

INSPECTION REPORT

St Alban's Church of England (VA) Primary School
London

LEA area: Camden

Unique Reference Number: 100036

Inspection Number: 181488

Headteacher: Alison Kahane

Reporting inspector: Mrs P Silcock

21261

Dates of inspection: 11th - 14th October 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 706504

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
Type of control:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Baldwins Gardens Holborn London EC1 7SD
Telephone number:	(0171) 242 8585
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Giles Wright
Date of previous inspection:	16 th - 20 th January 1995

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Pauline Silcock Registered Inspector	Mathematics	
	History	Attainment and progress
	Learning for children under five	Teaching
	English as an additional language	Leadership and management
Susan Pritchard, Lay Inspector	Equal opportunities	Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the community Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
Lesley Jones	English	Attitudes, behaviour and personal development
	Information technology	Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
Paul Stevens	Geography	
	Art	
	Science	The curriculum and assessment
	Design and technology	The efficiency of the school
	Physical education	
	Music	
	Special educational needs	

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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- The school is determined to continue to raise standards of attainment and, to this end, pays close attention to pupils' progress through its very good monitoring and assessment procedures.
- The quality of provision for children under five is excellent. This provision helps children make very good progress at the start of their schooling, so establishing secure foundations for their future learning.
- The quality of support staff from the Nursery upwards is very good, overall. These staff play a significant role in the good progress made by those pupils requiring additional support.
- In two thirds of lessons, teaching is of good or better quality. Particular strengths are to be seen in the teaching of children under five and in Key Stage 1.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good, with excellent provision for pupils' cultural development.
- The ethos of the school is very good, being securely founded on beliefs relating to equality of opportunity for all pupils.
- Relationships between pupils and between pupils and adults are very good, from the Nursery upwards. These relationships are a strength of the school.
- Links with parents and the community are very good. Parental support for the school's aims and values aids pupils' progress and contributes towards the school's generally rising standards.
- Throughout the school, the quality of the curriculum is very good, with a wide range of stimulating activities provided. Extra-curricular provision is also very good.
- The leadership and management of the school are very good, overall. Its policies are set firmly within a framework of principles derived from its Christian faith as a Church of England school. The financial management of the school is of a very high quality. The headteacher has a clear vision of the school as a community where pupils are respected and valued as individuals and where each individual is expected to strive for excellence. Staff and governors share this vision. All work hard to achieve the aims of the school.

Where the school has weaknesses

- I. In a minority of lessons in Key Stage 2, teaching is judged less than satisfactory in some subjects.
- II. Given that pupils with English as an additional language acquire good proficiency in speaking and listening skills in English, some do not make the progress that might be expected in developing the skills, knowledge and understanding necessary for them to undertake reading and writing activities with similar levels of confidence.
- III. The monitoring of classroom teaching and learning practices by senior managers and co-ordinators for subjects is not securely established. Consequently, they are not sufficiently well informed about what actually happens in classrooms to fulfil their management responsibilities.

The weaknesses are far outweighed by what the school does well, but they will form the basis of the governors' action plan which will be sent to all parents of guardians of pupils at the school.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school has made good progress in addressing the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection report. Emphasis on establishing whole-school approaches to teaching and learning through a substantial programme of In-service training for teaching and non-teaching staff has led to improvements in teachers' planning for different levels of learning need. These are now met for pupils across all levels of attainment. The school has established good quality policies and schemes of work in all subjects and these policies effectively underpin developments. However, design and technology is an exception to the more general rule here and development work regarding the subject has still to be initiated. Proposed plans for members of the senior management team and subject Co-ordinators to monitor classroom teaching and learning practices systematically on a formal basis have not, yet,

been realised. The school has worked hard to place more stress on pupils' aesthetic and creative development and has succeeded in doing so. Since the last inspection, the opening of the Nursery has significantly affected the progress the youngest children make before they enter compulsory schooling at five, with a consequent impact on their subsequent learning. The school faces further significant changes when the deputy head retires after long and loyal service. It has a good capacity to continue to improve.

Standards in subjects

This table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds in 1998 based on the National Curriculum tests:

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools	Key	
			<i>Well above average</i>	<i>A</i>
			<i>Above average</i>	<i>B</i>
English	A	A*	<i>Average</i>	<i>C</i>
Mathematics	C	A		<i>Below average</i>
				<i>D</i>
Science	C	A	<i>Well below average</i>	<i>E</i>

On the basis of the comparisons listed in the table, pupils do much better than their counterparts nationally in English and at least as well as their counterparts in mathematics and science. Pupils also do much better than their peers in similar schools in all three subjects, but especially in English. Early indications for 1999 are that pupils' results are not as good as in the previous year, especially in mathematics and science. National comparisons are not available. However, inspection evidence at this early point in the school year shows that pupils' achievements in the current Year 6 are in line with national expectations in all three subjects. Pupils of average and higher attainment reach particularly high standards in science. They have secure understanding of scientific principles and of investigative work. The national literacy strategy is well established and is facilitating pupils' progress and levels of attainment in English. This is especially notable for bilingual pupils. Pupils in both key stages develop satisfactory word-processing skills using computers and also learn to collect and enter data on to programs for making graphs. To date, though, they have not consistently developed an understanding of control technology, although resources and planning to remedy this omission are now in place. Some work seen in music was of excellent quality and enabled pupils to reach higher standards in singing than might be expected for their ages in both key stages. Good work was evident in geography and history also in both key stages. There is an appropriate emphasis placed across the school on pupils gaining necessary knowledge and skills to work independently in many curricular areas. With the exception of some aspects of physical development, by the time they reach five, pupils' attainments are broadly in line with expectations for their age in all areas of learning in relation to the desirable outcomes for children's learning¹. Access to climbing apparatus and wheeled toys for children in the Reception class is limited and this has an impact on their physical development. By seven years of age, a majority of pupils reach levels of attainment broadly in line with national expectations in reading, writing, mathematics and science. They make good progress in all areas of the curriculum. Their progress is especially notable considering that many entered the Nursery with little or no English.

Quality of teaching

Teaching in	Under 5	5 – 7 years	7 – 11 years
English	Good	Good	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good	Good
Science		Good	Satisfactory
Information technology		Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Religious education			
Other subjects	Good	Good	Good

In 66 per cent of lessons, teaching is of good or better quality. Seventeen per cent is judged very good or better. Overall, 90 per cent of teaching is at least satisfactory. Teaching is less than satisfactory in ten per cent of lessons. There is evidence of good or better teaching across the school, in a range of subjects. Particular strengths are to be seen in the Early Years and in Key Stage 1, where teaching is most frequently judged to be good or better. Strengths are to be found in specialist music teaching.

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. ‘Satisfactory’ means that strengths outweigh any weaknesses

Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Good. Pupils’ have positive attitudes towards their work and are most frequently observed to be keen learners.
Attendance	Satisfactory, overall. Much improved since the last inspection. However, a significant number of pupils arrived at school late during the week of the inspection.
Ethos*	Very good. The school’s positive ethos is a marked characteristic. It appears to be warm and welcoming and a place where harmonious relationships prevail. A commitment to high standards is evident in teachers’ expectations of pupils’ behaviour and work.
Leadership and management	Very good. Good leadership from headteacher; senior managers and head work well together; good levels of support from governors who know school very well. All are keenly committed to improving standards in all areas of work.
Curriculum	Very good provision for children under five in all recommended areas of learning, with the exception of some aspects of physical development in the Reception class; the broad and balanced provision in each key stage is of very good quality overall, although weaknesses are noted in design and technology; very good equality of opportunity and curricular access for all pupils; very good provision for the arts.
Pupils with special educational needs	Good provision, generally, with some very good strengths, notably in the quality of support provided by teaching and non-teaching staff.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Very good, with notable strengths in provision for pupils’ cultural development.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Good, overall. Good subject expertise amongst teachers. Very good quality of support staff. Accommodation is well cared for and maintained to high standard –a pleasing learning environment, especially in public spaces, for children under five and in Key Stage 1. Resources are frequently good in terms both of quantity and quality.
Value for money	Very good.

**Ethos is the climate for learning: attitudes to work, relationships and the commitment to high standards.*

The parents' views of the school

What most parents like about the school

- IV. Attitudes and values promoted by the school are a strength and are well supported.
- V. Help and guidance given to pupils is of good quality. Pupils transfer to different stages of their education readily because they are well prepared.
- VI. Pupils are well behaved and understand expectations in matters of discipline.
- VII. Parents are made very welcome and encouraged to take an active part in school life.
- VIII. All teachers are approachable and ready to discuss matters raised by parents.
- IX. The school makes good efforts to keep parents informed about what is happening.
- X. The school works hard to ensure that pupils achieve good standards and is concerned to keep on raising its standards.

What some parents are not happy about

concerns about t
expressed, altho
were aware that

At the parents' meeting, parents expressed no strong concerns about any aspects of the school's work. Similarly, questionnaires do not uncover issues of any significance. Concerns expressed about homework are genuine but, at the meeting, were set within the context of a new policy for homework which parents are pleased to see being implemented. Inspectors' judgements uphold parents' positive views of the school. They also endorse views about homework in terms of the general effects of the new initiative. The headteacher, staff and governors are concerned to maintain and develop existing good partnerships with its parent body. They work hard to this end and maintain a welcoming ethos, encouraging parents to participate in school life.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

The governors, in partnership with the headteacher and staff, should:

- Further develop strategies for supporting those bilingual pupils whose reading and writing skills in English do not yet match their oral competence by ensuring that:
 - where these pupils' progress is seen to be limited, and it is judged appropriate and practicable to do so, their problems are diagnosed and their learning supported via their first language; and
 - all teachers improve these pupils' understanding of key texts (which the teachers have selected) through whole class discussion as well as through planned group activity, as preparation for their written work.
(13, 17, 19, 35, 82, 99)
- ensure that the quality of teaching throughout the school, in all subjects of the curriculum, reflects its own 'best practice', by further supporting teachers' professional development where weaknesses are identified;
(30, 32, 119, 152, 153, 156)
- improve monitoring procedures so that:
 - staff with senior management responsibilities formally monitor teaching and learning in classrooms, in order to grasp, better, underlying processes and the development needs of teachers; and
 - subject co-ordinators are similarly better informed about classroom practices so that they can carry out management responsibilities in their subjects more effectively.
(39, 68, 103, 111, 120)

In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in an action plan. These are indicated in paragraphs 8, 38, 40, 57, 59, 73, 78, 92, 131.

- the development of an appropriate curriculum for design and technology together with improving resources for the subject, as highlighted in the previous inspection;
- arranging access to outdoor play facilities for children under five in the Reception year;
- ensuring that procedures in matters of health and safety, identified during the inspection as weak, are made more explicit; and
- a policy in respect of the use of force to control or restrain pupils and subsequent recording practices in the use of such restraint are put in place.

