

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **EMSCOTE INFANT SCHOOL**

Warwick

LEA area: Warwickshire

Unique reference number: 125566

Headteacher: Mrs M Dickson

Reporting inspector: R J Schaffer  
23698

Dates of inspection: 17 – 20 September 2001

Inspection number: 230471

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant School

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 to 7 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: All Saints Road  
Warwick

Postcode: CV34 5NH

Telephone number: 01926 491 433

Fax number:

Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs D Amor

Date of previous inspection: December 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23698	R J Schaffer	Registered inspector	English Information and communication technology History Physical education Areas of learning for the foundation stage Equal opportunities	What sort of school is it? School's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9327	S Vincent	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?
30075	M Duggan	Team inspector	Mathematics Music Religious education English as an additional language	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
30559	J Taylor	Team inspector	Science Art and design Design and technology Geography Special educational needs	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The school is a community infant school. There is no nursery and children start in the reception class in the September of the school year in which they will be five. At the time of the inspection there were 83 boys and 75 girls on roll. Forty four per cent of pupils are identified as having special educational needs which is well above the national average. The percentage of pupils having a statement of special educational needs is above average. Most of these pupils have moderate learning needs but the school has a number of pupils with significant physical, medical and emotional needs. The accommodation is adapted for disabled pupils. There are 11 per cent of pupils who speak English as an additional language. They come from a number of different ethnic backgrounds and only a very small minority are at an early stage of learning English. The local education authority provides some specialized teaching for their support. The number of pupils entitled to free school meals is similar to the national average. The school is situated to the east of Warwick town centre on a quiet and pleasant site. There are many stable families but within the locality there are some aspects of social deprivation. The attainment of the children starting school varies considerably, but overall it is below average.

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

The school is effective in providing an environment where pupils are happy in school and are eager to learn. Although standards in reading, writing and mathematics are below average, pupils generally make satisfactory progress. In some aspects, such as speaking and listening, pupils make good progress. Teachers are committed to providing the best for their pupils and to this end they strive to improve their teaching. A good emphasis is placed on ensuring that opportunities offered by the school are available to all. However, the school has not always been effective in directing its energies consistently and rigorously towards improving the achievements of pupils. The school has a new headteacher and relatively new deputy headteacher who are both keen to address the areas in need of improvement. At this time of change, the governing body has provided stable and effective support to the management of the school. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- The school teaches pupils to speak and listen very well; this improves the content of what they write and helps all pupils, including those who speak English as an additional language, with their speech.
- Standards in physical education and in history are better than in most schools.
- Pupils behave well and are encouraged by the example of all the adults in the school to be caring towards each other.
- Very good relationships with parents are developed by the school and parents' efforts make a good contribution to their children's education.
- The school is welcoming to all pupils and has very good provision for those with physical, medical and emotional difficulties.

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

- Standards in reading, writing and mathematics and the standard of work in religious education.
- Checking on how well pupils read.
- Setting targets that are achievable, in a reasonably short period of time, for those who learn more slowly than others.
- The achievements of boys.
- The process of school improvement planning so that subject co-ordinators are able to direct their energies efficiently towards improving pupils' achievements.

*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 less improvement than one would expect since it was last inspected in 1997. The results achieved by its pupils in national tests have declined over the four year period. There has been improvement in some areas but not in others, and this reflects the fact that, although teachers are hard working and talented, there has been insufficient focus on the cause of difficulties. During the last year, improvements in teaching have resulted in more pupils achieving higher standards in reading and mathematics. The previous inspection identified the need to improve pupils' work in information and communication technology and this has been done. There was, however, a slow start to addressing some of the other areas identified for improvement. Improvements to curriculum planning and assessment have only been addressed in the past year and some work still needs to be done.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
reading	D	E	E	D
writing	E	E	E	D
mathematics	E	E	E	D

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

In 2000 the school's results in National Curriculum tests continued a downward trend from a high point in 1997. The well below average results for 2000 are explained in part by the significant number of pupils who joined the school part way through their final year with special educational needs, and the much higher proportion of boys to girls. In most years boys do not achieve as well as girls in reading, writing and mathematics.

Current standards are:-

Below average: reading, writing, mathematics, religious education and geography;

Average: science, information and communication technology, art and design, music, design and technology, speaking and listening;

Above average: history and physical education.

These standards are an improvement on previous years and reflect new initiatives in teaching. Generally all pupils including those who speak English as an additional language make satisfactory progress year on year. However, pupils do not make satisfactory progress in learning, and using, letter sounds to help them spell and read. Children in the reception class make satisfactory progress and currently they are achieving standards that are similar to what is usually expected for this age.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Nearly all children as they start school in the reception classes are ready to listen and learn on their first day in school. Most older pupils are interested in their lessons and try their best at their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good in assemblies and at play times. Pupils need few reprimands to settle at their work in class, although on occasions there is too much chatter for concentrated working.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. From the reception class onwards, children learn to think of others and to share and co-operate as they work. They are respectful and helpful to adults.
Attendance	Very good. Pupils enjoy school, and parents support the school in ensuring their child arrives on time.

Pupils respond very well to the school's happy atmosphere. All pupils feel valued and able to participate in school activities.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

*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.*

In the reception classes, teachers have a good understanding of how young children learn through play and their own interests. Teachers develop excellent relationships in which pupils hold them in respect and trust. In English and mathematics teaching is never less than satisfactory and on occasions it is good. Teachers are knowledgeable about how to develop sentence structures and vocabulary through giving pupils opportunities to talk. This provides well for pupils who speak English as an additional language. However, the teaching of letter sounds is not done consistently well and this means that pupils do not use these sounds to help with spelling and reading as much as they should. In mathematics teachers provide regular sessions of mental arithmetic so that pupils can practise making calculations, but sometimes lessons lack sufficient challenge. Pupils with special educational needs are generally given good support during lessons by teachers and classroom assistants.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	All subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education contribute to pupils' knowledge. Recent good improvements in planning have ensured that tasks build on pupils' previous knowledge. In the reception classes, planning reflects the principles outlined in the new guidance for this age group, but has not yet been organised so that children move consistently through the objectives.

Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Overall, satisfactory. Teachers plan appropriate activities and adult support to help pupils achieve their individual targets. However, the process of target setting allows for too great a length of time before a target is checked.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. Support from the local authority service means that some good strategies are used to help pupils learn English and to participate in all school activities. However, better assessment of their knowledge of English, using up-to-date assessment materials, would help to focus on the specific learning needs of these pupils.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The good social and moral development of pupils is rooted firmly in the aims and values of the school. Pupils learn about their own culture and that of others effectively in many subjects including history, art and dance. Spiritual development is satisfactory but is not planned for beyond the confines of assemblies and religious education.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school takes good care of its pupils. New procedures for assessing pupils' achievements in mathematics and English are satisfactory, except for reading where assessment is not well established in group work. In the reception classes, assessments are not yet linked to the new national guidance.

Over a number of years the school has built up very positive relationships with parents. These are based on the provision of very good information about the school and what children are doing and achieving. Parents are given clear guidance on how they can help their children learn and they respond accordingly.

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

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. Many of the school's aims have been successfully established within its working practices. However, there has not always been a well directed drive towards raising standards. This has sometimes made the work of key staff less effective, despite their committed efforts.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors provide stable and committed support to the school that has been particularly important at this time of change in the headship. They fulfil their statutory duties well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. Recent evaluation of the school's results in national tests have led to a greater awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses. However, the process of school development planning is not used sufficiently as a means of monitoring and evaluating school improvements.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The reduction in finances, owing to the fall in pupil numbers in the past, has meant that the school has had to plan well in advance to meet necessary commitments. It has done this well.

The school has sufficient numbers of teachers and classroom support assistants. Support staff make a good contribution to pupils' learning but there are times when they are not used to the best advantage. There is good accommodation. The outside play area has been very well developed and supports pupils' achievements in physical education and social awareness. The limitations on the school's finances has meant that teachers have sought numerous ways of supplementing the school's resources, and parents' fund raising has made a significant contribution. However, care to check that chosen resources are the best for the purpose intended, has not yet been fully implemented.

### **PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children enjoy school.</li> <li>• Their children make good progress.</li> <li>• Behaviour in the school is good.</li> <li>• They are given a clear understanding of how well their children are progressing.</li> <li>• The staff are approachable.</li> <li>• The school expects their children to work hard and encourages them to become more mature.</li> <li>• The leadership and management of the school.</li> <li>• The way the school works with parents.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The amount of homework.</li> <li>• The range of activities outside lessons.</li> </ul>

The inspection confirms all the positive views expressed. The amount and use of homework is much the same as is given to pupils of this age in most schools. It is organised well and makes a positive contribution to pupils' learning. Similarly, the range of out of school activities and visits is much the same as expected and provided in most schools for pupils of seven years and younger. The inspection does not therefore support the negative views expressed by a small number of parents.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

- 1 The well below average results in national tests for reading, writing and mathematics that have occurred in recent years have been carefully analysed by the school. The school took part in an early introduction to testing children at the start of their schooling in reception. Using support from the local authority to compare the results of these early assessments with the end of Year 2 national tests, the school has been able to show that pupils' achievements year on year have been satisfactory. However, other ways of analysing the results indicate that there are areas for development within school provision that would improve the pupils' performance in national tests. These include improving the standards achieved by pupils with higher attainment in reading writing and mathematics, improving spelling and knowledge of letter sounds and improving some aspects of assessing reading.
  
- 2 There is a very wide range of attainment among the children when they start school. Some know more than is expected for their age, and one or two are very well ahead of others, whilst there is also a considerable proportion of children below average and a few with significant learning needs. This results in wide variations in the attainment of year groups. Many of the Year 2 pupils who sat the tests in 2000 were identified as having considerable learning needs. There was also a good proportion of pupils in that year group who joined part way through their education, although this does not generally occur in other year groups in the school. Added to this there was a much higher proportion of boys to girls. Boys' achievements year on year have not been as good as that of girls. In the current Year 2 there is a significant proportion of pupils identified with special educational needs. In Year 2000 the pupils' performance was well below the national average. Currently, pupils' standard of attainment in Year 2 is below average in reading, writing and mathematics, but teachers have set pupils challenging targets and are aiming to improve standards by the end of the year so as to match the national average.
  
