

INSPECTION REPORT

CAULDWELL LOWER SCHOOL

Edward Road, Bedford

LEA area: Bedfordshire

Unique reference number: 130326

Headteacher: Mrs Judith Apps

Reporting inspector: Julia Elsley
16892

Dates of inspection: 9th October –12th October 2001

Inspection number: 230788

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Lower
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	5 - 9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Edward Road Bedford
Postcode:	MK42 9DR
Telephone number:	01234 301400
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Martine Barron
Date of previous inspection:	23 rd February 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
16892	Julia Elsley	Registered inspector	Equal opportunities, Mathematics, Religious education, Music.	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are children taught? What should the school do to improve further?
9986	William Twiss	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school work in partnership with parents? How well is the school led and managed?
4262	Tony Taylor	Team inspector	English, English as an additional language, Information and communication technology, Art and design, Design technology	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
22398	Lynne Wright	Team inspector	Science, Geography, History, Physical education, Areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage, Special Educational Needs	How well does the school care for its pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Cauldwell Lower is a smaller than average primary schools with 187 pupils on roll, aged from five to nine years. The school serves the surrounding area that has a mixture of owner-occupied, rented and local authority housing. The children come from a wide range of social backgrounds. High mobility rates, refugee families, single parent families, unemployment and low incomes are all influential factors. The number of children (37 per cent) who are entitled to free school meals is above the national average. The proportion (31 per cent) of the pupils included on the school's register for special educational needs is also above the national average. There are three pupils with statements of special educational need. The children come from a wide range of cultural heritages. Two thirds speak English as an additional language, and of these over a third are at an early stage of English language acquisition. Eight different home languages other than English are spoken; Punjabi, Bengali-Syhetli being the most common. There is a full-time teacher to support these pupils. All the children start school in the term after their fifth birthday. On entry, their attainment covers the full ability range, but overall it is well below average. The school is in an Education Action Zone and is involved in educational initiatives to raise standards.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides a good education for its pupils. The quality of the teaching is good overall, and very good in key stage 1. As a result, the children are now achieving well and attaining standards that are similar to the national average. The headteacher provides strong leadership and is very well supported by the staff and governors in her commitment to raising standards and improving the quality of education for all pupils. The school offers good value for money.

What the school does well

- It provides a fully inclusive education for all pupils and creates an excellent ethos in which they can thrive intellectually, physically, socially and emotionally.
- Standards in English and mathematics have improved at both key stages.
- The quality of teaching is good overall and a significant proportion is very good. As a result, the pupils are achieving well.
- The school's care and welfare of the pupils is very good. The provision made for the pupils on the special needs register is particularly strong.
- The pupil's behaviour is good and their attitudes to learning are very positive.
- The pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good.
- The curriculum offered is very good. The extra-curricular activities, community involvement and partnerships with other institutions are outstanding.
- The leadership of the school is excellent.

What could be improved

- No major key issues because the standards in English and mathematics are now satisfactory.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in February 1998, when the report identified weaknesses in many aspects of the school's work. **This is no longer the case.** The strong commitment

of the previous headteacher, staff and governors has resulted in very good improvements to the quality of education provided, and this process has been even further enhanced by the current headteacher who has been in post since January 2001. The teaching is much better than at the time of the previous inspection.

As a result, all children are now challenged and the national test results for reading, writing, mathematics and science have improved markedly this year. The pupils have far greater access to the full breadth of the curriculum because the school has sensibly adopted the national guidance for the teaching of the non-core subjects. Better procedures for the planning and evaluation of the curriculum, assessment, and the monitoring of the teaching and learning are now in place. The key issue relating to the health and safety of the children entering or leaving the building has been resolved.

STANDARDS

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

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

The table shows that the pupils' attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is well below the national average and that of similar schools. In the past, the results have been adversely affected by the high proportion of pupils on the special education needs register, the high pupil mobility rate and irregular attendance. The school has worked extremely hard to improve results. It is having considerable success in tackling these underlying problems and at the same time improving the quality of the teaching and learning. The results for 2001 indicate a steep rise in the proportion of pupils achieving at the higher levels. Overall, the results are likely to be very close to the national average in English, mathematics, and science. The inspection findings also show that standards have risen and are now broadly average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. By the end of year 4, standards are broadly average. Analysis of the pupils' work shows that boys and girls of all capabilities are making good, and in some cases, very good progress across all subjects. There have been, for example, considerable improvements in the teaching of information computer technology and music. As a result, standards have risen and the pupils are now attaining the expected level. In religious education, the pupils are meeting the expectations set out in the locally agreed syllabus. Overall, the pupils are achieving well.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. The majority of the pupils are well motivated,

	interested and keen to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Most pupils treat each other with respect and consideration and are generally polite and helpful.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. The pupils have very good relationships with all the adults, who treat them with sensitivity and respect.
Attendance	The school has worked effectively with the outside agencies to bring attendance to a satisfactory level.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching		Very good	Good

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

The teaching is good and is very much better than at the time of the last inspection. It is particularly strong in key stage 1. Of the lessons seen, a third were satisfactory, a third good and the remaining third very good. The teaching of English and mathematics is a very strong across the whole school and the skills of literacy and numeracy are developed very well in other subjects. The teaching of information and communication technology is very good. The teachers plan their lessons thoroughly, carefully match the tasks they set to the pupils' needs, and use assessments effectively. The 'setting' arrangements in English and mathematics ensure that there is clear progression in the teaching of skills and knowledge. The lessons have a brisk pace, and the teachers' questioning techniques are good. They use very good visual materials to challenge and motivate the pupils who respond well and clearly want to learn. The learning assistants and carers are effective in supporting groups and individuals to extend their learning. Together with the teachers, they ensure that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, have a full access to the curriculum.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. There is a broad, relevant and well-balanced curriculum. However, there is scope to improve further the planned curriculum for design technology in Years 3 and 4.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. The very good support that the pupils receive from the classroom assistants, carers, and teachers ensures that their wide-ranging needs are successfully met.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. The pupils are well supported in class lessons and their work is matched to their learning needs. Good use is made of appropriate materials, books and artefacts to support their learning.
Provision for pupils' personal, including	The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils is very good. It is helping to raise their self-esteem and

spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	encourage good behaviour and a keen awareness of the society in which we live.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. The school has very good systems in place for the monitoring the personal and academic progress of all its pupils.

The school has very good relationships with the parents. The range and quality of information provided for the parents is very good. The annual report sets out clearly what the child has achieved and highlights areas for further improvement.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership is outstanding and the management is very good. The headteacher has developed a strong commitment among all members of the staff to continue to improve the quality of education and to raise standards.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. The school has effective systems to monitor its work and to identify areas for further improvement
The strategic use of resources	Excellent. Expenditure is planned very carefully to match the priorities within the well-considered school development plan. It is evaluated in terms of its effect upon the pupils' learning.

The commitment and clear direction given by the headteacher aligned with the strong support of the staff and governors are moving the school forward rapidly. They are all rigorous in their application and monitoring of the principles of best value. The resources are good and the accommodation is well used to support learning. All of the staff are well qualified and their expertise are used effectively and efficiently to ensure a fully inclusive education for all of the pupils.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The children like school. They are well taught and make good progress. The school expects the children to work hard and do their best. The school's emphasis on encouraging the children's personal and social development. The firm leadership of a headteacher who gets to know all the children very well. The staff welcomes opportunities to work closely with parents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A few parents would like to see more homework. A small minority of parents had concerns about the behaviour of some children last year, but they feel that the school has begun to tackle the issue appropriately.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The provision of "Care Clubs" before and after school, the wide range of activities and the 'Homework and Catch-Up' clubs for Y4. | |
|---|--|

The inspection team agrees with the positive views of parents. The pupils are set an appropriate amount of homework. There is a greater stability in staffing and as a result the inspectors found the pupils' behaviour has improved. Discussions conveyed a very happy, caring ethos and indicated that all connected with the school, including the staff, parents and the visitors from the wider community, have a commitment to providing a good quality education for all pupils.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

Any subsequent reference in the report to 'all children' automatically includes those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. There are no significant differences in the achievements of various ethnic groups or of boys and girls in any aspect of the curriculum. This comes about because the school ensures that the curriculum is fully inclusive to all its members.

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The school's results in the national tests for seven-year-olds in reading, writing and mathematics have been well below the national average and that of similar schools. Over the past three years, the results have been adversely affected by the high proportion of pupils on the special education needs register, the high pupil mobility rate and irregular attendance. The school has worked extremely hard to improve results. It is having considerable success in tackling the underlying problems outlined above and at the same time improving the quality of the teaching and learning. The results for 2001 indicate a steep rise in the proportion of pupils achieving at higher levels. Overall, the results are likely to be very close to the national average in English, mathematics, and science. This lays a secure basis to be built on in years 3 and 4.
2. The inspection findings also show that standards have risen and are now broadly average. A significant proportion of pupils is on course to achieve the expected levels in reading, writing, mathematics and science by the end of year 2. These improvements are a direct result of the highly focussed teaching and the 'setting' arrangements in both literacy and numeracy lessons. Standards in science are average, but with a small minority of pupils achieving higher levels.
3. The pupils are making very good progress. When they start school their overall attainment is well below average. Although there is a wide spread of attainment, many pupils' spoken English, literacy and mathematical development are weak. Attainment is broadly average in personal, social and physical development. From this position, the school is now very effectively developing the pupils' knowledge and skills so that by the end of key stage 1 standards are broadly average.
4. The school has a very strong commitment to the raising of standards. It has set challenging literacy and numeracy targets for every child. 'Setting' arrangements are used effectively to ensure that all pupils are challenged. The sets are flexible to allow pupils' to move between groups. The pupils' work is very closely monitored and analysed, and any gaps in their learning are identified. In addition, the headteacher gives extra support to the most able pupils to ensure they are fully challenged. The targets for all pupils are demanding. Although it is very early in the school year it is clear that the very good teaching in Year 2 is sustaining the improvements in standards.
5. Standards at the end of year 4 have improved and are now broadly average. This is because a difficult staffing situation has been resolved and all the pupils are now receiving well-focused teaching and extra curricular 'Catch-up' clubs. There are no significant differences in the achievements of various ethnic groups. This comes about because the school ensures that the curriculum is fully inclusive of all its members. Analysis of the pupils' work shows that boys and girls of all capabilities are making either good or very progress across all subjects.