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INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school

1. St Alban's Church of England Primary School is situated on a small site off the Gray's Inn Road in central London. It is close to a street market, with local authority and housing association flats, from which the school draws many of its pupils, overlooking the playgrounds. The Church of St Alban is opposite. People of many faiths, cultures and languages live in the area, providing an ethnic diversity which the school values, takes account of and celebrates in a variety of ways.
2. At the time of the inspection, there were 190 pupils on roll (counting from the Reception class to Year 6) with a further 22 pupils attending the Nursery. Of these latter pupils, two were part-time. Overall, there are broadly equal numbers of boys and girls in the school, although there are gender imbalances in some year groups. Children enter the Nursery in the first half of the Autumn term when they are aged around three-and-a-half (more children were to be enrolled after the inspection), usually spending three terms there before transferring to the Reception class in September of each year. Five weeks into the new school year, almost all the children in the Reception class were under five. A small number of children enter Reception class without their having attended the Nursery or other pre-school class. In addition, the school roll changes throughout Key Stages 1 and 2 when families are rehoused in and out of the area.
3. Across the school, 81.5 per cent of pupils come from homes where English is not the first language spoken. This figure is very much higher than the national average. The school lists Sylheti/Bengali, Lingala/French, Somali and Arabic as the four most common languages spoken by pupils apart from English. Approximately 70 per cent of pupils receive additional support in learning English from teaching and non-teaching staff funded through the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant. Almost all the children (91 per cent) speak little, if any, English when they enter the Nursery and many of these are Sylheti/Bengali speakers. These children do not start to acquire literacy skills in their own home via their mother tongue (Sylheti) since Sylheti is not a written language. Approximately 19 per cent of pupils have refugee status. This implies that they might need other kinds of support than that associated with learning a new language. The percentage of pupils on the Code of Practice Register for Special Educational Need (approximately 26.4 per cent) is above the national average. There are four pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need in the school. Approximately 51 per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals: this figure is well above the national average.
4. The school has noted a change in its intake over recent years with an increasing number of pupils for whom English is not the first language being enrolled (either in the Nursery or in the later key stage). These children's family circumstances are often such as to reflect a multiplicity of social needs. This trend continues. In the cohort of 29 Year 6 pupils taking statutory assessment tests in 1999, for example, five pupils took the tests within two years of starting at the school. Some of these were lower attaining pupils. Approximately 51 per cent of the cohort taking this test was on the Code of Practice Register of special needs. One pupil had missed a considerable amount of schooling prior to taking the tests owing to his family's extended holiday. The school's analysis of results showed such factors as these to be correlated to the levels of achievement attained by individual pupils.
5. The expansion of provision in the early years through the addition of a Nursery four years ago is seen by the school to be crucial to its attempt to raise standards. The school likewise considers it vitally important to further enhance provision in the Reception class by ensuring that a full-time Nursery Nurse works alongside the class teacher. Early Years provision includes full-time support from bilingual classroom assistants funded through the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant for the Sylheti/Bengali speakers and this, too, is seen as crucial to these pupils' success in school. Further, the restructuring of the senior management team is judged by the school to be key to continuing school improvement and, thus, to raising

standards. Emphasis has been placed on improving attendance and the school has worked to ensure that parents from overseas understand the impact on their children's education when extended holidays are taken during term time. Such occurrences are now much less common, and attendance, overall, in school shows a marked improvement. In response to government initiatives over recent years, the school has concentrated on improving teachers' professional understanding of classroom practices through an extensive programme of In-service courses. This policy has led to a review of curricular provision across all subjects to ensure that National Curricular demands are met. In addition, the Literacy Strategy has been implemented. The school is currently in the process of implementing the National Numeracy Project in accordance with requirements. Improving assessment procedures as a means of better understanding how groups of pupils and individuals perform over time has been integral to professional development work undertaken by the school. On the basis of all these developments, the school's management believes it has set realistic targets for standards of attainment in the year 2002. A further period of change will follow the retirement of the Deputy Head during this academic year, after long-standing and loyal service to the school.

6. Key indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
For latest reporting year:	1998	14	13	27

6. National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or Above	Boys	7	10	7
	Girls	6	8	6
	Total	13	18	13
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	50 (85)	69 (88)	50 (73)
	National	80 (80)	81 (80)	84 (84)

6. Teacher Assessments		Reading	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or Above	Boys	8	8	9
	Girls	7	6	6
	Total	15	14	15
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	58 (85)	54 (89)	58 (73)
	National	81(80)	85 (84)	86 (85)

Attainment at Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
For latest reporting year:	1998	9	13	22

6. National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or Above	Boys	6	4	5
	Girls	12	8	11
	Total	18	12	16
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	82 (64)	55 (60)	73 (64)
	National	65 (63)	59 (62)	69 (69)

6. Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or Above	Boys	5	5	6
	Girls	8	8	8
	Total	13	13	14
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	59 (56)	59 (52)	67 (52)
	National	65 (n/a)	65 (n/a)	72 (n/a)

6. Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed			%
Through absence for the latest complete Reporting year:	Authorised	School	5.98
	Absence	National comparative data	5.7
	Unauthorised	School	0.14
	Absence	National comparative data	0.5

6.

6. Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during		Number
The previous year:	Fixed period	0
	Permanent	0

6. Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is:		%
	Very good or better	17
	Satisfactory or better	90
	Less than satisfactory	10

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

6. Attainment and progress

6. The attainment of the majority of children on entry to the Nursery is low in all areas of learning. These areas are: language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical, creative and personal and social development. All children nonetheless make very good progress in each of these areas and are well prepared for their transfer to the Reception year. Pupils with English as additional language learners make particularly good progress in acquiring speaking and listening skills in English and in their understanding of early literacy and numeracy skills. They also make marked progress in their social and personal development. The early identification of pupils with special educational needs aids these pupils' general progress.

7. A wide range of levels of attainment is evident in the Reception class. Baseline-assessment information illustrates that children attain broadly in line with what can be expected for their age overall. All children continue to make very good progress in most areas of learning and to build successfully on the skills, knowledge and understanding developed in the Nursery. However, opportunities for structured play in an outdoor setting are limited: this affects children's attainment in some aspects of their physical development (for example, hindering the development of those physical skills associated with the use of wheeled toys and climbing equipment). Apart from this, a majority of pupils are attaining well in relation to the desirable learning outcomes, according to normal expectations of what children can achieve by the time they reach their fifth birthday. Considering all children's starting points, relative to their knowledge and understanding of the English language, their attainment in personal and social development, in speaking and listening and in the early skills necessary for reading, writing and mathematics is good. When they are five, at the start of compulsory education, children are in a sound position to move forward to meet the demands of the National Curriculum. Even so, it is also evident that bilingual pupils continue to benefit from the good levels of support they receive in their acquisition of skills in English.

8. In the 1998 National Curriculum statutory assessment tests, pupils' attainment in reading at seven years of age was very low in comparison with the national average at the nationally expected Level 2 and below this average at the higher Level 3. When compared to pupils in similar schools, pupils' attainment was well below the average. In writing, pupils' attainment was also well below the national average at Level 2 but well above this average at the higher Level 3. Their results were above the average when compared to those of pupils in similar schools. In mathematics, pupils' performance was very low at Level 2 when compared to the national average and well below this average at the higher Level 3. Their results were also very low in comparison to those of pupils in similar schools. Teacher-assessment in speaking and listening showed pupils to be well below the national average at Level 2 and well above this average at Level 3. Teacher-assessed tasks in science revealed pupils' attainment to be very low in comparison to the national average at Level 2 and in line with this average at the higher Level 3. In three sets of results between 1996 and 1998, pupils' levels of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics show a dramatic rise to meet national averages in 1997 and an equally dramatic drop in reading and mathematics in 1998, with levels in writing falling just below national trends. Over this whole period, no significant difference is found between the attainments of boys and girls in reading and writing within the school, although girls do rather less well than boys in mathematics. In national comparisons, girls do significantly less well than their counterparts in all three tests and boys less well than their peers in reading and mathematics.

9. The school states that there was a high incidence of pupils with special educational needs, as well as of bilingual pupils still developing their literacy skills in English, in the 1998 cohort (now Year 4) and this fact has had an impact on results in statutory tests and assessments. Inspection evidence upholds the

school's view. It shows that 30 per cent of pupils in Year 4 are in the early stages of learning English as an additional language, a further ten per cent require continuing language-learning support and approximately 27 per cent are on the Code of Practice register for special educational needs. This latter group represents pupils both on the later stages of the register and with Statements of special educational need. Early indications for 1999 are that results for seven-year-olds are better than they were in the previous year, especially in reading and mathematics. No comparisons with national results are available. Inspection evidence shows the capabilities of pupils now in Year 2 to be broadly in line with national expectations in speaking and listening, reading, writing, mathematics and science. Pupils across all levels of attainment, including pupils on the Code of Practice register for special needs, make good progress as they move through the key stage.

10. Eleven-year-olds attained well above national averages at the expected Level 4 and the higher Level 5 in the 1998 statutory assessment tests in English. They attained close to national averages in mathematics and science at both these levels. In comparison with the results of pupils in similar schools, pupils' results were very high in English and well above the average in mathematics and science. Over a period of three years from 1996, pupils' attainments rose considerably in all three subjects and have continued to rise in English. In mathematics and science, their attainment has leveled out and remains in line with national trends. Over this same period, girls are seen to do rather better than boys in all three subjects within the school, although the difference in English results is found to be negligible. In terms of national comparisons, girls attain broadly in line with national averages for their peer group, but boys' attainment is below this average, overall, especially in mathematics and science.
11. Early indications from the 1999 statutory test results for eleven-year-olds are that pupils' attainment has fallen below the levels of the previous year in all three subjects. Differences are most marked in English and science. No national comparisons are available. In order to understand better the poor results, the school analysed them and also looked carefully at pupils' schooling experiences. Its evidence reveals that a number of significant factors correlate closely with test outcomes (see paragraph 4). Although this cohort (i.e. that tested) is no longer in school, it is, indeed, plain that each cohort varies greatly in its make-up in terms of the balance between girls and boys and in the identified needs of particular groups. For example, there is considerable variation between cohorts in the number of bilingual learners and those on the Code of Practice register of special educational needs, including pupils with Statements of special need. Such variation, arguably, strongly affects statutory test results and results of other tests carried out regularly by the school. Inspection evidence demonstrates that the capabilities of pupils now in Year 6 are broadly in line with national expectations in English, mathematics and science. Higher attaining pupils and some of average attainment do better than this in science when demonstrating their knowledge and understanding of scientific principles and investigative work. There is no significant difference in the attainment of pupils with English as an additional language and their monolingual peers, or between boys and girls. Pupils make satisfactory progress, overall, and, at times, their progress is better than satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs and those with Statements of special educational need attain in line with their prior attainment. They, too, make good progress.
12. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils develop confident speaking and listening skills. For example, they enjoy discussing ideas for a poem with a partner before sharing their thoughts with the class. By eleven, pupils put forward sensible suggestions for what counts as a fair test in science, and higher attaining pupils explain their scientific ideas using correct terminology (such as 'molecules' and 'saturation'). Attainment in reading is satisfactory, overall, for seven and eleven-year-olds, with some older pupils demonstrating good skills in grasping the meaning of demanding texts. In Key Stage 1, a majority of older pupils can read a new 'big book' in the Literacy Hour along with its teacher, and less confident readers join in any repeated phrases after one or two pages. Bilingual learners identified for additional support become able to join in successfully by studying the book beforehand with a support teacher. In the lower Key Stage 2, many bilingual pupils have good skills in decoding words and can read with reasonable fluency. However, they are not, yet, at the stage of always grasping the content of information books and they find it hard to infer the meaning of unknown words from the context of what they read. By the time

they are eleven, pupils can read selected texts (such as accounts of the impact of different Acts of Parliament on the working lives of women and children during the Victorian era) and relate the content to previous learning. In response to questions, lower attaining pupils write simple sentences, accurately reflecting the information they have read. Higher attainers write at some length and are beginning to present information showing an understanding of different points of view. In Key Stage 1, pupils of average and higher attainment in Year 2 can accurately match pictures to words and sentences. They can sequence the story events and re-tell these in their own words. Lower attaining pupils match words to pictures when playing 'lotto' games with an adult. Pupils are developing a neat handwriting style when composing their own sentences. Those of average and higher attainment spell simple words and use basic punctuation correctly. In Key Stage 2, the majority of pupils write for a variety of purposes with good understanding. For example, they produce accounts of scientific experiments and write imaginative stories. By eleven, higher attaining pupils and some of average attainment write at a reasonable length and many use punctuation such as speech marks appropriately. Overall, pupils can write in a neat, cursive, script although some continue to find this way of forming letters difficult. Pupils in both key stages have good opportunities to apply their developing skills in literacy across the curriculum, especially in science, history and geography.