- 3 Pupils of higher attainment in Year 2 read confidently at a standard you would expect for their age. Teachers give pupils good examples of how to use expression and punctuation marks in their reading. As a result, pupils of average and higher attainment read with good fluency. They use their voices well to denote the speech of different characters, and when there is a change of mood, for example, when an exclamation mark occurs. When the class studies the text of a 'big book' pupils make good progress in acquiring new vocabulary. For example, in a lesson in Year 2, all pupils learnt to read the word 'whale' because the teacher helped them focus on the word each time it appeared in the text. Higher attaining pupils can suggest good alternatives when the teacher covers up a word or phrase to improve pupils' understanding of vocabulary choices. Pupils of average and lower attainment acquire a satisfactory number of words they recognise by sight. However, they do not use letter sounds very effectively, either in working out how to read an unknown word or to spell. This slows their progress in both reading and writing. All pupils, including those of higher attainment do not achieve as well in spelling as in other aspects of English.

- 4 Pupils are keen to express themselves in writing. They tackle the tasks they are given with enthusiasm because teachers have encouraged them to express their ideas in speech before putting them down on paper. Pupils' writing generally follows a good sequence. They have been taught well to consider how different pieces of writing start, develop and end. This is reflected in their work. Few pupils lose the thread of the story when they retell it. Most pupils form letters correctly and some are beginning to make correct letter joins. With an improvement in spelling and some improvement in the use of punctuation many pupils would be achieving an above average standard of written work. All pupils have a good understanding of the different purposes of writing and that they can use computers to record their ideas.
- 5 In mathematics, pupils at the end of Year 2 can use addition and subtraction in calculations involving tens and units. Teachers give pupils good opportunities to learn how to explain their methods of calculations using correct mathematical terms. At the beginning of the year pupils make satisfactory progress in understanding multiplication by counting backwards and forwards in twos and tens, and identifying the pattern on a 100 square. Pupils have a sound range of mental strategies but some have difficulty in using them in simple investigative situations. The co-ordinator has identified the need to improve ways of helping pupils make decisions and understand the organisation and use of data in mathematics.
- 6 The current standard of work in science of pupils in Year 2 is higher than in previous years when standards were well below the national average. This is because the school has improved the planning of investigative work. There is also a greater focus on ensuring that pupils learn to record their observations in a systematic manner. Pupils in Year 2 have a good understanding of why tests need to be made 'fair' in order to draw conclusions. For instance, in a lesson on forces pupils could confidently explain how the change in the height of a ramp would affect how far a toy car would travel down a slope.
- 7 By the end of Year 2, pupils have gained a good understanding of using information and communication technology in many different ways because they have used computers in most subjects. However, a significant number of pupils have not got the skills expected for this age in the use of the keyboard and the mouse. The school has not yet developed an overview of computer skills to guide assessments for each individual pupil.
- 8 Pupils' achievements are good in all the areas of physical education. They use apparatus and games equipment more skilfully than is usual for their age. They can express mood, emotion and response to music in dance lessons better than most. History is well taught throughout the school and pupils' enthusiasm for the topics they have covered in history results in their knowledge being greater than expected for this age group.
- 9 The schemes of work for geography and religious education have not been in place for a sufficient length of time to ensure that pupils build on their knowledge and understanding successfully, and this results in their achieving below average standards. In geography, pupils have not had the benefit of good classroom resources, such as maps and globes so that teachers can use geographical terms regularly and prompt memories of previous work. This contrasts with history where simple class time lines are an effective means for teachers to consolidate understanding of terms such as 'present day' and 'a long time ago' In religious

education, too great a time between one topic and another has resulted in pupils' forgetfulness.

- 10 Currently, the standard of attainment at the end of the reception year is similar to what you would expect for this age. The reception classes for last year were much smaller than usual having almost ten children less in each class than in previous years. By the end of the year, children wrote simple sentences describing their visit to the Butterfly farm using some words they could spell themselves. They read stories at the level you would expect and knew how books work. In mathematics they had a good understanding of the vocabulary of measurements using terms such as 'shorter and longer' accurately. Many could count well beyond ten and most could use numbers up to ten in their calculations. Their knowledge and use of letter sounds was not high enough.
- 11 The school has been particularly successful in promoting speaking and listening and this has meant that pupils have made good progress in this aspect of their learning. It has supported the learning of pupils who speak English as an additional language very well and they have, as a result, made similar progress to their peers in learning to speak English. Their progress in other subjects is generally satisfactory but improved assessment of their needs would be of benefit. Pupils with special educational needs are given good support in small groups in class. However, their progress overall is only satisfactory because the targets in their individual plans are set too far ahead and pupils do not know when they have been achieved. Those pupils with special needs relating to physical or emotional needs are well supported by their individual education plans and their achievements are good.

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

- 12 Pupils' attitudes to their work and their willingness to learn, are positive features of the school. In the majority of lessons their attitude to their work is good, sometimes very good. Pupils are keen to please their teachers, they participate well and become excited by their successes. They work hard, they are keen to answer questions and enjoy their activities. On a few occasions, however, lessons were interrupted by a considerable amount of chatter. Teachers quickly restored a reasonable level of noise. In the questionnaires, parents are unanimous that their children enjoy coming to school. Those pupils who speak English as an additional language and those from a different ethnic background are enthusiastic about their school and respond in a similar way to others.
- 13 Behaviour in lessons is good and in the playground, pupils are equally well behaved. Boys and girls play well together and there are very few instances of unacceptable behaviour. There have been no exclusions of any kind during recent years. Relationships at all levels are very good and the atmosphere in the school is relaxed, friendly and welcoming. The school functions as a very harmonious community. Parents express their approval of the standards of behaviour achieved.
- 14 Pupils' personal development is very good. Children join the school with social skills which are about what might be expected for their age. They make very good progress throughout their time in school. They talk well, and grow increasingly confident to talk in front of the class. They speak respectfully to adults. They share resources, help to organise their classrooms, take their turn and work co-operatively in pairs and groups. Their skills in concentration are developing well and most can sustain interest long enough to work for appropriate lengths of time without direct

adult supervision. A few are less able in this respect but, with adult support, still learn well. Pupils are increasingly aware of the needs and feelings of others. They take part enthusiastically in charitable fund-raising activities. They are pleased to have responsibilities around the school and the older children enjoy helping the reception class children with their work. They are particularly considerate of the needs of the less able or disabled children.

- 15 Pupils come willingly to school and attendance is well above the national average. There is no unauthorised absence. In the main, most pupils arrive punctually at school in the mornings.

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

- 16 Teachers are skilful and hard working. They reflect on their work and are committed to improving their teaching. All lessons had some good features but in most there were also some areas for development.
- 17 The quality of teaching is similar to that of the previous inspection, after which there were two important and far reaching aspects of teaching identified for improvement. They were:-
- using information from accurate assessments to plan work that is well matched to pupils' prior attainment;
  - setting sufficiently demanding work which encourages pupils to investigate and think for themselves.
- 18 The school drew up an action plan to deal with these areas for improvement. They were incorporated into the school's policies and a new policy for supporting gifted and talented pupils was drawn up.
- 19 However, the important task of supporting teachers in finding ways to translate these policies into practical classroom activities, and monitoring and evaluating those changes has not been fully carried out. Individual teachers have worked hard to address these issues but there has not been a whole school approach and this has dissipated efforts. For example, the school planned to ensure clearer target setting for children, but although individual teachers sometimes tell pupils what it is they want them to learn in a lesson, this is not done well across the whole school. Also, clear targets for those who learn more slowly than others are identified in their individual education plans, but because of the long time before reviewing these plans, they are not easy for class teachers to use.
- 20 Ninety seven per cent of lessons were satisfactory or better. Six per cent of the teaching was very good, forty five per cent good and just three per cent unsatisfactory. In the reception classes, lessons were either good or satisfactory, with an equal proportion of each. There has been a satisfactory implementation of the National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies. However, there are methods of teaching in need of improvement in both numeracy and literacy lessons. The methods teaching of letter sounds needs to be improved throughout the school and there is insufficient challenge and variation of methods in mental arithmetic sessions.

- 21 Parents are rightly satisfied with the standard of teaching. Teachers throughout the school establish good relationships within their classes. Planning within a topic approach, teachers make lessons interesting and often stimulating. As a result, pupils like coming to school. They like their teachers and are interested in their lessons. In the reception classes, teachers are particularly skilful at providing a warm and welcoming atmosphere for children on their first days in school. Careful thought is put into planning the arrangement and display in the classrooms to interest and catch the eye of a four year old. Children settle quickly, even when they come from a different environment and do not know the language being spoken. One small child who spoke no English, spent the whole of the first day with a deep frown on his face, not responding to anyone. By the second day he was smiling and taking part in feeling and touching the dried seashore creatures that were passed round in the class circle; great improvement in a short time. In the older classes, teachers establish well understood class routines. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and pupils respond accordingly. Praise and encouragement are given whenever possible. As a result, most pupils try hard at their work and persevere at tasks. The need for a firm word or reprimand is rare. All pupils' work is valued by teachers. Teachers are sensitive to the need to include everyone when good work is praised or used as an example to others. In one class, the teacher chooses a group on a rotation basis to be the focus of the end of lesson session, when all come together to evaluate their efforts and learning. This good practice is appreciated by the pupils because it is seen as fair.
- 22 There is a very wide spread of attainment in all classes. Teachers' planning is generally good at providing work to match these different levels during the part of the lesson when all are engaged on activities. There is good thought given to how well pupils will cope with a task and adult support is well directed at where it is most needed. This is effective in helping those with special educational needs to achieve well during lessons. However, during whole class teaching when pupils sit for half an hour or so listening and learning, teachers' questions are not always targeted on pupils' differing levels of attainment. Questions are often addressed to the whole class and as a consequence some pupils 'switch off', leaving others to put up their hand. Strategies to overcome this have not been the focus of staff discussion. During whole class sessions, learning support assistants and support teachers often sit around the circle with little to do. In some lessons, notes are made of how well those pupils who speak English as an additional language participate. These are helpful assessments, but better strategies to increase and improve participation have not been sought.
- 23 In the reception classes, teachers correctly identify providing opportunities for children to speak and listen as a priority. Teachers are skilful at helping small children gain confidence in speaking. They model language by speaking clearly themselves. They use rhyme and song effectively, interspersed with other talk. In most lessons seen, adults were skilful at finding opportunities to develop language as children's interest was engaged by their activities. Occasionally, opportunities were missed, but because the children had only been in school a very short time teachers were at an early stage of assessing their needs. Throughout the school, speaking and listening continues to be skilfully taught. It is a strength of the school's provision and actively supports the learning of those who speak English as an additional language and those who learn more slowly. Role play in structured play areas and interaction with each other in pairs during lessons are good strategies used throughout the school. Good questioning allows pupils to gain confidence in putting forward their opinions and views. Teachers judge when to correct grammar

or word use sensitively. Pupils' achievements in improving their speech is reflected in the content of their written work which is good.

