

INSPECTION REPORT

BLOSSOMFIELD INFANT & NURSERY SCHOOL

Shirley

LEA area: Solihull

Unique reference number: 104039

Headteacher: Mrs K Barton-Smith

Reporting inspector: Mr Sean O'Toole
20891

Dates of inspection: 4th - 7th December 2000

Inspection number: 225153

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Nursery
School category:	Foundation
Age range of pupils:	3 - 7 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Eastcote Close Shirley Solihull West Midlands
Postcode:	B90 3QX
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs L Bosley
Date of previous inspection:	March 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Sean O'Toole 20891	Registered inspector	Equal opportunities English as an additional language Art Mathematics Information and communication technology	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught How well is the school led and managed What should the school do to improve further
Patricia Willman 14178	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
Stella Derrick 18537	Team inspector	Special educational needs English Religious education	
David Walters 17857	Team inspector	Science Geography History	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils
Graham Warner 2818	Team inspector	Foundation stage Design and technology Music Physical education	

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Inspection Quality Division
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Blossomfield Infant and Nursery School is located in Shirley, a district of Solihull and educates children aged three to seven. They come from a largely residential area and their socio-economic backgrounds are above average. There are 182 boys and girls in the infants and 60 children attend the nursery part-time either in the morning or afternoon. The number of places available in the nursery has increased since the previous inspection. The school is about the same size as other primary schools. Twelve pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds; they speak English as an additional language, their main languages being Punjabi, Urdu and Gujarati. Six pupils are entitled to free school meals, a figure which is below average. The school has identified 12 pupils with special educational needs, a figure which is well below the national average, and one pupil has a statement of special educational need (below average). The school's assessments of the children on admission show that they have average levels of attainment overall and good communication skills.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a very effective school where standards are well above those expected of seven-year-olds in English, mathematics and science and above average in almost all subjects. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make good progress. The quality of teaching is very good and has a beneficial influence on developing pupils' positive attitudes and learning skills. The school is led by an inspirational and enthusiastic headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, staff and governors. Very effective use is made of the funds available and the school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science are well above average.
- The pupils achieve above average standards for their age in art and design, geography, history, music, physical education, design and technology and religious education.
- The quality of teaching is very good and has a significant impact on pupils' learning.
- The school benefits from excellent leadership and management.
- The school fosters spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very effectively and the pupils behave very well, have very positive attitudes and excellent relationships.
- The care, well being and personal development of pupils are given high priority.

What could be improved

- The development of pupils' skills in using computers.

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 very good improvement since it was inspected in March 1996. It has improved standards in most subjects and has developed even more effective management strategies. Issues raised in the previous inspection report have been remedied very well. Standards in English, mathematics and science have been raised through effective targeting of the more able so that a higher proportion of pupils now achieve the higher level 3 in national tests. There are now good procedures to monitor the effectiveness of spending. The governors have a clear understanding of their duties regarding health and safety. The school has also extended its range of opportunities to develop pupils' cultural awareness, which is now very good. In addition, the quality of teaching has improved with a higher

proportion of good or better lessons. The school has excellent capacity to build upon its strengths.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by seven-year-olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			Similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
Reading	A	A	A	A	well above A average above B average C below average D well below E average
Writing	A	A	A*	A	
Mathematics	A	A	A	A	

The school sets and meets challenging targets for performance in national tests. The school has built upon the high standards it achieved at the time of the previous inspection. Standards in reading and mathematics were well above average in national tests in 2000 and when compared with similar schools. Standards in writing are among the top five per cent of schools. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher level 3 has risen consistently through effective and well-planned teaching and rigorous pursuit of higher standards. Teacher assessments show that standards in science are well above average. Throughout the school pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. Gifted and talented pupils are given additional challenging work and they make good gains and achieve very high standards in mathematics and English. Those with English as an additional language are supported effectively and attain levels which are at least in line with those expected for their age and above average in mathematics. Standards are at least as high as they should be in all subjects, being above average in art and design, geography, history, music, physical education, design and technology and religious education. Standards in information and communication technology are about average but in comparison with the other subjects are not high enough. Children in the nursery and reception classes make good progress and achieve levels of knowledge, understanding and skills which are above those expected for their age by the time they start Year 1.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. The pupils develop very good learning skills; they are very interested in all aspects of their work and try hard. Children in the nursery and reception classes have positive attitudes and apply themselves well.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. The pupils have a very clear understanding of right and wrong and they show care and concern for each other. They work and play together effectively. Behaviour in

	assemblies is exemplary.
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Personal development and relationships	Excellent. The pupils are friendly and confident. They co-operate well and enjoy taking responsibility.
Attendance	Good. The pupils enjoy coming to school. Punctuality is good.

Children in reception and nursery make good gains in their personal and social development and become well-motivated and effective learners. Relationships between staff and pupils are significant strengths and result in pupils becoming confident and mature.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Very 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.

Throughout the school the teaching is very good. In the lessons seen, teaching was very good or excellent in just under half and good in the remainder. The high quality of teaching of English, mathematics and science is the result of very effective planning, supportive and challenging monitoring and much commitment and hard work to ensure that sufficient demands are made on all pupils. Those with special educational needs and English as an additional language are taught well. The school has been very successful in raising the achievement of the most able by expecting and obtaining high quality work. Children in the foundation stage (nursery and reception) benefit from good teaching. Throughout the school literacy and numeracy skills are taught very well and there are excellent opportunities provided for pupils to extend their reading and writing skills in other subjects. The pupils are avid learners who are keen to succeed. They work hard and maintain good levels of concentration. Other strengths in the teaching include very effective ways of managing behaviour, the successful work of support staff, helpful and challenging marking and the imaginative use of resources. All of these methods inspire confidence in the pupils and promote learning very well.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. All subjects are taught and pupils benefit much from the interesting and imaginative way that the school plans activities. The school provides satisfactory extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. The school rigorously analyses the pupils' needs and sets well-focused targets and individual education plans. Parents are involved very effectively.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. The staff are well aware of the pupils' needs and have good expertise in providing tasks which are matched to pupils' needs. Resources are good.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social	Very good. The school promotes social development excellently. There is a strong commitment to promoting pupils' understanding of right and wrong. Assemblies contribute

and cultural development	excellently to spiritual development. The school very successfully promotes pupils' knowledge of the wider world.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very effectively. The care of pupils lies at the heart of all the school does. The staff make very good use of assessment to plan work that is matched to pupils' needs.

The school has a very good partnership with parents. The parents support the school through helping in classrooms, assisting on visits and by raising substantial funds.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Excellent. The headteacher provides inspirational leadership and is supported very well by the deputy and staff. They are a highly committed and successful team who contribute much to ensuring a very good quality of education.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very well. The governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and are fully involved in strategic planning.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The school makes very good use of test data to highlight areas for development and has used the information to raise boys' attainment in reading and writing. The staff and governors set rigorous targets and measure the school's success in meeting them.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The school makes very good use of the funds available and applies the principles of best value by tendering for supplies and services.

There are sufficient suitably qualified teachers and support staff. The accommodation is good although there is limited provision for outdoor play for reception children. Resources for the subjects are good, with a very good library. There are sufficient computers but access to the computer suite is restricted.

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 and make good progress. • Behaviour in the school is good. • Children are well cared for and helped to become mature and develop good attitudes to work. • The quality of teaching is good. • The school is led and managed effectively. • They are encouraged to be involved in the school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The provision of extra-curricular activities. • Information about how their children are making progress.

The parents' very positive views of the school are fully justified by inspection evidence. The school makes satisfactory provision for extra-curricular activities. Reports to parents on their children's progress are insufficiently well focused.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS

The school's results and achievements

1. The school has improved its standards since the previous inspection. The rate of pupils' progress is better than it was and overall standards are now well above average. The pupils achieve very well, applying considerable effort and enthusiasm to their work. The school achieves marked success in national tests at the end of the infants. Standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science are consistently well above average and, in the tests in 2000, pupils' attainment in writing was among the top five per cent of schools nationally. When compared with schools with similar intakes, standards in reading, writing and mathematics are well above average. The school has been particularly successful in increasing the proportion of pupils attaining the higher level 3 in national tests due to very focused target setting, rigorous tracking of pupils' performance and significant improvements in the quality of teaching. The school has met its targets and is on course to achieve standards in national tests that are at least as high as those in 2000. Well-focused teaching has eliminated the differences in performance between boys and girls recorded in the tests in 1999 in reading and writing. Boys and girls perform at similar levels and achieve very well. Standards in English, mathematics and science are at least as high as they should be given the pupils' average levels of attainment on admission to the school. The very good progress made in key areas of literacy and numeracy is a tribute to the teachers' dedication, commitment and understanding of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. The school is particularly successful in helping pupils to use their skills in reading, writing and number to best effect in subjects such as religious education, geography, history and design and technology. Skills learned in English and mathematics lessons are applied very well; for example, the quality of written work in history reflects pupils' very good writing skills such as their use of correct spelling, grammar and punctuation. The pupils' ability to read accurately and find out information from a variety of books enables them to use facts to illustrate their historical and geographical writing.
2. Children in the nursery and reception classes make good progress and, by the time they start in Year 1, they have achieved levels of knowledge, understanding and skills in all areas of learning that are above those expected for their age. They make good gains in their personal and social development, becoming effective and well-motivated learners. They make good progress in reading and writing, becoming confident in recording their thoughts and feelings and developing an appropriate style of handwriting. Mathematically, the children achieve well and are confident in recognising numbers and understanding their value. They make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world; they take a keen interest in living things, make effective use of a variety of materials and develop a very good understanding of the passage of time and how things change. However, their skills in using computers are underdeveloped. Children work creatively, enjoy role-play and know how to mix paints and use a wide variety of materials to express themselves. They joyfully make music together. The children have good physical skills, a good awareness of space and move energetically and imaginatively. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to engage in structured outdoor play in the reception classes.
3. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs make very good progress due to effective support, well focused individual education plans and opportunities in lessons which are matched well to their level of understanding. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress and achieve

appropriate levels for their age by the time they leave the school. The school clearly identifies pupils who are gifted and talented and provides additional work to challenge them. As a result, these pupils make good progress in English and mathematics and achieve very high levels. Progress for all other pupils is good overall; it is very good in English, mathematics and science due to the strong emphasis given to these subjects and well focused teaching.