13. In mathematics, pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 can count in fives up to 100 from different starting points. A majority can also count in tens. Lower attaining pupils understand how to use a 100 square to help them with such counting. By eleven, most pupils are confident in explaining how many parts of a given fraction make up the whole. All understand the relationship between fraction and decimal notation and can order given numbers correctly along a decimal number line. Pupils with special educational need work successfully with numbers from 0.0 to 2.0. In both key stages, pupils can transfer their understanding of number to other subjects when necessary, such as when pupils in Year 2 collect information about favourite foods in a science lesson to make a block graph.
14. In science, pupils in Year 2 can identify similarities and differences between plants and animals, using this knowledge to understand the basic conditions that plants need in order to survive. They begin to appreciate how different animals live in habitats that suit them. In Key Stage 2, higher attaining pupils in Year 6 arrive at answers to problems tackled independently. These pupils and those of average attainment show very good knowledge and understanding of plant and animal life and the way organic life adapts to its environment. Through good classroom support, in both key stages, pupils with special educational needs, including those with Statements of special need, make gains in their knowledge comparable to those gains made by their peers. They do not, however, always grasp the scientific principles behind what they learn. Across the school, pupils develop good investigative skills in science and show a secure understanding of what constitutes a fair test.
15. In information and communications technology, pupils at the end of each key stage attain broadly in line with national expectations. They develop sound skills, knowledge and understanding in the use of computers. Throughout the school, pupils apply their computer skills well to literacy work as well as to geography, history and art and this application has a good effect on the standards achieved in these subjects. Such a finding represents an improvement on findings of the last inspection, when weaknesses were identified in all aspects of the information technology curriculum. The use of control technology is still in the early stages of development, but planning and resources for this subject are fully in place. Older pupils in Key Stage 1 can manipulate a computer 'mouse' successfully to click on programs they want to use. They find their way around a computer keyboard, composing sentences and entering data for simple graphs. Pupils use 'listening posts' to listen to familiar stories on tape. This facility reinforces reading and writing activities. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils can access programs on many kinds of computer software and have acquired well-developed skills in the use of 'mouse' and keyboard. Across the key stage, pupils use the Internet and CD-Roms confidently in conjunction with different types of classroom work, especially for research tasks in geography and history. The school places a good emphasis on providing access to computers whenever practicable and this is important in view of the fact that many pupils do not have other opportunities to acquire necessary skills, or extend those they learn in

school.

16. The progress of pupils with English as an additional language is good in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in Key Stage 2. In Key Stage 1, it is evident that bilingual support for pupils aids their progress in reading and writing tasks, as well as helping them secure good speaking and listening skills in English. Except where they have only recently entered school, pupils are proficient in spoken English by the time they move to Key Stage 2. A significant number are equally skilled in reading and writing. However, as indicated above and as might be expected given their starting point in English on entry to the Nursery, around 40 per cent of bilingual learners in Years 3 and 4 continue to have considerable support needs for literacy activities across the curriculum. In spite of carefully targeted support, these pupils do not make the progress one might expect. This is especially true of pupils whose spoken English nevertheless appears fluent. At times, it is difficult to determine (simply through communicating with them in English) how much this lack of expected progress is owed to pupils' poor grasp of subject specific vocabularies or to their difficulties in making sense of underlying concepts being taught. It is possible to exemplify this problem by reference to a history lesson for older pupils in the lower Key Stage 2. It was observed how pupils found relevant passages about markets in Aztec times in the books available to them and read these with reasonable fluency, using their knowledge of how to 'sound out' and blend parts of unknown words successfully on the whole. However, they needed adult support to make sense of some key words and discussion with them did not altogether reveal whether they grasped properly the meaning of the words they were given or missed something important in the underlying content (or about the background) of what they read. In the upper Key Stage 2, these sorts of problems are still evident, albeit to a lesser degree. Bilingual pupils make substantial progress in their learning and, by the time they reach Years 5 and 6, many attain at least in line with what can be expected for their age and sometimes much better than this in subjects across the curriculum. For a significant minority, though, such evidence of sound learning remains largely at the spoken level and is still not accurately reflected in what pupils can manage to record on paper.
17. In the non-core subjects of art, geography, history, physical education and music, pupils generally attain standards in line with what can be expected for their age and make satisfactory progress, overall. At times, pupils in both key stages make good progress in lessons and achieve standards better than might be expected. Again, it is worth giving examples. In both key stages, pupils invariably sing well to produce a pleasing sound. In Year 1, the youngest pupils demonstrate a very good knowledge of the local area when looking at photographs and make a simple map in geography. In Year 5, pupils build successfully on previous history work to produce coherent accounts of their investigations of the Ancient Greeks, when explaining the main influences on the Ancient Greek life-style. Few lessons in design and technology were seen and these were in Key Stage 2. There is insufficient evidence to base a judgement on progress, overall, although in the lessons seen, pupils achieved at least satisfactory standards for their age and progress was good in some lessons. Pupils in Year 3 make good progress in planning a design for a 3D model of a monster and in learning how to incorporate moving parts into their design.
18. Overall, pupils generally attain standards to be expected of them by eleven years of age. Some, including those for whom English is an additional language, attain high standards. Principally, the school is determined to continue to improve the 'added value' it is currently seen to give pupils through its teaching and learning practices, so that more pupils achieve their potential. To this end, it is developing its capacity to 'track' pupils' progress from entry to school (whether at Nursery age or later) until Year 6 and to refine its analyses of test results to very good effect. Through such means, it is better able to make decisions about the most effective way to deploy limited resources to raise the attainment of individuals or particular groups of pupils, as well as to raise overall standards. It is also able to set realistic targets for year cohorts, in line with government requirements, because of its careful analysis of important information. Such analysis has helped the school, for example, to identify those pupils with English as an additional language who are not making the progress expected of them in their literacy development and to look more closely at what might be the cause of this.

Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

19. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good, overall, and their relationships with others, both peers and adults, are very good. The school has continued to build upon positive features identified in the previous inspection. Such features of behaviour and attitude are highly valued by parents. Particular strengths are noticed in classrooms for children under five and in Key Stage 1. In fact, the democratic ethos of the school contributes significantly to the standards that all pupils achieve and to their progress, including the standards and progress of those pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language.
20. In the very short space of time since the beginning of term prior to the inspection, children under five in the Nursery and Reception classes have developed effective relationships with each other and with adults. This good quality of relationship is especially seen in the Nursery where most children have little, if any, experience of being outside their families for long periods of time. In the Nursery, children enjoy choosing what they will do when they first enter in the morning and they sustain interest in an activity for appreciable periods of time. For example, they choose to work in the 'home' area, taking care to select the right clothes and equipment needed for ironing and attend seriously to their task. Children develop a capacity to concentrate very well by the time they transfer to the Reception class. In both Nursery and Reception classes, children enjoy the company of adults. They are confident in seeking help and respond positively to adult interest. In the Reception class, children like to talk at length about their work, as when a girl recounts a story read from a favourite book. Children develop very good skills for behaving independently. Even the very youngest understand that they are responsible for tidying toys and materials away at the end of sessions and work hard to do this in a responsible manner.
21. Good attitudes to learning are shown across the school in pupils' attentiveness, in their eagerness to join in with learning activities and in their generally keen response to questions. Pupils settle quickly to their work. They are familiar with routines and organise themselves well in classrooms. They frequently display considerable powers of concentration when engaged with tasks. Pupils take pride in their achievements and are seen to respond well, both in classrooms and in assemblies, when praised. Similarly, they respond well to opportunities to improve their performance by considering their own and each other's work. For example, in Year 4 after they have watched a dance and movement lesson, pupils appraise critically the group mimes they have seen. By the time they reach the upper Key Stage 2, pupils have a good capacity for personal study. During a Year 5 history lesson, pupils work very productively in pairs and small groups on a research task, needing little adult intervention to aid them.
22. The behaviour of pupils in classrooms and around the school is, with a few exceptions, good. These exceptions are uncharacteristic and are generally confined to pupils' behaviour observed in a small number of lessons in Key Stage 2 where pupils respond to an unchallenging lesson content or to a slow pace with varying levels of silliness, which verges on rudeness at times. Parents value the positive and caring example set by all adults in the school and approve of the good influence this generally has on how pupils conduct themselves. For their part, pupils respond well to adults' consistent expectations of their good behaviour, reliability and respect for others and for property in classrooms. Their positive response can be seen frequently around the school building and during periods of outdoor play. Whilst pupils are boisterous in the playground, good levels of co-operative play and awareness of others' space show in their games. Incidents of an aggressive nature are very rare. Where they occur, as when two pupils have a dispute and one hits out at the other during lunchtime play, pupils respond positively to their supervisors' speedy and fair intervention. In the example given, they listened attentively, apologised and shook hands, after a period of reflection. Pupils are aware of both rewards and sanctions, knowing that they might lose their play or be required to stay close to adult supervision if they cannot play amicably with peers. When gathering for assembly, pupils' behaviour is exemplary. They enter the school hall quietly and with respect for the occasion and sit and listen to the music until everyone is present and assembly begins. There have been no exclusions in the year prior to the inspection. This represents an unchanged position

since the school's previous inspection.

