationships with their pupils and make activities interesting and related to pupils' own experiences. As a result of good questioning, pupils remember the name of different jobs such as a crofter. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is generally promoted well. For instance, teachers manage and organise pupils' learning and behaviour well, helping pupils maintain concentration, gain knowledge and improve. However, as not enough writing and drawing is required of pupils in lessons, and there are long periods when the subject is not being studied, it is difficult for pupils to build on their previous skills and learning in lessons.
174. There are no formal procedures for assessing pupils' achievements. Although teachers know their pupils well, the lack of systematic assessments means that teachers' awareness of pupils' differing levels of attainment is not consistent amongst classes and year groups. As a result, expectations of what pupils can achieve is variable and progress is hard to measure. Samples of pupils' work, kept by staff in a portfolio, help them to gain an understanding of the areas covered within the curriculum. However, these have not been assessed against national criteria and so

their use as a means of raising teachers' expectations of pupils' achievements is limited.

175. The subject co-ordinator maintains a satisfactory overview of resources and curriculum coverage and has had a recent opportunity to observe colleagues teach. The school's focus on English and mathematics has meant that the subject has not been given a high profile in curriculum planning in recent years. Consequently, opportunities are missed for pupils to use literacy and numeracy skills in geography lessons.

HISTORY

Strengths

- Pupils show good sequencing skills.
- Pupils show enthusiasm for the subject.

Areas for improvement

- Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are not sufficiently rigorous.
- The subject is not used sufficiently to develop pupils' skills in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology.
- The time allocation for the subject is insufficient.
- Higher attaining pupils are insufficiently challenged.

176. By the end of Year 2, standards of attainment in history are broadly in line with expectations. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make satisfactory progress. Standards are similar to those reported at the time of the previous inspection. No overall judgement can be made about the quality of teaching and learning as, because of timetabling arrangements, too few lessons were seen during the inspection. Further evidence for judgements is taken from discussion with teachers and pupils, and from scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' documents and plans. The subject does not have a high profile in the school curriculum, largely as a result of a strong emphasis in recent years on literacy and numeracy.
177. Year 1 pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their sequencing skills. For example, one class of Year 1 pupils looked at artefacts from the past as part of their class project about light. They correctly sequenced a candle, oil lamp, miner's lamp and a modern day electric table lamp, creating a timeline of light sources. The lesson was well linked to their work in science. Watching a video about the life and work of Sir Humphrey Davy successfully extended their learning. This lesson lost continuity when pupils departed for a physical education lesson, returning to complete the lesson half an hour later.
178. By the end of Year 2, pupils talk with interest about the Great Fire of London, and the work and life of Florence Nightingale. For example, a higher attaining pupil recalled that the fire was fanned by the wind, that houses were built too closely together, and that only six people died. Other pupils were less sure in their knowledge. Pupils were aware that Florence was the 'Lady with the lamp', who made hospitals cleaner but, in discussion, showed little knowledge of chronology generally. Pupils' knowledge of topics studied is superficial. Teachers follow the national guidelines for history and topics studied match those found in other infant schools. Topics are spread

appropriately across the school year, ensuring the progressive learning of skills. However, pupils study these topics in too little depth. This is because insufficient time is allowed for history in the overall curriculum plan.

179. In lessons seen in Year 1 classes, teachers had planned clear learning objectives but did not return to these at the end of the lesson to reinforce and consolidate pupils' learning. In the most successful lesson, challenge for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and higher attaining pupils, was good and all pupils learned well as a result. Pupils benefited from a good structure to the lesson. For instance, the teacher insisted that written work was completed before any drawing took place. In another lesson, insufficient writing was completed and not enough was demanded of pupils of different capabilities. Teachers promoted appropriate vocabulary well and pupils confidently used words and phrases such as modern, newest, very long ago. Evidence from the lessons observed and discussions with pupils shows that they enjoy the subject, bring good attitudes to their learning and are keen to talk about their work.
180. The subject co-ordinator is newly appointed and has not yet had time to influence standards. There is no formal assessment. A portfolio of pupils' work has been compiled, and this is good practice, but work kept has not been levelled against national criteria, and its value to teachers in helping with their future planning is therefore limited. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning but has yet to be empowered to monitor teaching.
181. There is little evidence of the subject being promoted around the school. For instance, there are no timelines and no history displays in classrooms or corridors. The spending allowance for resources is low. Resources for the subject are limited, and not linked to the topics studied. The need to share these across each year group places restrictions on timetabling. The subject supports pupils' social, moral and cultural development well, but is not used well enough to develop their literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Strengths

- Standards have improved very well since the previous inspection.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to their work and behave very well in lessons.