4. By the end of Year 2, pupils read fluently and accurately from a wide range of texts. They have effective skills in research and understand significant themes in stories. Their reading skills are enhanced by the support given by parents. The very high standards achieved in writing are due to effective teaching and the use of writing skills across the curriculum. Pupils have neat, well-formed handwriting and they take pride in presenting their work. Most writing is spelt correctly, includes accurate punctuation and is grammatically correct. Their stories and plays are imaginative and use an extensive vocabulary. Pupils have very good speaking and listening skills which are enhanced by opportunities for discussion and role-play. Pupils speak clearly and audibly to an audience in assembly.
5. By the end of Year 2, pupils are competent mathematicians. In all aspects of their work they show a secure understanding of number and mathematical vocabulary. They use their number skills very well to solve problems and have a clear understanding of a variety of ways of tackling investigations. Pupils know much about shape, space and measures and are very good at estimating accurately. They have good skills and knowledge of graphs and charts and are able to read information from them. Similarly, standards in science are well above average. The strong emphasis given by teachers to improving scientific vocabulary has a significant impact on pupils' understanding of scientific ideas. Pupils achieve very well in all aspects of science.
6. By the age of seven, standards in art and design, geography, history, music, design and technology, physical education and religious education are above those expected by the end of Year 2. This remarkable achievement is the result of very effective teaching and planning, a rich and interesting curriculum and careful monitoring of pupils' development. Pupils have a good knowledge of famous artists and produce work in the style of Monet and Picasso that is of good quality. Their geography and history work includes detailed descriptions and effective use of correct vocabulary. Pupils have good knowledge of historical personalities and change over time. Pupils make very good progress and achieve well in playing the recorder. The standards of singing are good. In design and technology pupils show much enthusiasm and are adept in using a wide variety of materials to produce models. They carefully evaluate their achievements and, the more able alter their designs to improve them. Pupils have a good understanding of a variety of religious traditions and beliefs and their mature attitudes and understanding of other peoples' views are a tribute to sensitive teaching. Pupils apply their good skills learned in gymnastics lessons to improve their skills in attack and defence in games lessons. Standards in information and communication technology are about average for pupils aged seven. However, pupils lack confidence in applying basic skills to their work in most subjects. By comparison with other subjects, standards in information and communication technology are not high enough.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, have very good attitudes to school. Their behaviour in lessons and around the school is also very good and excellent in assemblies. Because they respond very well to the values consistently promoted by the school, their personal development is excellent. Pupils carry out their responsibilities conscientiously and with increasing maturity and show kind and caring attitudes towards their friends and the younger pupils. These very positive features create a very happy and harmonious community in which each individual feels valued. Pupils' response to these aspects of development has improved since the last inspection and parents are very happy with the attitudes and values promoted by the school. The level of attendance is above the national average and is good. During their time in school pupils develop a level of self-confidence and maturity beyond their years. This has a significant impact on the very good standards they achieve.
8. The children in the reception and nursery classes enjoy their time at school and have very good relationships with their teachers, with each other and with other adults who work with them. They arrive at school in good time and settle happily into the day. They take part in the many varied and interesting activities with enthusiasm, responding well to instructions and listening carefully to each other and to their teachers. In the reception classes, for example, there is great excitement when playing in the stable and the children enjoy pretending to be the different characters in the nativity story. They understand the routines of the classroom and tidy up carefully, sensibly and quickly. They help each other and clearly understand what behaviour is expected of them. They learn to think for themselves and, by the end of the reception year, the children are ready for the more formal structure of learning in the infants.
9. Infant pupils take part in all aspects of school life with great enthusiasm and interest. The majority of parents who expressed an opinion prior to the inspection agree that their children like school and the pupils themselves confirmed this. They work hard in lessons, becoming involved in and often excited by what they are learning. In a Year 2 art and design lesson, for example, pupils were thrilled at the prospect of making angels from an amazing variety of exciting materials. Infant pupils' response to the structure and challenge of the literacy and numeracy sessions is excellent and this has a very significant impact on the progress they make in these areas. They enjoy the challenge of mental arithmetic and contribute thoughtfully to the group discussion sessions offering a lively range of interesting ideas and suggestions. Pupils are curious and enjoy the practical nature of science experimentation and design and technology.
10. Infant pupils' behaviour in lessons, around the school and in the playground is very good. They respond well to the school's high expectations of their behaviour and have a clear understanding of what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviour within the school community. The majority of parents who expressed an opinion prior to the inspection consider that behaviour is very good and inspection evidence supports this view. Pupils are well motivated by praise for their good behaviour and respond very quickly when chastised. They move about the school purposefully and very sensibly, often looking closely at and pointing to the photographs on the walls and the delightful Christmas displays. Playtimes are active and exuberant and no unkindness was observed. Pupils are not worried about bullying and clearly understand the need to tell a member of staff if they are unhappy. There have been no exclusions.
11. The pupils' personal development is excellent. The very strong and supportive relationships they have with each other and with their teachers create a nurturing

and purposeful atmosphere in the school in which each individual blossoms. Through discussion in their religious education lessons and in assemblies, they develop empathy with and understanding of others. They respect each other's views. For example, Year 2 pupils listened carefully to each other when expressing how they felt about angels and their comments were enlightening and indicative of their growing maturity. Pupils carry out their school and classroom responsibilities sensibly and conscientiously, showing excellent levels of initiative. The lunchtime helpers, for example, take their responsibilities for the younger children very seriously. Many of the older pupils keep a watchful eye on the reception children at playtime and involve them in their games. Pupils are very confident, polite and articulate with adults. They can express their opinions logically about aspects of school life. They take care of each other, working constructively in pairs and groups in lessons. Pupils can successfully organise their own work and make independent choices. They are careful with resources and treat the school environment with respect.

12. Attendance has improved since the last inspection. It is above the national average and is good. Unauthorised absence for the year 1999/2000 was just below the national average. Most of this relates to the school's rigorous policy of marking any holiday absence over ten days as unauthorised. Parents take their responsibility to advise the school of reasons for absence seriously. Pupils enjoy coming to school and the majority arrive punctually. Registration is quick and efficient and pupils settle quickly to their lessons.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT

13. Overall, the quality of teaching is very good. In the lessons seen teaching ranged from good to excellent. It was at least very good in fractionally under half of lessons, a quarter of which were excellent. The remainder were good. The quality of teaching has improved considerably since the last inspection. Teaching of children in the reception classes and the nursery is mostly good, with some very good teaching of mathematics. In Years 1 and 2, the teaching of English and mathematics is very good, with some excellent examples seen in both year groups. Pupils with special educational needs benefit much from support by classroom assistants and through well-planned and organised lessons. The teaching of these pupils is very good. This is due to the very effective use of individual education plans that focus sharply on developing pupils' key skills, knowledge and understanding. The targets in these plans are understood well by all staff and are measured regularly. As a result, a significant proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs early on in their school life make sufficient progress so that they are removed from the register of special educational needs before they leave the school. Pupils with English as an additional language are taught well. The school employs a teacher with expertise in working with pupils who have English as an additional language. The teaching of these pupils focuses on regular practice of key words and includes good opportunities for pupils to take part in discussion and role-play. These pupils learn effectively and by the time they leave the school attain standards that are at least average. Similarly, pupils identified as gifted and talented are taught effectively. Lessons are planned to include additional challenge for these pupils. The work is demanding and the pupils respond enthusiastically to it.
14. Children in the foundation stage (nursery and reception) are taught well. Lessons are planned effectively to include a balance between adult-directed and child-chosen activities. In the nursery, the staff work together well to observe the children as they engage in a variety of practical tasks. Good records are kept of their achievements and the information is used to plan further work. The nursery nurses make a very good contribution to the children's learning and develop effective relationships with

the children. Teaching in the nursery is well organised and the staff make careful observations of the children at work. They intervene well in role-play and encourage the children to be imaginative and creative in their use of language. As a result, the children make good gains in early reading and writing skills. The staff are successful in helping the children to become confident and well motivated learners through providing good practical activities which are often overseen by an adult. This encourages the less confident children to join in and ensures that all benefit from the experiences provided.

15. In the reception classes, the teachers plan together effectively to ensure that both classes have similar opportunities. There is some very good and excellent teaching of language skills and mathematics. The staff build successfully on what has been taught in the nursery and take good account of records of progress. The children are monitored well and additional support is given to those with special educational needs. Support staff have high levels of skill and the teachers involve them very well in working with groups, for example, in language and literacy and mathematics and in working with those who have statements of special educational needs. This hands-on approach, which includes much encouragement and praise, inspires confidence in the children who learn effectively. The children enjoy lessons very much and are keen to participate. In the "stable" they work co-operatively and take turns to be different animals and characters in the nativity story. The sensitive and effective intervention by the staff moves learning on at a good pace. Much of the work in the foundation stage is of a practical nature and, as a result, pupils learn effectively. In an excellent lesson, which included a walk to mirror the journey of Mary and Joseph, the children developed a good understanding of life at the start of the millennium and showed much sensitivity to the plight of the Holy Family. There is effective teaching of early reading, writing and mathematical skills. Regular opportunities to listen to and take part in stories form an integral part of the work with these young children. There is regular practice of key words and the staff promote the children's knowledge of letter sounds well. One of the strengths in the teaching in reception is the use of role-play activities. The children gain much from their experiences in the "stable" because the staff encourage thoughtful behaviour, provide very good resources and intervene at just the right time to ensure that learning moves on sufficiently. The staff manage the children's behaviour very well. They are caring and considerate and use praise and encouragement effectively. Through these approaches to teaching, the children become active and purposeful learners. The very good quality of teaching prepares the children very well for their work in the infants.
16. The teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 are very good. Almost all subjects are taught well and teachers have very good strengths in English mathematics, science, design and technology and music. The teachers have good subject knowledge of almost all subjects, although some lack confidence in information and communication technology. They use this knowledge very well to make lessons interesting and challenging. The teachers are particularly skilful in developing pupils' English and mathematical skills and knowledge. A strength in the approach to developing literacy and numeracy skills is the way in which teachers encourage the pupils to apply what they have learned about spelling, grammar and punctuation to their work in science, history, geography and religious education. The school's strategy for teaching literacy is excellent and results in very high standards in writing. All staff prepare literacy lessons very well and focus strongly on developing pupils' confidence in reading and writing through a wide variety of methods. Pupils are taught new words and consistently reminded of ways to build words from letter sounds. The very effective use of stories inspires a love of books in the pupils. Pupils respond very well and work hard to improve their literacy skills by practising spellings

at home and regularly reading to their teachers and parents. In lessons in history and geography the pupils use their numeracy skills very effectively. The teachers also insist on accurate measuring in design and technology and use the pupils' knowledge of number patterns well to develop their awareness of pattern in nature and art.