23. The quality of relationships and racial harmony in school is very good. Parents are happy with these aspects of school life. In particular, they praise the good social skills developed in the Nursery and attribute their children's growing confidence in making relationships with others and with adults to such development. Boys and girls from a diversity of ethnic backgrounds work and play together harmoniously. In response to the evident value placed on the rich diversity of languages, faiths and cultures in the school, pupils actively participate in lessons and put forward opinions, knowing that they will be listened to with respect. They show respect for the values and beliefs of others, working together collaboratively and taking turns fairly.
24. Pupils take the varied opportunities provided for them to act as monitors and helpers. From the Reception class upwards, they are eager to take registers to the school office. They like to help around the classroom and school and organise and keep tidy classroom resources and equipment, showing a ready willingness and enthusiasm. Pupils' growing independence is reflected in the seriousness with which they undertake increasingly varied duties and in the personal initiative they display regarding them. Year 5 pupils act as library monitors and, in Year 6, pupils take turns to answer the telephone at lunchtime and deal with queries. Year 6 pupils are keen to visit the Nursery during their dinner break to play with the younger children. As Nursery helpers, they show considerable maturity and thoughtfulness in the way they support the younger children's play. Parents state that these opportunities to take responsibilities add considerably to pupils' confidence in dealing with others. Pupils also contribute to wider community projects, raising funds for the Gambia and on behalf of the homeless.
25. **Attendance**
25. Attendance rates have improved considerably since the figures quoted for the last reporting year (1998/9) and are now in line with most schools nationally. This is due mainly to a reduction in the number of holidays children take during term time. Parents have taken the school's good advice on this issue. All unauthorised absences are investigated and dealt with promptly.
26. Classes settle quickly at the start of each day, although a significant number of pupils are often late, thereby missing what might be an important introduction, for example, to numeracy or literacy lesson. By improving the attendance of pupils, if not their punctuality, the school has maintained the satisfactory level of attendance found in its last inspection.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

Teaching

27. In 66 per cent of lessons, teaching is of good or better quality. Seventeen per cent is judged very good or better. Overall, 90 per cent of teaching is at least satisfactory. Teaching is less than satisfactory in ten per cent of lessons. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. There is evidence of good or better teaching across the school, in a range of subjects. Particular strengths are to be seen in the Early Years and in Key Stage 1, where teaching is most frequently judged to be good or better. Strengths are to be found in specialist music teaching.
28. The quality of teaching for children under five in the Nursery and Reception classes is never less than satisfactory. In 83 per cent of lessons, it is judged good or very good. Provision for children under five is of a very high quality and is a strength of the school. Teaching and non-teaching support staff work well together both within and across classes, and make a good team. All Nursery and Reception staff have high

expectations of children's behaviour and of the standards of work to be achieved. Adults consistently provide excellent role models for children in their concentration on the work in hand and the evident pleasure they take in working together and with the children. Nursery and Reception teachers openly value the work of Nursery Nurses and bilingual classroom assistants, and the ethos of shared working practices adds considerably to the good standards children attain. Teachers' planning reflects secure knowledge and understanding both of the learning needs of young children and of the Desirable Learning Outcomes for Children's Learning. In the Nursery, such planning is managed flexibly, especially at the start of the school year. It is well founded on assessments made by all staff about individual learning needs, gained through their observations of children's responses to the planned provision. Provision is structured purposefully in each area of learning, both within the classroom and in areas organised for outdoor play. Staff concentrate on providing a calm, secure, environment where children feel valued and where they are able to make choices about the tasks they undertake. Planning takes good account of providing opportunities for children to initiate their own activities, and the ensuing self-initiated work, supplemented by judicious adult intervention, extends what children are taught more formally through adult-led activities. In the Reception class, planning is more consistently structured formally as children develop a capacity for attending to tasks for longer periods of time, both in small groups and as members of the whole class. Reception staff continue the good practice of child observation and planning is consequently adjusted to take account of individuals' needs, where appropriate. Adults are caring and considerate in the way they manage children, showing an underlying firmness. They create a secure learning environment in both Nursery and Reception classrooms. Teachers provide a range of stimulating activities and first-hand experiences, so as to engage children's interest and intellectual curiosity. Children who have special educational needs receive appropriate support and make very good progress. Overall, teaching is aimed at raising standards by maximising children's potential for learning. The general quality of teachers' assessments and of their record-keeping practices is excellent.

29. In Key Stage 1, most teaching (76 per cent) is of good or better quality. No teaching was judged less than satisfactory. For example, very good teaching was seen in a Literacy Hour where older pupils enjoyed exploring their ideas for a poem after reading a book together as a class. The teacher's thorough preparation for this lesson ensured that tasks were well-matched to pupils' different learning needs so that all pupils achieved better than might have been expected. In Key Stage 2, 81 per cent of teaching is judged satisfactory or better, with over half of this (54 per cent) of good or better quality. However, 19 per cent of teaching is unsatisfactory or poor. Very good teaching was seen in a science lesson in the upper key stage, for example, where resources were used effectively to illustrate the earth's movement in effecting the way day turns into night. A good monitoring of pupils' work ensured that a brisk pace was maintained and that notable progress followed. By contrast, in a follow up lesson on making graphs to illustrate this practical work, teaching was judged unsatisfactory when the teacher's exposition lacked clarity. Pupils became inattentive and too much time was spent dealing with inappropriate behaviour rather than in moving the lesson forward. Teachers across the key stages give good support to enable pupils on the Code of Practice register of special needs to participate in lessons by contributing to discussions on what they have learned.
30. Where teaching is good or better, teachers' planning is thorough. Time is well spent in establishing the content and purpose of lessons at the outset through discussion and demonstration, ensuring that all pupils understand points being made and the tasks they are required to do. A strong feature of such teaching is the way in which teachers set new learning in the context of existing knowledge, gained through pupils' own experiences as well as through previous work. So, for example, in a history lesson for younger pupils in the lower Key Stage 2, a teacher immediately captures pupils' interest by stating that they are all going to be historians for the afternoon. Good questioning strategies serve to reinforce pupils' understanding of what this might entail by building on previous learning and a wide variety of good quality resources supports the subsequent investigative activities well. Also in the lower key stage, in a geography lesson given by the subject co-ordinator, the teacher stops the video at well-chosen points to check what pupils have learned about the River Nile and to see how well they recall previous work. In these lessons, teachers have consistently high expectations of pupils' capacity to listen attentively and tasks are well matched to

pupils' different learning needs. In a Key Stage 1 art lesson, a teacher demonstrates techniques for 'mark making' to the youngest pupils with paints and brushes to good effect when exploring how Andy Warhol created his images of flowers. As well as reinforcing her lesson's main focus in this way, she also stresses the importance of using an appropriate subject-vocabulary, as well as teaching her pupils how to keep their colours clean. Good quality questioning is evident across the school, but is especially marked where teaching is assessed to be of good or better quality. This was notably the case at the end of a science lesson in the upper Key Stage 2 where the class teacher and the support teacher for bilingual learners engaged jointly in asking challenging questions of pupils about pupils' results and the hypotheses they had formed. In music, the quality of specialist teaching in a lesson in the early Key Stage 1 and, again, at the end of Key Stage 2 is judged to be excellent. An evident subject expertise combines with the teacher's very high expectations and brisk pace to ensure that pupils make very good progress as they work on a wide variety of carefully selected activities.

31. Where teaching is judged unsatisfactory or poor, this is generally associated with a lack of sufficient challenge in the lesson content and a consequent lack of pace as pupils lose interest, combined with teachers' failure to deal successfully with any resulting poor behaviour. So, difficulties are compounded, as teachers waste energy managing poor behaviour instead of insisting that pupils listen to and follow instructions from the start. For example, teaching is judged poor in a physical education lesson in the upper Key Stage 2 when the teacher becomes preoccupied by the behaviour of some pupils and discusses with them the impact this behaviour is having on others. As the subject of poor behaviour is returned to repeatedly, little progress is made and pupils further demonstrate low levels of skill in the task given. In a music lesson in the lower Key Stage 2, teaching is unsatisfactory, in part, for a different sort of reason. Although planning is sound, the lesson loses its musical focus when the teacher turns to aspects of related science work, examining the length of notes struck on tuned instruments. In part, however, this lesson is unsatisfactory because the teacher intervenes too late to stop some pupils' silly behaviour when they hit the instruments loudly.
32. In almost all lessons, teachers have good relationships with pupils and manage them well. Teaching, support teaching and non-teaching staff work well together in classrooms and agree in their expectations of pupils. They provide very good social role models for pupils in their positive interactions with one another and in the way they share classroom work. Adults almost always deal with pupils courteously and politely.
33. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good. The Co-ordinator for special needs has very good expertise and classroom assistants are well-trained. The Co-ordinator shares her time in the school between her special needs' responsibilities and those attached to being a member of the support staff for bilingual pupils. Work on agreeing the targets for pupils' individual education plans with class teachers is developing effectively. Regular liaison with teachers highlights a need for them to formulate targets understood by all concerned, so that they inform planning properly. Support teaching and non-teaching staff work mainly within classrooms and withdraw pupils for specific purposes. For example, the Co-ordinator is trained in Reading Recovery strategies and gives very good support to targeted pupils over an agreed period of time. In addition to working with pupils directly, teachers and classroom assistants monitor pupils' responses to lessons closely as they observe whole-class or group teaching sessions. Such monitoring generates valuable assessment information. It also leads to pupils participating in discussions alongside their peers, since they can be quietly encouraged by support staff to answer teachers' questions. In addition, the Co-ordinator for special needs takes on the role of a class teacher at times and so gains a useful insight into particular pupils' progress. She leads the plenary session at the end of a Literacy Hour for older pupils in Key Stage 1, for example, and checks on pupils' recall and understanding of the content of the 'big book' through an amusing game involving masks. This successfully involves everyone, including pupils identified as having special needs.
34. The quality of teaching for pupils with English as an additional language ranges from satisfactory to very

good and is good, overall. Staff-members funded through the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant are deployed appropriately in line with recommendations from the local education authority. So bilingual assistants focus their support on identified pupils in Key Stage 1, working alongside support teaching colleagues. In Key Stage 2, support teaching staff are deployed across the classes in accordance with pupils' identified needs. Support staff have a sound understanding of pupils' English language learning needs. Pupils are removed from classes only for specific purposes and for brief periods of time. For instance, older pupils in Key Stage 1 are included in a small group for additional support for reading. Most frequently, teaching takes place within the classroom. Class teachers and support staff work closely together in planning lessons and this collaboration generally helps pupils make progress and raise their standards of attainment. Examples of this are seen where support teachers work alongside class teachers and pupils perceive the support teachers as integral to the teaching and learning activities, as when a support teacher introduces the 'big book' in a Literacy Hour in Key Stage 1, and, elsewhere, another teacher actively participates in a question-and-answer session in a science lesson in the upper Key Stage 2. Through such means, teachers monitor responses made by the pupils they work with as well as usefully modelling to non-specialist colleagues ways of including these pupils in events. Where teaching is not integrated into the mainstream work of the class, progress in meeting lesson objectives is judged to be less secure. This is seen, for example, in a history lesson in the early Key Stage 2. Pupils make satisfactory progress in writing simple sentences about houses in Ancient Egypt compared to present times in response to their teacher's questions, drawing successfully on some pupils' experience and knowledge of housing in hot countries. However, pupils do not grasp how to use secondary sources of information for historical research purposes or learn how to deploy a relevant subject vocabulary. That is, they do not handle and talk about what is observed in the variety of visual images, books and CD-Rom material available to the rest of the class.

35. Teachers mostly pace lessons well. They choose resources with care and give pupils good opportunities to handle them, so that interest is maintained. To illustrate: in a history lesson in the lower Key Stage 2, pupils are intrigued by the idea that the avocado pear and tomatoes, familiar to them in their homes and at the local market, have their origins in South America and were just as familiar to the Aztecs. Overall, teachers make good day-to-day assessments of pupils' progress, adjusting their planning to take account of the judgements made. They frequently give helpful oral feedback to pupils in the course of lessons as they monitor around the classroom and work with individuals, or groups. Plenary sessions at the end of lessons are frequently valuable for this purpose. Such feedback is not generally reflected, however, in the marking of pupils' work. Co-operative practices between class teachers and support staff benefit such planning, as all information on groups and individuals is shared at the end of lessons. The practice of giving homework is now being established more widely and teachers match homework demands to pupils' known learning needs. So, the youngest pupils take home 'book bags' and older pupils are given a range of appropriate tasks as well as being required to rehearse spellings and 'times tables'.