6. The teachers are focussing on developing the pupils' speaking, listening, reading and writing skills. All the pupils receive a thorough grounding in the use of phonics to support their reading, both in the literacy sessions and individually when they are reading quietly with an adult. As a result, reading standards are now average overall. A significant proportion of the pupils read fluently, with good expression and understanding of the text. Standards in writing are more varied, but broadly average. In Key Stage 1, much time is spent on discussing writing tasks, utilising visual resources to enable pupils with limited English to reach a better understanding of the written word. The weakness in some of the older pupils' work is in their spelling and handwriting. The school is suitably targeting spelling and weekly spelling tests are held. The pupils are learning spellings at home and becoming more aware of the need to check their work. The older pupils' written work is often marred by its untidy presentation. The school recognises this and has begun to take steps to improve the presentation of work. **Nevertheless, it is an area where further improvement is needed.**
7. In mathematics, standards are average at the end of Key Stage 1 and Year 4. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection and is the direct result of the school's recent work in numeracy. The teachers and support assistants have worked very hard to improve their own knowledge of the subject and to increase the pace and demands of the lessons. In mental mathematics sessions, the pupils are fairly confident and competent at using mathematical vocabulary in its right context. Standards in science are broadly average in Year 2 and in Year 4 and overall the pupils' progress is good. Scientific investigation is a strong feature of the lessons. The teachers ensure that the pupils have very good opportunities to use materials to support their understanding. In many lessons, the teachers speak slowly and give clear explanations so that the pupils with English as an additional language can understand the terminology being used. Standards in information communication technology (ICT) have improved since the last inspection and are fast becoming a real strength of the school. There is a well-planned programme of skills taught, and the pupils are making rapid progress. Moreover, ICT is being used well across all subjects. The pupils' attainment, across the whole school, is in line with expectations.
8. Attainment in religious education in Year 2 and by the end of Year 4 is in line with that outlined in the locally agreed syllabus. All pupils are making good progress in their knowledge and understanding in both lessons and assemblies and it is likely that a significant proportion of the children at both key stages will have exceeded the expectations by the end of the year.
9. The overall standards and quality of work seen in geography, history, music, and physical education are broadly average overall and the pupils' progress is good. Standards have improved since the last inspection because the teachers have placed an emphasis on the teaching of skills. This is most evident in art and design where, as a result of this focussed teaching of skills and techniques, standards are above expectations. Conversely, whilst standards in design and technology in Key Stage 1 are average, skills and techniques are not sufficiently well taught in Year 3 and Year 4 for the pupils to reach satisfactory levels of achievement. Although the school has recognised this and work is in progress, it is **an area for further improvement.**
10. The pupils with special educational needs are given very good support. In most lessons the activities are well matched to the pupils' particular needs, enabling them

to make good progress and to meet the very carefully planned targets set for them. As a result, some pupils either cease to need additional support, or require less individual support, during their time in school. This marks another improvement since the previous inspection.

11. The majority of pupils with English as an additional language attain standards that are comparable with other groups in the school. There is a constant emphasis on the development of spoken language, reading and writing skills and the pupils' confidence in the use of English to communicate with both adults and other children. Consequently, the pupils make good progress as their needs are now targeted more closely. This also marks an improvement since the previous inspection.
12. Taken overall, the pupils are achieving well and making good progress. As a result, standards in English, mathematics and science are now broadly average. A significant minority of pupils are now on course to achieve higher levels because the lessons are well structured to meet their needs and quality of the teaching is good.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

13. The pupils' attitudes to school are very good. Almost all of them show a positive and conscientious approach to their work. They are well motivated by their teachers who frequently provide stimulating and exciting lessons. As a result, they are eager to learn and they develop a keen sense of enquiry. In a Year 1 / 2 mathematics lesson, for example, the pupils were enthused by the tasks set for them, concentrated well and enjoyed counting coins to the value of ten pence. The pupils listen attentively and are not afraid to ask questions and put forward their suggestions and ideas. The older pupils were, for instance, keen to suggest ways of performing experiments on the absorbency of paper in their science lesson. The pupils settle quickly into their classes. They are capable of sustaining concentration even when they are not formally supervised by an adult. The pupils are diligent in their approach to learning and stay on task. They enjoy their lessons and many of them take part in the wide range of clubs that the school offers.
14. Overall, the pupils' behaviour in and around the school is good. They are generally mature and responsible and move about the school in an orderly manner. Their conduct in classrooms is consistently good. On the very few occasions when misbehaviour occurs, the teachers deal with it effectively, ensuring that there is no disruption to lessons. The same positive picture of behaviour is apparent at break and at lunch times. There are no signs of either bullying or other forms of oppressive behaviour. In recent years, the school has not excluded a single pupil.
15. Relationships throughout the school are good. The school rightly sees this as crucial to the development of the pupils' self-esteem. In a Year 1 / 2 science lesson, these good relationships were apparent as pupils responded well to their teacher and, enthusiastically pursued their practical work on forces. Pupils of all ages are courteous, polite and welcoming to visitors. They relate very well to staff, other adults and to one another. All activities provided are educationally inclusive of all pupils. In lessons, the pupils frequently collaborate well, discuss ideas and share their resources. During assemblies, they show appropriate respect for the occasion. In a religious education lesson, even the younger pupils showed a sincere respect for a rich diversity of faiths and places of worship. High standards of care for the

school environment are apparent. and there is no deliberate damage to school property.

16. The pupils' personal development is very good. Many enter the school with under-developed social skills. All members of staff are committed to helping the pupils to become rounded individuals and they work hard to foster positive social skills. They provide a good range of opportunities for the pupils to participate in after school activities including the Skylark and Fun clubs. As a result they benefit from activities that allow them to play and work together outside lessons.
17. The pupils respond well to opportunities to take responsibility. They select, prepare and put away resources for their lessons and take turns at doing routine jobs, such as looking after the toy buckets. The pupils take their responsibilities seriously. For instance, they understand that School Council is a forum in which they can express their views about the school and are keen to see it work well. The pupils support charities and make contributions to help those who are less fortunate than themselves. Visits to the community are a strength of the school and are successful in helping the pupils to understand some of their responsibilities in society.
18. The school's involvement in the social inclusion project has enabled it to strengthen its approaches to monitoring attendance and ensuring that the pupils' attendance has improved. The reason for the previous unsatisfactory attendance related to the high mobility rate, but this has been resolved and, as a result, attendance and punctuality are now satisfactory overall. The registration sessions are efficient and are used well, not only to record those pupils who are present, but also to introduce lessons.
19. The previous inspection reported a positive picture of attitudes, values and personal development. The school works hard to improve further this aspect of its work and there are now several features that are very good. Overall, the high standards of behaviour and very good attitudes to learning make a positive impact on the pupils' achievements.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

20. The teaching is good and is very much better than at the time of the previous inspection. The teaching is particularly strong in key stage 1. Of the lessons seen, a third were satisfactory, a third good and the remaining third very good. A small proportion of lessons were judged to be excellent and none were unsatisfactory.
21. The major strength of this successful teaching is the very effective classroom management. All of the teachers have very high expectations of the pupils' behaviour despite the fact that some find it hard to concentrate and there is a small minority with emotional and behavioural difficulties. These pupils are very well supported by their carers so that there is minimal disruption to the learning. The classroom routines are firmly established, and the pupils feel very secure in the familiar setting. The pupils in a Year 1 class, in their first few weeks at school, were happy and could use vocabulary such as squeeze, roll, messy, cold, smooth confidently and competently describe what they were doing with a piece of clay. They were continually praised for their efforts and as a result, found learning to be fun. The specialist teacher for English as an additional language supported them very effectively, speaking in the pupils' mother tongue to enable them to fully

understand the class teacher's instructions and the vocabulary used when working with clay.