- 24 The teaching of the basic skill of using letter sounds to spell, or to work out unknown words when reading is in need of improvement. Teachers use the correct sounds themselves but do not always plan sessions that really focus pupils' attention, through as many senses as possible, on the letter sound. In one session, for example, pupils listened to the sound and watched it written but they did not practise making the sound with their own voices to any significant extent. Throughout the school pupils are hesitant in using letter sounds to work out unknown words and to think out spellings. In numeracy lessons, mental arithmetic is taught satisfactorily, but teachers do not have many strategies for making these sessions fun and move at a fast pace so that pupils' interest is heightened.
- 25 Teachers' assess pupils' work well as lessons proceed. In a number of lessons, teachers altered their planning for the remainder of the lesson because it was clear to them that some pupils had not achieved or learnt what was required. Sometimes notes were made to change planning for the next lesson. At this early part of the year, clearly this could happen frequently. Teachers talk to pupils about their work and help them to understand how they can improve. As yet, marking does not generally follow this pattern. In Year 2 marking often gives pupils good ideas of how to improve but this is not used systematically. Generally marking consists of 'ticks'. The new headteacher has identified target setting for all pupils as an area for development and improving marking needs to be addressed within that area. When pupils read in groups with the class teacher or learning support assistants, assessments from pupils' previous efforts have not been used to identify the focus for the session. This detracts from the benefit of these sessions. Frequently pupils lose interest as they listen to others read.
- 26 Teachers plan work that provides specifically for pupils with special educational needs. Very good attention is paid to those whose needs are physical or medical and these pupils learn at a good rate. Those pupils whose difficulties relate to their social or emotional needs are supported very well and make good progress in their attitudes to learning. Teachers plan satisfactory activities for those who learn more slowly. However, the individual education plans for these pupils are not checked up on a sufficiently frequent basis and this makes it difficult for teachers to use them effectively in day to day teaching. Because teachers focus well on providing activities at different levels, their achievements are satisfactory but there is room for improvement in provision. Those pupils who speak English as an additional language are provided for well by the support and attention to their cultures given by the teacher from the local education authority. However, some assessments used are not specific to second language learners and some assessment materials to judge their language needs are out of date. The use of specific up-to-date assessments would enable teachers to focus more tightly on their needs and to separate out when those needs are language based or stemming from lower attainment.
- 27 Teachers use the support of parents very well in improving pupils' learning. A good foundation for this is laid in the reception classes. Home reading diaries are sent home with reading books that are used in the classroom and another book of the pupils' own choice. Parents send these back very regularly and clearly have been helped by the school to understand how to support their child's adventure in learning to read. In mathematics pupils are given tasks to do at home that support

learning in class. In other lessons contact with home makes the work in class interesting and relevant.

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

- 28 The curriculum provides the pupils with a sound range of activities that are relevant to their interests. Subjects are securely planned to reflect the National Curriculum. Planning for each term is constructed well to meet the diverse needs of the pupils, especially those with physical disabilities. Provision is in distinct allocations of time with clear learning objectives and expected outcomes. Part of the school's aim 'to ensure that each child feels valued and enabled to reach full academic, social and emotional potential' is supported well by its work. The positive working atmosphere within the school provides a good basis for pupils to become life-long learners and caring members of society. The curriculum is particularly effective when the lessons planned are practically-based and matched to pupils' needs.
- 29 Judgements in the previous inspection identified a number of subjects with aspects for improvement, including information and communication technology, design and technology and geography. All these issues have been addressed successfully, although provision for investigative work in mathematics and science could still be extended. A detailed review of the curriculum led to the preparation of a cross-curricular framework. During the past year the school, led by the deputy headteacher has reviewed this planning and ensured that the new requirements for the National Curriculum have been included for each subject. In the reception classes planning reflects the methods and principles of the new national guidance. However, teachers have not yet devised a system of daily planning to incorporate the steps from the guidance that indicate how children's learning is progressing.
- 30 Personal, social and health education is promoted well throughout the school. Regular opportunities for discussion during assemblies and in lessons are used effectively to promote self-esteem. This was seen to good effect during the inspection when the monthly theme was 'positive attitudes'. Issues relating to drugs (medicines) are dealt with sensitively in Year 2 discussions. Pupils are given appropriate opportunities to develop initiative and independence in their work. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and for whom English is an additional language, have equal access to all areas of the curriculum including extra-curricular activities. The requirement for the daily act of collective worship is met fully.
- 31 There are policies and schemes of work in place for all subjects and the school follows the local education authority's Agreed Syllabus for religious education. Some of the schemes of work, including music, history and geography, are being reviewed with the intention of including the nationally recommended schemes. For English and mathematics the framework for the national strategies has been adopted. The schemes of work for most subjects set out clearly the attainment pupils need to reach at staged intervals in order to meet the expected standards by the age of seven. The school is effective in fostering pupils' intellectual, spiritual and physical development, preparing them well for their next stage of education. Good links have been established with the local pre-school group and the junior school, which ensure smooth transition between the phases.

- 32 The previous inspection reported that no provision existed for extra-curricular activities, a situation now rectified by the introduction of a weekly 'Get Sports' club, which is well attended by both girls and boys. Planned educational events include a visit to Brandon Marsh Field Centre and other places of note, such as local museums, castles and art galleries.
- 33 Sound links with the community have been established. Pupils make visits to the local church, post office and local supermarket. The school takes every opportunity to involve its parents in the education of their children, with part of the premises being used as a base for the pre-school group. There are regular visits from the local clergy, visiting artists and theatre groups, which help to promote pupils' learning.
- 34 The overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. This is rooted firmly in the aims and values of the school, set out clearly and published in the prospectus. However, there is no specific policy to promote these aspects throughout the curriculum to ensure that opportunities are not missed.
- 35 Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory and is promoted, principally, through school assemblies. These daily events are planned to explore human emotions, feelings and ideas, and to recognise the beliefs and celebrations of the major religions. In the religious education lessons themselves, pupils learn about the importance of faith and ritual in peoples' lives. More opportunities need to be planned into the wider curriculum.
- 36 The underlying ethos of the school helps to promote moral and social education well. The agreed school rules are displayed in every classroom, and good use is made of relevant stories in assemblies, to promote them. A system of rewards encourages pupils to behave sensibly, to be kind and thoughtful towards others and to work hard. Discussion times are used well to help develop pupils' awareness of good citizenship. Pupils are expected to look after their school and to take responsibilities for jobs in the classroom. As they get older, they are expected to work in pairs or groups with minimal supervision and to take more responsibility for what they do. Through charitable fund raising, pupils begin to understand how they can help others, often those less fortunate than themselves.
- 37 Cultural development is promoted well. Pupils have a good introduction to their own culture through looking at the local area and enjoying a range of visits to the castle, the canal and the hospital when studying history and geography. At various times of the day, opportunities are sought for pupils to listen to music representative of a range of cultures. Good attention is given to promoting an understanding of the different cultures within the school's own population and beyond. The presence in the school of pupils from a variety of cultural backgrounds provides many first-hand opportunities to understand the way of life of different peoples. Assemblies, religious education, music and art are used well to promote cultural development.

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

- 38 The school takes good care of pupils. The formal procedures are based on the very good relationship and trust between adults and pupils. Adults know the children very well as individuals and this helps them to respond to their needs.
- 39 The procedures for child protection are satisfactorily organised and staff meetings are used to maintain awareness of the importance of these matters. The school's policy document needs to be reviewed and updated. The health and safety policy is comprehensive and procedures are also carried out well. The school makes particular use of specialist skills within the governing body and ensures that risk assessments and inspections are carried out at regular intervals. Individual responsibilities are defined and classroom safety, fire drills, first aid, medicines and general welfare are dealt with consistently. There is a very good provision for children with physical disabilities. First aid certification needs to be brought up to date.
- 40 The systems for the monitoring and management of behaviour are effective. The rules are clear, agreed with the pupils and then posted in classrooms. The expectations are always stated positively and they are clearly understood by pupils. Very occasionally, it may be necessary to work with individual pupils to improve their behaviour and this is done with the full involvement of parents. Adults are very good role models and the mid-day supervisors are particularly involved in promoting good behaviour outside of the classroom. The school is a friendly place to be and parents strongly approve of the standards of behaviour achieved.
- 41 The procedures for recording personal development and attendance are good. The personal development of each child is monitored as they enter the foundation stage. As they progress through the school, their social skills continue to be monitored by informal means and this leads to contacts with parents if there are concerns. Staff keep careful records of incidents of unacceptable behaviour. Class discussion times on personal and social issues provide teachers with a good insight into how children are developing socially. Pupils with special educational needs, or other problems, are quickly identified. Attendance is properly recorded and absence is now more accurately analysed. All parents know that regular attendance is an important factor in achieving good standards and they respond accordingly.
- 42 At the time of the last inspection the school was asked to develop consistent procedures which accurately assessed pupils' attainment and to use those assessments to plan future work. Because of changes to the curriculum brought about by national initiatives the school delayed acting on this issue. Many aspects of assessment have only recently been put in place. The delay in establishing good assessments, particularly in mathematics and English has meant that the school has not been in a good position to monitor pupils' individual rates of progress. Some good assessment procedures have now been identified for mathematics and English. They are linked to the objectives in the Numeracy and Literacy Strategies and the National Curriculum. In English, however, pupils' reading is not assessed well in the group reading times and, as a consequence, their individual records do not give a clear picture of what they need to do to improve further. Teachers generally assess pupils' work effectively in lessons. Misconceptions are put right and good achievements praised. These form the basis of assessment for subjects other than English and mathematics. The school is aware that it does not have a simple means of recording these to help build a clear picture of achievements over

time. Plans are in place to put this right. The school has established collections of work in each subject that teachers have annotated. They are, however, very time consuming and, unless teachers use them to help make their assessments accurate, which is not currently the case, their usefulness is limited.

- 43 Pupils who learn considerably more slowly than others are provided with appropriate individual plans for their learning. These are produced by a computer program and are reviewed on a termly basis. The targets set in the plans generally focus on what needs to be learnt next. However, the length of time between setting the target and its review is too long to be meaningful to young pupils. Within the classroom, teachers and support staff work together closely to assess the achievements of pupils who learn more slowly, and those with other special educational needs. Resources and equipment are used that are well matched to their needs. In a similar way pupils who speak English as an additional language are assessed well within in their classroom work by classroom teachers and by the support teacher from the local authority support service. However, some of the materials used for initial assessments of their knowledge of English are very out-of-date. There is also confusion in the records between assessments for their knowledge of English and other possible learning needs.
- 44 The school works with parents very well to support pupils with special educational needs. Parents are kept informed and contribute their help to the support given; outside specialists are involved as necessary. The school works hard to help all pupils achieve their best.