17. English and mathematics lessons follow the national guidelines for literacy and numeracy. Teachers make good use of time in most of these lessons although some mathematics lessons go on too long and the momentum is lost resulting in a slower pace of learning. However, the pace is usually brisk during introductions when quick fire questions, carefully structured to the needs of the pupils, are asked of the pupils. The pupils respond very keenly and take much delight in answering first. The main part of lessons is usually a time when pupils work in groups according to their ability. This strategy works very well as the teachers plan thoroughly and match tasks to the pupils' ability. The staff are busy about the room during these times and, because of their very effective preparation and planning, are able to focus well on specific tasks and help the pupils to improve. Timely intervention linked to challenging work and opportunities for the pupils to work independently result in very effective progress. Pupils are left in no doubt about what is expected of them as teachers share lesson objectives and review them during and at the end of lessons. Consequently, the pupils have a good understanding of their own achievements and know how to improve. In discussions at the end of lessons, the teachers ask effective questions and often get the pupils to show their work and explain how they have worked out answers. The pupils respond very maturely and sensibly to these suggestions and show much pride in explaining difficult and complex problems.
18. Teachers plan together very well and this ensures that all pupils in each year group have similar opportunities. Lesson plans are detailed and include effective ways of measuring the pupils' progress. Support staff share in the planning and have a very good understanding of what is expected of them. They have very good relationships with the pupils and are constructive, helpful and supportive. Lessons are very well prepared and resources are used effectively to aid the pupils' understanding. In an excellent lesson in mathematics in Year 1, the teacher provided high quality resources so that the below average pupils made very good progress in sequencing and ordering numbers. Much of the learning is based around practical activities. In science the teachers encourage pupils to experiment and make predictions about what might happen. They allow time for reflection and experiment and encourage the pupils to explore several ways of finding a solution to a problem. This excellent style promotes independent skills very well and results in well-paced and effective learning. Other methods of promoting learning include very good opportunities for the pupils to discuss sensitive issues. In a religious education lesson the pupils were engrossed in meaningful discussion and made very effective gains in understanding how different people worship.
19. There are excellent relationships between the teachers and pupils. The staff have a thorough understanding of each individual's needs and focus well on providing effective support by setting realistic and challenging targets for everyone at just the right level. Very good marking of the pupils' work includes helpful and supportive comments as well as guidance about how the pupils might improve. The teachers and other staff have a consistent approach to managing behaviour in a firm, friendly and positive manner. Pupils know where they stand and respond by behaving very well.
20. The teachers make very good use of visits and visitors to inspire the pupils. The pupils talk excitedly about their visits to places of historical interest. The teachers have high expectations. They insist that pupils use correct vocabulary when

describing what they have done. The analysis of pupils' work shows that pupils work hard and produce good amounts of work in lessons. Most lessons have a strong focus on teaching new words about the subjects and this has a positive effect on pupils' understanding of new ideas. The pupils enjoy learning. They are very keen to complete homework, which is given regularly for reading, mathematics and spelling, and occasionally for research. Pupils apply themselves very well to tasks, for example, they practise playing the recorder regularly and become proficient at reading musical notation. In lessons on the computer, the Year 1 pupils benefited much from the expertise of the subject leader and showed good aptitude in experimenting with some of the computers' tools to import Christmas pictures to add to their greetings. In a design and technology lesson in Year 1 the pupils listened attentively to instructions, applied techniques they had learned previously and modified their designs to make good greetings cards with moving parts. Pupils apply themselves well in physical education lessons and improve their performance by adapting their movements following good observations of other pupils' displays.

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS

21. The school provides a very good curriculum, which includes all of the National Curriculum subjects and religious education. The curriculum contributes a great deal to the pupil' academic, social and physical development and prepares them well for the next stage of their education. Although information and communication technology (ICT) is evident in the work of the school, aspects of the subject are underdeveloped. The school has good plans to deal with this situation. The school is effective in promoting pupils' awareness of health and deals with sex and drugs education at an appropriate level. There is very good progress towards the introduction of personal, social, health education and aspects of citizenship. Due to long established cross-curricular planning, many of the expectations of recent legislation are in place. The excellent provision for the National Literacy Strategy and very good provision for the National Numeracy Strategy has resulted in both having a very significant impact on raising standards across the whole curriculum.
22. An appropriate amount of time is given to each subject. Policies and schemes set out clearly what has to be taught and there is a very good level of planning. The development plan charts progress effectively in the areas of the curriculum that are the main focus for the year. Regular and well focused monitoring keeps the school and governing body up to date and enhances their effectiveness in giving the school a sense of direction. The topic cycle is planned well, being concerned with creating and maintaining high standards, not just coverage of curriculum content. The high standard of planning is a significant factor in the success of this school.
23. There is a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities. The gardening club has been a factor in improving a weakness in the science work and the CD-ROM club promotes the use of technology for researching information effectively. There is good liaison with the main receiving school and very good practice to ensure that no pupils are denied access to all aspects of the schools' work. Assemblies provide a good act of worship, with prayers, singing and time for reflection. These occasions have a very good impact on pupils' personal development and behaviour.
24. The school is successful in providing equal opportunities for all its pupils. The school makes good provision for pupils with English as an additional language. Staff are well aware of the needs of these pupils and provide effective support. Good emphasis is given to developing spoken language through role-play and the pupils are encouraged to join in all activities. Lessons are organised well to focus on the teaching of specific language skills and to increase the pupils' competence in

learning new words and building words from letter sounds. On some occasions the pupils are withdrawn for individual help and this works well. The school makes very good provision to support pupils with special educational needs. Pupils are fully integrated into all school activities. Staff are very sensitive to the pupils' specific needs and write very good individual education plans which focus strongly on the teaching of skills. The needs of pupils are matched very well to the work given in English and mathematics and information about learning needs in these subjects is well used in other curriculum areas. Well-qualified classroom assistants give pupils good support. A specialist teacher gives very good support for pupils and teachers. The teachers have a very good understanding of the pupils' levels of attainment and match work to that level to give pupils opportunities for success in completing and improving standards of work

25. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is very good. The policy is currently under review in order to reflect the strong and very effective emphasis on this subject throughout the curriculum. A wide range of visits and visitors, together with the residential visit for Year 2, make a significant contribution to pupils' personal and social education. Aspects of health education are taught through the science curriculum and food technology. Staff consistently build on opportunities that present themselves to reinforce socially acceptable attitudes and the importance of personal responsibility.
26. A particular strength of the school is the way in which it promotes pupils' very good spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There are excellent opportunities provided for the children in the foundation stage and the infants to improve their social skills. Overall, the provision has improved much since the previous inspection and significantly so with regard to pupils' cultural development. School assemblies, which comply with statutory requirements, are delightful occasions during which pupils are taught to appreciate the values, beliefs and traditions of others. The staff also strongly emphasise an awareness of faith, spirituality and sensitivity towards others. In literacy lessons, the teachers use a good range of books to inspire the pupils and to develop a love of stories and poems. This works very well and pupils develop very good skills of expressing feelings and emotions. In a Christingle service there were gasps of delight and amazement as candles were used to light the hall. Sensitive teaching in religious education and art and design help the pupils to extend their understanding of humankind's development through the ages. The staff provide excellent role models and promote moral understanding very well. Pupils are taught the difference between right and wrong and are made aware of how their actions can influence others. There are helpful rules for the pupils to follow and the pupils understand them. The effective system of rewards and the strong emphasis given to self-discipline are hallmarks of the school's success in promoting mature and sensible attitudes.
27. The school promotes social skills excellently. Teachers have high expectations of the pupils and encourage them to take responsibility for their own work and for helping around school. In lessons, particularly in English and mathematics, the grouping of pupils is very effective and encourages collaboration and co-operation. Pupils are encouraged to take charge of their own learning and they take this responsibility seriously. The 'friendship stop' in the playground encourages pupils to take responsibility for one another and to take care of others who are lonely or sad. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to take part in a residential visit and to join in a variety of activities held at lunchtime. Regular and very good opportunities are provided to perform in public and it is a mark of the school's success that even the very youngest children respond to these occasions confidently and competently. The school has responded very well to the previous inspection report's criticisms and takes every opportunity to promote pupils' cultural development. In assemblies pupils

have opportunities to listen to a variety of styles of music and perform in their music lessons using instruments from a wide range of countries. Their studies about the history of World War Two include much work on the impact of war on their locality and in geography they examine their own area and compare it with life in other countries. In art and design the pupils study the work of famous artists, and are taught to appreciate a variety of styles such as Impressionism and Cubism. Pupils have good opportunities to learn about a variety of cultures and faiths in their religious education lessons. These opportunities in spiritual, moral, social and cultural development contribute significantly to pupils' personal development and help them to become mature and caring members of the community.

28. The school has maintained its good links with the local community since the last inspection. There are close ties with the local church and the pupils visit amenities in the surrounding area. An interesting range of visitors come into the school to talk to the pupils to extend their understanding and learning. Local businesses supply raffle prizes for the events organised by the parents' association. The school has very good liaison procedures with the junior schools to which the pupils transfer, and is planning to develop links with local playgroups to facilitate transfer into the nursery.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS

29. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, are very well cared for at school. The well-being of each pupil is a major priority of all who work in the school and this has created a warm and caring family atmosphere in which pupils thrive. The procedures for monitoring academic performance and personal development are very good and this provides an excellent level of educational support and guidance for each individual. The excellent relationships between pupils, their teachers and other members of staff are a strong factor in the high quality of care provided for the pupils. The school has remedied the issues related to health and safety raised during the last inspection, and the overall quality of care has improved.
30. The children in the foundation stage (nursery and reception) are very well cared for in a happy and well-ordered atmosphere. There are good induction procedures for both children and parents and the children settle quickly and happily into the routines of the classroom. Parents of reception children particularly have very good opportunities in the mornings to speak informally to staff about any small matters of concern. This has helped to relieve the understandable anxiety of some parents over the recent staff changes. The new teachers have quickly established secure and happy relationships with the children which ensures that any disruption has been minimal. The children quickly learn what is expected of them and staff consistently reinforce good work and behaviour with praise. All members of staff have a very good awareness of each child's strengths and weaknesses and plan incrementally to ensure that each child makes as much progress as possible.
31. The safety and welfare of all the pupils is fundamental to the work of the school. The excellent relationships at all levels in the school ensure that any worries that pupils may have are picked up early and dealt with. The procedures the school has to govern health and safety are comprehensive and very good. The issues raised during the last inspection have been effectively remedied. Formal risk assessment is now carried out regularly and there are two members of staff with appropriate first aid training. Fire drill takes place once a term and records are kept. Elements of personal safety are taught in science, physical education and design and technology lessons and teachers use opportunities that arise in discussion sessions to reinforce these issues. The designated member of staff for child protection has received appropriate training and ensures that all members of staff are kept up-to-date with procedures. A second member of staff has recently undertaken training and

responsibility for child protection. The school follows recognised guidelines and staff are vigilant in their approach to this aspect of care. The quality of supervision during the mid-day break is very good. The mid-day supervisors are kind, good humoured and well-organised and the pupils respect and like them.