36.

36. **The curriculum and assessment**

36. Overall, the school's curricular provision is very good with strengths evident in all aspects of provision for children under five.

37. The curriculum for children under five is consistently very good. It is broad and balanced, and well matched to children's own experiences. Provision is based securely on teachers' thorough understanding of the Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning in both the Nursery and Reception classes. Teachers ensure that all pupils have equality of access and opportunity to engage in planned activities. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is of very good quality. There is a sound knowledge in the Reception class of how to meet children's needs, while satisfying the requirements of the National Curriculum when they reach five. Such requirements are matched to the 'Desirable Learning Outcomes', so that the transition between the two is smooth. Teachers in both classes provide a rich learning environment by choosing resources to support each area of learning, although access to outdoor play for children in the Reception class is restricted in nature and does not, for example, include opportunities to climb or play

with wheeled toys. Strong emphasis is placed on the importance of literacy activities. These are well-structured so that pupils make secure links between speaking and listening and learn to use reading and writing skills for a variety of purposes. Similarly, teachers provide for children's developing mathematical understanding and early numeracy skills. Acknowledging and celebrating children's proficiency in their first language is integral to curricular provision in these classrooms and is well supported through the deployment of bilingual classroom assistants. The excellent assessment procedures for children under five ensure that both teaching and non-teaching staff have a very good knowledge and understanding of individual children's progress on a daily basis and over time. This information is used to inform future planning as a matter of course. Excellent Records of Achievement are passed from the Nursery to the Reception class when children transfer and planning subsequently takes good account of these so that pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding continue to be developed. Very good communication between staff in both classrooms furthers teachers' comprehension of individuals' learning needs for assessment and planning purposes. Baseline assessment is in place in the Reception class and takes place as required during the early part of the Autumn term. Information from this is carefully recorded and incorporated into teachers' work with children.

38. Since the previous inspection, the school has improved curricular provision in Key Stages 1 and 2 so that this is now broad and balanced, with greater attention given to aesthetic and creative development. The curriculum is of good quality. To secure improvements and match subject coverage to recommended requirements, key stage Co-ordinators monitor all aspects of curricular planning both within and across the key stages. In addition, they keep abreast of classroom events and planning by regularly meeting teachers within the relevant key stages. Importantly, Early Years teachers are involved in Key Stage 1 meetings. Through their work, key stage Co-ordinators are in a good position to pass on to the senior management team an overview of curricular matters. This situation represents an improvement since the last inspection. Subject Co-ordinators have a good overview of planning in their subject area. They monitor this regularly and check learning outcomes by sampling pupils' work. However, neither subject nor key stage Co-ordinators or other senior managers gain a knowledge of classroom practices through systematically observing these at first hand.
39. With the exception of design and technology, good quality policies are in place in all subjects. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. Schemes of work for all subjects are similarly of good quality. These have been adjusted in line with the latest government recommendations and take account of pupils' growing skills and understanding over time. The school regularly reviews each subject and such reviews affect future planning. However, too little attention is given still to design and technology, which is often confused with art. Development in music is being addressed for the current academic year and part of the next through the employment of a specialist teacher. At the time of the inspection, this development was still in its initial stages. It is being achieved through careful planning over time so that class teachers build on their subject confidence as they observe the specialist and participate in a series of lessons. The school states that time for non-core subjects has been 'squeezed' as a result of a focus on implementing the National Literacy Strategy and preparing for the National Numeracy Project over the past two years. Emphasis has been placed, too, on developing teachers' skills and understanding in information technology since the last inspection and significant improvements have been made. Scope for further development remains, for example, in the use of information communication technology across the curriculum and in the application of control technology. The school is aware of the weaknesses identified in design and technology and the need for further developments in information technology. It plans to address these needs. The school's strategy for literacy is good and is working well, especially with those pupils for whom English is an additional language. The National Numeracy Project is being satisfactorily introduced, but it is too early to judge its impact.
40. Curricular provision gives pupils in the key stages many opportunities to show initiative and originality, especially in art, music and science. In some lessons, skills acquired in information technology are used well to support learning, for example, in science in Year 5 when some pupils write up their experiments using a computer and create diagrams to illustrate their work. There is an appropriate programme of health and sex education. Pupils' personal development is catered for through discussion and role-play in

drama. The school makes very good use of its central London location: visits to many places of interest and visitors to the school routinely enrich pupils' learning experiences. Pupils in Key Stage 1 visit the local street market and go to the London Museum as part of their geography and history studies. Pupils in Key Stage 2 go to concerts and theatre productions to widen their understanding of the creative arts.

41. The school actively promotes equal opportunities and provision for this is very good across the key stages. Its long-term plans, as well as teacher's lesson plans, are aimed at all pupils reaching their potential. In contrast to what was found at the previous inspection, there is evidence, now, that higher-attaining pupils are challenged appropriately. Teachers work to provide for different levels of need. Curricular planning demonstrates awareness of the language needs of bilingual learners and teachers frequently plan tasks and choose resources with good attention to them. For example, in the upper Key Stage 2, texts selected for a history lesson on life in Victorian times enables all pupils to grasp the main points of the lesson and accompanying discussion is well-founded on pupils' reading. The school's curriculum recognises the diversity of cultures, faiths and languages amongst its pupils through its inclusion, for example, of a range of stories and poems in literature and through the use of resources reflecting different musical and visual arts traditions. Such resources extend considerably the effect achieved by related school visual displays.
42. The school's provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, overall, with some very good features. Individual education plans are in place and the Co-ordinator for special educational needs monitors them for their learning outcomes in conjunction with class teachers. There is inconsistency, however, in the organisation of such meetings, as well as in the recording of the evaluations undertaken. The Co-ordinator is concerned to address this issue. There is an appropriate balance of strategies involving pupils being withdrawn from classrooms and of working within classrooms. Judgements about which strategies to use are always made so that pupils' best interests are taken into account. Classroom assistants provide very good support to pupils. For example, in accordance with identified targets, they add to pupils' knowledge of language patterns and the sounds of words by using tape recorders and by closely attending to individual speech difficulties. Such assistance often helps pupils contribute to topics on a par with their peers, as when they participate in a discussion on the lifestyle of the Aztecs in a history lesson in the lower Key Stage 2. When she works alongside classroom assistants, the Co-ordinator's very good expertise directly benefits pupils. They also benefit indirectly through her close liaison with class teachers.
43. The school makes good use of the expertise of the speech therapist and educational psychologist. The governor for special needs gains an informed oversight of provision through visits to school to observe practices and through discussions with the Co-ordinator. Parents are regularly involved in reviewing their children's progress, although they are stated to take a somewhat passive part in the proceedings. As yet, a lack of clarity is evident in records kept of special needs' work and this sometimes impedes efficient and effective follow-up. Nor is it clear how the success of the policy for this work is monitored. Nevertheless, the school adheres well to the requirements of the Code of Practice. Provision for this area is being reviewed appropriately in the current round of school development planning.
44. The school's extra-curricular provision is very good. A full programme of sporting activities includes football, cricket and tennis, whilst school clubs allow an equally wide variety of creative activities. These include art and craft, dance and drama and an increasing number of musical opportunities. A club for information and communications technology has also started. The school is very keen to develop its singing club into a large choir, in order to capitalise on the widespread musical talents of its pupils.
45. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment are very good for both key stages. This represents a marked improvement since the previous inspection. Teachers keep very thorough records of pupils' progress, as well as portfolios of samples of work across the curriculum. They are working to ensure that samples are systematically 'levelled', to aid assessment against National Curriculum standards. Teachers keep detailed records of pupils' progress in literacy and numeracy. The science Co-ordinator extends records by analysing differences between groups, for example, on grounds of gender or ethnicity. Such analyses are also being developed in relation to statutory test results at the end of key stages to inform decisions about

curricular planning. Teachers make good use of records of assessment for planning. This is seen particularly where pupils with special educational needs have individual education plans and where bilingual pupils are identified as needing specific support in their acquisition and use of the English language. Daily assessment in lessons is variable in quality, but is at least satisfactory and sometimes good. It is more consistently good in Key Stage 1. Marking varies from being good and influential on the progress pupils make to unsatisfactory, with no attention paid to ensuring that pupils correct their mistakes. In light of its assessment information, the school sets realistic targets in literacy and numeracy to keep its policies in line with government requirements.

46. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

46. Provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils is very good from the Nursery to Year 6. The provision for cultural development is excellent and a strength of the school. High standards identified in the previous inspection report have been maintained and even raised. Parents speak strongly in support of all aspects of provision, seeing these as central to the life of the school. The aims and objectives of the school are set within a Christian context and good quality policies underpin practice. The school places a high value on respect for persons and for differences in culture, language and faith.

47. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. The school has a clear conception of spirituality, and gives sound guidance on how this is to be encouraged. Adults promote in pupils a sense of awe and wonder, help them grasp what it means to be members of a community and encourage in them a sense of personal self worth and the worth of others. For example, in an art lesson in Key Stage 1, the youngest pupils are excited by the flower images made by the artist Andy Warhol and express wonder at the creative possibilities provided by bright paints when they begin their own work. The good quality of provision is reflected in the way that teachers celebrate pupils' success and share their pleasure. A good example of this sharing was seen in the Reception class when a teacher expressed astonishment at a 'princesses hat' produced spontaneously by a pupil after listening to a story. The whole class admired the hat and clapped at the results. Whole-school assemblies help pupils listen, keep still and reflect quietly. Music is used well to set the tone of the school's gathering together and seating arrangements contribute to the powerful sense shared by adults and pupils alike of being part of a larger community.

48. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. Rights and responsibilities are made explicit, and pupils are taught to distinguish right from wrong, both through exemplars, as when stories such as 'The Good Samaritan' are told in assembly and through daily actions. For example, adults consistently address individuals' transgressions of good behaviour in and out of classrooms by asking the individuals concerned to reflect on consequences. Through such means, Nursery children are helped to realise why they must not prevent others from using popular toys such as tricycles, but take turns in sharing them. Pupils are similarly taught to respect and take care of their own and others' property. Teachers draw attention to the need for pupils to handle artefacts, but remind them about the importance of keeping these in a good state for future use and enjoyment. So, in the lower Key Stage 2, pupils who have taken fruits, vegetables and Aztec artefacts from displays around the classroom, know that they have to re-assemble the displays at the end of their lesson.

49. Provision for social development is also very good. Parents praise the school's caring culture, reserving special praise for the way social skills are taught in the nursery. Adults are good role models in their social interactions with one another and with pupils. Such interactions contribute strongly to a mutual respect, widely experienced within the school, which ensures that pupils from different backgrounds and with different learning needs feel at home there. Teachers reinforce the importance of good manners and skills of personal organisation. From the youngest upwards, pupils are expected to keep their classrooms tidy and are taught to create and maintain an attractive learning environment. This teaching might account for one pupil in the Reception class being heard to comment that the mess on the floor is not all hers and then being seen to take great care to sweep it into the dustpan. The oldest pupils have many opportunities

to take responsibility and show initiative, as when they visit the Nursery at lunchtime to play with children.