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

- 45 Parents have very positive views about what the school does for their children and the quality of education it provides. The pre-inspection meeting with parents and the questionnaires show that parents are very happy with most aspects of school. Just a small number feel less happy with the amount of homework and the provision for the range of activities outside of lessons. The quantity of questionnaires returned was higher than average and this itself is indicative of a good relationship between school and parents.
- 46 Parents are given a very good range of information about the school and what their children are doing. As their children join the school, there is a home visit and parents receive a comprehensive starter-pack of information, including prospectus and home-school agreement. Day-to-day matters are dealt with by individual letters and there is a general monthly newsletter. Information about homework and forthcoming topics is included within the starter-pack and there are further posters around the school at points which are visible to parents. The pack also shows the schemes of work and study to be undertaken in core subjects, as well as topics in history, geography and so on. There is useful guidance about how parents can help in all these matters, particularly reading at home and development of number skills. There are occasional workshops for parents to explain more specific aspects of the curriculum and an explanation of statutory testing which takes place towards the end of Year 2.
- 47 There are opportunities for parents to talk to staff informally at the start and end of the day and parents confirm that they are confident to approach the school at any time. More formal meetings with class teachers take place during the autumn and spring terms and these are well attended by parents. The pupils' annual reports give

a clear picture of progress showing strengths, as well as areas for development. Parents of children with special educational needs are kept fully informed about progress and involved in discussing their targets.

- 48 The very positive links between the school and home ensure that parents make a significant contribution to the life of the school and what it achieves. The parents' and friends' association organises many events during the academic year. These are well attended and have a substantial financial outcome that benefits the pupils. For example, funds have been used to buy physical education equipment and to pay for visits by theatre companies. The school also enlists parents' involvement directly in the classroom after the first half-term of the year; they run a book club and a monthly social afternoon tea for parents and toddlers. Homework is well supported by most parents. Most are keen to attend and discuss progress at consultation evenings, particularly where their children have special needs. Parents are keen to ensure their children come to school regularly and this is reflected in the above average figures for attendance.

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

- 49 There have been very recent changes to the leadership of the school. A new headteacher was appointed to start in September 2001, two weeks before the inspection. The deputy headteacher started in September 2000. These changes have been well managed by a stable governing body and by a good period of induction led by the previous headteacher.
- 50 Overall there is satisfactory leadership and management with some aspects in need of improvement. The school has clear and appropriate aims. The previous headteacher was successful in establishing many of these aims within the school's working practices. A positive and welcoming school ethos has been established in which all pupils feel secure and happy to learn. However, a clear drive towards ensuring that all pupils achieve their full potential in English and mathematics has not been fully achieved and this is reflected in the school's well below average results in national tests. The school has made use of data analysis from the pupils' results in tests and assessments to understand its own strengths and weaknesses. However, there were significant gaps in the school's own systems of assessment before September 2000. Assessment procedures have now been improved significantly in mathematics and English and the school is beginning to track individual pupils' progress. However, for pupils with special educational needs, the lapse of time between drawing up their individual plan, and checking whether the target has been achieved, is too long and so it is difficult to judge their progress. In consequence, although the school can show that it has added value to the cohort as a whole, it does not have fully reliable systems to show what progress individual pupils make.
- 51 The new headteacher has made her own audit of the school's strengths and weaknesses. She has appropriately identified establishing good relationships with children, parents and staff as her first priority. Within the short time that she has been in school, it is clear that this priority is being well met. She has already established a good working relationship with the governors and proposed a vision for the school.
- 52 After the previous inspection, an appropriate action plan was drawn up to address the main issues that had been identified. Government initiatives such as the literacy

and numeracy strategies were implemented. Review dates were set within the process of school improvement planning to monitor and evaluate the success of actions and initiatives. However, these were too long term and as a result, there was a loss of urgency in the school's work which has resulted in some areas still in need of improvement. The plan is carefully costed and the finance committee are effective in prioritising spending. There is, however a lack of cohesion within the numerous priorities. For instance, the school rightly identified that boys were lagging behind the girls in the results achieved in national tests. Good training was provided to help staff improve boys' interest and achievements. Several people were identified as needing to take action but no one person made responsible for checking how successful teachers have been in implementing this in their classroom practice. As a result of the training, listening centres have been purchased for some considerable amount of money. However, no means have been established of checking whether this was money well spent.

- 53 Governors make good efforts to ensure that all statutory requirements are met by the school and they are knowledgeable about the areas of their responsibility. In particular, the school has a good policy to ensure that equal opportunities are available to all and it is consistently acted upon. For instance, the school has taken very good steps to ensure that the needs of pupils with physical, emotional and medical difficulties are met. The school's accommodation has been very well adapted to meet the needs of pupils who have physical disabilities, and support staff and teaching staff have built up valuable knowledge and expertise. Equally, pupils from different ethnic backgrounds settle quickly and clearly feel at home. The school, however does not have any means of checking if these pupils make similar progress to their peers. The school has responded well to the need of ensuring young pupils learn about living in a multi-racial society from the start of their education.
- 54 Governors are well organised to support the school in its work and have the trust of the school staff. Governors generally attend meetings regularly and contribute their time and expertise in the best interests of the school. Members of the governing body are allocated to each curriculum subject and this has resulted in some good practice. The support of a governor with expertise in information and communication technology has been instrumental in helping the school improve pupils' work in this subject. During a monitoring visit to the school to check on provision, and on how well pupils were learning, governors identified both strengths and weaknesses. They made some useful recommendations for improvements. However, in other aspects and subjects, governors have not always been in a position to check on the progress of improvements. On too many occasions, the criteria identified for evaluating success in school developments does not reflect greater achievement by pupils.
- 55 There are satisfactory systems in place for monitoring the quality of teaching and the planning of the curriculum. The headteacher has monitored planning three times a half term and informed staff of the evaluations. During the past year, the deputy headteacher has led the re-organization of the school curriculum in line with the new National Curriculum requirements for September 2000. Throughout the year, staff discussed plans and as a result useful on-going evaluations were made. However, the work of curriculum co-ordinators is not organised so that they can make monitoring of their subject an effective tool for checking on standards and identifying areas for improvement. The headteacher has evaluated the success of school development planning. However, subject co-ordinators have not been fully

involved in this process. Although co-ordinators have their own ideas about what they would like to see improved in their subject, this is not formalised into an action plan which can then be discussed to ascertain if priorities are right. As a consequence, some co-ordinators have spent a great deal of time on areas which, while beneficial in themselves, would have been best addressed later once more important areas for improvement had been tackled. The staff work well together as a team with the deputy headteacher who has established his role in a quiet and effective manner. Staff are committed to improvement and take on a great many duties. Improved planning should see some of these reduced, and a clear focus on the priorities of their work result in their many talents being used to best advantage.

- 56 For a number of years the school has struggled with pressure on the budget. This began with the re-organisation of the school from a first school to an infant school when the numbers of pupils in the school declined. Very careful and considered monitoring of spending and financial planning by the headteacher and the chair of the finance committee has ensured that the school has averted budget deficits, but the school has had little money to spend on resources or improving the number of classroom support staff. The governors have identified this as a priority for helping to raise the attainment of the many pupils in the school who learn more slowly than others, but they have not been able to fund their decision. Governors have insufficient procedures in place to evaluate whether spending on resources has been good value for money. Parents raise significant amounts of money for the school and this is spent wisely. Some methods of increasing the school's finances, by approaching outside bodies or bidding for extra funds within areas of education, have been undertaken but this could be further developed.
- 57 There are appropriate numbers of trained staff to teach the National Curriculum. Learning support assistants for those pupils with physical disabilities, emotional and behavioural problems and those with more pronounced learning needs are skilful, well trained and effective. They make a very positive contribution to the achievements and well being of pupils. Classroom assistants work well with small groups of pupils but their time is not always used efficiently. The accommodation is well maintained, despite the absence of a site manager. There is a large and attractive library that is insufficiently used at present. The English co-ordinator has developed it in part and has good plans to ensure that it is used more effectively in the future. Currently, there is no separate outdoor play area for children in reception to use during lessons. However, teachers make good use of the whole school outside play area, which is a very good feature of the school's accommodation. The large play equipment supports physical development and there are numerous features of interest to stimulate creative and sociable play.
- 58 Resources are satisfactory in most subjects, except in geography where they are unsatisfactory and in physical education where they are good. In reception classes, much of the play equipment is unsatisfactory, although teachers have maintained it to the best of their ability and supplemented it by donations from friends and parents. Most of the history resources have been acquired in a similar way. Books have also been purchased through efforts such as amassing numbers of crisp packets. Through the good support of the teacher from the local authority responsible for raising achievement of pupils from ethnic minorities, resources appropriately reflect modern day life in a multi-racial society.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

59 The governors, headteacher and senior management of the school should seek to raise standards in the following:

- reading, by improving the teaching of letter sounds, and improving the class group reading sessions; (paragraph references: 3, 24, 42, 72)
- writing, by improving the teaching of spelling; (paragraph references: 3, 24, 74)
- mathematics, by improving the level of challenge in mental arithmetic sessions; (paragraph references: 24, 80)

Further, the school should seek to improve the achievements of boys in all these subjects by identifying classroom practice to do so, and monitoring its implementation; (paragraph references: 2, 52, 75, 80)

Also the governors, headteacher and senior management of the school should seek to make improvements by:

- ensuring that targets set for pupils who learn more slowly than others are short term (paragraph references: 11, 43)
- improving the process of school development so that subject co-ordinators can direct their energies towards improving pupils' achievements; (paragraph references: 55, 76, 85)

In addition to the key issues above the following weaknesses should be considered by the governors for inclusion in the action plan:

- the below average standards in religious education and geography; (paragraph references: (9, 102, 128)
- the out of date assessments for pupils who speak English as an additional language; (paragraph references: 26, 43)
- the planning in the foundation stage. (paragraph references: 29, 62)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	32
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	37

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	2	12	17	1	0	0
Percentage	0	6	38	53	3	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. [When the total number is substantially less than 100, add] Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one [two, three, etc] percentage point[s]. [Where the total is close to or greater than 100, use only the first sentence.]