22. Most lessons are presented in an interesting, exciting and challenging way and the children feel secure. In selecting work they want to go into the "Best Work" books, the children are helped to reflect upon what they have done well and what they want to do better. Throughout the school, the pupils are encouraged to become increasingly aware of themselves as learners through discussions with their teachers. This helps to raise their self-esteem so that they become more effective learners.
23. The teaching is very good in Key Stage 1 where the lessons have a good pace and the pupils concentrate on their work and respond well. In Years 3 and 4, the teaching is good overall, but in some otherwise satisfactory lessons the learning is not moved forward as rapidly as it might be. Consequently inattentive behaviour creeps in among a small minority of older pupils disrupting the flow of the lesson. Nevertheless, the majority of pupils learn effectively in these lessons. At other times, when the pace is more rigorous, the teaching is good.
24. The teaching of English and mathematics is a very strong across the whole school and the skills of literacy and numeracy are developed very well in other subjects. Most of the teachers have become skilled practitioners because of the good training they have received. They plan the literacy and numeracy lessons thoroughly, use time effectively and support the pupils purposefully. The lessons start with a clear introduction, in which the objectives and learning points are highlighted to ensure that the pupils know what is expected of them. The mental mathematics sessions, for example, are well focussed and have a quiet rigour and pace. Good questioning by the teachers challenges the pupils to think and reflect. Whole-class lessons are sharply focussed and the pace is brisk. As a result, the pupils are learning effectively and making very good progress.
25. The 'setting' arrangements in English and mathematics ensure that there is clear progression in the teaching of skills and knowledge. These arrangements have been very effective in raising the pupils' attainment. The teachers make very good use of the information gained from the national tests and their informal assessments and, as a result, have placed the pupils in the various sets to meet their individual needs.
26. Although the teachers generally have high expectations of the pupils, there is a marked difference between the quality of the pupil's presentation of work in their books and that which is delightfully displayed on walls. The latter shows pride and care in its presentation and finish, but the work in older pupils' books it is particularly untidy. The teachers' marking of pupils' work is variable across all subjects. The best marking gives the pupils a clear indication of what they need to do to improve. In other cases, the work is marked with a tick and supportive comments, but without giving the pupils constructive help towards meeting their individual targets. **These are areas for further development.**
27. The teachers are very adept at explaining concepts patiently and clearly to give the second language learners the time to absorb what is being said and to respond accordingly. This is a very strong feature across all subjects. The pupils on the register of special educational needs benefit from good teaching and very good support. This enables them to make good progress, and in some cases they cease to need extra help. All staff use the pupils' individual education plans effectively to ensure that the work is not only interesting and stimulating but is also well-matched to their needs. This is an improvement since the last inspection when it was found

that these pupils were not sufficiently challenged, and were sometimes given inappropriate tasks. In literacy, numeracy and science lessons, the teachers now provide suitable activities. In other lessons, these pupils are fully involved in discussions through the individual or small-group support that they receive, enabling them to remain part of their social group and to complete their allotted tasks. The pupils identified as more able (gifted and talented) have some small group teaching in order to extend their learning more rapidly. The individual programmes prepared, for example, in mathematics are very successful in raising standards to a higher level.

28. The teachers were seen setting relevant and interesting homework such as asking the pupils to find out about different types of paper or the cost of different boxes and tins of food to help them with their understanding of the use of money. Most of the children complete these tasks so that the homework supports and extends their learning in class. Many pupils voluntarily stay to the 'catch-up' clubs in English and mathematics after school. These activities are really paying dividends in the raising of attainment.

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

29. In all of the areas of learning, the Foundation Stage curriculum has been carefully planned to take account of the different ways and different rates at which children learn. It is underpinned plans by a very strong philosophy, that learning should be enjoyable and meet the interests and needs of all the children. To this end, the co-ordinator has organised the learning programme to be as flexible as possible, so that she can take advantage any opportunities that arise. At the time of the previous inspection, the curriculum for the rest of the school was broad and balanced overall, but contained weaknesses in some non-core subjects. The school's long-term planning also required improvement. These limitations have been rectified.
30. The school now provides a very good curriculum that is thoughtfully designed and planned. It covers all the required aspects of the National Curriculum, and provides for religious education. It is broad, balanced and relevant, and is enhanced by a wide range of additional features.
31. The development of the pupils' literacy and numeracy skills is given a major emphasis. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have both been firmly incorporated into the day-to-day work of the school. Good additional provision is made for those pupils with English as an additional language. The provision for the pupils with special educational needs is very good.
32. The careful development of the various aspects of the curriculum ensures that it is inclusive. All pupils have equal access to the opportunities that the school provides. One of the numerous positive features is the work the school does through 'catch-up' clubs for those pupils who need extra support in their learning. There is also an outstanding range of extra-curricular activities that are ongoing throughout the week. The latter include a computer club, sporting, musical and artistic activities, gardening, and a homework club. In addition, the school offers a range of visits to local places of interest, such as museums, and many visitors are invited to help the school in its overall enrichment programme.
33. The personal and social education of the pupils is very good and includes sex education and drugs education. Excellent curriculum links are maintained with other local schools, and good use of the Education Action Zone support monies

significantly extends the learning opportunities in music and the arts for the pupils and staff.

34. The school fosters the interests and aptitudes of the pupils well. The whole curriculum is geared towards developing the pupils' basic skills and providing relevant opportunities for them to develop and grow, both individually and collectively within the school and the local community. This is largely achieved through a clear recognition of the pupils' needs and continuous encouragement.
35. The school enjoys excellent links with its neighbouring nursery and middle schools. This is a result of positive participation in the Education Action Zone initiatives both in curriculum development and in regard to transfer arrangements. The staff value the meetings with other colleagues to ensure that curriculum issues are explored and that they get a very clear picture of their future pupils.
36. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural aspects of the pupils' development are all very good. There is an inclusive ethos throughout the school based on a philosophy of total care. This aspect was strong at the time of the last inspection and remains so.
37. The provision to foster the pupils' spiritual development is very good and enables them to focus on some of the larger questions of life. For example, in a Key Stage 1 history lesson, the pupils found it unbelievable that a senior citizen who came to talk to them had no 'Lego' to play with when he was a boy nor a television to watch. In school assemblies, there are very good focal points that encourage reflection and spiritual awareness. This was evident, for example during the lighting of a candle and as the whole school listened to the sounds of two children playing the tabla.
38. The provision for the pupils' social and moral development is very good. A clear and consistent ethos permeates the work of the school. Moral issues that affect the pupils are openly discussed and the difference between right and wrong is gently, but emphatically taught. The systems for managing behaviour promote the pupils' moral behaviour well and there are many varied and effective opportunities for social development. In particular, the adults provide very good role models for the pupils. They treat the pupils with respect, provide clear expectations and continually strive to praise their efforts, in the classroom, playgrounds and dining hall. The pupils have routine responsibilities and the school council takes on board issues to be resolved. Each class has its own responsibility for equipment at playtimes, the register, tidying areas of the classroom or in the library. The pupils are very caring of each other and oldest look after the younger ones well.
39. The cultural provision is very good. The strongest aspect of the school's work is the multi-cultural element linked to art and music. Over the course of a year, the pupils have good opportunities to hear 'live' music as well as a range of 'World Music'. They are made aware of the rich artistic traditions not only of Europe, but also Africa and other continents. The school is proud of its community identity and many parents and local people readily volunteer to discuss with the pupils their own cultural backgrounds. The pupils' learning experiences are considerably enriched by the local people, who have provided evidence of life in the past. Steve 'the Viking', for example, provided the children with insight into previous cultures and how elements have been developed in our life today. There are very good links with different places of worship, which provide valuable information about the religious practices of Hinduism, Sikhism, Islam and Christianity prevails. Resource materials and artefacts of a very high quality enhance the curriculum and to support the pupils' knowledge and understanding.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

40. This is a strong aspect of the school's work and provides very good support and guidance for all the pupils. The settling in arrangements for all five-year-old pupils is clearly well organised. All staff are vigilant and take the welfare and safety of the pupils seriously. The school has very good arrangements for ensuring the health and safety of the pupils at all times. Regular inspections of the premises are made, risks are fully assessed and timely action is taken to rectify any shortcomings. The school's strong personal, health and social education programme alerts the pupils to important aspects, such as healthy eating and the dangers of substance abuse. Routine medical screening takes place and each year the school reinforces this by holding a healthy eating week. Qualified first-aiders are on hand at all times. The staff are sensitive to minor upsets and in a Year 1 physical education lesson, for example, the teacher and learning support assistant showed great care and concern for a pupil who temporarily felt unwell.
41. Very good arrangements cover all aspects of child protection. The formal policy is fully understood by all staff. Any concerns are quickly investigated and are dealt with in a sensitive and confidential manner.
42. Much time and effort is put into promoting good attendance. The registers are properly maintained and thoroughly checked. Immediate contact is made with families if there are any unexplained absences. The school's recent project, on social inclusion, has led to a big improvement in the overall rates of attendance. Formal policies outline the school's good procedures for promoting and monitoring high standards of behaviour. These are understood and rigorously applied throughout the school. A system of rewarding positive conduct is valued by the pupils and provides the motivation for them to maintain high standards.
43. The school's systems for monitoring the personal development of the pupils are very good. Comprehensive records of the pupils' progress are kept as they move through the school. The teachers and support staff know the pupils and their needs well. This combination of formal and informal monitoring readily identifies those pupils who need extra help with their learning and is highly effective. It also alerts the staff to other important needs. For instance, all staff recognise that pupils who are learning English as a second language respond well to the use of visual materials. Consequently, they use this technique well in their classes. The achievements of the pupils are fully recognised. The regular awards assembly celebrates the success of individuals and classes and is seen by the pupils as one of the most enjoyable aspects of their schooling.
44. The pupils are made most welcome when they come into the school for the first time. The induction procedures provide the parents and carers with ample opportunities to visit the school and gain information about it. Excellent liaison work with the local nursery ensures that the teachers have a very clear picture of the pupils' needs as they take the next steps through their schooling.
45. The pupils with special educational needs are very well supported and are effectively integrated into classes. This is particularly noticeable where they have difficulties controlling their own behaviour and relating well to other pupils. The assessment and record keeping for pupils with special educational needs is of very good quality; their progress is monitored regularly to ensure that their needs are met and their learning is developing. Some pupils respond so positively to this that

they move out of the special needs category. The progress of pupils with identified behavioural difficulties is monitored carefully, and they are treated fairly and consistently to help them become better able to control their actions. External specialist help is used regularly to support the pupils with special needs. However, at present the school is awaiting a new appointment by the Education Authority of an educational psychologist to further support the assessments of pupils with special educational needs.