32. Attendance has improved since the last inspection. The class teachers and school secretary monitor attendance regularly, absence is followed up rigorously and the school is well supported by outside agencies. The school follows a strict policy of recording any holiday absence in excess of the concessionary ten days as unauthorised. This has achieved some success in discouraging parents from taking holidays during school time, but has resulted in a slight increase in recorded unauthorised absence. Registration procedures are quick and efficient and fully comply with legal requirements. The school has very good procedures for recording and monitoring any persistent instances of poor behaviour, although in practice, these are rarely used. All members of staff are consistent, firm but kind in handling any unacceptable behaviour and pupils clearly understand what is expected of them. The school formulated an excellent anti-bullying policy as a result of the last inspection but this has not, as yet, been shared with parents. Pupils are not concerned about bullying and, in the rare instance when bullying occurs, parents are involved at a very early stage. The systems of rewards and praise for good work and behaviour effectively motivate pupils to live up to the school's high expectations. Pupils' personal development is tracked and promoted very effectively both informally and formally and pupils are valued for variety of individual talents they bring to the school community.
33. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are fully included in all aspects of school life and receive a very good level of support, both personal and academic. Detailed records are kept of pupils with special educational needs and this ensures that all staff are knowledgeable about individual difficulties pupils might encounter. Both within the classroom and in the support groups, staff successfully establish a supportive environment where pupils feel secure and can develop their self-esteem and confidence. From a very early stage, assessments are used effectively to identify attainment, progress and targets for further development. Pupils are moved up and down the special educational needs register as their needs change, and many make such good progress that they are removed from the register. The child with a statement of special educational need receives a very good level of support.
34. The school has very good procedures to assess how well the pupils are doing. Teachers use the information effectively to plan lessons and ensure that pupils of all abilities have work which is appropriate for their level of understanding. Procedures for assessment and the use of information to plan work have improved since the previous inspection. The staff keep good records of the pupils' progress in the subjects and review their achievements regularly. Teachers keep detailed notes on the pupils' performance and carefully track their progress. This is particularly effective in mathematics where work is planned to match the needs of all. The staff use test results to identify the most able pupils and provide demanding work to ensure very good progress. Reading records contain sufficient information to guide teachers on how well their pupils are progressing.
35. The school makes excellent use of statistics to analyse overall performance in national tests. Much success has been achieved in raising boys' attainment in reading and writing through using this data to set targets for improvement. The governors have a very good understanding of the school's performance in national tests and actively encourage the headteacher and staff to use this information to improve standards. Each pupil is tracked effectively by the headteacher. Targets are

shared with the pupils and there are constant reminders in the classroom to encourage pupils to focus on improving their skills. Teacher assessments in Year 2 match the results achieved in the national tests. Teachers have a good understanding of the levels achieved by pupils because they compare performance and keep good samples of work in every subject. This information provides a very useful benchmark and is used to increase the amount of challenge in pupils' work so that standards are pushed higher. Assessment records are included in all pupils' English books and they serve as a useful reminder to pupils and staff about the next step in learning. This very effective use of assessment has contributed much to the school's very high standards in writing.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS

36. The school has a very effective partnership with parents and this has a very positive impact on the work of the school and on the children's attainment. The overall quality of this partnership has been maintained well since the last inspection. The school provides many opportunities for parents to become involved in school life and in their children's learning. The vast majority of parents are very supportive of the work of the school and value the very good educational opportunities provided. This is reflected in the very positive views about the school expressed by parents prior to and during the inspection.
37. The information provided for parents about the school is of good quality overall. It is practical, comprehensive and informative. The prospectus and the nursery information pack are very professional, high quality publications and present the school very well. The governors' annual report for parents contains useful information about the school and its achievements. The quality of the children's annual reports is satisfactory. The format of the reports for the nursery and reception classes is currently being changed to reflect the revised foundation stage curriculum. The reports for the infants provide parents with a good insight into what their children have done, but do not provide a balance between strengths and weaknesses and there is insufficient emphasis on targets for improvement. Although Year 2 reports contain the national test results, Year 1 reports give no clear indication of attainment. Parents have two formal consultation opportunities during the year and an open evening at the end of the summer term. Throughout the year parents can speak to the headteacher or class teachers if they have any concerns about the progress of their child. Regular newsletters and letters are sent to parents to keep them up to date with activities taking place in school. Briefings on reading, literacy and numeracy are held for parents and the newsletters contain brief details about what children are to be taught. Very good information about homework is provided for parents. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in the decision making process and are kept well informed about the needs of their children.
38. The school is committed to involving parents in their children's learning and in the life of the school. Parents clearly understand the school's expectations with regard to homework and most of them make time to help their children at home with reading and other tasks. Several parents help regularly in classrooms with reading and practical activities and many volunteer to accompany the children on visits. This active involvement by parents has a positive impact on individual attainment. The school conducted a consultation process over the content of the home-school agreement and most parents have signed this document. Although parents' views are not formally canvassed on a regular basis, there are many opportunities for parents to express their views both formally and informally. The parents' association is very successful, making a valuable contribution to the social life of the school as well as raising substantial funds. The most recent project undertaken was to build an

interesting extension to the playground and this has now been completed. The events organised by the parents' association are very well supported by both parents and staff and they provide a valuable forum for informal communication between home and school. The children benefit from all aspects of these activities.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED

39. The leadership and management of the school are excellent and this has a significant impact on the standards and quality of education. Since the previous inspection, leadership and management of the school have improved. There is greater involvement of the governing body in decision making. The school has remedied all of the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection report and is better than it was. Standards in most subjects are higher than previously reported. The quality of teaching is much improved; the curriculum is now very good and other strengths identified in the previous report have been maintained and in some cases, improved. The headteacher provides outstanding leadership and inspires confidence in the staff, governors and parents. The deputy headteacher plays a pivotal role in the development of the curriculum. Other staff have responsibilities for subjects. They lead the subjects well, are involved in monitoring of teaching and learning and have clear vision and the ability to raise standards further. Support staff, including those working in the office, are efficient and effective. The school is part of Investors in People and this philosophy underpins the open style of leadership and management at the school.
40. The governors very effectively fulfil their statutory responsibilities and take a keen and active part in monitoring the school's achievements. Several governors visit the school regularly and are involved in checking on how well the pupils are taught. Governors have a perceptive view of strategic developments at the school and are fully involved with staff in developing the school's plans for the future and in monitoring how well the school is doing. Governors are organised very well and the committee structure works efficiently. The governors work well with the headteacher and keep up to date on government and local initiatives through regular attendance at training courses. Governors monitor the school's strategies for literacy and numeracy and are very involved in supporting the work with pupils who have special educational needs.
41. The school makes very effective use of performance data to set challenging targets. The governors have for two years set targets for the headteacher and through the effective use of monitoring of teaching and appraisal the school has raised the quality of teaching. The school sets itself high standards and this is reflected in the rigorous drive to ensure that pupils of all abilities achieve their potential. Detailed and thorough analysis of the school's performance in national tests by governors and the headteacher has previously identified underachievement by boys in reading and writing. This issue has been tackled assiduously and resulted in improved performance. The school's plans for the future are detailed and well focused. Priorities are clearly identified along with staff responsibility, projected costs and timescales for completion. The governors and staff have an excellent overview of long-term strategic development and are on course to meet their targets. The plan includes sharply focused measures of success. The governors regularly review the school's progress in achieving its aims.
42. The school has a very positive ethos in which all are valued. Statutory requirements regarding collective worship and equal opportunities are taken seriously and all pupils have good opportunities to benefit from the very good quality of education provided. The management of key areas of school life, such as the provision for special educational needs, support for pupils with English as an additional language and support for children in the foundation stage is very good.

43. Led by the headteacher, who works closely with the finance committee of the governing body, the school is very clear about what is required to enable it to obtain best value. Efficient support is given to both headteacher and governing body by the part-time financial administrator who deals exclusively with the initial setting and continuing control of the budget. Comparisons are made by using the competent local authority systems and the school's own comprehensive research. The school's plans for the future are detailed and focused and provide a useful way for the governors to challenge the school on how well it is performing. They involve the local authority well in judging the school's success. The school's consultation process is wide ranging and effectively involves all personnel in making decisions and reviewing progress. Competition is considered fully in all aspects of school's development. The school's place within the context of local and national achievements is given careful consideration. The governors and staff draw accurate conclusions about what is achieved.
44. There are sufficient and suitably qualified staff to teach the National Curriculum and religious education. Similarly, staff working with children in reception and nursery classes have appropriate qualifications and experience. The support staff make a very good contribution to school life, particularly in their work with pupils with special educational needs and children in the nursery and reception classes. The nursery nurses have very good skills in supporting the children. A hardworking caretaker and cleaning staff keep the school spotlessly clean. The office staff are extremely efficient and effective; their skills free time for the headteacher and staff to concentrate on pupils' learning. The financial administrator deals exclusively and very efficiently with the budget. Equally efficient attention is given by the full-time school secretary to the administration of a wide range of day-to-day routines to do with registration, admissions, supply staff and some support staff as well as school fund and petty cash. School routines are very secure. The school was commended in the most recent audit report for its financial systems.
45. There is an extensive programme of in-service training linked to the school's priorities. Staff share their expertise with colleagues. New staff benefit from very good guidance procedures. The school provides good support to students training to be nursery nurses and, because of the very good teaching skills, would make an effective provider for initial teacher training.
46. The accommodation is good. The school has an attractive library, which is used very effectively to promote pupils' learning. The new computer suite offers opportunities for pupils to improve their skills in information and communication technology. However, as this space is shared with a Year 1 class, opportunities for pupils throughout the school to benefit from this facility are too limited. The teachers make excellent efforts to enhance the school by displaying pupils' work attractively. Opportunities for children in the reception classes to benefit from outdoor play are limited, as there is no separate play area for them. The school has good resources for most subjects. There is a very good range of library books and the quality and range of mathematical apparatus is very good. However, some reading books are outdated. The school makes good use of visits, visitors and loans from the local authority to enhance the curriculum.
47. In view of:
- pupils' average attainment on admission to the school;
 - well above average standards in English, mathematics and science;
 - above average standards in most subjects;
 - the very good quality of teaching; and excellent leadership and management.