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	-	158
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	-	15

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	-	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	-	72

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	14

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	16
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.3
National comparative data	5.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	31	19	50

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	21	21	23
	Girls	16	17	18
	Total	37	38	41
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	74 (76)	76 (78)	82 (83)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	22	23	24
	Girls	16	16	13
	Total	38	39	37
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	76 (76)	78 (83)	74 (81)
	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	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	4
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	2
Chinese	
White	107
Any other minority ethnic group	2

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

### Exclusions in the last school year

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

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: YR – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.4
Average class size	26.3

### Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	9.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	140

### Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	-
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	-
Total number of education support staff	-
Total aggregate hours worked per week	-
Number of pupils per FTE adult	-

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2

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

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Financial information

Financial year	1999/00
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	£
Total income	291,156
Total expenditure	299,718
Expenditure per pupil	1,922
Balance brought forward from previous year	1,758
Balance carried forward to next year	(6,804)

## **Results of the survey of parents and carers**

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	158
Number of questionnaires returned	46

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

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	67	33	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	52	48	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	48	52	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	43	28	28	0	0
The teaching is good.	70	30	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	48	41	9	0	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	76	22	2	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	52	43	2	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	52	43	2	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	74	24	0	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	52	46	0	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	30	37	24	4	4

## **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**

- 60 Children start in the two reception classes in the September of the school year in which they are five. There are no nursery facilities attached to the school, however, the majority have attended the pre-school unit that shares the school's accommodation. On entry to the foundation stage, initial assessments show that attainment of the majority of children is below average. However, there is a very wide spread of attainment from well above what is expected for this age to well below. Recently, in comparison to previous years, more children with attainment above expectations have been starting school.
- 61 There is a good period of settling in for the children at the start of the school year. Some attend for mornings and some attend for afternoons and the in-take is staggered so that children have the benefit of small groups to get to know school and the adults in their class really well. At the time of the inspection there were no more than nine children in the classes in the morning and 12 in the afternoon and children started on the second day of the inspection. Teachers concentrated on making the children feel confident and settled, and on carrying out initial assessments. It was not possible during the inspection to observe many aspects of teaching.
- 62 Teaching is never less than satisfactory and sometimes it is good. A secure environment with plenty to interest and encourage the young child makes children's first experience of school happy and constructive. Good relationships and trust between children and staff allow children to explore ideas and be confident to ask for help, even in their first week in school. Teachers generally use the methods recommended in the national guidance for this age to plan lessons, and as a basis for their long term planning. However, they have not yet identified how to structure their planning using the steps in the guidance that match work to children's level of attainment. This means that they have no way of telling how well children are moving through the objectives. In the past, assessments have not given the school sufficient information to track children's progress from the time they start in reception to leaving. There are now better assessments in place at the end of the reception year. These show that children's achievements are satisfactory. The children who finished in reception at the end of 2001 achieved a standard similar to that expected for this age. However in that year there were almost ten children less in each class and so adults were more able to focus on individual needs than in previous years.
- 63 The school works very closely with parents. The staff visit each child's home before they start in the Autumn term. Parents and children appreciate this and a good relationship is formed from the beginning. Parents are encouraged to think of themselves as partners in their child's education. There are good suggestions for ways in which they can help learning and clearly they act on these.

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

- 64 Teaching and learning is good and care of pupils is very good. On the first day for children in school, teachers welcomed children and their parents, having met them before in their own homes. As a result, all children were happy getting to know their new classroom and school. Teachers had planned a good range of activities to this

end. For instance, the whole class group made a tour of the school building finding out where other classrooms, the dining hall and even the secretary's office were situated. This responded to children's natural curiosity as well as helping in the practicalities of locating toilets and outdoor play areas. Teachers made good efforts to plan for different needs, such as the children who were learning to speak English because their home language was different, and those who had medical or emotional difficulties. In the three days they were in school children learnt much about the class routines because teachers stated clearly what were the expectations. For instance, after children had played with an activity they were encouraged to tidy away and make sure that others could enjoy the resources. Children responded well. Those who spoke English as an additional language or who had no English made very good progress in settling in because teachers were skilful in understanding their needs. Behaviour was always good. Small groups enjoyed playing together and many showed a mature understanding of sharing resources. The attainment of this small group was similar to that expected for this age.

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

65 Teachers' planning for the week included starting the initial assessments for individual children. Understandably, at this very early stage teachers provided children with very simple tasks so that they could gain confidence and begin to talk to each other and to adults. Teachers' planning focused on encouraging talk, listening and the use of paper and pencil for making marks and writing names. Attractive writing areas were set out in both classrooms. However, few children chose this as an activity, their attention understandably being taken by more active pursuits. Children were encouraged to write their name when they produced a painting and many could do so. All wrote at least some of the letters in their name. Teachers used the theme of the seashore as a focus for children's talk. Attractive displays in both classes provided good opportunities for children to touch and handle objects such as shells and dried sea creatures. The theme was chosen as a link to family holidays to the seaside and most children could remember a day spent recently on the beach. Teachers encouraged talk well in activities such as sitting in a circle and passing round different items from the displays. Those that were still too reticent to speak at this early stage were not pressured to do so, but most were keen to say what they could see and feel. On occasions better use could have been made of the classroom assistants who sat on the outside of the circle. Children handled the objects carefully and passed them on to the next child easily. Teachers made good use of rhymes and stories. Overall, the attainment of these small groups was average for this age. Children's work from the previous year shows that children made satisfactory progress in forming letters and in learning to write their own words. In a topic on bears in the spring, for instance, children wrote letters to their teddy "Dear Teddy. Do you want to... my parte". Despite the omission of an important word, the meaning is clear and the standard is similar to what one would expect for this age. However, pupils in Year 1 do not use sounds well to help them build unknown words when they are reading and writing, and there is insufficient evidence to show how well they achieved in this respect throughout the reception year.

### **Mathematical development**

66 No teaching in this aspect was seen. An assessment activity to ascertain how well children knew simple mathematical two dimensional shapes was well thought out to provide interest and fun to the newcomers. They searched for squares, triangles and circles in the sand tray, naming them as they were found. Classroom support assistants worked well with this group. The work of children from the previous year

shows a good range of activities to develop mathematical learning. For example, children learnt about measuring in a very practical way when they compared lengths of paper to measure how much card they needed to make a box. There was satisfactory progress in using and writing numbers. By the end of the year children could record, using cubes and writing numbers, addition and subtraction to ten. Because much work in mathematics is not recorded at this age it was not possible to make a judgement about children's achievements from examples of work.

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

- 67 Good teaching in this aspect stems from the good use of topics. These are chosen to relate to children's own interests so that their knowledge can be developed on further. Learning is good. In one classroom teachers had provided a variety of play resources in the 'deep sea den' to stimulate children's imaginations and to develop further the ideas promoted by the seashore displays around the room. Music and pictures are used to encourage the ideas and talk. Computers are accessible in each classroom. Teachers and support assistants help children use and control the mouse and to follow the instructions of simple programs. Topics from previous year's work show children's interest in mini beasts developed through a visit to a butterfly farm. Some of the resources such as the jig-saws and 'small world' equipment used to support learning in this area are very out-dated. Although the school playground has good resources to develop learning for this age group, teachers cannot include it fully in their planning as there is no specific secured area for the reception classes. Each class has good working areas where children can choose a range of tools and materials to work with and explore. These were not seen being used.

### **Physical development**

- 68 Because of the short time the children had been in school it was not possible to make a judgement on the quality of teaching and learning. Teachers provided children with physical education lessons in the hall where the focus was clearly, and appropriately, on personal and social development. Children and teachers were dressed appropriately. Teachers and support staff gave children good support in learning to get dressed and undressed and to take care of their own clothes. In the hall the teacher gave simple commands for children to follow such as walking, stopping and starting. As the lesson proceeded skipping was added to the actions. The participation by the classroom assistant was particularly helpful in ensuring that all were confident enough to join in. The outside play area has good equipment for physical development and there are attractive resources for indoor games.

### **Creative development**

- 69 Teaching is at least satisfactory in this area although it was not possible to gain a full view of how teachers develop the requirements of the national guidance or at what rate children learn. Teachers gave children a very good start to learning about music by providing displays of musical instruments that they could shake or bang. Children enjoyed listening to the sounds made by different instruments. There was a good link with the topic on the sea by the inclusion of an instrument that made a sound like the waves receding on the beach. In one session, when the teacher asked children to pass the musical instruments round the circle, the children who had been unwilling to participate up to this point joined in and clearly delighted in the activity. Paints were provided for children to choose to make a picture. Each child took a painting home providing a good talking point for parents when they came to fetch their child.



## ENGLISH

- 70 The school's standards have declined since the previous inspection and for some time this was not a sufficient focus of the questions the school asked about its provision for the teaching of reading and writing. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented satisfactorily and some good initiatives have taken place recently so that improvements are now beginning to take effect. Current standards in Year 2 are below average but teachers have set challenging targets to improve on pupils' achievements by the end of the year. The school identified that their results in national tests showed that too few pupils were achieving the higher standards in reading and writing. For instance, in the national tests for seven year olds in 2000, only six per cent of pupils gained the higher level, which compares poorly with the national average of 28 per cent. In order to improve on this, teachers planned work to present greater challenge for those with higher attainment. In 2001 many more pupils gained the higher level, and currently those pupils who learn more quickly than others are reading and writing at the standard they should be. Year on year, boys' achievements have been below that of girls in both reading and writing and the school is now beginning to identify how to address this.
- 71 The co-ordinator identified that the school needed to improve the teaching of letter sound and that this would improve the achievements of pupils of all levels of attainment, but most particularly those who take longer than others to learn to read. Although some discussion has taken place as to how to go about this, the school has not made it an urgent focus of action. Pupils of all levels of attainment, including those who speak English as an additional language, do not make sufficient use of letter sounds, and word building strategies in general, to work out unknown words. Pupils of lower attainment, in particular, need to be prompted, and sometimes told the correct letter sound before they can puzzle out a three or four letter word they do not know. Pupils of higher attainment read with fluency and good expression. Pupils of all levels of attainment can talk about favourite stories they have read, retell stories and explain why a character has acted in a certain way. They are interested in facts about books, such as the author, publisher and illustrator. In the library they can locate a book on a particular topic, showing good understanding of how information is presented in non-fiction books.
- 72 A good aspect of provision in reading has been the very good links developed with parents. Teachers use the support of parents very effectively. For many pupils this is a good spur to their achievement in reading. Reading books go home and are returned twice a week. Once a week the pupils read in class as a group to an adult, either the teacher or a learning support assistant. The organisation of this is good. However, during these reading sessions pupils read one after the other whilst the adult corrects or praises. Inevitably, those pupils not reading lose interest. Specific objectives are not planned and assessments are not recorded that could be used to set the objectives for the next session.
- 73 The school provides very well for the development of speaking and listening. Pupils enjoy the rhymes, songs and word games that teachers use when there are a few spare moments. In whole class sessions teachers are skilful at encouraging all pupils to contribute by answering questions or by putting forward their ideas or views. There are good opportunities planned for partner work when pupils learn to negotiate. In a very good English lesson in Year 1, aimed at teaching sight vocabulary, the teacher devised a simple but competitive activity in which the more pupils co-operated the better they did. Spontaneously they said things like "it's your

turn now” and “do you think that’s right?” as they worked together. All classes have well equipped, well structured areas for pupils to develop role-play. Here pupils negotiate and talk with each other, as, for instance they sort out the post in the class ‘Post Office’ or serve drinks in the ‘Café’. Pupils who speak English as an additional language and those of lower attainment become engrossed in what is happening, trying out words and sentence structures they have learnt from others. Pupils have below average skills in speaking when they start in the school and their progress year on year is good.