Areas for improvement

- The range of software to support learning in some areas of the curriculum is limited.
- Assessment information is not always used well enough to plan activities that match pupils' capabilities, especially those of the higher attainers.

182. At the time of the last inspection, provision did not meet statutory requirements and pupils' attainment was below national expectations. Improvement has been good since then. Staff and governors have worked hard to develop an effective scheme of work, improve teachers' confidence and expertise and improve the range and quality of software and hardware. As a result, pupils' standards of attainment by the end of Year 2 are above those expected. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make good progress and achieve well. Pupils benefit from teachers' effective use of a computer suite in the Acorn Centre which, with good leadership by the subject co-ordinator, has made a significant contribution to improved standards.
183. Years 1 and 2 pupils use a mouse skilfully to control a cursor on-screen and access programs that support the development of literacy and numeracy skills. Many pupils access information from CD-Roms and skilfully use the Internet to search for information, for example about geography projects. By the end of Year 2, pupils have made good progress and developed their skills to a high level. The vast majority are adept at importing, or adding, pictures to wordprocessed texts and changing font and print sizes. They confidently make use of shortcut procedures and access index and contents menus. Pupils have experienced data handling, for instance in mathematics, producing simple graphs. Some higher attaining pupils are familiar with aspects of control technology and prepare programs to control the movements of a toy robot.
184. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, with examples of very good teaching in Year 2. Very effective teaching makes a significant contribution to the high standards achieved. For example, a class of Year 2 pupils was observed working in the computer suite. The object of the lesson was for pupils to develop their skills of finding information. The lesson was very well planned and prepared and this enabled pupils, after an initial helpful whole-class session, to move quickly on to practical tasks. Pupils used CD-Roms to find answers to questions prepared by the teacher. Levels of challenge were high. The relationship between teacher and pupils was excellent, and this meant that pupils rose to the challenge set, worked hard and concentrated for long periods. The teacher gave good support to individuals and groups of pupils when appropriate, often setting new challenges with skilful use of questions and suggestions. The final whole-class session was well used to review what had been learned and for pupils to discuss any problems they had encountered.
185. Lessons are often successful because of skilful intervention by teachers to help pupils with their learning. There is a good balance between encouraging pupils to work through difficulties themselves and showing them what to do. This balance is successful in developing pupils' self-confidence and promoting their social and moral development. It is particularly helpful for pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs. In the Year 2 lesson described above, over a third of the pupils were on the special educational needs register, and made good progress because of the well-judged support they received throughout the lesson. Special educational needs pupils benefit from working in pairs, often with a pupil of higher ability who helps and explains tasks. This method is successful in promoting very good pupil co-operation and relationships.
186. Pupils of all capabilities respond very well to teaching in the subject. They behave well, sustain concentration and are eager to further their own learning.
187. Where teaching is less effective, but is satisfactory, the use made of computers in classrooms to support learning across the curriculum is not as well developed as it is in the computer suite. Very good use of computers to help pupils learn was seen in some English and mathematics lessons. In other areas of the curriculum, similar

opportunities were not so evident. This is due mainly to a limited range of software available to teachers to promote and extend pupils' skills, for instance in science, geography and history.

188. Assessment procedures are satisfactory. A record booklet is used to good effect in Year 2 classes to help teachers keep track of pupils' achievements. This is a recent innovation and is beginning to help teachers make adjustments to the planning of work, both within the computer suite and the classroom, to set demanding tasks and extend pupils' skills.
189. The subject is very well led by a knowledgeable and enthusiastic co-ordinator. She has a clear sense of vision for the subject's further development. She has identified the need to further develop software provision and to ensure pupils' achievements are properly assessed. She has useful plans for how an interactive whiteboard, for which the school is awaiting delivery, is to be used in the computer suite. The co-ordinator has a close link with the governor responsible for information and communication technology and, together, they are successful in maintaining the subject's high profile in school life.
190. The quality and quantity of resources are satisfactory overall. The computer suite is an excellent and well-used facility. There is a computer in each classroom, but these support only a few pupils even when well used. Pupils have regular access to tape recorders. The school has one digital camera and, although it is in regular use, there is potential for it to be used more effectively by pupils in most subjects.

MUSIC

Strengths

- Pupils achieve high standards in singing and performing music.
- The subject is very well led and managed by the co-ordinator.
- Pupils benefit from a good quantity and quality of resources.