The school provides very good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER

48. In order to build upon its many strengths and raise standards even further, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

***Improve the standards in and the provision for information and communication technology by:**

- Extending the teachers' skills and knowledge in the development of teaching of the subject: through further training:
- Providing more opportunities for the pupils to use the school's computer suite:
- Developing a consistent approach to building upon pupils' previous knowledge of information and communication technology:
- Extending the range of software available:
- Using computers more to support the pupils' work in other subjects.
(Paragraphs 2, 6, 16, 21, 46, 61, 74, 89, 91-4)

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

- *Improve the provision for outdoor play for children in the reception classes:
(Paragraphs 2, 46, 55, 56)
- Develop the use of sketchbooks in art and design: (Paragraph 75)
- Improve the pace and shorten the length of some lessons in mathematics:
(Paragraphs 17, 68-9)
- Improve the written reports to parents to give them a fuller picture of their children's progress. (Paragraph 37)
- * The school is aware of this issue and it is included in the school development plan.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

48

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

42

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
13	36	51	0	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	Y1 – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	30	182
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	N/A	6

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	Y1 – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	12

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	12

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	9

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.7
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	42	22	64

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	39	40	41
	Girls	21	22	22
	Total	60	62	63
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	94 (94)	97 (98)	98 (95)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	40	41	40
	Girls	22	22	22
	Total	62	63	62
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (97)	98 (98)	97 (98)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	0
Indian	7
Pakistani	5
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	206
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y1 – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.2
Average class size	26

Education support staff: Y1 – Y2

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	64

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	30

Total number of education support staff	2.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	64

Number of pupils per FTE adult	10
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	448,514
Total expenditure	456,146
Expenditure per pupil	2,055
Balance brought forward from previous year	24,509
Balance carried forward to next year	16,877

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	222
Number of questionnaires returned	109

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	70	28	2	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	55	37	4	1	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	52	39	4	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	34	48	5	0	14
The teaching is good.	59	35	2	0	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	33	51	13	0	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	59	36	4	0	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	66	29	1	1	3
The school works closely with parents.	36	54	6	0	4
The school is well led and managed.	61	33	2	0	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	60	34	2	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	21	36	17	4	22

Other issues raised by parents

Only two parents attended the meeting held prior to the inspection. They had very positive views about the school but felt that their children were not happy in the nursery.

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

49. Since the previous inspection there has been an improvement in the quality of education provided for children in the foundation stage. The major improvements are in teaching, which is now always at least good, and in the consistently good standards achieved by the children. The nursery and reception classes are well-organised places of learning with a good range of imaginative activities to spur the children on in their learning. Together with the good teaching they have a positive impact upon the children's learning. All nursery aged children have either a morning or an afternoon session before they transfer to one of the reception classes at the beginning of the academic year in which they become five. Fifty-nine children currently attend the school nursery class on a part-time basis. There are 62 children in the two reception classes and the majority of these children have attended the school nursery, another nursery or have had some other pre-school experience.

Personal, social and emotional development

50. Although children's personal, social and emotional development is average on their entry to nursery it is the least well developed of their skills. In consequence the teacher and support staff place much emphasis on improving the children's confidence and the teaching of this area of learning is good. They plan activities that ensure co-operative learning takes place in pairs and small groups and also provide opportunities for children to work together in a large group. There are good opportunities for individual learning through a well-balanced programme of work where good teaching results in the development of positive attitudes. Much of the learning takes place through effective role-play. In their home corner the children set up a cafe or a hospital where they learn about helping one another as they serve one another or take care of sick people. They help one another in difficult tasks such as doing up coat buttons when they are preparing to play together outside. The children learn how to take responsibility as they welcome visitors, including mothers with new babies. They support one another very well when they make visits outside school to places such as the farm. This good starting point is built upon very effectively in reception classes. The reception children take turns in making sensible contributions to discussions at circle time at the beginning of lessons. For example, when they are thinking about the sort of gifts that they might take to Jesus they listen to one another carefully to show a mature, emotional response that sequences learning very thoroughly for one another. This helps them to build a composite picture in their minds that they then take into small group activities that have been very carefully planned for them.
51. The children in all classes are effectively organised and so work together well. Adults are good role models. They provide good resources for the wide range of activities. The subject leader for the foundation stage teaches in the nursery and generates the team approach with support staff who work with her. She has also begun the process of joint working practice with the newly appointed reception class teachers, one of whom is a supply teacher covering the maternity leave of a permanent member of staff. They all build self-confidence in the children by giving them ample opportunities to make choices in the activities that support personal development appropriately.

Communication, language and literacy

52. This area of development is given on-going priority in both nursery and reception classes as it is recognised as being of paramount importance to children's development in other areas of learning. The children are taught well. By the time they leave the reception classes the children have above average skills in language and communication. The children listen carefully to adults and carry out instructions appropriately. They begin the process of reading in nursery where they move through a picture book in sequential order. They use picture clues to help them to tell the story competently. They move fingers along words to show that they understand the importance of words on the page if they are to become real readers. The reception teachers build upon this progress effectively. Children with special needs make consistently good progress in early reading in both the nursery and reception classes. Above average readers in reception classes read with confidence. They show their enjoyment of what the stories tell them about the characters in their books. Adults share books with the children and encourage them to join in and to listen carefully. This caring and purposeful approach supports the children's growing confidence in communicating with each other as well as adults. The staff in nursery and reception make very good use of role-play to extend the children's vocabulary. In the nursery the children pretend to be customers in a cafe and in reception the children plot a journey to the stable where Jesus was born. Their imagination and concentration is sustained because they work in small groups on these tasks and can call on adult support if needed. When staff do intervene they do so with sensitivity. They generally ask open-ended questions that demand and gain a full response from the children. This good quality teaching ensures good progress for all children, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language. Teachers and support staff plan together methodically in order to maximise the learning opportunities for children. They pay particular attention to extending children's language and making use of accurate language in different subjects. So, for example, if children are joining card together they ask them about different sorts of levers in order to make things work properly. They encourage the development of writing effectively. In nursery the children write letters home assisted well by the staff. Reception children write about gifts for baby Jesus after they have listed words with initial sounds and rhyming patterns. By the time they leave reception classes the children control pencils well and are beginning to write with confidence.

Mathematical development

53. Children benefit from focused activity in nursery in developing their mathematical skills from an average to above average level of attainment by the time they leave the reception classes. Good quality teaching results in good and consistent progress for all children, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language. The children recognise numbers to five and beyond as they count the stars that they have collected after throwing a dice. They sustain concentration well because they are carrying out this task in a small, well-controlled group. The staff encourage the children to use mathematical vocabulary and the children make good gains in understanding signs and symbols. The children work in a calm and purposeful way because their learning is well organised. Activities are planned according to the requirements of the stepping stones of the early learning goals. The activities are made meaningful for them as they are interrelated to other activities in which the children are involved. For example, they learn about shapes and size when they make candles for their Christmas cards. They find out effectively about capacity as they work with different sized containers in the sand and water trays. The teachers plan work well and there are good links between the nursery and

reception to ensure consistency in developing skills and knowledge. Children are able to use comparative vocabulary when their teacher asks them to make guesses about what will come next as they throw the dice to confirm their knowledge and understanding of numbers up to ten. Staff have a good checklist of key skills and also monitor carefully the children's participation in activities. They talk with confidence about more and less than as they pass round a parcel that contains a present for Jesus. The good link with other work is used effectively to reinforce children's learning. The children stay focused for an extended period of time as the activities are matched well to their abilities and the very good use of apparatus helps the children to gain in confidence.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

54. Children benefit from being able to bring a range of experiences with them when they start in nursery. These experiences are built upon effectively in a wealth of further experiences in nursery and reception classes. The school is very concerned to support the development of the whole child and meets that very successfully from the time that they start school. The good quality of the teaching means that the children make good progress and have above average skills by the time they leave reception classes. This progress is often achieved through linking many of the learning experiences. Activities are based around the stepping stones of the early learning goals but are very much related to the children's own and the wider world. For example, in the nursery the children make biscuits that have one colour and they begin to understand the basic principles of mixing ingredients together in order to make something that is good. This is extended in reception classes when they again make star biscuits but they are able to describe the texture of what they are making, the smells that it has and to produce an end product with some skill. In the nursery, the children find out about the passage of time as they plant seeds in the garden and tend their growth with care. This awareness is developed further in reception as the children study the journey of Joseph and Mary, the shepherds and Kings. They then plot their own journeys correctly. This activity is also used skillfully to develop an understanding of direction and movement. The children have good opportunities to construct vehicles and tracks from construction kits and then apply these skills well in making models using a variety of materials. The children begin to use the computer in nursery in order to learn how to control the mouse. This process continues in reception classes where different programs are used to generate interest in pupils. This has some limited success and is an area for improvement. Teachers and support staff plan comprehensively to develop children's overall knowledge and understanding of their world through giving them a rich variety of experiences. They teach sensitively and use praise appropriately to continue to move the children on in their learning.

Physical development

55. The children attain the early learning goals by the end of reception and make good progress in their physical development. The teaching is effective and good. There is ample opportunity for the children in both nursery and reception classes to enhance their larger physical skills successfully indoors. Children in the nursery have equally effective opportunities to develop these skills outdoors but this is much more limited for children in reception classes who do not have a separate outdoor play area. Indoor activities give children in the nursery opportunities to show their competence in travelling in different ways as they make their own decisions about how they can safely walk, hop and jump in the hall. They do this very successfully. The children transfer these skills as they make use of benches to move in different ways. They comment about how exercise affects their bodies. Reception children build upon

these skills by making good use of apparatus in the hall. They move imaginatively. The children's positive attitudes arise from the good teaching that is a feature of both the nursery and reception classes. The staff provide nursery children with appropriate opportunities to use large wheeled vehicles in their outdoor play.

56. The finer physical skills are developed equally well in both the nursery and reception classes. For example, in the nursery the children find out about the first principles of cutting accurately as they make their own Christmas decorations. This is very effectively extended in reception classes as they cut and put back together the pictures that make up some Christmas jigsaws. They join things together and stick with accuracy as they make up parcels of gifts that they have decided that they would want to give to Jesus. Teachers and support staff plan for all of these activities carefully. They choose their resources efficiently so that the children consistently develop their finer physical skills. However, there are insufficient links between the nursery and reception in developing children's skills in outdoor play.

Creative development

57. The teaching is good with some excellent examples of developing the children's imaginative vocabulary. The teachers provide a good range of opportunities to develop the children's creative skills so that by the end of reception the children have above average skills for their age. They make good progress in both nursery and reception classes. Teachers and support staff plan thoroughly in order to ensure good progress. The children participate with a great deal of enthusiasm. They experiment with paint in the nursery as they mix black and white together. They begin to understand the importance of observing closely as they use pencils with care to draw creatures such as fish. The children improve their skills in using paints in reception as they paint in a variety of styles. They competently use glitter paints, rollers and sponges for printing that give different effects to their Christmas cards that they have designed for themselves. The staff provide good opportunities for the children to make music and to play instruments together. The children are good singers and know a wide range of rhymes and songs. Nursery children use a suitable range of instruments to make appropriate effects for rain. They join together for performances for parents to show their developing skills. In the reception classes this is further enhanced as they use instruments accurately to accompany their singing of favourite carols such as "Away in a manger" as they perform for one another. They improve their skills through practice as they also prepare to perform for parents together with other classes in the school at special times such as Christmas concerts.