- 74 Good work in speaking and listening supports pupils’ attainment in writing. Although the school has not achieved good results in writing, pupils are keen to write and their writing follows a logical sequence and has a good structure. They know what they want to say and they choose interesting and suitable words. For example, a pupil in Year 2, retelling the fairy story about a man and his wife quarrelling over how to use the three wishes granted to them by a fairy writes: “Suddenly a cream cake floated in the air and landed on the old woman’s head.” The pupil maintained the action in the story and used good descriptive language to bring the piece to life. Pupils do not do so well in spelling, and to a lesser extent with punctuation. Full stops are often forgotten. Many more pupils at the end of Year 2 would achieve the higher levels in writing if their spelling was improved. Pupils find building their own words difficult as they write and often ask adults for spellings, even so written pieces by pupils in Year 2 often have simple words spelt incorrectly. Teachers are knowledgeable about how to support pupils develop their writing. Pupils are taught to think out a plan before they start. When they are unable to think what to put next, teachers ask good questions, or encourage a read through of what has already been written, rather than just providing an idea. Teachers explain that writing is used for lots of different reasons. For example, in Year 2, pupils learning about letter writing, were taught that letters are sometimes used to complain about a matter. In this lesson, pupils successfully managed to select their own words to show the reader of their letter that they were annoyed.
- 75 Overall, teaching is satisfactory but there are many good and very good features in regular use. Lessons are planned that inspire pupils’ interest in reading and writing. Planning reflects the requirements of the National Literacy Strategy and there is a good balance between the different areas of learning. Sometimes objectives for the different parts of the lesson are not defined clearly enough or checked to see if they are achieved. Similarly, in some lessons pupils are made fully aware at the start of the lesson what the teacher expects them to learn, but in others this is left out. In a very good lesson in Year 1, on increasing the number of words pupils knew to read and write by sight, what the teacher wanted the pupils to learn was automatically checked as the activity proceeded. As a consequence, pupils became excited at their own achievements and made good progress. Teachers have begun to look at texts to ensure that they are of interest to boys as well as girls but as yet comprehensive strategies to improve the achievements of boys have not been implemented.
- 76 There is satisfactory leadership. The co-ordinator provides real inspiration for colleagues and has developed the good work in speaking, listening and writing very well. How pupils could improve their reading is not recorded well and this has resulted in a lack of clarity in identifying the objectives for the next session. There has also been a lack of clarity in planning the way forward for the subject, and in particular for reading. Assessment procedures have been recently revised and are now beginning to play a useful part in checking the progress of individual pupils.

However, previously there has been insufficient focus on good day to day assessment to judge if pupils had learnt what was intended. Good efforts have been put into organising resources and the library but the important work of monitoring teaching and pupils' achievements has lacked focus and has not been sufficiently linked to school development planning.

## **MATHEMATICS**

- 77 The school has identified both a prediction and a higher target for the standards that will be achieved by pupils in Year 2 in the National Curriculum tests at the end of the year. If all achieve the predicted score the standard will be well below the national average, whilst if pupils achieve the target scores the school's results would be average. Current attainment indicates that standards are below average. Never the less, this is an improvement on standards achieved in 2000 and 2001.
- 78 Since 1997 the trend in the school's results has fluctuated but has been mostly in decline, with the greatest deceleration between 1997 and 1998. During this period girls have outperformed boys significantly in the national tests but few pupils achieved the higher levels. Tests results for 2001 show that more pupils were achieving the higher levels than in the years prior to that. The school has identified two areas for development to improve standards: firstly supporting pupils of higher attainment; and secondly, improving the achievements of boys. Staff attended appropriate training in the summer to identify ways of encouraging boys to try harder. The main weakness in the school's current improvement planning is that classroom strategies have not yet been put in place and plans to do so are not clear.
- 79 At the time of the previous inspection, standards were reported as similar to the national average. The school has taken in more pupils with significant learning needs since then. One of the main contributory factors to the low standards in the current year is the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs in this group. This was also the case for the pupils who took the tests in 2000, when results were well below the national average. However, some aspects of provision could be improved and the school recognises the need to raise standards in mathematics, especially in investigative work and data handling. It is determined to do so. After a detailed audit and analysis of the national test results, the co-ordinator helped teachers produce the targets for Year 2. A good start has been made on improving pupils' skills in mental mathematics and place value. Inspection findings indicate an improving picture in all classes.
- 80 Overall, pupils' learning, including those with special educational needs and for whom English is an additional language, is satisfactory. All pupils achieve soundly over time, due to consistently sound teaching and pupils' perseverance and willingness to learn. Teachers begin lessons with mental warm up activities such as counting on in twos, decreasing by ten or adding four. This consistent approach enables pupils to become confident with number bonds and to gain a range of strategies for calculations. Teachers, however, have not developed challenging activities to push pupils' thinking a little bit further during mental sessions and so get all pupils trying to extend their thinking and to work as hard as possible. Methods of improving boys' attainment, as suggested in the training sessions, have not yet made an impact on class teaching.

- 81 In Year 1, pupils can count, order and sort objects. Many can read numbers and identify odds and evens. Higher-attaining pupils can recognise number sequences and all are learning mathematical vocabulary such as 'shorter' and 'longer' and use 'tallest' and 'shortest' in relation to their heights, which is an improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils with average ability carry out simple addition and subtraction operations accurately. Lower ability pupils are less confident. All pupils are beginning to measure and weigh, and to realize the relationship between standard and non-standard measures, for example when measuring classroom items, using teddy bears, unifix cubes or body parts.
- 82 In Year 2, pupils understand about halves and quarters and know the names and properties of common two and three-dimensional shapes. Higher attainers interpret simple graphs and bar-charts accurately, recognise number patterns and subtract correctly in tens and units. Pupils are routinely required to discuss their methods and justify their answers, as was observed in a Year 2 lesson on counting on or back from any given two-digit numbers. Although pupils develop a sound range of mental strategies, the opportunity to use them in investigative situations is sometimes under-used.
- 83 Pupils enjoy lessons, especially when interesting tasks are organised, exemplified well in a Year 1 lesson on recognising the value of coins in calculating prices. They use and share resources well and settle quickly to pencil and paper tasks. Such an example was observed in a Year 2 lesson on place value, when pupils were also keen to explain the methods used in calculations. Work is always neat and many take great pride in presentation. Behaviour is good and managed well and pupils of all ages persevere and respond appropriately to teachers' instructions.
- 84 The quality of teaching observed was never less than satisfactory and occasionally good. Consistent planning in parallel year groups is helping teachers to set clear learning objectives for each lesson. In some lessons, these are shared with pupils at the beginning. For example, in a Year 1 lesson when pupils knew they had to use different sets of coins to pay a fixed amount, they were able to discuss effectively at the end, the combinations used. Teachers assess pupils' responses well and target supplementary questions to expand their thinking, seen to good effect in another Year 1 class working out menu prices. These consistent strategies ensure at least sound progress. The best teaching combines problem-solving, discussion and explanation, high expectations and good pace. In lessons where teaching is not so effective, teachers' expectations are not sufficiently challenging, instructions are imprecise and pupils are sometimes unsure about how to tackle set tasks. Assessment of daily work is sound and, in Year 1 classes, is used to set individual targets on a weekly basis. Marking generally consists of ticks. On occasions it gives pupils a clear idea of their own targets and how they are expected to fulfil them. Generally, lessons are organised and managed well, with an efficient use of time and resources, and smooth transition between activities.
- 85 Leadership is sound. The co-ordinator, a keen advocate of the subject, has drawn up a policy and detailed plans reflecting the requirements of the National Numeracy Strategy. A more rigorous assessment system has been recently introduced but has not yet contributed to identifying areas for development. There are plans in place to track all pupils' progress through the school. Targets are now set for each pupil and these will be evaluated on a regular basis. A very useful analysis of pupils' work has been carried out and strengths and areas for development reported back to teachers. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' plans on a weekly basis, but

has not yet had the opportunity to monitor teaching and learning. The co-ordinator has worked very hard to gather together a collection of examples of pupils' work to help guide teachers in their planning. These are useful, but without discussion to identify levels of attainment, represent a great deal of effort without much return. The co-ordinator's good guidance together with the involvement of the local education authority's mathematics consultant, are beginning to raise the quality of teaching and learning. Resources are adequate and easily accessible.

## SCIENCE

- 86 Pupils' attainment in Year 2 is similar to the national average, as was found at the time of the last inspection. This is an improvement on the assessments made by teachers at the end of last year and the year before. The school is providing pupils with more challenging work and as a result more pupils are achieving a higher standard than they did previously.
- 87 All aspects of the National Curriculum are planned for in a careful way so that pupils can build on their previous knowledge. Science is taught as part of a topic, and this helps to keep lessons interesting for pupils. Planning includes provision for pupils with special educational needs. There is planning to include cross-curricular links and for teaching of basic literacy and numeracy skills. For example, the introduction to the food topic to pupils in Year 1 came through the reading of the story 'Strawberry Jam'. Pupils' interest in how jam is made helped the teacher to focus attention on the elements of science within the process. Overall, pupils' achievements year on year are satisfactory.
- 88 Teachers plan together effectively to ensure that all pupils within a year group follow the same curriculum. Planning for less able pupils is included in lesson planning and allows for teaching and learning to be in small, achievable steps so that pupils can make progress through gradually building their knowledge and understanding. Good attention is given to resources and methods of teaching to make lessons accessible for those who speak English as an additional language. Work provided is matched to the aptitude and ability of pupils.
- 89 The use of information technology is included in science lessons usually to help record findings. Greater use could be made to further knowledge and understanding. At the moment it is regarded as an additional resource and not as an integral part of the teaching and learning process. Similarly, increasing the use of books to encourage independent research to widen and deepen pupils' knowledge and understanding should be encouraged.
- 90 Most teaching is at least satisfactory and often it is good. One lesson was unsatisfactory because the teacher spent too long on the initial introduction and pupils became uninterested. Clearly this was not representative of that teacher's usual work. Teachers generally use questioning well to establish that pupils have remembered earlier learning and to ensure they understand the scientific vocabulary. There is good classroom management. All pupils are encouraged to contribute to class discussion. Guided by the teacher they explore alternative answers and express their opinions even when the answer may not be correct. In discussion with pupils several had difficulty remembering the previous term's work. The more able were able to explain some of the differences between animals and plants and one pupil knew that fish must live in water to be able to breathe.