191. Standards are above those expected by the end of Year 2. High standards have been successfully maintained since the last inspection. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make good progress.
192. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 confidently express their views and opinions about music, for instance 'Spring' by Vivaldi, with guidance from their teachers. They sing tunefully. For example, they confidently stay in tune when singing in more than one part. Year 2 pupils play tuned and untuned percussion rhythmically and keep time well. They pay close attention to teachers conducting their playing and singing and perform music of a high quality as a result. They clearly enjoy making music and their very good attitudes to the subject make a significant contribution to the high standards achieved.
193. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and this is evident, not only in the quality of the pupils' performance, but in their knowledge and understanding of instruments and musical notation. For example, Year 1 pupils name a wide range of instruments. Year 2 pupils recognise instruments from around the world, including a native American drum. They describe the sounds of the instruments they are playing and recognise that sounds in music can be used descriptively. They use appropriate terms, such as pitch and tempo, to describe their work. Pupils competently follow a simple system of notation and vary the dynamics in their playing. They suggest ways of improving their work and play confidently.

194. Music makes a significant contribution to pupils' personal development and the promotion of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Very good singing and pupils' enthusiasm whilst performing in class and in assembly promote spiritual development. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in music and teachers use the subject well to promote these pupils' confidence and self-esteem. For example, during an assembly, four Year 2 pupils signed to a song, emphasising the inclusive and supportive approach of the school. Behaviour is very well managed in music. A Year 2 pupil, with significant behavioural difficulties, managed to achieve an enthusiastic performance, for which he was praised, due to his teacher's skill in encouraging and motivating him.
195. During the inspection, only one lesson and one assembly consisting mostly of musical performance were observed, so that it is not possible to make secure judgements about the quality of teaching and learning. However, one of the reasons for the high standards achieved by pupils is the very good support teachers receive from the subject co-ordinator. She is extremely knowledgeable and enthusiastic and uses her expertise effectively to influence classroom teaching and the quality of school concerts and performances. The co-ordinator monitors planning and teaches alongside other staff. She demonstrates various parts of the newly introduced scheme of work to help teachers see how they can improve their teaching in music.
196. There are no formal procedures for assessing pupils' achievements. However, the co-ordinator and class teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of pupils' skills. For instance, the co-ordinator hears every pupil sing twice a year to assess standards and to help inform annual reports to parents.
197. Resources in music are of good quality and quantity. There is a good range of instruments, including some from a variety of different world cultures. Pupils benefit from an extensive programme of visitors who perform to them. The school also provides opportunities for pupils to perform out of school in the local community. Class teachers make very good use of the Acorn Centre for music lessons and to store resources.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

Strengths

- Pupils achieve well in games and dance.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good overall; games skills are taught particularly well.
- All staff pay close attention to pupils' safety.

Areas for improvement

- Assessment information is not always used well enough to develop and extend pupils' skills step by step.
- Some outdoor areas have uneven surfaces.

198. At the time of the last inspection, pupils' standards of attainment by the end of Year 2 were above national expectations. These good standards have been successfully maintained. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make good progress and achieve well.

199. During the inspection, mainly dance and games lessons were observed. Evidence from a portfolio of photographs and discussions with staff and pupils show that provision for gymnastics and movement is satisfactory.
200. Pupils' standards in dance are above expectations. Pupils respond to music well. They show good control of their bodies and confidently revise their movements, using imagination and reflection to interpret the mood of the music. They co-operate well in groups and use space effectively. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and this makes a significant contribution to the standards attained. The use of pre-recorded dance and movement lessons is helpful for teachers who lack confidence, but tends to stifle creativity and extension of pupils' skills.
201. Pupils' standards in games skills are well above expectations. Pupils competently bounce balls whilst moving and throw and catch well. In the lessons seen, activities were well matched to pupils' capabilities. Higher attaining pupils made good gains in their skills' development with challenging, stimulating games and tasks, whilst lower attaining pupils practised basic skills, through no less enjoyable games. Teachers' awareness of the progressive development of pupils' skills meant that the quality of learning was good and pupils achieved well.
202. Pupils' standards in gymnastics are in line with expectations. Pupils are aware of body shape and move confidently. Pupils put out and clear away apparatus quickly and effectively, with a well-developed sense of safety.
203. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Teachers have mainly good subject knowledge and expertise; they expect and achieve good standards. Pupils react to teachers' expectations and praise in a positive manner and engage in lessons with obvious effort and enjoyment. In the most effective lessons, pupils make good progress because teachers make accurate assessments of what pupils need to do next to improve. Learning moves on at a good pace and teachers and learning support assistants demonstrate skills to good effect. Pupils are well managed so that behaviour is consistently very good. Pupils are aware of how to use apparatus safely. Where teaching is sometimes less effective, but nevertheless is satisfactory, the practice of pupils waiting to use apparatus slows the pace of lessons and restricts pupils' opportunities to practise and refine skills.
204. The subject is well managed by an enthusiastic and capable co-ordinator. She has led staff well in producing a scheme of work which gives helpful guidance to teachers as they plan their lessons. Recently developed assessment procedures are satisfactory. However, information gathered is not used consistently by staff to set suitable challenges for all pupils and to develop skills progressively. The co-ordinator's own expertise, especially in the teaching of games skills, leaves her well placed to demonstrate to colleagues and strengthen consistency of practice throughout the school.
205. Resources are generally of good quality and quantity. Pupils benefit from the use of a good-sized hall. However, some outdoor surfaces are uneven and, despite considerable vigilance by staff, are potential safety hazards during games lessons.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Strengths