50. Provision for cultural development is excellent. It aims to extend pupils' understanding of their own and others' cultures in the context of classroom and school learning. It also aims to teach pupils about the wider community beyond the school. An extensive programme of learning opportunities is planned to provide a wide variety of cultural experiences for all pupils, ranging from walks around the immediate locality to visits to museums, art galleries and theatres. Visitors to the school include a historian, musicians, artists in residence and presenters of drama and video workshops. Links are maintained with the local community by visits to libraries and an over 60's club. Teachers plan themes of work in order to draw on such resources and to reflect in the materials selected for lessons, for example, stories, visual images and music, pupils' own experiences of the world, wherever practicable. Provision for cultural development very effectively addresses weaknesses identified in the previous report relating to a need to develop pupils' creativity and imagination.

51.

Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

51. The school's provision for the support, guidance and welfare of pupils is good. It makes a significant contribution to the school's ethos. Opportunities for informally helping pupils and their families are plentiful, being created through the approachability of the headteacher and staff. Parents have a great deal of confidence in staff-members who, without exception, show a genuine interest in and concern for pupils' personal needs. This relationship with parents was recognised as a positive feature of the school at its last inspection.
52. Very good procedures are used to monitor all aspects of pupils' progress and personal development. Assessment outcomes inform teachers' discussions with parents on the academic progress of their children as well as feeding into pupils' annual reports. Accordingly, appropriate identification is made at an early stage of those pupils who may need additional learning support, such as pupils with special educational needs. The support given is valued by parents. Language support for pupils in the early stages of English language acquisition is very good. It is considerably enhanced by the support of bilingual classroom assistants. Children's individual Records of Achievement in the Nursery are kept comprehensively. They provide a revealing portrait of children's progress in each area of learning, as well as children 'as learners'.
53. Pupils' personal development is carefully monitored. It is helped by good relationships with staff, who know pupils well. Home visits by Nursery staff before children begin school provide good opportunities for parents to discuss their child's needs with a teacher. They also allow staff to observe children in their home setting where the children are most confident. In the Early Years, considerable emphasis is placed on furthering pupils' social development and skills. As they move from Nursery to Reception Class and then into Key Stage 1, the youngest children are well prepared for the rigours of more formal education. A profile containing detailed information on personal development is kept on each pupil. Lunchtimes are well organised and supervised and are periods when pupils are encouraged to share their games and toys, to play constructively and to develop a sense of fairness in their dealings with each other. The stimulating large equipment in the playground for pupils in Key Stage 1 and the good range of small equipment available to older pupils aids pupils' social development. Mid-day supervisors work closely with teachers to discuss and monitor pupils' overall progress in their personal and social skills. Appropriate teacher-intervention in lessons raises pupils' self-esteem by pinpointing pupils' achievements.
54. Procedures for promoting discipline and good behaviour are very good. Teachers most frequently, calmly and confidently, operate rules to manage the behaviour of pupils. Pupils are encouraged to care for each other and show kindness and tolerance to all. Any incidents of bullying and harassment which occur are

dealt with effectively and consistently by all staff. Good records are kept by the headteacher of rare incidents of poor or unacceptable behaviour. These records are employed to monitor and eliminate possible recurrences of such conduct. Teachers use class time, assembly themes and playtimes to guide pupils into behaving in an acceptable and responsible manner.

55. Overall, procedures for monitoring and ensuring attendance and punctuality are satisfactory, with teachers maintaining a friendly and relaxed partnership with parents. Appropriate use is made of the educational welfare services where families have particular problems in getting their children to school. The school has been very successful in dissuading parents from taking extended family holidays during term time. This has greatly improved the attendance of a significant number of pupils. Instances of lateness are recorded in the attendance registers with the time and reason for the lateness entered when this is deemed by the school to constitute serious lateness. It is not altogether clear how such judgements are made or how persistent lateness is monitored and then addressed. The school is concerned suitably about this matter.
56. The school meets the legal requirements for health and safety by its policy. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. Frequent risk-assessments are made of the site and buildings to eliminate and control potential risks to the health and safety of school users. Regular fire drills and appliance-testing take place. However, certain other routine procedures to support the high level of care and concern that staff show for their pupils' well-being are inconsistently applied. For example, there is no record kept of who is on the school premises at any one time during the school day. Similarly, detailed records of the contacts teachers make with parents when children suffer an accident or injury at school are not kept. The school is aware of the need to redress such inadequacies. Procedures for administering first aid are satisfactory, but only one adult in school currently holds a first-aid qualification.
57. Governors and parents have approved programmes of sex education and drugs education taught in science and in personal, social and health lessons across the school. Parents recognise that the school deals with their children's questions on these topics properly and sensitively. The school's systems for monitoring and dealing with its responsibilities in relation to child protection issues are satisfactory. They are well known to teachers, but other staff-members are less secure in their knowledge of what constitutes good practice in this area.
58. The school does not, yet, have a policy in respect of the use of force to control or restrain pupils, or, therefore, a means of recording such instances. It is aware of this deficiency.
59. The school ensures that no pupil misses out on any school-organised activity because of a family's financial circumstances. By their fundraising and valuable help in school, parents, governors and volunteers make genuine efforts to make sure that all pupils have equal educational opportunities.
60. **Partnership with parents and the community**
60. Links with parents and the community are very good. The links established at the time of the last inspection have been maintained and in some cases extended. Teachers are committed to keeping open lines of communication with parents and do this very well. Every effort is made to maintain relaxed, friendly and supportive relationships with parents and with visitors to the school, who are all made very welcome. Meetings between teachers and parents prior to children's entry to school are felt by parents to be reassuring and informative. Nursery and Reception classes provide a family atmosphere where all are warmly welcomed and where staff work hard to build links with all sections of the community. As parents deliver and collect their children, they exchange information with teachers and staff.

61. Parental involvement in their children's learning is good. A home-school partnership in learning is being successfully promoted by the setting of regular homework, in addition to reading. Parents expressed concerns about homework prior to the inspection, but are nevertheless pleased with the school's new homework policy and support the essence and spirit of the home/school agreement. Open evenings, sessions explaining the school's methods of teaching literacy and numeracy, class assemblies and school concerts attract a keen level of parental interest. The parents' meeting held prior to the inspection illustrated this well. It was attended by a good cross-section of the parent community and parents were also keen to give their views via the questionnaire. Parental support for the school positively affects pupils' attitudes to work, their progress in lessons and standards attained. Links with community projects in adult education have enabled weekly classes to be held in school for parents wishing to improve their English language skills. In addition, the local education authority supports a class for parents interested in finding out about how their children are taught, especially in relation to literacy activities. All sessions are well attended and help parents support their children's education at home.
62. Because of the nature of the community, there are few regular parent helpers in school but there is always a lot of assistance with study visits. Parents also give generously of their time for other events. For example, an international food evening was a definite success. Parents energetically enlist local business organisations in donating prizes and supporting school raffles and fetes. During the week of the inspection, members of the Parents' Association successfully persuaded other members to volunteer for future fundraising events and social activities. Parents are working hard on suggestions for the school's millennium celebrations. The school appreciates efforts made by parents in contributing towards the costs of educational visits and helping with charity appeals.
63. The quality of information available to parents is good. The school tells parents about school life in a variety of ways. In the school's reception lobby and library area, for example, parents and visitors can share in the buzz and excitement of learning by looking at displays of pupils' work and other evidence of school activities. Learning resources (such as books and musical instruments) show what pupils use in lessons, and photographs illustrate other aspects of school life. For example, they show the High Commissioner for Gambia talking to pupils in assembly and accepting gifts which the pupils collected for children in a Gambian school. The annual reports to parents on their children's progress are written in an easy-to-assimilate style. These include guidance to parents on what their child needs to do to improve his or her rate of academic progress. During parent/teacher consultations, teachers initiate discussions on the personal and academic targets set for children, making sure that parents understand what is being said. Parents appreciate the efforts involved in this and value the information they are given. They also appreciate what oral information they receive on their child's progress during informal chats with their child's class teacher. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are appropriately involved in the early identification of their child's needs and in the subsequent review meetings arranged to discuss progress made.
64. The current edition of the governors' annual report omits certain information that parents should be given. For example, there is no reference to the school's arrangements and facilities for admitting children with disabilities. The new school prospectus is an attractive document and is used as a convenient point of reference by new and existing parents. The brochure for parents with children entering the Nursery is also very attractive and illustrates the work of the Nursery well, so that parents gain a clear understanding of the purpose of children's daily routines and the provision made by staff.
65. The school maintains good links with the Church of St Alban immediately opposite. Most pupils attend a service on a fortnightly basis in the Church in place of school assembly. These links are extended for special celebrations throughout the year, such as at Christmas and Easter and for the Summer leaving ceremony for pupils in Year 6. The school interacts purposefully with its local community as well as making good use of the immediate locality for study purposes. For example, the school received a gift of gemstones from a firm in nearby Hatton Gardens. Links with other local schools and community groups

have developed well since the last inspection. Notably, a project funded through the single regeneration budget and various charities enables pupils to take part in a wide range of after-school activities at low cost. The local education authority provides Community Service Volunteers recruited from well-motivated college students and local employees. These give valued support in classes, in particular to developing pupils' reading skills. As pupils move to the next stage of their education, people who work in the local community also provide pupils from different minority ethnic backgrounds with valuable role models of success.

THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

Leadership and management

66. Overall, the leadership and management of the school are very good, with particular strengths identified in the implementation of the school's aims, values and policies, in its development planning, monitoring and evaluation and in its ethos. These strengths are set firmly within the framework of the principles informing its Christian faith as a Church of England school.
67. The school has made good progress in addressing the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection report. Emphasis on establishing whole-school approaches to teaching and learning through a substantial programme of In-service training for teaching and non-teaching staff has led to improvements in teachers' planning for different levels of learning need. These are now met for pupils across all levels of attainment. Such whole-school emphasis has also led to continuing improvements in already sound assessment procedures, which are being further developed through the use of computerised systems. Assessment information is of very good quality. It is gathered systematically in a number of ways and is well exploited for planning purposes. The school has established good quality policies and schemes of work in all subjects and these policies effectively underpin developments. However, design and technology is an exception to the more general rule and development work regarding the subject has still to be initiated. The school has worked hard to place more stress on pupils' aesthetic and creative development and has succeeded in doing so. Subject Co-ordinators monitor teachers' planning, regularly sampling pupils' work as a means of monitoring learning outcomes. They keep very detailed records and portfolios of pupils' work. Co-ordinators for Key Stages 1 and 2 add further to ways of monitoring within and across key stages, ensuring that planning takes into account pupils' growing skills, knowledge and understanding. As senior managers, they also supply important information to the senior management team. The restructuring of this team is another initiative that has improved the efficiency with which the school is run. However, although the headteacher moves around the school each day and has a good grasp of what is happening in classrooms, neither senior managers nor subject Co-ordinators formally monitor classroom teaching and learning practices on a systematic basis. School development planning currently includes remedying this as a priority objective. Additional support for pupils with English as an additional language is deployed in line with their assessed needs. The school has further refined its good strategies for improving pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Since the last inspection, the opening of the Nursery has significantly affected the progress the youngest children make before they enter compulsory schooling at five, with a consequent impact on their subsequent learning. The school faces further significant changes when the deputy head retires after long and loyal service. It has a good capacity to continue to improve.
68. The leadership of the school is good. The headteacher has a clear vision of the school as a community where pupils are respected and valued as individuals and where each is expected to strive for excellence. This vision is rooted in her understanding of issues relating to equality of opportunity. Senior managers, staff and governors share this understanding. The Chair of governors gives valued support to the headteacher through his regular visits and his very good knowledge of the school and local community. The headteacher is also well supported by the loyalty of the deputy head and his long-standing knowledge of the school. With two recent new appointments to the posts of key stage Co-ordinators, the senior

management team is fast developing, with commensurate importance attached to these posts. Senior managers work hard in pursuit of common goals.