- 91 Teachers plan interesting activities that make their pupils enthusiastic about science. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to work together in groups. They settle to work quickly and remain on task when working together, often without adult supervision. They talk meaningfully to each other about their findings, for example, pupils spent a considerable time investigating how to measure which small car would go further than the other and how the distance would be affected by the angle of the slope of the ramp; the surface of the ramp and the force used to push the car. In Year 2 pupils spontaneously introduced the question of how to make sure that the tests they had devised were fair. Younger pupils could tell how to make a jam sandwich. Most pupils could recognise the words recipe and ingredients and more able pupils used these terms when describing how they are used when planning to cook food. Pupils are made aware of the health and safety aspects of science including the care needed when using tools such as knives and the importance of washing hands before handling food.
- 92 Pupils are beginning to see the need to record their findings and to represent their recording in a variety of ways. Pupils who experience difficulties benefit from additional support to enable them to record in alternative ways, for example, through drawing objects that can be pushed or pulled on a chart previously prepared for them. One pupil raised the question of which column should a lawn mower fit into as you pulled the cord to start the mower, but pushed it to mow the lawn. The more able pupils are encouraged to write an account of their investigations either independently or with adult support. When appropriate, pupils record using simple block graphs.
- 93 The co-ordinator provides effective management. Support to colleagues is offered and year group teachers meet with the co-ordinator each term to discuss how the science curriculum is developing within the current topic. Teachers assess pupils' understanding at the end of each block of work, but there is no formal means of monitoring the development of skills as pupils move through Year 1 and 2. This means that teachers are not in a good position to target work for those who learn more quickly than others, or those who have fallen behind. The co-ordinator has identified this as the next development for the subject. Resources are in good condition and adequate for the needs of the National Curriculum. They are stored centrally and are easily accessible.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

- 94 The standard of work in art and design is similar to that expected for pupils of this age. There has been no change since the last report. Pupils are proficient in the use of a range of media. They know and understand that by mixing different colours of paint they can create new colours. They are able to discuss and demonstrate how to mix primary colours to make purple, green and orange. Pupils are able to print using fruit such as pears to create a pattern and this activity links closely with their science study of seeds. Pupils use a range of techniques including stick printing, printing with fruit, rubbing and wax resist paintings. They also experience different media such as pastels, paper weaving and collage. Pupils study other artistic styles through the works of famous artists, such as Van Gogh. A local artist, Sally Harper has worked with the pupils to help them create a tissue paper, textile and stitched collage. The artwork produced by the pupils is displayed at the annual Warwick Festival in St Mary's Church.

- 95 There is a topic based approach to the teaching of art and design, consequently most art and design is closely linked to the current topic and takes the form of group work within a topic lesson. Teaching observed has been within other subjects but art and design is included within the topic lesson plan. In this situation there is little opportunity for the teacher to concentrate on the development of vocabulary and skills specifically associated with art and design. Pupils are encouraged to work together in small groups and benefit from talking about their work and ideas with each other. They behave well and generally maintain concentration on the task. They display an obvious enthusiasm and interest in art activities. All pupils have full access to the art curriculum and support is given to those who may experience difficulties, or when the activity requires closer supervision, for example when tools and equipment are being used.
- 96 Based on discussions with pupils and from scrutiny of their work, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. Lesson plans indicate that lessons are well organised and there is an interesting range of stimulating activities, including three-dimensional work. Pupils have made model houses to provide additional detail to their plan of the 'Island of Struay'. Teachers' expectations are high which also contributes to the quality of the artwork and to the very good behaviour during lessons. There is emphasis on the creative and imaginative element of artwork, but there is little indication that information and communication technology is used to extend and enhance the subject. Pupils are encouraged to become independent and to develop the skill to reflect on their efforts and at a later date evaluate their work before taking the necessary steps to make alterations to improve it. Teachers' knowledge and understanding and interest in the subject are reflected in the quality of the work produced. There are photographic records of the pupils' earlier work in addition to collections of samples of work. There is a system for monitoring progress against 'end of year expectations' but there is no formal record of individual pupils' development of skills. Management of the subject is satisfactory. Art and design contributes to the life of the school through the work displayed in the communal areas of school and in the classrooms. It also contributes well to pupils' cultural development through their understanding of the work of famous artists. Pupils have visited the local art gallery and nearby exhibition of folk art. There is a recent policy which is currently being reviewed. Resources are of good quality and support the requirements of the National Curriculum. The majority of resources are stored within the class areas and are in good condition.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

- 97 The standard of work by the end of Year 2 is similar to that which you would expect to see from pupils of this age. Design and technology is closely linked with other subjects of the curriculum through a topic based approach. For instance, pupils in Year 1 designed and made menus for the fictitious 'Cherry Café', the role play area used to promote their learning about food in science and other subjects. They discussed their designs and then selected appropriate materials to make the menus. Pupils were encouraged to explore their own ideas before beginning their tasks. They were able to use scissors, glue and paints or felt pens to create their individual menu cards. This task gave the pupils opportunity to practise numeracy and literacy skills. They reach a satisfactory standard in generating ideas and recognising that designs must meet certain needs. Pupils, including those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress and adult support is usually available for those who experience difficulties.

- 98 During topic lessons in Year 1, some groups of pupils were given the opportunity to make models using 'play dough'. They made models of fruit and cakes linked to the 'Cherry Café' theme. Pupils worked well together and shared their ideas and equipment well. These products were of a satisfactory standard for pupils of this age.
- 99 Teaching is good. Lessons are well planned and teachers' expectations are high. Plans show that all pupils will have the opportunity to take part in this activity over a period of time. The classrooms are well organised and the resources the pupils use are prepared in readiness for them.
- 100 There is sound subject leadership. The development of pupils' acquisition of basic skills is monitored through periodic work trawls but assessment is informal. Recording of the development of skills is linked to the teachers' end of year expectations statement. There is a useful policy that helps to ensure provision for pupils with special educational needs and equal access for all pupils. Those pupils with special educational needs are well supported by class assistants when required. There is proper regard for the health and safety of pupils to ensure they have clean hands when handling food and that they take proper care when using scissors or other tools. There are adequate resources to support the curriculum plans. There are areas suitable for practical work outside the classrooms but these do not appear to be used for creative activities.
- 101 Pupils need more opportunities to increase their independence in the preparation and selection of the materials they need to complete the tasks successfully. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last report but greater emphasis on pupils testing, evaluating and finding ways to improve the products being made will develop the subject further.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

- 102 Geography is taught within the year group topic. There are strong links to other areas of the curriculum, particularly literacy as new topics are usually introduced through a relevant story. Pupils are interested in their lessons, but the standard of work seen and their knowledge and understanding is below national expectations. The co-ordinator has recently improved curriculum planning to ensure that understanding and skills will be developed consistently. This has not been in place for a sufficient length of time to have had an impact on pupils' knowledge and understanding.
- 103 The most significant weakness in pupils' knowledge is a limited understanding of their locality. For instance pupils of higher attainment found it difficult to describe simple features of the area around the school. They needed prompting to describe the different types of houses such as detached houses, terraced or flats that they see on their way to school and to identify that there is a canal nearby.
- 104 In the one lesson seen, teaching was good and pupils learnt at good rate. The lesson drew on pupils' interest in a story about life on a Scottish island. Teachers planned for pupils to identify the physical and human features of a place and types of transport used on an island and on the mainland. The pupils of higher attainment knew good reasons why certain forms of transport are more suitable for the island, for example, the bicycle, tractor and boat. They understood that different surface conditions require different forms of transport. By the end of the lesson, those of

lower and average attainment understood the terms, 'island', 'rocks' and 'streams'. Pupils were beginning to understand that an imaginary environment can be represented on a plan or map. However, the pupils did not have a good recall of work done before on plans and maps.

- 105 All pupils have equal access to the curriculum and there is appropriate support for those pupils who are experiencing difficulties and those who speak English as an additional language.
- 106 Management of the subject is satisfactory. The policy and scheme of work have recently been reviewed and are currently being evaluated. The co-ordinator monitors planning each term but there are no formal systems for assessing pupils' attainment and progress over the academic year. The last inspection identified geography resources as an area for improvement but there has been little change since then. Resources are inadequate to meet the needs of the curriculum, for example there are no atlases suitable for use with pupils of this age and ability.

## **HISTORY**

- 107 Teachers have good knowledge of the subject and teach in an interesting and exciting way through topics. There were no history lessons during the week of the inspection. Never the less, pupils talk well about what they know and their work is good. All in all, standards are better than usual for pupils aged seven. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. All pupils make good progress year on year. Pupils from different ethnic minorities and those who speak English as an additional language are well supported by the teacher from the local authority who ensures that topics are made relevant to their backgrounds and understanding.
- 108 The history co-ordinator teaches in the reception class and from this early age represents the passage of time by a wall diagram, known to the pupils in Year 2 as a 'time line'. This is very beneficial in helping pupils begin to make sense of the stretch of time known as historical periods. By the age of seven, pupils can use words such as 'before' and 'after' well when referring to events. These pupils were five during the millennium celebrations but they had no difficulty in recalling the clay tiles they had made in reception that went towards building a millennium wall in the town. They were able to give a good explanation of why the celebration took place.
- 109 Teachers plan work which builds on pupils' knowledge and understanding from previous years. There is good involvement of pupils' family so that they can draw on the memories of older people. For instance, during the topic on toys, the pupils took home a simple questionnaire to find out what toys their parents played with as a child and this information was used in their class work. One pupil volunteered an explanation of the way historical knowledge is passed down through the generations "My gran was told things by her gran, she has told them to me and when I have children I will pass it on, that's how it goes".
- 110 In a well thought out project on the gunpowder plot, pupils were taught to think about historical events and to look for reasons why things happened. There is a good emphasis on writing. Small books with contents pages are produced. Very good links with literacy are developed. For instance, pupils are asked to write a 'newspaper' article describing the arrest of Guy Fawkes. They write lively pieces incorporating historical facts and descriptions "I was walking along and it was dark

and quiet. I had my lantern. Suddenly I heard a scuffling noise. Then I saw two men holding a man. It was Guy Fawkes.”