- Pupils' standards are above those expected by the end of Year 2.
- Pupils have a good knowledge of Bible stories.
- The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' understanding of right and wrong.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good.
- Assemblies make a significant contribution to religious education.
- The subject is very well led by the co-ordinator.

Area for improvement

- Opportunities are missed to promote pupils' literacy skills.

206. At the time of the previous inspection, standards were reported to be satisfactory, with pupils familiar with many of the well-known Bible stories. There has been a good improvement since then. Teachers have higher expectations of what pupils can achieve, pupils' knowledge and understanding has been extended by the introduction of a visit to a local church and pupils benefit from a wider range of artefacts and use of information and communication technology. As a result, standards are above those expected by the end of Year 2. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make good progress.
207. By the end of Year 2, most pupils show a good knowledge and understanding of Jewish, Christian and Islamic faiths. This is because they have had discussions in class, listened to stories from the Old and New Testaments and from other religions, looked at pictures and become aware of the importance of certain symbols to people of different faiths. For example, pupils are developing a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of differences in lifestyles and expressions of language between Christians and Jews. Examples of their past work show that they know that Christians worship and pray in church whilst Jewish people pray in the synagogue. A visit to a local Methodist church has helped Year 2 pupils become aware of the fact that a place of worship is a special place with special features. Overall, the standard of pupils' oral and written responses are above those expected.
208. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. There are three main reasons for this. Firstly, teachers' subject knowledge is good and pupils benefit from confident responses to the questions they ask and enthusiastic teaching. As a result, pupils have very good attitudes to religious education lessons and are keen to express their views and opinions. Secondly, there has been an extensive programme of teacher training since the last inspection, led by the subject co-ordinator and by visiting advisers, and this has helped teachers to improve the quality of their lesson planning based on the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus and national guidelines. Thirdly, teachers who lead assemblies use these occasions very well to promote and extend themes from class lessons.
209. In the most effective lessons, teachers combine religious education themes with other subjects. For example, a class of Year 2 pupils were observed designing Easter cards. They extended their knowledge and understanding of symbols well as they studied a range of commercial cards and artefacts and discussed the significance of the Cross, chicks, new life and the Bible to Christians at Easter time. The quality of learning was good because the design and technology task was relevant to their own experience and they made good progress and achieved well as a result. In one assembly, pupils' knowledge and understanding of Easter was successfully extended

by a combination of storytelling and the singing of songs, some with actions, that were closely linked to the events in the story.

210. Teachers use the subject very well to promote pupils' personal development. Promotion of pupils' spiritual development is good as, for instance, teachers and pupils share and reflect upon significant aspects of other religions. Teachers are successful in helping pupils to learn about and compare other cultures with their own. There is a strong emphasis in lessons and assemblies on respecting other people's beliefs and reflecting on the difference between right and wrong. Assembly themes planned for the year show the promotion of a wide range of moral and social themes presented through story, drama and music.
211. Where teaching is less effective, but is nevertheless satisfactory, tasks planned are not sufficiently challenging for pupils of differing capabilities. This is mainly because of the lack of formal assessment procedures. However, teachers follow an effective system for recording pupils' achievements and evaluating the success of lessons, including helpful evaluation by pupils of their own work. These arrangements help teachers to make well-informed comments about pupils' achievements in reports to parents.
212. The subject is very well led by an experienced and knowledgeable co-ordinator. She provides very good support for colleagues as they plan their lessons. The co-ordinator has worked hard since the previous inspection to enhance pupils' experiences through wider access to books, in classrooms and the school library, videos and artefacts. For example, all Year 2 pupils benefited from watching together a good quality video about the death and resurrection of Jesus. The presentation made a significant contribution to helping pupils develop a deeper knowledge and understanding of complex events and the importance of these to Christians. However, there is a shortage of books about other religions and faiths.
213. Art and design, design and technology and information and communication technology are used well in religious education lessons. However, opportunities are missed to extend the skills pupils learn in literacy lessons through the use of different types of writing and the use of drama.