ENGLISH

58. Since the previous inspection the school has made very good improvement in the teaching of English and standards are higher than they were. By the end of Year 2 pupils achieve standards in English that are well above the national average and those achieved by similar schools. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make very good progress in all aspects of their work. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher level 3 in national tests has increased since the previous inspection. The school's performance in national tests over the last three years has kept pace with the improving national trend. In 1999, the school identified that girls were doing better than boys in reading and writing. Through well focused planning and careful target setting, the teachers have raised boys' attainment to a similar level to girls. On admission to the school pupils' attainment is broadly in line with that expected for their age. The school's impressive results in national tests are due to sharply focused teaching, high expectations and excellent use of literacy skills in other subjects.

59. The pupils have very good speaking and listening skills. They happily engage adults in conversation, talking knowledgeably about their work and using a wide range of vocabulary. In assemblies they speak clearly and effectively and use hushed tones to create an atmosphere when sharing about the Christingle. In lessons, the pupils listen attentively and show they have understood by settling to tasks quickly. In circle times, pupils listen to each other's points of view and show respect for one another's feelings. Teachers use questions very well to promote speaking skills and expect the pupils to reply with detailed and accurate vocabulary. One of the strengths of the school is the way in which technical words for each subject are taught; the pupils apply this knowledge well in discussing their scientific experiments and their work in history.
60. By the age of seven pupils have well above average reading skills with about half of the pupils achieving the higher level 3. They read fluently and with expression from a wide range of books and have a good understanding of how to build words from letter sounds. The pupils enjoy reading aloud and comment knowledgeably about what they have read. They have good research skills and use the library very well; this is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils have clear preferences for authors and many benefit from using the public library. Reading is given a strong emphasis not only in the literacy hour but also at times when pupils are able to read quietly to themselves or to an adult. Teachers keep accurate records of their skills and use the information to encourage pupils to move on to harder books. Parents comment favourably on the school's approach to teaching reading although some would like the school to introduce new reading books. Parents are very supportive of their children's reading and regularly listen to them at home. This has a good impact on the standards achieved.
61. The school has achieved particular success in writing, and standards are among the top five per cent of schools. This has been achieved through linking reading and writing skills very effectively and providing extensive opportunities for pupils to write detailed, imaginative and descriptive passages not only in English lessons but also in history, geography, religious education and science. From an early age pupils are taught to form letters correctly and soon develop a consistent style that is legible and well presented. The pupils know how to use capital letters, full stops, commas and question marks correctly. They use their extensive vocabulary well to create interesting stories. The pupils correctly sequence stories, embellishing traditional tales with their own interpretation. They make very good progress in spelling. This is due to regular practice, homework and testing. Spellings are matched to the needs of the pupils who apply themselves well to learning the words at home. Pupils have some opportunities to use computers to record their work. However, they have limited skills in editing their work and in using some of the computer's tools to help them to improve.
62. The quality of teaching and learning is very good. The pupils take a keen interest in English and are inspired by enthusiastic teaching. The teachers have a very secure understanding of the National Literacy Strategy and use a wide variety of methods to promote reading and writing skills. The excellent links made between English and other subjects are the result of thorough planning. Teachers in each year group plan together to ensure that all pupils have similar opportunities. The planning includes detailed notes on how each group of pupils will be taught. This ensures that work is matched carefully to the needs of all. Pupils with special educational needs are given very good support as the staff set tasks that are linked to the pupils' individual education plans. Support staff are involved very much in this process and carefully record the progress made, discuss it with the teachers and use the information to plan the next step in learning. Pupils with English as an additional language receive good support and they make good progress in extending their use of a suitable

range of words and phrases. There is some very challenging work set for gifted and talented pupils who respond exceptionally well and produce imaginative and high quality work. The pupils apply themselves well, work hard, produce good quantities of writing, are keen to please their teachers and respond very well to praise. Because the teachers set tasks that are at an appropriate level for each group or individual, the pupils are able to work independently, maintain concentration and gain in confidence. Relationships between the teachers and pupils are excellent. The teachers make time to listen to the pupils and to explain what is to be done so that pupils are left in no doubt about what is expected of them.

63. Lessons are well structured and have good pace. Teachers follow the guidance in the National Literacy Strategy and make good use of the resources available to interest the pupils. Whole class introductions are very effective as the objective for the lesson is shared with the pupils. During the lessons, teachers refer back to the objectives and discuss how much has been achieved. This acts as a spur to learning and ensures that pupils work at a good pace. It is also used well to assess how well pupils are learning so that the teacher can intervene effectively. Homework is given regularly to encourage the development of basic skills.
64. The subject leader has a very good understanding of the school's achievements in English and is very supportive of her colleagues. The school makes very effective use of the results of tests and teacher observations to assess pupils' performance and monitor their progress. This very effective system of tracking the pupils has resulted in significant gains in learning, particularly for boys. The school has used funds for literacy very well to buy a good range of books, although some reading books are outdated. The library is a very good resource that is used consistently to raise standards in research. The headteacher and subject leader monitor the effectiveness of teaching and also regularly check that pupils are producing work of sufficient quantity and quality. This effective evaluation of performance has led to improved teaching since the previous inspection.

MATHEMATICS

65. The teaching and standards in mathematics have improved since the previous inspection. In the national tests in 2000 at the end of Year 2 pupils achieved well above average standards and, when compared with similar schools, standards were also well above average. About half of the pupils attain the higher level 3 in the national tests. This is due to challenging teaching, an effective match of work to pupils' abilities and high expectations of performance. Inspection evidence shows that standards are well above average in all aspects of mathematics. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make good progress. Gifted and talented pupils are set demanding work and make good progress.
66. A particular strength in pupils' attainment by the end of Year 2 is their competence in mental calculation, knowledge of number facts and the ability to apply this knowledge to solving problems. Through regular practice of multiplication facts, in school and at home, the pupils become confident in recalling quickly and accurately their two, three, five and ten times tables. Most pupils have a good understanding of addition, subtraction and multiplication and are already beginning to recognise and use simple division. The teachers strongly emphasise mathematical vocabulary and pupils are very secure in their knowledge of signs, symbols and terms. This enables them to identify different types of problems and to use appropriate number operations. The most able pupils explain very clearly strategies they have used. For example, in calculating five times nine they suggest several alternatives including two times nine plus two times nine and add nine. The pupils have a very good understanding of shape, space and measures; they use non-standard units of

measurement to estimate size and length and measure accurately using metres and centimetres. Pupils collect data and record it in a variety of ways, including tally charts. They work together very effectively in producing large block graphs and also present data in pie charts. They read information from charts and graphs and make up their own sums based on this information. The pupils make suitable use of computers to record data and print out their own graphs.

67. In Year 1 pupils receive a thorough grounding in addition and subtraction and have good recall of number bonds to 20. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support and, as the work is matched to the targets in their individual education plans, they make good progress by building upon skills already learned. Throughout the infants, pupils enjoy mathematics. They are keen to answer questions and to explain how they have arrived at an answer. They work hard and produce a good quantity of work during lessons. Pupils co-operate very well, often sharing ideas and making effective use of mathematical apparatus. They are independent and self-assured, willing to have a go at solving problems. The pupils make very good use of their knowledge of mathematics in other subjects. In science they produce graphs and charts. In history they make good use of mathematical vocabulary such as “before” and “after”, and also have a good understanding of how to read a timeline.
68. The quality of teaching and learning ranges from good to excellent and is very good overall. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and also have benefited much from training in the National Numeracy Strategy. They apply the principles of this strategy very effectively in their teaching, although, on some occasions, lessons lack sufficient pace as they go on too long and pupils’ concentration span dips. During introductions to lessons the teachers explain very clearly what is to be learned and during the lesson refer to these objectives so that pupils have a clear understanding of what is expected of them. In an excellent lesson in Year 1, the teacher skilfully questioned the children expecting immediate responses and used praise and encouragement very effectively to promote learning. The lesson developed very well with several practical activities that totally engaged the pupils and led to a thorough understanding of multiplication. Pupils learn effectively through the use of apparatus and the teachers’ skill in pointing out patterns of numbers ensures that pupils develop a good awareness of odd and even patterns.
69. Lesson planning is a strength in mathematics and the teachers organise classes well so that pupils of different abilities are taught in groups. The very careful match of work to pupils’ needs and the support provided by the teacher and classroom assistants ensures that pupils make good gains in their learning, grow in confidence in using a variety of mathematical strategies and achieve high standards. The excellent relationships between staff and pupils ensure that pupils are comfortable with learning and are not afraid to ask for clarification. Teachers mark pupils’ work regularly and give good guidance to them on how they might improve. At the beginning of most lessons there is a review of what has been learned previously and any mistakes are explained thoroughly. The lessons end with a time to reflect on what has been taught and teachers ask well-focused questions to find out how successful the learning has been. They use this information well to plan the next stage in learning. However, a few lessons go on too long and the pace of learning drops.
70. The subject leader has a good understanding of mathematics and provides good support and guidance for her colleagues. The headteacher and subject leader regularly monitor what is happening in the classrooms and also check the pupils’ progress by scrutinising their books. The governors and headteacher analyse national test results very well and, with the information gained from monitoring in the classroom, provide good guidance on how to raise standards further. There are very

good resources for mathematics. Both teachers and pupils make very effective use of the resources and teachers encourage pupils' independence well by encouraging them to select their own apparatus.