69. Staff and governors enjoy good working relationships. Members of the governing body are committed and hard working in support of the school. In addition to their work on committees and the good quality information they receive from the headteacher, a number of governors are well-informed of school activities through the visits they make. Visits by governors, both formal and informal in nature, service the governing body's strategic management of the school. For example, the governor for literacy has followed up literacy training with visits to school to look at the implementation of the Literacy Hour in classrooms and to talk to teachers about this development. Governors have a good understanding of the community the school serves and of the needs of pupils for whom English is not a first language. Similarly, they have a good understanding of the demands made on staff who meet these needs. They are primarily concerned to ensure that pupils achieve high standards. Governors, therefore, fund an additional, qualified, full-time Nursery Nurse in the Reception year as a key strategy for raising the attainment of these young pupils. Further, governors raised funds for building and establishing the Nursery, augmenting Early Years provision significantly since the last inspection. Governors are equally concerned to support developments in relation to pupils with special educational needs in order to continue to raise standards.
70. School development planning is very good. It sets realistic targets for each year of a three-year cycle, keeping to criteria recognised as determining success. Planning involves senior managers and governors together with teaching and non-teaching staff in a yearly review of progress. This review-process is thorough. The review cycle is maintained with targets suitably adjusted according to past performance and in response to changing needs. Targets are translated into practical action through responsibilities delegated to relevant post-holders in their job descriptions. These targets take good account of new initiatives such as the implementation of the Literacy and Numeracy strategies and of recent research findings, for example, the report on Raising the Achievement of Minority Ethnic Groups published by the Department for Education and Employment. In light of changes in funding provision, the work of support staff funded through the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant has become a priority for the current academic year alongside the establishing and monitoring of the Numeracy Hour. Governors are also committed to ensuring that provision for special educational needs remains a priority and continues to improve. In addition to a yearly review, targets are monitored regularly by the headteacher and senior managers and by the work of the governing body through its well-structured committees. The continuing professional development of staff is seen to be fundamental to ongoing school improvement and to raising standards.
71. The ethos of the school is very good. It is evident in the good relationships maintained between staff, between adults and pupils and between pupils. Instances of poor behaviour in lessons are the exception rather than the rule. The school is a harmonious community. Its headteacher provides a positive role model in her consistently courteous dealings with others and in the welcome she extends to all. The school provides an attractive learning environment, especially in its public spaces and in Early Years and Key Stage 1 classrooms. Through such provision, positive messages about the school's commitment to high achievement and to equality of opportunity for all pupils are transmitted successfully.
72. Statutory requirements are not fulfilled in relation to there being a policy for the use of force to control or restrain pupils and the recording of such restraint.
73. **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**
73. Since the last inspection, the school has employed a sufficient quota of suitably qualified and experienced teaching staff. These provide the good balance of expertise and experience required to meet the demands

of the National Curriculum for pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2, and achieve the Desirable Outcomes for Learning for children under five. Teachers are hard working: they are well deployed and committed to their school. Non-teaching support staff are also experienced and well qualified, giving very good quality support to pupils. All staff have relevant job descriptions which, where appropriate, include reference to targets set for them by their additional responsibilities. Staff work together well as a team.

74. Arrangements for staff development are satisfactory, overall, with some good features. The formal appraisal system previously used has lapsed, pending agreement on new procedures. Interim, an informal approach works well and provides a basis for a thorough review of teachers' work. Through this review, training needs are identified, careful regard being taken both of general school needs and teachers' own professional development needs. Although the focus of recent staff training has been on the teaching of literacy and numeracy and on developing staff competencies in information communications technology skills, the school has continued to meet many of the identified training needs for its teaching and support staff. However, there are no formal procedures established to support and monitor the work of new teachers or those taking on new responsibilities. Rather, these teachers receive effective, albeit informal, support from the headteacher as well as good support from their colleagues. The training needs of mid-day supervisors are mostly well addressed, particularly in relation to managing pupils' behaviour and furthering their social skills. Plans are in hand to ensure that they are suitably trained in first aid and understand child-protection issues.
75. Very efficient secretarial staff help to keep administration demands on the headteacher and teachers to a minimum. Office staff are a friendly, welcoming, first contact point with parents and visitors to the school. All areas of the school demonstrate the commitment of the caretaker and his team to providing a safe learning environment for pupils. However, litter collects in the environmental area and detracts somewhat from its otherwise attractive appearance. The good levels of cleanliness and hygiene in school are assisted by a routine tidying of classrooms carried out by pupils of all ages. Overall, the school presents an attractive and well-cared for learning environment.
76. The school's accommodation is good in spite of the cramped nature of the site. Classrooms are well lit and are adequate in size to accommodate the numbers of pupils. The school hall is well used for physical education and assemblies and also serves as a dining room at lunchtimes, accommodating the whole school community with relative ease. The purpose-built Nursery is a very attractive addition to the school since the last inspection. It has the advantage of its own outdoor play space, which, although immediately adjacent to a busy lane alongside the school, is pleasant and inviting to children. All visitors, parents and pupils notice the attractive and well-stocked library positioned close to the main entrance. The area is in constant use throughout the day, yet provides a pleasant place where pupils can improve their research and referencing skills, using books and computers. Playgrounds for pupils in each key stage are on different levels below the school. These provide adequate spaces for the teaching of small games' skills in physical education as well as for playtimes. The school lacks any grassed area suitable for field sports. However, it makes very good use of the facilities available at nearby Coram's Fields. Through good links within the community, pupils use the green at the nearby Gray's Inn Gardens for sports' day races and events.
77. Resources to support teaching in all curricular areas are good with the exception of design and technology resources. The school carefully checks that its resources are of good quality and will stand the test of time, as well as being suited to their purpose and pleasing for pupils to use. The library is very well stocked, since weaknesses identified in the last report relating to its resources have been successfully addressed. Books for higher attaining pupils are now available, and computers have been updated. The library has built up its stocks to reflect the diversity of cultures and beliefs reflected in its own community as well as those of the wider community beyond the school. Outside resources, most of which are within easy reach of the school, such as the parish church, the fire station, local theatres and museums, are used to very good effect. A new range of climbing frames and equipment in the Key Stage 1 and Nursery playgrounds stimulates pupils' imaginative outdoor play and physical development. However, outdoor

play for children under five in the Reception class is limited in scope because pupils have to negotiate flights of stone steps to reach climbing equipment and any space where they can use wheeled toys. Consequently, opportunities for these pupils to develop some physical skills are curtailed. The school has improved access to the building for those with physical disabilities.

The efficiency of the school

78. St Alban's is a very efficient school. This judgment marks an improvement since the previous inspection. The school's financial planning is excellent. Financial managers are meticulous in setting up yearly budgets that aim to ensure that the best use is made of available funding. Budgets take good account of priorities identified in the school development plan. The school benefits from the services of a Bursar who monitors financial matters and gives the headteacher and governors good quality information on which to base decisions. This assistance is cost-effective since it ensures that the school's budgeted funds are put to best use and are thoroughly monitored to balance income and expenditure. Information given to the school usefully includes alternative options that managers take into account during school development planning.
79. The school's financial control and administrative procedures are excellent. Administrative staff keep finances in very good order and liaise with the headteacher to enable her and the staff to concentrate on educating pupils. An improved computerised system aids efficiency. The school has dealt with all matters raised in the most recent auditor's report.
80. The governing body, headteacher and staff work closely together to make development planning meet current needs, allowing realistically for future developments in light of budgetary information. A recently restructured senior management team is improving the school's efficiency by streamlining its co-ordination of the school's work. Another priority since the previous inspection has been to establish a Nursery. This is already proving to be an excellent investment. Its high quality provision provides a very effective base for raising standards of attainment in all areas of learning, but especially in developing language and literacy skills, and social development, for young children by the time they enter the Reception year. This good impact is seen to continue as pupils reach five and enter compulsory schooling.
81. Governors work hard to maintain levels of support appropriate to the learning needs of bilingual pupils and are concerned to ensure that such support is not further eroded. They take an active interest, analysing assessment information to see how this can best inform decisions about educational provision. The school is beginning to develop very good systems for monitoring pupils' progress through its connecting of its analyses of statutory test results to established assessment procedures. Such work gives a clearer picture of how some bilingual pupils do not make the progress expected of them because their literacy skills do not match their good levels of competence in understanding and speaking English. Consequently, devising strategies for supporting these pupils more effectively is targeted as a priority for development. In addition, as a means of continuing to improve standards, overall, the school identifies a need to develop further practices focusing on pupils' literacy and numeracy skills in response to government initiatives. These practices are already proving successful and maximum resources have been allocated to these areas. Governors have been successful in attracting funding to support the improvement of music teaching. The expertise of the music specialist is judged to affect pupils' progress positively, although the impact on teachers is not as yet evident, since the initiative was implemented only a short time prior to the inspection.
82. Unit costs are high, but the school takes very good account of value for money when purchasing resources. It compares products thoroughly in terms of quality and cost before making decisions about purchasing them. It also evaluates improvements to staffing, accommodation and resources for their impact on the progress pupils make and standards attained. Very good use is made of teaching and support staff, accommodation and learning resources.