46. The previous inspection identified the positive care and guidance arrangements. The school continues to work hard on these aspects and has dealt fully with the health and safety issue highlighted in the last report. Overall, the very good care and support offered to the pupils make a strong contribution to the school's aim of 'achievement for all.'
47. Since the last inspection, the school has taken action to ensure that all the issues identified have been thoroughly addressed. A comprehensive analysis of the baseline assessments made of the children's attainment on entry to the school is now used very effectively to plan interesting and suitable activities for the youngest children. The processes for assessing what the children do and do not know, and how well they are learning, are manageable and effective across all aspects of the Foundation Stage curriculum.
48. There are now very good procedures for assessing the pupils' attainment and for monitoring their academic progress. There is a very good, manageable system for assessing what the pupils know in English, mathematics and science. The analysis of the test results and regular recording of progress in these subjects enable the school to set targets for future academic and personal attainment. These targets are re-evaluated twice each year to see whether individuals need either extra help or additional challenge in the teaching. As this system has been very successful, the speaking and listening targets are now to be incorporated.
49. Other subjects of the curriculum are assessed regularly and effectively at the end of each block of work. These assessments are skilfully managed by the teachers so that the pupils have every opportunity to explain what they know and understand. Because many pupils have difficulty explaining in writing more abstract concepts, such as pushes and pulls, the assessments use a range of other techniques very effectively. Good use is made of the resulting information, in setting targets for further learning and in reshaping the learning programme where necessary.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

50. The school's relationships with the parents are very good. Their views expressed at the parents' meeting and in responses to the questionnaires confirm that they have no significant concerns about the school. The school works very hard within its community to secure the support of the parents. The headteacher and her staff are very approachable and welcome parents into the school. As a result, the parents feel able to discuss freely with the teachers matters such as their children's reading and homework. There are a number of enthusiastic parents and governors who help in the classrooms. For example, they hear children read and help with Divali celebrations. The school has excellent links with the community. This is well illustrated by the local shop owners, the health centre and the local places of worship that are fully involved in the life of the school.
51. Almost all parents feel that the school encourages them to become involved in all aspects of its everyday life. There is no complacency in the school's efforts to engage the parents. It has, for example, set a target of ensuring that every pupil is

heard reading at home. Extra effort is made to encourage families who are learning English to support their children's schooling. Home visits are a feature of this work and the school's specialist teacher holds weekly classes for parents. The parents of pupils with special educational needs are given good opportunities to be involved in reviews of individual education plans. A committed band of volunteers runs the school's association. They are successful in raising funds and have recently bought a new television for the school.

52. The range and quality of the information provided for the parents are very good. The annual report sets out clearly what the child has achieved and highlights areas for further improvement. Parents are invited to termly meetings and are encouraged to discuss the progress of their children with the teachers. A regular newsletter keeps them informed of school events and the home school agreement has been a feature of school life for some time. Specific letters let the parents know about important matters such as the subjects and topics that are being taught in each term. An interesting feature of the school's communications with the parents is the use of a parent representative for each class. Their role is to disseminate information to their peers. Members of staff frequently translate newsletters and messages to parents in other community languages should the need arise.
53. A very small number of parents commented that more homework would be helpful. The inspection team found that the amount of homework set was appropriate for the age of the pupils. A few parents remarked that the behaviour of a minority of pupils fell short of the standards normally seen in the school, but they thought that the school had dealt with this. The inspection team conclude that the school's efforts to promote good behaviour are effective and that high standards are the order of the day.
54. The previous inspection report highlighted this area of the school's work as strength. The same positive picture is still apparent.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

55. The leadership of the headteacher is excellent, and overall management of the school is very good. The headteacher, staff and governing body share a common vision that puts the achievements of the pupils above all else. Consequently, the school is very effective. Its aims are succinct and are reflected in a school community that is orderly and welcoming.
56. The headteacher constantly assesses the school's work and identifies areas for improvement. She uses the school's comprehensive range of data to celebrate successes and to shape and implement plans for development accurately. Consequently, the school knows that the results achieved by the pupils when they reach the age of seven have improved. Similarly, the management team has set about improving the achievements of the older pupils.
57. The headteacher and her team value the use of realistic and challenging targets for the pupils. Individuals and groups have clear targets for their learning, which they are able to discuss and explain to their teachers, their peers and visitors.
58. A very strong feature of the leadership and management of the school is its effectiveness in monitoring and evaluating the teaching. A regular programme of observing the teachers at work enables the management team to identify strengths

and to provide timely and constructive feedback. This has made a significant contribution to improving the quality of the teaching since the previous inspection.

59. The governing body is very supportive of the school. Its members visit the school regularly and know its strengths and development needs. Consequently, they are well informed and are able to contribute effectively to the monitoring of school performance and the shaping of its future plans. The governors discharge their responsibilities conscientiously and meet their statutory obligations.
60. The headteacher recognises the crucial importance of teamwork. In the short time that she has been in post, she has built a robust team spirit within the school. Staff members take their responsibilities seriously. As a direct result of the support and encouragement of the management team, the teachers with subject leadership responsibilities are now fully involved in monitoring and influencing the direction of their subjects. The members of the support staff also make an excellent contribution to the pupils' learning. For example, they lead much of the group work in classes and give extra help to those pupils who need it. Consequently, the learning support assistants work in close harmony with the teachers to ensure that the pupils achieve all that they are capable of.
61. An appropriate programme of professional development is in place for all staff, including the support staff. This is closely linked to the school's well-established culture of staff appraisal and performance management. Comprehensive support is given to all staff both through formal training courses and through the mentoring and coaching arrangements. For example, the new Foundation Stage co-ordinator has made a prompt and efficient start to her role. She has clear priorities for the development of this stage of the children's learning, and is undergoing a well-focused programme of professional development to help her to meet the school's aims successfully. The procedures for inducting new staff into their roles are excellent. The school is, for instance, helping one of its support staff to become a qualified teacher. The school has achieved the "Investors in People" national standard for its staff development work.
62. The new co-ordinator for pupils with special educational needs has inherited a robust and secure system, and has made a determined beginning to her leadership. She is forging close working relationships with the staff, and increasing her own expertise through clearly focused professional development. The staff have a very sensitive and knowledgeable approach to special needs issues and very positive attitudes to special needs provision, including the planned work to be undertaken by the headteacher for the gifted and talented children that are identified as the year progresses.
63. The school has a very positive approach to the teaching of English as an additional language. It has a full time teacher provided by the Local Education Authority, for the teaching of pupils who need this support. The class teachers plan carefully and the visual resources used to support and increase children's understanding and vocabulary are very good. All the pupils' spoken and written English is assessed and recorded. Subsequent targets are appropriately set and are made clear to the pupils.. The specialist teacher takes identified groups or individual pupils for additional support. However, her role could be more active in helping to enhance the quality work of other staff. **This is an area for further improvement.**
64. The school's leaders and the governing body make very effective use of the resources at their disposal. For example, it has used funds it has received from the Education Action Zone initiative to employ a specialist musician, who has provided the teachers with additional knowledge and skills in this subject. Consequently, the

pupils' standards of work and progress have also improved. The social project to ensure that all pupils are included in everything that it has to offer has had a good impact upon improving attendance. This has been money well spent because it has raised the quality of education for all pupils.

65. The headteacher fosters a consultative style of planning for school improvement. The plan is appropriately costed, and as each project progresses the work is evaluated and further action taken where necessary. Each year, appropriate priorities are set for the further development of crucial subjects, like literacy and numeracy and ICT, through the use of specific grants. Additional key priorities, for example ICT, music, design technology and physical education, are kept to a sensible, yet challenging level. The financial planning is of a similar high quality. Under the leadership of the present headteacher, the school's budget deficit has been eliminated and the principles of best value have been embedded into the planning decisions.
66. The accommodation available to the school is satisfactory, and is adequate for the number of pupils currently on roll. The classrooms, small teaching areas and the library are well organised and used effectively. There are spacious hard and soft areas for outside play and an attractive courtyard, which has been developed by parents. Overall, the resources for learning are satisfactory with some strengths. The school is rapidly improving the pupils' learning in information and communications technology because it has bought a new suite of computers. The training and expertise of the various members of staff are well matched to the needs of the pupils, and the teachers have responsibilities that are closely allied to their experience and talents.
67. The previous inspection report concluded that leadership and management were effective. A new management style and clear-sighted leadership are taking the school further forward. Today, many of the improvements in the achievements of the pupils came as a direct result of the high quality of the new leadership and management.