SCIENCE

71. Attainment since the previous inspection has been consistently above, and more recently, well above, the national average for pupils aged seven. Teachers' assessments in 1999 and 2000 show that pupils achieve standards well above the national average. A significant proportion of pupils achieve the higher level 3. This success is partly as a result of the improved standards in literacy and numeracy that have had a strong influence on the pupils' work in science. In addition, there is an effective scheme of work, currently being reviewed, which shows teachers clearly what they have to teach. Test results have been analysed and weaknesses identified. Action taken to improve weaker areas, such as the low result in life processes and living things, has improved attainment in the most recent assessments. Teaching is never less than good and there is a high proportion of very good and excellent practice, a situation that has improved significantly since the previous inspection. All pupils make very good progress, carry out investigations and understand the importance of collecting data. With effective support materials adjusted to their level of understanding, appropriate use of scientific vocabulary and effective application of writing skills, pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language, also make very good progress. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls.
72. By the end of the infants, pupils have a knowledge and understanding of circuits that is well above the expectations for their age. In lessons all pupils are challenged to investigate situations where extra bulbs or batteries are used, first making and recording their prediction. This results in a high level of co-operative activity as both boys and girls make suggestions as to how they should proceed. Year 1 pupils understand that shiny objects are not light sources and know more than one way in which this can be demonstrated. For about one third of the class, this level of attainment is well above the expectation for their age. The teachers place a strong emphasis on the use of correct scientific vocabulary. Pupils respond well to this challenge and use words such as 'reflective' in their work on light. Pupils present their work very well, making very good use of a variety of methods to record and display data. Such high standards are achieved by the very high standard of teaching, which motivates pupils to work hard and enjoy what they are doing. Discussions with pupils show that they associate what they are learning to situations in everyday life, such as the reasons for wearing reflective safety clothing. Scrutiny of work shows that pupils benefit from a rich and varied science curriculum. Improvement in their knowledge of life processes and living things has been accomplished through work on senses, growth of animals from babies to full size and knowing about their pets. Improvements to the pond area and the beneficial effect for some pupils of the gardening club as a lunchtime activity have also contributed to effective progress.
73. The effective teaching which includes some excellent practice, makes a major contribution to the high standards that pupils achieve. The very good rate of progress for all pupils has led to a higher than expected amount of work being completed in one term. Pupils work very hard and present their work well. They make good gains in thinking in a scientific way and apply much rigour when recording their experiments. Lesson planning is very good and the analysis of results has highlighted weaknesses on which action has been taken. Teachers have high expectations of work and behaviour and pupils respond by being well behaved. Secure with the subject knowledge through a good scheme of work, their lessons

build on what pupils know already. All teachers share the objectives with pupils and bring them quickly into the lesson with good questioning, sometimes to check what they remember and at other times to challenge their thinking. The result is a high level of enthusiasm and eagerness to succeed. Relationships are secure, so that pupils know their answers and ideas will be taken seriously. A Year 2 class showed a high level of confidence and responsibility when voting on what they thought would happen if an extra bulb was put into their circuit. Equally effective, was the sensible way in which Year 1 pupils worked in pairs, searching for hidden objects and recording their decisions about the reflective qualities. During lessons, the teachers use a variety of methods to motivate the pupils; they focus well on giving direct instruction knowledge, extending pupils' vocabulary and encouraging a scientific approach.

74. Senior staff monitor assessment results effectively and use the information to plan work and target improvement. The school has a useful collection of samples of work to illustrate attainment and this is updated regularly. Teachers use the school's good science resources well and initiatives with the local health authority, such as the promotion of healthy eating, have a beneficial impact on work in personal, social and health education. Although the use of information and communication technology is evident in some of the pupils' work, this is an area where a more consistent and regular approach is needed.

ART AND DESIGN

75. The school has maintained its good provision for art and design since the previous inspection. Standards are above the expectations of seven-year-olds at the end of Year 2. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make good progress. Each aspect of art and design is covered appropriately although the school does not use sketchbooks to further the pupils' observational skills. The school's work on famous artists is good and contributes much to the pupils' cultural development.
76. The art and design curriculum is planned well and the recently appointed subject leader has a good overview of the school's success in art. The policy and scheme of work provide good guidance to the teachers in developing creative skills and techniques consistently and effectively. The teaching is good and has a beneficial impact on learning. The teachers have much enthusiasm for the subject, which they communicate well to the pupils. The very effective displays of pupils' work and the use of prints by famous artists provide good stimuli to the pupils. The school keeps an extensive collection of pupils' work and it is used to guide staff on the expected standards.
77. By the end of Year 2 the pupils have good skills in working with clay to make a variety of models. They carefully and successfully mould the clay and use good techniques to produce well-finished items such as angels. They use tools carefully and persevere to achieve pleasing results. The teachers intervene well and make suggestions about how the models may be improved. The pupils stay totally absorbed and respond well to suggestions by their teachers and peers. A particular strength in the artwork is the creative way in which pupils use techniques and skills. They make good observations of the work of famous artists and produce stunning paintings in the style of Monet and Picasso. Their knowledge of the work of these artists is good.
78. The teachers provide a good range of opportunities for the pupils to experiment with paint and other media. A strength is the way the teachers focus on teaching pupils' how to produce good effects using paintbrushes and tools imaginatively. The pupils gain much in confidence and competence through such teaching and this equips

them well to work imaginatively. They use colour-mixing techniques well and know how to blend and tint colours. The teachers often link work in art and design to other subjects and this provides good opportunities for the pupils to finely hone their skills, for example, in producing detailed pencil drawings that include effective use of light and shade. The teachers also encourage collaborative work and the pupils cooperate well to make attractive collages using a wide variety of materials.

79. Lessons are planned very well and often include several activities for the pupils to take part in. This approach ensures that all pupils have good opportunities to practise and refine their skills in using fabric, paint and mouldable materials. The teachers emphasise the need for care and accuracy and the pupils respond very well by behaving impeccably and sharing equipment and resources. The staff provide a good range of equipment and make very effective use of books and pictures to stimulate the pupils' interest. In a lesson on making angels, the pupils studied Renaissance paintings, thought about their own image of angels and then combined the ideas to produce effective results. Teachers praise the pupils well and are rigorous in helping the pupils to improve their work through helpful and constructive comments. Art and design makes a significant contribution to the pupils' spiritual and cultural development and the collaborative projects help to improve their social skills. Displays of the pupils' work help to make the school a vibrant and colourful place.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

80. The school has improved its provision for design and technology since the last inspection and standards have risen. The teaching is very good and is better than reported at the time of the previous inspection. At the end of Year 2, pupils attain above the normally expected standard for seven-year-olds. Throughout the classes pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make very good progress. Sliding levers, pivot levers and hinges are all competently used by pupils in Year 1 to make creatures such as cats that have moving eyes. They extend these skills by making an octopus with many moving parts. The teachers also provide challenging opportunities for the pupils to design and make functional objects such as buckets and to test them to ensure that they are suitable for holding a variety of materials.
81. In Year 2, the teachers focus strongly on improving pupils' competence in designing and modifying their work. The pupils gain much from this effective guidance and the way in which teachers provide opportunities for the pupils to practise basic skills equips the pupils well to make their own models using a variety of techniques. The pupils make successful vehicles with moving wheels. The teachers encourage accuracy in cutting and shaping materials and insist on high standards. The pupils respond very well and use skills and knowledge of measurement learned in mathematics to measure accurately and cut to size using a variety of tools. There is lovely work produced in textiles in both years. The pupils use clay to join and raise features as they construct faces and objects. They cook using electric mixers and microwaves where they have suitable adult support
82. Pupils have very good attitudes to their learning in design and technology. The pupils talk excitedly about their work and are well able to describe the whole process that they have gone through to produce their end products. The excitement of the pupils is generated as a result of the quality of teaching which is very good overall. Teachers have secure subject knowledge. They plan imaginatively and with thoroughness. They ensure pupils have high quality resources to work with and pupils are taught how to use them correctly. The teachers encourage pupils to apply themselves well and by intervening at the right moment suggest ways that the pupils might improve their work. Pupils respond enthusiastically to suggestions and are also confident to use their own ideas. The draft policy and scheme of work are

entirely appropriate for the school's needs. The committed and very effective subject leader works hard to ensure the successful direction of the subject throughout the school and has a clear vision to raise standards further.

GEOGRAPHY

83. Since the previous inspection standards in geography have remained above the national expectations for pupils aged seven, with pupils making good progress in all aspects of the subject. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are well supported and make good progress.
84. By the end of the infants, pupils achieve a high level of map reading skill for their age. All pupils recognise landscape terms, such as hill, mountain and waterfall. Higher attaining pupils understand some Ordnance Survey map conventions and make accurate observations about landscapes from photographs. For example, they know that a building in a photograph is not made from the same material as local buildings. From this and other clues, they conclude that it is in another part of the British Isles. Pupils understand the importance of colouring a map key. The teachers use imaginative approaches to improve pupils' knowledge of the locality through regular visits and walks in the area to observe a variety of routes to school and to study local services such as shops. They develop pupils' international awareness through tracking the journeys of Barnaby Bear. Having his own passport enables him to travel widely. His postcards arrive regularly from different parts of the globe and are plotted on a large wall map. Pupils are taught to have responsibility for the environment and to make accurate observations of changes to buildings in their area. The teachers insist on good standards of presentation and encourage literacy skills such as informative writing and the use of books for research to develop pupils' competence in recording their work accurately and with detail.
85. Teaching and learning are good. In a lesson about Barnaby Bear's journey, clear objectives were shared with the pupils, skilfully brought into the lesson through good discussion. Lessons build effectively on previous work and some good direct teaching of a colour key enables pupils to start their activity quickly. Teachers in each year group plan well together. This ensures consistency in covering the curriculum and, combined with regular reviews of pupils' progress, ensures that work is planned to suit different abilities and rates of learning. This has a significant impact on the levels of attainment of all pupils. Pupils are well motivated and they work hard. Good relationships between teachers and pupils provide a secure learning environment, where pupils enthusiastically express ideas or opinions. Very good links between subjects are made. While watching a video about the Holy Land pupils were attentive and responses showed that their observation skills are good. They gave thoughtful, accurate answers to the task of identifying modern features of life and the landscape, with features, which Jesus would have known, while learning about changes in places over a period of time.
86. The subject receives good coverage and the subject leader monitors teachers' plans. The school has a good range and quantity of resources that are used well. The pupils enjoy finding out about the wider world through studying maps and globes. Many of the social and personal values taught by the school can be identified in lessons and records of work in geography. The subject leader has a clear view of its value in promoting literacy and numeracy. This is expressed through very good cross-curricular planning and the variety of ways in which pupils record their work.

HISTORY

87. Attainment is better than at the last inspection, when standards were judged to be sound. Pupils make good progress and achieve standards that are above the

national expectations for pupils aged seven. A scheme of work, which shows clearly what needs to be taught, has led to a significant improvement in teaching. The able subject leader has a good overview of the teaching of history and monitors planning effectively to ensure that key skills are developed consistently. In addition, the school is fully aware how speaking skills and writing can be improved through history. Consequently, pupils' ability to express opinions and re-tell stories in their own words has improved. The teachers plan challenging and interesting activities that meet the needs of all pupils. As a result pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language make good progress and become adept in telling historical stories in their own words.