- 111 The subject has good leadership. The co-ordinator has worked well at planning the scheme within the school’s topic approach. This has been effectively linked to planning in geography. There is a school portfolio with evidence of work from Year 2000. This provides a useful basis for monitoring the school’s provision in different aspects of the programme of study. However, it is not linked to the different levels expected at the end of each year which would help teachers judge how well pupils are progressing. Resources support learning well and, though not plentiful, have been acquired through gifts and diligence on the part of the co-ordinator. Outside visits are made, and visitors are invited into school but this aspect could be developed further. The language support teacher from the local authority acquires artefacts and pictures when needed.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

- 112 In most lessons, teachers include work on computers in their planning, and as a result, by the age of seven, the standard of pupils’ work is satisfactory. This is an improvement from the time of the previous inspection when levels of attainment were below average throughout the school.
- 113 At the time of the previous inspection there was no policy or scheme of work to help teachers plan for the next stage of pupils’ learning and so pupils did not make consistent progress. The school has adopted the nationally recommended scheme of work and the co-ordinator has identified how skills can be developed from one year to the next. In consequence, pupils are making satisfactory progress. This applies to all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language. There is a reasonable system for assessing pupils’ knowledge, but because this has only recently been put in place, some pupils have gaps in their skills and understanding. For instance, by the end of Year 1 some pupils know that computers allow you to save work and then retrieve it at a later date, whilst others are unsure about this. Some use the keyboard with confidence, whilst others are hesitant.
- 114 Teachers apply the use of computers to pupils’ learning in almost all subjects so that by the end of Year 2 pupils have had numerous opportunities to organise information in different ways. For example, in music, pupils use a program to produce a graphic representation of musical sounds. They know that computers are good at analysing and presenting data. Pupils in Year 2, talking about a pictogram of eye colours, explained that the data had to be entered slowly but then the computer “sorted out the blues, greens and browns really quickly”. Pupils co-operate when working together and confidently tackle problems without adult support. Pupils are proud of their work on computers. By the end of Year 2 they can present written work enhanced by a picture they have chosen themselves. One pupil, whose home language was not English explained that reading the ‘talking’ books helped him to learn words.
- 115 Teaching is satisfactory overall. A few lessons are good. When teachers have good knowledge of computers, careful organisation ensures that there is an appropriate balance between the time spent on explanation and the time given for pupils to work on computers. Most teachers though have not yet been on computer training. On occasions, teachers’ plans do not identify a computer skill to be improved when

using programs such as word processing, picture making or map making. Opportunities are missed, and some bad habits creep into pupils' computer work. For example, pupils stabbing at keys with one finger; clicking on icons without thinking out why, and knowing the function of keys but not the name.

- 116 Subject leadership is good. All aspects of the National Curriculum are taught. A governor who has extensive knowledge of computers has given good support to the school. When the subject became a school priority, he visited classrooms to help draw up an audit and plan for the subject's development. The co-ordinator has matched programs and the scheme to fit into year group topics. She has supported teachers with guidance and advice. Training is planned for the current term. However, not all teachers have a means of checking the amount of time each pupil has on the computer. The new system of assessing pupils' knowledge and understanding has not yet been used to monitor pupils' achievements, but the co-ordinator checks the quality of work produced in each class.

## MUSIC

- 117 Although only a small amount of teaching was seen, it was clear from this, from listening to singing in assemblies and video evidence that music is in line with national expectations at the end of Year 2. Pupils' achievements are good in singing and sound overall. This includes pupils with special educational needs and for whom English is an additional language. This judgement is similar to that of the previous inspection.
- 118 Pupils in Year 2, clap beats accurately both with music and unaccompanied. They recognise the slow and fast rhythms in music ranging from a haunting Mozart composition to modern rap. They are beginning to handle and use percussion instruments effectively, and name many of them, including tambourine, wood-blocks, maracas and castanets. This was demonstrated well during the recent performance of Dumble the Dinosaur when pupils performed to good effect while accompanying the pianist. In assemblies and concerts they sing with enthusiasm and in tune, for example the lively song, 'Have you seen the tabby cat?' They are beginning to know how to use their tongues, lips and breathing to improve the quality of their singing. Pupils use good diction and appropriate dynamics to tell the story of the song, as was viewed on the video of Dumble the Dinosaur where they sang, 'We are cavemen'.
- 119 Pupils' attitudes to the subject are good. They listen carefully to the pianist and each other's work, as was observed in a Year 1 lesson where pupils kept a steady clapping rhythm to 'Bake a Cake'. Pupils are well behaved. They enjoy making music, show respect for instruments and try hard to improve their skills. This was demonstrated spectacularly during the end of year concert.
- 120 The quality of teaching is good. Lessons are planned well and most staff feel confident with their material. The sessions have pace and a good variety of activity, as was noted in the Year 1 lesson on developing a sense of rhythm. There is a good emphasis on improvement through rehearsal and self-appraisal seen to good effect in another Year 1 lesson on establishing appropriate pitch.
- 121 The subject is sound leadership by an enthusiastic advocate. She is knowledgeable, accomplished and keen to spread her skills throughout the school. Since her appointment the profile has been raised and each teacher now possesses a music

file containing games, topics and songs with appropriate end of year expectations for each year group. A detailed policy and scheme of work are in place but plans have been made to update them to incorporate the scheme recommended nationally, together with assessment procedures. Plans are also in place to improve pupils' compositional skills.

- 122 Additional expertise is provided for one hour each week by a music specialist. This has been instrumental in improving teachers knowledge of the subject. Recitals at the school have included performances by 'Tubalate', a brass quartet taking part in the Warwicks Arts Festival. Resources are adequate and are easily accessible to pupils and teachers.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

- 123 Good resources, good teaching and the interest generated through the after school club, 'Get Sporty' have resulted in pupils achieving a standard in physical education above that generally expected of seven year olds. This is an improvement on the previous inspection when the pupils' achievements were satisfactory. All pupils look forward to their lessons and participate eagerly. Teachers expect pupils to bring the change of clothing they need for physical education and to behave well, and this sets a good tone for lessons. Those pupils with special educational needs whose behaviour is sometimes difficult are managed very well, and those who come from different ethnic backgrounds take part in lessons, with all pupils making similar progress.
- 124 Teachers organise and plan lessons effectively. In gymnastics and games, lessons start with an energetic warm up session and pupils are encouraged to think about the effects of exercise on their bodies. One pupil in Year 2, placing her hand on her chest after jumping for a minute or so, said she could feel her heart beating faster. By the time pupils are in Year 2, they have good control when running, jumping or moving on hands and feet within the confines of the hall. They use apparatus with confidence. They jump on and off apparatus landing smoothly. When asked to find different ways of moving on the apparatus they are inventive. They can link movements together.
- 125 Pupils learn and improve their skills at a good rate because teachers plan well organised lessons that move at a good pace and provide pupils with good opportunities to practise and develop their skills. Resources are good and support learning well. For example, in a very good dance lesson in Year 1, the teacher had assembled a range of different short pieces of music to stimulate expressive movement. Attention completely captured, pupils used their arms and bodies to express the mood of the music. Teachers focus pupils' attention effectively by good questions, by praise and by using those achieving well to demonstrate to others.
- 126 A good range of activities is planned in each year group. In addition to the requirements of the National Curriculum, there are lessons which encourage group co-operation, such as parachute games. These involve a class in working together to raise a parachute from the ground and trap air inside it. A Year 2 class enjoyed working together to achieve a 'mushroom'.
- 127 Since the previous inspection, resources have been improved and staff have attended training for short games activities, including football training from Coventry City footballers. There is satisfactory subject leadership. The scheme provided by

the local education authority has been adopted. Dance lessons based on Chinese, Asian and Caribbean music and dance increase pupils' understanding of other cultures. There is an after school sports club which is held for both Year 1 and Year 2 pupils, but a charge is made for this. The co-ordinator has no opportunity to monitor pupils' achievements.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 128 Teaching in religious education integrates personal and social education well. Teachers encourage pupils to think about moral issues, but there is insufficient focus on developing their knowledge and understanding. Attainment at the end of Year 2 is below the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus which the school follows. All aspects of the syllabus are covered. The school has chosen a wide range of religions, for example, Christianity, Sikhism, Hinduism and Islam for pupils to study.
- 129 Pupils in Year 2, can retell in a simple way and with support, some of the well-known stories from the Bible. Some higher-attaining pupils know the significance behind them, for example the importance of forgiveness in the Prodigal Son (modern version). They know about celebrating important events such as Easter and Christmas, and some could name Diwali. Two pupils with higher attainment gave good reasons for these festivals. For example, they could talk about how Christmas is celebrated as a family feast and why Jesus was put on the cross. However, most pupils found it difficult to explain a reason for festivals other than Christmas. In Year 1 pupils could retell the basic events in the Adam and Eve story. Higher-attaining pupils in Year 2 know the significance of a crucifix and that Muslims pray to Allah and often use beads and prayer mats while praying.
- 130 The majority of pupils listen well and sustain concentration during religious education lessons. They are willing to offer opinions and express feelings, as was observed in a Year 2 lesson about making and keeping promises. Pupils' learning, including those with special educational needs and for whom English is an additional language, is sound overall. They show respect for the wide range of artefacts on display and take good care of books.
- 131 The quality of teaching is sound. Teachers have a positive approach to the subject, and use stories, artefacts and pictures to develop interest and learning. They show concern for pupils' understanding, and offer careful explanations, as was observed in a Year 2 lesson about the significance of making and keeping promises. Their subject knowledge is sound but in some cases pupils' work is not challenging and this means that learning is not consolidated well. In the best part of lessons skilful questioning generates pupils' interest and provokes their thinking. Good links are made with other areas of the curriculum, such as music, art, history, English and drama.
- 132 The co-ordinator, who has been in post for two years, works soundly to promote the subject. A policy and scheme of work is in the process of being updated pending the publication of the new Agreed Syllabus. She has gathered together a collection of work to help guide teachers in their planning. There are reasonable methods of assessing pupils' understanding, but as yet teachers are not using assessment sufficiently to guide their planning. Similarly there is insufficient monitoring and

evaluation of teaching and lesson plans. Resources are good, maintained well and easily accessible.