The provision for and standards achieved by pupils with English as an additional language. (EAL)

68. At the time of the previous inspection, this aspect of the school's work had a number of weaknesses, but almost all of them have been rectified. The school's provision for English as an additional language (EAL) is now good; it meets the needs of the pupils effectively.
69. Many opportunities are provided for the pupils to be supported in their spoken and written language, not only in English lessons, but also in other aspects of their work and their social interaction. The pupils' first language is used to support their learning of English where appropriate. A number of the support assistants are bi-lingual and this is helpful when tasks and ideas need to be clarified.
70. The staff are aware of the needs of the pupils and are quick to spot either progress or lack of progress, they offer praise or remedial action as appropriate. Firm attention is paid to ensuring that the pupils with EAL follow a programme based on the National Curriculum, and standards are measured against these expectations. The relevant assessment data is used effectively to determine progress and to plan subsequent activities appropriately, always ensuring that the pupils follow the mainstream of education. Clear targets are set for individuals and for groups of pupils, based on the assessment of their needs. The school has a good range of resources to support learning across all areas of the curriculum, and they are used

very well by all staff. For instance, there are sufficient dual texts of traditional stories from mother cultures. As a result of this well integrated approach, the standards pupils achieve are now comparable with any other ethnic group in the school and progress is good.

71. Cultural differences are seen as an advantage and are valued and encouraged. For example, a pupil in Year 2, recognising his country's national flag in a computer program, was encouraged in his recognition and gained the general interest of other pupils.
72. The co-ordinator for English as an additional language provides satisfactory support for the pupils in their day-to-day learning. However, she needs to be more active in supporting other staff and in providing the initiative for developments in this vital aspect of the school's work. Other identified weaknesses have been fully addressed and as a result standards have improved, **but this remains an area for further improvement.**

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

73. There are no major issues for improvement. However, there are a number of minor issues that the headteacher, governors and staff should consider. They should continue to build upon the recent improvements giving particular consideration to:
 - ensuring that the co-ordinator takes a more active and influential role in the future developments of the provision for pupils with English as an additional language **(paragraphs 63, 72).**
 - improving the pupils skills and techniques in design technology in Years 3 and 4 **(paragraphs 9, 101).**
 - improving the presentation of pupil's written work in Years 3 and 4 **(paragraphs 6, 79, 87).**
 - developing greater consistency in marking so that the teachers comments tell the pupils how they can improve their work **(paragraphs 26, 82)**

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	40
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	23

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	13	13	13	0	0	0
Percentage	3	33	33	33	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

The following statistics are based on figures presented by the school in July 2001. The school has no reception class pupils during the Autumn Term of each academic year.

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	R – Y 4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	197
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	72

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	R – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	60

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	126

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	25

Attendance

Authorised absence

School data	6.6
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

School data	0.8
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2000	19	23	42

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	13	16
	Girls	15	13	20
	Total	28	26	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	67 (71)	62 (76)	86 (90)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	15	18
	Girls	14	17	18
	Total	28	32	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	67 (79)	76 (88)	86 (93)
	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	2
Black – African heritage	8
Black – other	3
Indian	77
Pakistani	7
Bangladeshi	18
Chinese	0
White	58
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes**Qualified teachers and classes: Y1 –Y4**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	32:8
Average class size	28.1

Education support staff: Y1-Y4

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	158

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	0
Total number of education support staff	0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	0
Number of pupils per FTE adult	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Total number of unqualified teachers (FTE) – 1

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	2001-2002
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	£
Total income	459865
Total expenditure	481993
Expenditure per pupil	2038
Balance brought forward from previous year	28354
Balance carried forward to next year	6226

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

187

Number of questionnaires returned

28

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	79	18	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	61	36	4	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	46	39	11	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	50	32	14	0	4
The teaching is good.	71	25	0	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	68	29	4	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	71	29	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	75	25	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	75	21	4	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	64	32	0	0	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	75	25	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	75	21	0	4	0

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

74. There were no children in the Foundation Stage at the time of the inspection. The children start at the school in the term following their fifth birthday. During the present academic year, the children will be admitted to the Foundation Stage, in the Reception class, in January and April 2002.

ENGLISH

75. Since the last inspection, the school has established a rigorous programme to raise attainment. As a result, standards have risen and are now broadly average.
76. The school has placed great emphasis on ensuring that the pupils gain a thorough grounding in the basic skills of literacy, and on raising standards overall. Through the adoption of the National Literacy Strategy and other pertinent developments, the school has been largely successful in ensuring that the teachers' planning contains clear and progressive long and short-term learning objectives. The support for those pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language has been reviewed and strengthened. The school is also addressing the needs of higher attaining pupils more effectively. Whole-school targets for improvement have been set, and the pupils are given individual targets to focus their efforts in raising their attainment. The school's use of 'setting' to allow better matching of the work to the pupils' abilities is beginning to pay good dividends. Most pupils are now attaining the expected level with a few pupils attaining at a higher level.
77. By the end of Year 2, the pupils' speaking and listening skills are average, and are steadily built upon in Years 3 and 4. The teachers are skilled at giving the pupils good opportunities to listen to stories and accounts of events, to discuss work, to offer ideas and comments and to engage in role-play. For example, during the inspection, the pupils at Years 1 and 2 were observed enacting the traditional tale of 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears'. The quality of the pupils' expression as they modulated their voices to match the characters was very good, and they showed great confidence and assurance in performing before an audience of their peers. This is because the teachers engage them in high quality conversation, focus their questions pertinently to ensure understanding and draw out the pupils' thoughts and ideas. For example, in a religious education lesson, the children could relate to common features and values within places of worship and express their own thoughts about the similarities very well.
78. Reading standards are average overall, but there are numerous examples of above average attainment at both key stages. At Key Stage 1, all the pupils make very good progress as they share reading books in small groups, and use focussed texts selected as a basis for literacy work. They also benefit from reading individually with adults, learning how to link sounds with the letters they read and gaining confidence to attempt new words. The classrooms are well organised for reading. In Years 3 and 4, a significant proportion of the pupils reads fluently, with good expression and understanding of the text. They are able to discuss what they have read, and do so enthusiastically. They have good phonic skills. They know a range of authors, and can identify the contents and index pages of books and say what they are for. The

school places good emphasis on the development of the pupils' library skills. For example, most pupils now know about the Dewey System and can find books quickly to support their research work. All pupils, including the higher attaining pupils, are supported well and they make good progress. In addition, the classroom support staff are organised very efficiently to ensure the maximum support for the pupils so that they can achieve their best.

79. The pupils' writing skills are more varied across the year groups. Standards here are less secure, but overall they are average because the teaching is lively and the teachers enthuse the pupils with interesting tasks. Within the 'sets', the work is planned meticulously to ensure that all the pupils are challenged at their current attainment levels, and that their learning is continually extended. The pupils write with gradually increasing skill and imagination in a good variety of contexts, for example, accounts of events, letters, diaries, posters and stories; they make sound progress. However, the quality of their work is diminished by spelling errors, and in some instances, particularly where the work in books is not presented well, there are weaker handwriting skills. The school is suitably targeting the improvement of spelling, and the pupils take home regular spellings to learn. More attention to handwriting skills in workbooks would improve the presentation of work. **This is an area for further improvement** particularly in Years 3 and 4.
80. The school has effectively and consistently applied approaches for improving literacy. The introduction of the National Literacy Strategy three years ago has involved the whole school and the key stage teams in careful planning that has ensured that the pupils' literacy skills build steadily and successfully on their prior learning. As a result of these developments, the teachers have increased their awareness of the importance of incorporating aspects of literacy in the teaching of other subjects. For example, most pupils suitably apply grammar and punctuation in their history, geography, science and religious education projects.
81. The teaching seen during the inspection was generally good, and one in three lessons was very good. It has improved considerably since the last inspection because there is a consistent and coherent approach to the teaching of English. The teachers plan thoroughly to ensure that the pupils are developing a wide range of skills that can be applied in all areas of the curriculum. The work is analysed well and because relationships are good in almost all classrooms, the pupils are eager to please their teachers and want to do their best. All pupils respond positively to the additional help they are given. They accept the challenges they are offered with enthusiasm, and behave very well. Where the teaching is satisfactory, but less emphatic in ensuring the pupils' good progress, the teachers do not always insist firmly enough on the pupils' maintaining their concentration and endeavour. The background noise of chatter and fidgetiness tend to detract from the work in hand. Individual pupils sometimes disrupt the lessons by shouting out comments and occasionally by challenging the teachers with their inappropriate behaviour. This is an aspect that has been recognised by the school and action has been taken to mitigate it.
82. English is a well-managed subject. The co-ordinator is experienced and committed and has a sound knowledge of current standards throughout the school. The information gained from the assessment procedures is being used with increasing efficiency to focus attention on the school's and the pupils' needs, and to plan further development. The marking of work by teachers is methodical. Nevertheless, it could be more closely linked to the children's individual targets so that it allows the pupils to know where they are and what they now need to do to achieve the target. **This is an area for further improvement.** The quantity and quality of the resources are good and they are used effectively. For example, information and

communications technology and visiting poets are used effectively to increase the pupils' opportunities for using language and developing ideas. The library is used extensively to good effect. This important resource is supported by a voluntary librarian whose work is an invaluable aid.