88. In role-play, pupils re-enact the arguments between King James 1 and Guy Fawkes. This has a good impact on building confidence at speaking in public, while improving pupils' knowledge of people and events, such as Henry VIII and inventors and scientists like Thomas Edison. Pupils clearly enjoy their visits to places of interest, such as the moated manor house at Baddesley Clinton. Details of the parts of the house they liked best are discussed enthusiastically, with accurate detail from their observations. In their comparison of Tudor buildings with present day houses they note that modern homes do not have priest-holes! The teachers discuss sensitive and important issues, raising pupils' awareness of national events such as Remembrance Day. All pupils have a secure understanding of time, using past present and future correctly, and record their work effectively, using correct spelling, grammar and punctuation.
89. Teaching and learning are good. Classes are managed well and lesson planning within year groups is good. Consistent and thorough planning is one of the reasons why standards have improved. Lessons begin with the objectives clearly stated, often read from the board by the whole class. Pupils are brought into the lesson quickly by good questioning to establish what has been learned previously. The teachers provide effective opportunities to enable pupils to learn independently and to build their self-confidence. Lessons move along at a good pace and this has a positive influence on pupils' rate of progress. Teachers present historical stories in a lively style and the pupils respond well by reading their own work expressively. The teachers use a variety of methods and resources, including videos and visits, to interest the pupils and to spark their enthusiasm for history. They have secure subject knowledge and communicate their interest in history to the pupils very well. However, there are too few opportunities for pupils to use computers in their work in history. Pupils write thank you letters to guides at the manor house they visited and learn about national events, such as Remembrance Day. Visits out of school are used to good effect as a way of widening pupils' experience and have a good impact on pupils' interest and motivation.
90. The subject leader has a good overview of the history and monitors the work of her colleagues. The school has an effective policy and scheme of work and provides a well-balanced and interesting history curriculum.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

91. Standards in ICT were at a similar level at the time of the previous inspection. Overall, pupils have appropriate skills for their age in using computers but lack sufficient opportunities to apply these skills in their work in other subjects. Progress for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, is satisfactory. The school has good plans to develop the use of computers and to raise standards further. Compared to other subjects in which standards are at least above average, standards in ICT are not sufficiently high. Limited resources have hampered improvement in the subject. The school has recently bought new computers but there remain some gaps in software. In addition,

the computer suite is in a classroom used by Year 1 and this inhibits opportunities for pupils to make sufficient use of this facility. There are computers in classrooms; however, many of them are out-of-date and operate on a different system from the computer suite.

92. The subject leader has a good understanding of ICT and is enthusiastic in supporting staff and raising the profile of the subject in the school. However, some staff lack confidence in using ICT. The scheme of work for the subject is under review and is out-of-date. The school is developing a new scheme in Year 1, which is to be extended throughout the school during this academic year. However, there is insufficient knowledge of pupils' skills and understanding of the subject and this, combined with limited access to the computer suite, hampers the consistent development of computer skills.
93. By the age of seven, pupils have appropriate skills in most aspects of ICT. They use several programs but lack sufficient skill in applying their knowledge to their work in other subjects. Pupils type short stories into the computer but lack a clear understanding of how to edit and refine their work and to use many of the computer's tools to improve it. The pupils make good progress in using computers to collate and present data. They know how to print graphs and charts. Pupils lack confidence in saving and retrieving their work and have limited skills in using computers to explore what happens in real and imaginary situations.
94. The teaching and learning of ICT are satisfactory overall. Teachers often plan lessons to include some opportunities for the pupils to use computers and keep accurate records of who has completed the task. They intervene to guide the pupils but there is little direct teaching of groups and this wastes time in developing and improving pupils' skills and knowledge. The pupils thoroughly enjoy opportunities to work on computers but many lack the confidence to work unaided on developing and exploring the potential of the programs available. The teaching of Year 1 pupils seen was excellent due to the teacher's high level of expertise and confidence in the subject. The effective use of a specialist in the subject, which is a recent initiative, is beginning to pay dividends and has had a significant impact on the good progress made in Year 1. Pupils in Year 1 are enthusiastic and competent learners keen to experiment with new skills, for example in importing pictures from clipart and adding text.

MUSIC

95. At the time of the previous inspection standards were in line with national expectations. Standards are now above those expected of pupils aged seven. This improvement in standards arises from very good teaching which has a beneficial impact on all pupils. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make very good progress in all aspects of music.
96. In Year 1 pupils build upon the experiences that they have been given in the nursery and reception classes as they show understanding of the differences between high and low and soft and loud sounds. They relate this to other subject learning, for example when they make different levels of sounds for daddy, mummy and baby in the story of Goldilocks. This good approach to the teaching of composition results in successful performances of musical interpretations of "stormy" poems. The staff emphasise musical notation and pupils make good gains in recording their sounds graphically. These skills are further developed in Year 2 when pupils add to their musical knowledge and understanding as they focus on duration, especially long and short sounds and ostinati. They use their voices as instruments to a high level of competency. The school makes very good provision for pupils to learn tuned instruments. Pupils have opportunities to play recorders together with a peripatetic

teacher. They make good gains in their learning due to regular practice. They take over as the teacher when they take part in the copycat session that ends their time together. The pupils take the lead role as they play tunes accurately for the other pupils to repeat successfully.

97. Pupils use instruments with very good measures of self-confidence. There is a good range of instruments from different cultures that are used well to enhance the pupils' understanding of culture. The teachers insist on high standards of work and behaviour and the pupils respond well to these challenges. Pupils evaluate performances with clarity and are well able to improve performance as a result of this. They talk with high levels of understanding about beat and rhythm. Attitudes to music are very good. The pupils are very positive about the enjoyment of music making. In consequence, they behave very well as they have very good relationships with all adults who support them in making music successfully. Pupils are keen and anxious to be involved because they are given opportunities to take leading roles in making music with one another. The quality of teaching is very good. Teachers plan very thoroughly so that learning can take place in sequential order. They have high expectations that pupils respond to very positively. Teachers organise lessons very effectively and make excellent use of resources to support and complement learning. They encourage self-assessment and knowledge of learning throughout lessons, making particularly strong links with other subjects. Constant use of accurate musical language ensures that pupils are completely in tune with developing their musical skills appropriately.
98. The subject leader provides good leadership. The policy and scheme of work are to be reviewed in the near future but those already in use give clear targets for teachers and pupils. These are successfully met. The subject leader monitors planning but does not have sufficient opportunity to monitor the work throughout the school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

99. Although it was not possible to see all of the strands of physical education being taught during the inspection week, planning clearly shows that all of the requirements of the National Curriculum are met. When reporting last time, inspectors judged that standards in physical education were good, as was progress in dance and gymnastics. The teaching was good. The school has maintained these standards well. Progress for all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is good as a result of effective teaching. Pupils enjoy their physical education lessons and their behaviour and attitudes are good.
100. By the end of Year 2 pupils have good skills in gymnastics as they move around the space of the hall with high levels of accuracy and imagination. They are appropriately dressed for physical activities and pay good attention to the need for safety. They are excited by the range of activities that they are involved in but show high levels of motivation and concentration in carrying out their tasks. They move around with speed as well as agility as they throw and catch whilst changing direction as part of their gymnastic skills. They then put these skills to meaningful use in games by discovering the tactics that need to be generated when defending and attacking. Pupils apply much physical effort and keenly rise to difficult challenges in their work through their nimble application of movements.
101. The good progress made by pupils is made because the teachers plan work that builds skills consistently. The pupils improve control and balance in their gymnastics lessons and that in turn supports them in improving their ball skills in games. The hall and the small amount of grassed area around the school are adequate and allow appropriate opportunities to develop physical skills in different settings. Pupils' attitudes to physical education are good. Their enjoyment of activities motivates them to strive for improvement in performance. Independent, small groups work in harmony, mirroring each other's actions.
102. Teaching is good. The staff have high expectations which elicit good responses from pupils. Teachers plan thoroughly and take account of the needs of all including those who lack confidence in physical activities. They resource activities with care and provide just the right amount of challenge. At the start of lessons pupils are taught effectively how to warm up and the importance of exercise and how it affects the body. Throughout the lessons the teachers make good use of demonstration to guide the pupils on how they might improve. They reinforce learning through good use of praise. The pupils respond well to the teachers' insistence on good levels of concentration and behaviour. The teachers are good role models for pupils because they join in so readily with the activities. There is currently no subject leader for physical education due to recent staff changes. However, the effective policy and scheme of work provide secure support for staff.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

103. Standards in religious education have improved since the last inspection and are now above those expected of seven-year-olds in the syllabus followed by most schools in Solihull. There is a broad religious education curriculum in which pupils study Christianity and other major faiths as well as developing their awareness of spirituality. The good teaching ensures that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make consistently good progress. Religious education receives an appropriate amount of teaching time and themes developed in lessons are sometimes followed up in assembly.
104. By the end of Year 2 pupils have a good knowledge of the major festivals and celebrations of Christianity, Islam and Judaism. They successfully compare common

themes, such as festivals of light, and how people of different religions and cultures celebrate them. The pupils have a good understanding of several Old Testament stories such as Samuel where they learn how important it is to listen carefully. The teachers encourage sensitive discussion and provide very good opportunities for the pupils to explore feelings and to come to an understanding of the needs of others. The pupils are keen learners. They respond enthusiastically and sensitively. In their writing, which is of good quality, they make very good use of their literacy skills to describe religious events and beliefs. Younger pupils have a good understanding of Advent and the events leading up to Christmas. They enjoy pretending to be the different animals represented in the Christmas story. They talk sensibly about the different presents that would be suitable for a newly born baby. Year 2 pupils combine their artistic skills to create images of angels. They have a secure knowledge of the function of angels in several religious stories.

105. The quality of teaching and learning is good. The teachers plan lessons thoroughly to include opportunities for the pupils to take part in discussion, record their work and reflect upon their feelings. Skilful questioning is used to check on what the pupils have learned and to assess their needs in future lessons. The teachers make good use of resources and religious objects to interest the pupils who respond very well, showing respect for precious books and artefacts. Most lessons begin with a well-paced introduction in which the objectives for the lesson are explained clearly to the pupils. The teachers use good story telling techniques and involve the pupils effectively. They also encourage the pupils to think for themselves and provide good opportunities for them to write imaginative and factually correct accounts. Pupils work hard showing much interest and enthusiasm. The work is matched carefully to their needs and includes sufficient challenge to promote effective learning. The teachers have good subject knowledge and their enthusiasm for religious education inspires the pupils to do their best and also helps them to gain a deep knowledge and understanding of religious beliefs and traditions. Much emphasis is given to encouraging tolerance of the different religious values of others and the pupils respond well to this.
106. The subject leader monitors the teachers' plans to ensure that there is good coverage of each aspect of religious education. Teachers keep samples of pupils' work to illustrate progress and attainment and they are used well to plan work. There are sufficient resources and a good range of library books to support pupils' work in religious education.