MATHEMATICS

83. The school is working very hard to improve results from well below average levels in the Key Stage 1 tests and to tackle recent underachievement at the end of Year 4. It has taken significant steps forward with some successful outcomes. The results for 2001 show a steep rise in pupils achieving higher levels at the end of Key Stage 1. Standards are now in line with the national average with a small minority of pupils reaching a higher level. Since the beginning of the new academic term, with settled teaching arrangements, the pupils have begun to make rapid progress and the school has now successfully tackled the under-achievement of the Year 4 pupils. Many of these pupils attend the 'catch-up' classes after school and the after-school clubs where mathematical programs are readily available on the computers. The standards of work seen in lessons support this view. The teaching in sets based on prior attainment and the planned, logical progression of work are raising standards across the whole school. The pupils are enjoying the subject and are very focussed on their learning. They are making very good progress in mathematics compared to the well below average levels of attainment when they first started school. This is largely due to the very successful introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy and teaching that is generally good and often very good. There is little difference between the attainment of boys and girls, because the school is highly committed to ensuring full inclusion for all.
84. On entry to school, the mathematical standards of the current Year 1 pupils' were below the age-related expectation. By the time they reach the age of seven and nine, it is likely that most children will be attaining levels in line with those expected nationally because of the quality of the teaching they receive. The 'setting' of the children according to prior attainment means that they are receiving good, solid, focussed teaching that is directed at their level within the framework of the Numeracy Strategy and the National Curriculum. This is allowing all the pupils to build steadily upon their prior learning and to move forward at a much sharper and rapid pace. The pupils demonstrate how confident and competent they are in front of the other children when explaining how they get their answers. They are in mixed-age groups of Years 1 and 2, Years 3 and 4 according to their individual mathematical performance. Within these groups, the majority are working at their age-related expectation. There is a good proportion working at the higher level, including children with English as an additional language. The smallest group, working at the lower levels were mostly Year 1 and Year 3 pupils, many of whom have special educational needs. The pupils' mathematical performance is constantly assessed by the teachers, and they can easily be transferred from one set to another if necessary.
85. At this point of the school year, the higher attaining pupils at Key Stage 1 are counting in fives, tens, twenties and fifties. They understand the meaning of one more than, one less than, and can accurately add amounts of money, such as 35p+10p. In the lesson observed, they had listened and tried very hard to understand the new concept being taught, but had not quite grasped how to apply their knowledge of counting in twenty-fives to resolve the problem. Nevertheless, they tackle new concepts with verve. This is a strong feature as they are well challenged by all staff, including the support staff, with a quiet rigour when working either individually or as a whole class. The teachers use the correct mathematical vocabulary, which the children then adopt with great delight when talking about what

they are doing. The average and below average attainment groups are also working with money. The middle set recognises coins very confidently and through the well-organised practical tasks they can accurately count on to ten pence. They are also able to count numbers to thirty forwards and backwards, though in the mental mathematics session, they had difficulty in remembering the number between 13-11. However, during the whole-class session, the teacher reinforced this learning very well and by then had almost all remembered that it is 12. With very good support from adults, the lower attaining group worked very well to add sets of cubes together and then record accurately the total on the whiteboards. The adults marked the pupils' successes with praise and encouragement, but at the same time were very careful to ensure that they formed the numbers correctly.

86. In Years 3 and 4, a significant feature of the work was the way in which higher attaining groups collaborate to resolve mathematical problems. The pace of work is sharp and the activities are well focused to extend the learning. The pupils use the appropriate mathematical vocabulary in its correct context, share their reasoning and are able to reflect, question and think about what mathematical operation and method would be best to resolve successfully the problems they are given. For instance, they use mathematical language well and explain very confidently how they arrive at their answers. They are very enthusiastic about homework and almost all had returned their work. The average group, although restless at times, were gaining a fair understanding of lines of symmetry and tackled the work well. The lower attaining group, which included a number of pupils with special educational needs and a few with very limited spoken English, had a strong sense of achievement in understanding the terms 'longer than' and 'shorter than'. They worked in pairs at estimating the length of a variety of objects in a 'surprise' bag. They enjoyed this activity very much and their level of concentration was good. A very strong feature of this teaching was the use of everyday items that were meaningful to them, particularly the pupils with limited English. The teacher made the activity fun and the pupils were continually praised by other adults present. As a result, the teacher's very skilful, practical approach ensured that the pace that was suitable for all within the group and that the children had understood the aim of the lesson.
87. The pupils have very positive attitudes towards learning because all the adults value their efforts and responses. They ensure that the new information is presented slowly and clearly, particularly to help those who have limited command of English. The pupils listen to their teacher and to each other and participate willingly in all activities. This raises their confidence and self-esteem and ensures that they persevere and enjoy the challenges presented to them. The presentation of the pupils' work around the classrooms is neat and tidy. However, they do not appear to take such care and pride in their written work in their books, particularly in Years 3 and 4. **This is an area for improvement.**
88. The quality of teaching is very good at Key Stage 1 and good in Years 3 and 4. This is an improvement since the last inspection because the most of the teachers have good subject knowledge, and skilfully use mathematical vocabulary to challenge the pupils. The lessons have a quiet rigour because the teachers plan thoroughly, have very clear targets that meet the needs of pupils of all capabilities. They use resources very well to support the pupil's understanding. The subject is extremely well led, managed and monitored by the mathematics co-ordinator. The assessments are very good and the areas for improvement are built efficiently and effectively into the pupils' next stages of learning. However, in most cases the teachers' marking could be improved. The comments could be more informative to give the pupils a better indication as to whether or not they are on course to achieve their own individual targets in mathematics.

SCIENCE

89. The inspection evidence shows that standards match national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1, and when the pupils leave the school at the end of Year 4. All groups of pupils make good progress at both key stages. The pupils' attainment is higher than suggested by the written work in their books as their oral skills are in advance of their writing skills. The previous inspection report judged standards to match expectations at both key stages, although standards were lower in experimental and investigative science. This situation has been remedied and standards are now similar across all strands of the science curriculum.
90. The improvement in science that has taken place since the last inspection is largely due to teachers' more rigorous planning across of the various types of scientific enquiry. This is underpinning the development of the pupils' science knowledge and understanding across all strands of the science curriculum effectively. The whole-school teaching plans indicate that each concept is taught thoroughly in the depth and detail required to ensure the pupils' understanding. This is in large part the result of an allocation of longer blocks of time for the teaching of science. Science topics are linked well to the pupils' learning in other subjects, which helps to foster their enjoyment and concentration within a theme. For example, the topic 'All about me' taught the pupils about the features and characteristics of the human body, and linked this to the pupils' own home environment and family.
91. At Key Stage 2 the pupils make good progress in using scientific terms correctly in their writing to explain clearly, for example, how sound in the environment is caused by vibrations. They are beginning to represent scientific concepts diagrammatically, to show, for example, the components of a working electrical circuit. The pupils are also starting to link cause and effect in their understanding of how shadows are formed and what happens if they push and pull a stationary or moving toy. They are beginning to link different areas of their science knowledge, for instance the association between what animals need in order to live and to grow and the characteristics of their habitats. However, the teaching does not always give the pupils sufficient opportunities to make and use tables of results in order to discover patterns in their observations.
92. In Years 3 and 4, the pupils continue to make good progress. The amount of written work increases and their work in science is presented more neatly than in other subjects. In most instances, the work has a degree of detail that indicates the pupils' interest in what they are doing. They increasingly represent more abstract scientific ideas as diagrams, such as food chains that show good progress in their understanding of the links between conditions for life and habitats. The pupils write fuller and more accurate explanations, such as how to make a light bulb brighter, as part of a more structured investigation. They show a good understanding of the principles of experimentation and use their knowledge well to determine whether or not a test is fair. The higher attaining pupils explain some observations by using prior knowledge and coming to conclusions about how things happen. They organise their investigations in a more structured way, and more frequently quantify their observations, for example, by using their measurements of the size of hand spans and feet to plot a graph and search for patterns of similarity. All pupils are supported well in lessons, especially in investigative work.
93. The teaching is good. In one lesson, for example, the use of role-play allowed the pupils to confidently identify forces that make things move and stop. The teachers encourage them to record their science work in a variety of ways that are best suited to the particular aspect under consideration. The teachers' marking of the

pupils' work is inconsistent across the school; some is simply encouraging, but the better marking asks questions to check the pupils understanding of the work. The literacy and numeracy strategies are implemented well in science work, leading to recognisable development in both. Consequently, science makes a sound contribution to the pupils' developing literacy and numeracy skills.

94. In finding out what the pupils' know and understand, the teachers are skilful in devising ways of that do not rely overly on their writing skills. They have a clear understanding of the standards they wish to promote, and strive to meet them in their teaching. They share lesson plans and evaluations of lessons and work together well in key stage teams in order to promote higher standards. The co-ordinator is newly in post, but she has a clear sense of the priority of science in the school and of her role in developing it. She has made a good start in adapting the whole-school teaching plans to match the needs of the school and its philosophy. This initiative is already beginning to pay dividends.

ART AND DESIGN

95. At the time of the previous inspection, the pupils' attainment in art was in line with expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and in Year 4. During the present inspection, the quality of the pupils' artwork at the end of Key Stage 1 was above average, both in the lesson seen and in the examples of their previously completed work. It reflects the teachers' emphasis on the development of skills and techniques. This is an improvement since the last inspection. No lessons in art were observed in Year 3 and 4, but other evidence indicates that standards in Years 3 and 4 remain satisfactory.
96. The pupils experience a wide range of activities, using an appropriate variety of media. They draw and paint and use malleable materials (such as clay), card and textiles to create artefacts. They use the work of famous artists, such as Miro, Monet and Van Gogh to assist them in developing their ideas and techniques. Examples of the pupils' work around the school illustrate well its range and quality, particularly in Key Stage 1. There are examples of good work in pastel and coloured pencil, and of collage and printing. The work includes seasonal themes and illustrations of stories, such as 'The Iron Man' by Ted Hughes. However, the range and quality are better at Key Stage 1 than in Years 3 and 4. Wall displays about the Cecil Higgins Art Gallery and past work reflecting the influence of Klee are attractively presented. At this early point in the year, much of their artwork is linked to topics, such as science and history. Here the pupils take care and pride in their drawings and presentation.
97. In the lesson observed at Key Stage 1, the teaching was good. Instructions on how to tackle the tasks were given clearly, and emphasis was placed on the correct use of language. Pertinent and progressive learning objectives were followed. Consequently, the pupils made very good progress in their exploration of the properties of clay. Over the period of a week, the carefully planned and sequenced work ensured that the pupils' were able to explore and exploit the characteristics and possibilities of medium using their own thoughts and ideas. Consequently, they were interested and responded enthusiastically. These factors had a very positive effect upon their individual development, and lifted their general attainment significantly above the average.
98. The school uses the local education authority's support services purposefully, for example, to help with curriculum planning. It is also involved in the local art-loans

scheme and good use is made of local museums and visiting local artists. An extra-curricular art club takes place weekly. A record of achievement is compiled for each pupil and a school art file has been established.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

99. One lesson only, in Years 3 and 4, was observed during the inspection. There were a few artefacts and a small number of photographs of previous work available upon which to make judgements about the quality of work and the pupils' overall attainment. Attainment at the time of the previous inspection was below average at the end of Key stage 1 and average at Key stage 2. Based on the limited evidence available, this picture appears to have been reversed. At this point of the academic year, the standards seen at Key Stage 1 are in line with national expectations, but below in Year 4.
100. The school policy for design and technology and the teachers' planning indicate that an appropriate curriculum is in place. The pupils in Years 1 and 2 explore a range of materials, and the evidence indicates that they can use small tools efficiently to make models. They gain experiences in designing and making, in using construction kits and in food technology. In Years 3 and 4, a similar range of experiences is offered. However, in the one lesson seen the overall standard was broadly in line with age-related expectations and the teaching was therefore satisfactory. The pupils' were making suitable progress in learning about and choosing the right materials for money containers and were being taught a range of basic stitching well. In many cases, however, the practical application was not as well developed. The pupils' use of needle and thread lacked concentration and control. The majority of the pupils paid attention to the instructions and tried to complete the tasks following the teacher's clear directions and sound practical organisation. However, a few pupils were disruptive and as a result were not fully engaged in their task and struggled to produce satisfactory artefacts. The scrutiny of work showed that a greater emphasis needs to be placed on the development of skills and techniques
101. The school recognises that in recent years less attention has been given to the development of design and technology because of the greater focus on the national initiatives for literacy and numeracy. This is understandable in the circumstances. The co-ordinator for design and technology has been in post for just five weeks and needs time to try to assess the overall teaching and learning, the provision, including the use of ICT, implementation of the planned curriculum and the standards that the pupils achieve. The school development plan indicates that they are to tackle these issues in the same highly successful way that they have approached the improvements in other subjects. **Nevertheless the school should consider moving the developments at a faster rate than planned** to improve the pupils' skills and techniques, thereby raising the attainment in Years 3 and 4.

HISTORY AND GEOGRAPHY

102. The pupils start in Key Stage 1 with little general knowledge and restricted experiences within their own environment. Many of them have limited language skills with which to build up the more abstract historical and geographical concepts. However, they make good progress in Key Stage 1 and attain standards expected for their ages by end of Year 2. This good progress is maintained through Years 3 and 4 over a wider range of content and more advanced ideas. Standards continue to match those expected nationally. This marks an improvement since the previous inspection when standards were judged to be 'below expectations in the development of skills', and pupils' progress was found to be slow, due the teachers' lack of specific skills and knowledge in these subjects.

103. Since then the school has put considerable thought into the arrangements for the history and geography curriculum in order to build on the pupils' developing skills and knowledge to maximum effect. The disposition of geography and history topics in half termly blocks, and the introduction of new whole-school teaching programmes have led to greater coherence in the planning and teaching. The co-ordinators' good knowledge of both subjects, her determination to improve standards and her enthusiasm have encouraged the teachers to share ideas and support each other well. The teaching of history and geography is now generally good, and sometimes very good. Within the teaching programmes the development of knowledge and the development of relevant skills go hand in hand. In addition, all possible avenues for involving visitors and arranging visits are considered to bring history and geography 'alive' to the pupils.
104. In history at Key Stage 1, the pupils have a secure knowledge of three generations of their family tree and understand their place within it. A visiting 'Grandad' showed his old toys as part of a lesson exploring various types of historical evidence, including oral accounts drawing on first hand experiences. This well-organised session was well planned and the visitor, pupils and all staff clearly understood the purposes of the dialogue. An impressive feature of both the geography and history teaching is the way which all pupils, irrespective of their capabilities, are enabled to make good progress through thorough discussions rather than written expression of what they know and understand. In this particular lesson, the pupils handled artefacts of historical importance (old toys), sorted them according to age and the older pupils then recorded them in the form of drawings. In Years 3 and 4, the visit of 'Steve the Viking' in full regalia kept the pupils fully involved and enthralled over a long period as he very skilfully linked their own experiences to life in Viking times. An excellent range of artefacts illustrated the differences between the self-sufficiency of people in the past in comparison to the dependency of the consumer society of today.
105. In both sessions the pupils were fully engaged in the activities and listened well. Most pupils attempt to respond to questioning and put their ideas and thoughts into words, and their understanding of the processes of historical enquiry and importance of evidence develop soundly. The pupils are gaining a secure sense of chronology and are becoming confident and successful in finding answers to questions about the past by using a range of information sources, including I Internet searches.
106. In geography, the pupils contribute well to discussions, answer questions readily and are proud of what they know. For example, they can pinpoint the British Isles, New York and Australia on a world map. They know that Egypt has a desert terrain and that lack of rain limits plant growth there. They have a genuine interest in different places on the globe and maps and are beginning to understand the reasons for seasonal change, and show a clear understanding of the effects of climate, for example, on house styles. This is because of the teachers' detailed planning which enables them to identify many physical features of the world.
107. Through events such as UNICEF day, they gain a sound awareness of places beyond their own locality. They have a good knowledge of the leisure facilities and buildings in their immediate environment, and are building up a secure understanding of the physical and human features of their community. For instance, they give convincing reasons why the park is a popular place, and through trips to the Country Park and the river are beginning to offer simple explanations for the features of the surrounding area.

108. In Years 3 and 4, the pupils begin to apply their knowledge of place by selecting a holiday destination and giving reasons for their choice. In doing so, they gain knowledge of a wider range of countries and places. Fieldwork is planned to give a deeper knowledge of some major features of the locality, such as routes and land use. They build in their understanding of different climatic conditions by recording the local weather and then considering patterns of climate distribution worldwide. The teachers are enthusiastic and knowledgeable about this subject, and their lively teaching ensures that pupils make good progress. As a result, they are beginning to apply their developing geographical skills to ask their own questions and to select relevant information in order to find answers.
109. In both history and geography, language support is used beneficially to aid learning. The pupils also have good opportunities to use and extend their literacy, numeracy and ICT skills. Furthermore, both subjects make a good contribution to the pupils' cultural development. For example, in history they reflect on how the life of people in the past differs from ours today, and in geography they come to understand features of their own environment and society.
110. The teachers make effective use discussion and oral questioning to assess what the pupils know and how well they are getting on. In this way they get a truer picture of their pupils' knowledge and understanding than is reflected in their workbooks, as it is not dependent on their ability to write English. However, the presentation of the pupil's work could be neater.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

111. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 and in Year 4 at the time of the previous inspection was in line with national expectations. They remain so, but across both key stages significant numbers of pupils are now achieving higher levels. Recent developments in the provision that the school makes for the subject are beginning to have far-reaching benefits. Funds from the National Grid for Learning and the Education Action Zone initiatives have enabled the school to enhance the resources and to extend considerably the learning opportunities for both the pupils and the staff. As a result, the pupils' are improving their skills in the use of computers; their progress is now generally good, and for a significant minority it is very good. The staff has enthusiastically undertaken a considerable amount of in-service training on the use of the new technology. It has led not only to rapid development in their own skills, but also greater knowledge of how to use ICT in all areas of the curriculum.
112. The consequence of these commendable developments is that the pupils of all capabilities in Years 1 and 2 are rapidly gaining keyboard skills. They can use the capital lock, space bar, enter and backspace and delete keys well. Most are extending their word processing skills well by inputting, saving and printing the text confidently and competently. The teachers plan the work carefully to match the needs of individual pupils who enjoy the challenges they are set. In Years 3 and 4 pupils confidently select from menus, and write and manipulate text using different fonts and colours. They are also learning to combine text and graphics in the form of clipart. A significant proportion of the pupils can select information from encyclopaedic software to support learning in other areas of the curriculum. They are also learning how to store information on their individual disks, and print out their work for inclusion in their workbooks. Assessment and evaluative procedures are being developed to reflect the greater scope that is offered by the new provision.
113. The teaching of ICT is very good. There is a clear policy, and a nationally agreed scheme of work has been established as the basis for teaching and for learning.

The lessons have clear, appropriate objectives, and are therefore stimulating and purposeful. Consequently, the pupils achieve considerable success in their learning and gain basic skills rapidly. Preparations for the tasks are often conducted in the classroom so that the pupils have a firm grasp of what it is they have to do before they enter the computer suite. The keen and knowledgeable classroom assistants provide a very good level of support. As a result, the pupils concentrate hard, share the resources amicably and help one another. The new computer suite provides plentiful opportunities for them to use not only word-processing and clip art, but also other programs to support their learning across the curriculum. These opportunities are taken well.

114. There are other commendable initiatives within this very positive picture. An extra-curricular computer club is organised on a weekly basis, and recently parents have been given the opportunity to develop their own computer skills. The school has firm plans to utilise the Internet facilities in the near future.
115. The resources are very good, and include a number of laptop computers, which are being used efficiently and well to support all areas of the curriculum. The co-ordination of the subject is shared between the headteacher and the deputy headteacher, each having a clearly defined role in the ongoing developments. This dual co-ordination is proving very effective, and the use of this technology is rapidly becoming a strong feature of the school's work.

MUSIC

116. In recent years, the school has given less attention to music because of the greater focus on the national initiatives for literacy and numeracy. Consequently, the issues raised in the previous report have only recently been effectively addressed. Music has a high profile on the school development plan for this year. Improvements are being funded by the Education Action Zone initiative and the work of the visiting musician is having a direct impact on the curriculum provision and the raising of pupils' attainment. The initiative is also providing very good in-service training for the development of the teacher's own knowledge, techniques and skills. The subject is now well-led and managed and the teachers' plans show that the pupils experience music making through the full range of the curriculum in singing, composing, appraising and listening.
117. By the end of Key Stage 1 and in Year 4 the pupils overall standards in music are in line with those expected nationally. The quality of the teaching and learning is very good and all of the pupils become fully involved in the music making. This is because the teaching is focussed on children acquiring the basic musical skills. The specialist music teacher uses her musical knowledge and understanding very confidently and competently to stimulate and interest both the staff and the children. Appropriate emphasis is placed on improving the pupils' their understanding of dynamics, such as loud and soft, and on their rhythmic skills using the voice, body movement and instruments. In the one Key Stage 2 lesson seen, the teaching centred on developing a greater understanding of the differences between high and low sounds. The use of the xylophone and tenor and descant recorders helped to give the pupils a greater understanding of pitch. All the pupils were able to sing using signs and symbols to make the high and low sounds. They extended this work well by putting the signs and symbols into a simple graphic score to make a musical composition that they then sang in unison. One child reminded the teacher that following a score was like reading. 'Mozart could write music before he could read' he said. The pupils were enthusiastic and behaved very well throughout the lesson, which was conducted by the teacher in a challenging and rigorous manner. They were all very disappointed when it had to end because it was fun.

118. Singing is broadly satisfactory and the children obviously enjoy it. A significant number of the children can recall the words of a song and the general contour of the melody. They keep a fairly accurate rhythm, but generally their sense of pitch falters. More emphasis on improving the basic skills of posture, breathing, tone and pitch accuracy during the singing practice would have enhanced the quality of singing. However, in the other lessons observed the staff placed an appropriate emphasis on the progression of skills and techniques in instrumental playing and singing.
119. Literacy skills are developed well through music because the pupils use reference books to find and record the information about the composer of the month. They use also information communication technology, including the Internet to find out, for example, more about Mozart. Their work is attractively displayed in the foyer of the school where all children can read it.
120. By the end of Year 4, the standards of the children's individual instrumental work when playing the harmonium and the tabla are above those expected. During assemblies, they enjoy performing to other pupils who listen attentively and appreciatively and like to celebrate their achievements with them. At play times, many children of different ages were seen spontaneously improvising on the 'netball posts' and playing very good rhythmic pattern together using the finger and hand technique you require when playing the tabla. Other children were seen singing traditional playground songs with the support of an adult during the lunchtime break.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

121. At the end of Years 2 and Year 4, standards are in line with national expectations, and the pupils' progress is satisfactory. This is a similar picture to the one reported at the previous inspection. The whole-school teaching plans stress the development of the pupils' knowledge and skills, and give the teachers a firm basis for their weekly lesson plans. This ensures that the pupils make progress in all strands of the physical education programme.
122. The youngest pupils, in Year 1, help to get the equipment ready for the lesson, and take this responsibility seriously. The teachers remind pupils clearly of previous work, stressing key words associated with types of movement so that they all know the purposes of the lessons and what is expected of them. Throughout the lesson, the teachers are careful to ensure that the working space is safe, and remind the pupils of safety procedures. The youngest pupils, in Year 1, satisfactorily develop previously taught skills of moving in straight lines, and of travelling high and low. The Year 2 pupils continue to concentrate hard, for example, in their weaving movements in and around others in a large space, so that they do not make physical contact. The pupils in Years 3 and 4 follow demonstrations with concentration and copy movements satisfactorily. However, although the teachers use their voices well to give encouragement, many pupils regard physical education as solely physical, and do not always have any intellectual engagement in it. For example, when given a range of options to pass a ball quickly from one end of a line to the other, the team choose passing between the legs 'because it's easiest'. They did not consider the most accurate and quickest way that would help them win the game! Nevertheless, the pupils co-operate amicably and move with consideration and care for others.

123. The teaching is satisfactory overall. By the time the pupils leave school at the end of Year 4, they can roll, kick, pass, throw and head a ball with reasonable accuracy, and with a satisfactory sense of space. The teachers demonstrate movement with varying degrees of skill. Sometimes the demonstrations are not of a high enough quality either to improve the pupils' performance or to signal to them the effort and thought required. Demonstrations by the pupils are used satisfactorily to make a teaching point and to raise the pupils' self-esteem, but they are not always evaluated sufficiently to improve their performance. Steps are being taken to improve the teaching of physical education. For example, the headteacher worked alongside one teacher to improve the quality of the pupils' movements. This is another good example of the effectiveness of the headteacher's monitoring.
124. There are good procedures for assessing the various aspects of the pupils' work, and physical education is an important feature of the established Record of Achievement. All pupils have swimming lessons in the outdoor pool during the summer months. The co-ordinator is committed to the improvement of her subject and is attending an intensive course in order that she can support other colleagues. She monitors the planning and teaching in order to raise standards. A particular strength of her energetic management is the way in which she has considerably enriched the curriculum by the use of outside resources for cricket, hockey, rugby and tennis coaching after school. These sessions are well attended, expertly run and much enjoyed by the pupils.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

125. Most pupils attain standards that are in line with those indicated in the locally agreed syllabus by the end of Key Stage 1 and in Year 4. A significant minority of pupils at both key stages exceed these expectations. This shows that standards have been maintained since the last inspection. The teachers' knowledge and understanding of the topics are very secure and their teaching approaches are interesting and meaningful to all.
126. Over the two-year rolling programme, the pupils in Key Stage 1 develop a very good knowledge of stories from the Old and New Testaments. They also make very good links between celebrations of different faiths, for example, Christmas and Diwali. They are also beginning to recognise similarities in the special places of worship. For example, when looking at a model of a Christian Church one child very quickly said 'We have a meeting room like this at the Gudwara'. Another child recognised other similarities when he said that there are rooms in the Hindu Mandir where food is offered just like in the Christian Church. By the end of the two lessons seen, the children were beginning to understand the significance of the Christian church building and could name and describe many of its features such as the altar, lectern, font, cross and the pulpit. A picture of Lincoln Cathedral was also shown to the children who were amazed at its size and the beautiful colours in the windows. The teacher had a recording of the organ being played, and when she put it on children just sat up, silent, and absolutely enthralled. Their facial expressions showed just how much they enjoyed the wonderful sound. The children are making a book about each special place they have learnt about. This is a very good example of how the teachers enable them to use literacy skills in other areas of the curriculum.
127. By the end of Year 4, the pupils acquire a greater breadth of knowledge about Jesus' ministry, and know that significant points of the church calendar are linked to his life and death. This work is supported well by the local Vicar. For instance, during an assembly with some friends of the school he enacted a story, led a prayer and a rock-style hymn of praise. Some of the children contributed readings from

the Bible. The session, based on the moral message 'Try hard and don't give up', was purposeful and fully inclusive. The children also recognise and greatly respect features of other world faiths such as Judaism, Hinduism and Islam. They know that religion has an impact on the lives of believers and that each major faith has its special places of worship, holy book and practices. In the one lesson, for example, the pupils gained a good understanding of the various purposes and uses of water in life. They became aware of its positive features as well as its dangers, like floods in England and in India. The teacher used photographic evidence effectively to promote discussion and to allow the pupils to express their own thoughts, ideas and opinions.

128. The overall quality of the teaching and learning is very good. Discussions are well conducted and are allow the pupils' to demonstrate their knowledge and express their opinions. Good resources such as books, artefacts, video programmes and visitors from different faiths enliven the teaching and learning. The curriculum for religious education is well led and managed.