83. In view of the very good quality of the school's leadership and management, the stringency with which financial resources are used and managed, the good quality of educational provision, overall, the school's strong partnership with parents and its very good systems for assessing pupils' progress and deploying staff in pursuit of raising standards, the school gives very good value for money.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

Personal and social development

84. Provision for personal and social development in the Nursery and Reception classes is excellent. By the time they are five, children attain well within expectations for their age.
85. In the Nursery, children are still mostly at the stage of playing alongside one another rather than being able to work together on joint enterprises. They almost always play amicably with toys and have learned how to take turns when sharing those that are scarce. They realise it may not be appropriate to take something simply because they want it. Children listen carefully to adults' questions when they do have disputes and respond with understanding to what adults have to say. They know the Nursery's routines and make considered choices about which activities to undertake when they arrive. For example, a group settles on a carpet with big wooden blocks and moves these around purposefully to construct a 'train' whilst others concentrate equally well at a table constructing objects from a kit. Children sustain their interest for considerable periods, especially in the classroom. Outside, they change more quickly from one possibility to another, but can stay focused for a time when given adult support, for example, in playing in the shop. Children with special educational needs and those (the majority) with English as an additional language make very good progress in this area of learning because of the high quality support they receive both individually and within small groups. All children are well prepared for transition to the Reception year. In the Reception class, children work for appreciable periods of time on self-initiated or teacher-directed tasks. Teaching builds successfully on skills established earlier. Children co-operate well in working in pairs or small groups as shop keepers and customers making and serving fish and chips for example. Children go confidently to the hall for physical education lessons or assembly and like to take the register to the school office.
86. There are excellent resources in the Nursery and Reception classrooms. Children are taught to respect and care for these resources. They are also taught to take good care of their classrooms by tidying things away at the end of sessions. Staff place a very high value on children taking such responsibilities. Teaching and non-teaching staff use learning resources effectively to promote high standards. Staff have very high expectations of children's work and behaviour and the quality of teaching is very good.
87. **Language and literacy**
87. By the age of five, most children's attainment in language and literacy is broadly in line with that expected for their age on the baseline assessment used by the school. Children frequently do better than might be expected in their speaking and listening skills in English and one or two children attain good standards in

their understanding of reading and writing at this stage in their learning. Because of the high quality provision for activities relating to language and literacy, children make very good progress during their time in the Nursery and Reception classes. Developing their communicative powers is central to the early years' curriculum. To this end, teachers have created 'language rich' classrooms where the printed word is used in ways that have meaning for children. For example, scripts which are used are familiar to bilingual as well as monolingual pupils. Visual images reinforce printed messages, enabling children to access important information. For example, large coloured shapes, representing how children are grouped, are juxtaposed with photographs of pupils in the Reception class to remind children of their group's scheduled activity. Teachers are very skilled at observing children. They seize every opportunity to extend their pupils' language repertoire, carefully matching resources to activities, taking into account different levels of needs. Nursery Nurses similarly skilfully support teachers through their interactions with children. Bilingual classroom assistants add yet another important dimension to the language learning of bilingual pupils.

88. In the Nursery, children enjoy the company of adults and, at this early stage in the school year, are starting to respond confidently to questions about the tasks they undertake and suggestions about how they might extend them. When they are stimulated by practical activities, children with little or no English pick up quickly on adults' body language and facial expressions and listen attentively to what is said. For example, while children manipulate dough to make 'sandwiches', they attend carefully to their teacher as she talks about how the dough is to be kneaded and what different kinds of fillings might be used, apparently ignoring the fact that much of what is said is not fully understood. Children are seen to adjust their play to take account of what they hear and to respond with nods or shakes of the head, or with one or two word sentences. They like to use the writing corner for producing their own miniature books after listening to a story and after looking at pictures in an already published 'little book'. One girl demonstrates good understanding of how 'writing' goes on one page and a 'picture' on the next. She can retell her story in her first language to the bilingual assistant. Although her emergent writing and accompanying pictures employ very simple marks, the combined activity denotes remarkable progress in the way the girl conceives and carries out her own plan after being only a short time in school. In the Reception class, a bilingual pupil enthusiastically re-tells a story from a favourite book, matching many of the words in the text with what she says and holding the listener's attention with appropriate dramatic emphasis. Children enjoy varied opportunities to read for their own purposes, such as when three girls study catalogues in the home corner to choose dolls and clothing. All Reception children can recognise and spell their names. During guided reading, they can follow the text by pointing to words on the page accurately with a 'pointing stick'. Higher attaining children are gaining good levels of fluency with familiar texts. Children across all levels of attainment make good progress in reading simple words and inferring meaning by using clues in the pictures and text. They are well supported in their efforts through the highly focused support of adults and the careful structuring of the activity.

89. **Mathematical development**

89. Children's attainment in mathematics is broadly in line with what can be expected for their age on the baseline assessment used by the school and by the time they reach five and transfer to Key Stage 1. In the Nursery, children display a wide range of attainment in number, with some children having little or no understanding of how to count and others demonstrating a good capacity to count accurately to ten and beyond. One high-attaining pupil knows that 1 more than 8 makes 9 when he is selecting sets of elephants and can count accurately to 13. In both classrooms, children learn about number through counting and sorting objects. Such learning is reinforced through counting rhymes and songs. Children develop understanding of shape, size and quantity through a variety of materials. Teachers use these effectively both for teaching mathematical skills and understanding in order to meet teaching and learning objectives and as a means of reinforcing such learning more incidentally. Children in the Nursery make masks and select from circular or oblong shapes for their mask's face. They play purposefully with containers in the water tray, pouring water from one to the other and finding out, for example, how many times they need to fill the smaller one when pouring water into a larger vessel. In the Reception class, all children can count to 20 in unison by quickly holding up 5 fingers at a time until they reach the target number.

Approximately half the class can count back accurately from 10 to zero. A high-attaining pupil manipulates numbers below five mentally and works out answers to simple sums. Children understand the terms 'big' and 'little' when comparing the lengths of pieces of paper for use in a picture. Higher attainers know that 'long' and 'short' more accurately describe these pieces of paper and that they are making 'big' and 'little' octopuses for their seascape. Bilingual children talk about such differences in their first language, learning to use the appropriate English words with bilingual support. The quality of teaching is good.

90. **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

90. Both in the Nursery and the Reception year, children make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world. They attain in line with what might be expected for their age. Teaching in this area of learning is good in both classes. Staff promote children's developing capabilities through direct teaching, through timely interventions in children's play and by providing a stimulating assortment of structured activities to match planned objectives. Children in the Nursery talk about their families and where they live. They make models of houses or flats and place these along a road with traffic and trees. They learn about the changing seasons in the immediate environment of their outdoor play space, where there are trees and planted containers. They build purposefully, using a range of construction materials, explaining what they make. Children enjoy blowing bubbles with their teacher, observing the beautiful colours and how the bubbles float away. They are intrigued to find out how to make the bubbles grow bigger before they burst and work hard at this. Children have good access to computers and learn from direct teaching and through their own experiments how to manipulate a 'mouse'. In the Reception class, children build very effectively on these early skills. For example, a boy finds he can make coloured dots on a computer screen rather than large blocks or lines when using a painting program. With growing excitement, he realises he can control not only his choice of colours but also where to place the dots. He creates a series of deliberate patterns to confirm this accidental discovery. Children in the Reception class explore the environment immediately around the school in connection with classroom work. They look for street lighting when working on sources of light in science and use a floor map in outdoor play to set up streets and railway lines. They move 'traffic' around with understanding. Children talk knowledgeably about food and the process of cooking as they manipulate playdough to create different dishes.

91. **Physical development**

91. There is good provision for aspects of children's physical development involving climbing and the use of wheeled toys and equipment such as balls in the Nursery where, weather permitting, children play outside each day. In the Reception class, there are fewer opportunities of this sort, reducing informal opportunities for children's physical development. However, children have regular, structured physical education lessons in the school hall where they learn the bodily control needed for more formal movement and gymnastic lessons. By the time they are five, children's attainment is broadly in line with expectations for their age, overall. Children in the Nursery climb and balance on apparatus confidently. They manipulate wheeled toys adeptly, for example, around planted areas with due regard for their own and others' safety. In both classrooms, children handle a variety of small equipment and mark-making tools skilfully. For example, they use pencils, crayons, chalk, felt tip pens, paint brushes, glue spreaders and scissors. They learn to handle tools, both of their own choosing and when working under the direction of adults, with dexterity and for varied purposes. Teaching in physical development is not less than satisfactory and is sometimes good. Adults consistently remind children of the need for safety when using tools and equipment and give clear explanations about why it is necessary to take care. For example, a teacher explains why it is unsafe to climb up the slide in the Nursery and helps a child to wait his turn in taking the correct route.

92. **Creative development**

92. Provision for children's creative development is good and children attain at least in line with expectations for their age by the time they are five. Although no music lessons were seen, it is evident that children play a range of instruments to accompany their singing and to devise sound-patterns. In both classes, but especially in the Reception year at this point in the term, children know familiar rhymes and can recite or sing these from memory. They have built up a good repertoire through their Nursery experiences. In Assembly, Reception children join in singing hymns confidently with their older peers from Key Stages 1 and 2, even where they may not yet know all the words. In the Nursery, children play happily in their 'home' corner and rehearse routines familiar to them at home, such as organising how to do the ironing. They behave as 'writers' in the writing area, taking on the role of author to concentrate on writing their books. Children interact as shopkeepers and shoppers in the outside shelter set up as a grocery store, playing alongside one another, and responding to a teacher's questions about their activities. In the Reception class, they enjoy taking on equivalent roles in the fish and chip shop. They can sustain such activities for quite long periods, using appropriate vocabulary, organisation and management skills needed for running the 'business'. Children develop good creativity through making pictorial representations or three dimensional objects. In the Nursery, they are beginning to grasp how to handle paint to produce bold effects on paper, and make masks with correctly placed facial features. In the Reception class, when making octopuses for a joint undersea collage, children choose suitable materials for their planned effects. They know how to keep their colours clean when painting and, when drawing, learn how to observe details closely. Teaching is of good quality. Adults provide creative activities rooted in the themes of work being pursued wherever practicable, reinforcing children's learning by ensuring that links with other areas of learning are made explicit. Reception class children enjoy making their octopuses and deciding what length of tentacles they should have and whether the space they will occupy in the collage is large enough. In the Nursery, a 'home' area contains objects and materials familiar to children in their own homes. Thus, relevant connections are made with finding out about 'myself and my family'.

ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

93. English

93. In the 1998 National Curriculum statutory assessment tests, pupils' attainment in reading at seven years of age was very low in comparison to the national average, at the nationally expected Level 2. It was below this average at the higher Level 3. When compared to pupils in similar schools, pupils' attainment was well below the average. In writing, also, pupils' attainment was well below the national average at Level 2 but well above this average at the higher Level 3. Again, their results were above the average when compared to those of pupils in similar schools. Teacher-assessment in speaking and listening showed pupils to be well below the national average at Level 2 and well above this average at Level 3. Between 1996 and 1998, results reporting pupils' levels of attainment in reading and writing show a dramatic rise to meet national averages in 1997 and an equally dramatic drop in reading in 1998, with levels in writing falling just below national trends. Over this period, no significant difference is found between the attainments of boys and girls in reading and writing within school, although girls do less well than boys in writing. In national comparisons, girls do significantly less well than their counterparts and boys less well than their peers in reading.
94. Inspection evidence supports as valid the school's stated explanations for these poor results (see paragraph 10). Early indications for 1999 are that results for seven-year-olds are better than they were in the previous year, overall, especially in reading. In writing, however, results are not as good at the higher Level 3. No comparisons with national results are available. Inspection evidence shows the capabilities of pupils now in Year 2 to be broadly in line with national expectations in speaking and listening, reading and writing. Pupils across all levels of attainment, including pupils on the Code of Practice register for special needs and those with English as an additional language, make good progress as they move through the key stage.

95. In the 1998 statutory assessment tests, eleven-year-olds attained well above national averages at the expected Level 4 and the higher Level 5. In comparison with the results of pupils in similar schools, pupils' results were very high. Over a period of three years from 1996, pupils' attainment rose considerably. In school terms, girls attain better than boys, overall. In terms of national comparisons, girls attain broadly in line with national averages for their peer group but boys' attainment is somewhat below this average. Early indications from the 1999 statutory test results for eleven-year-olds are that pupils' attainment has fallen below the levels of the previous year. No national comparisons are available. The school undertook a careful analysis of results because of this latter, disappointing outcome (see paragraph 12).
96. Inspection evidence demonstrates that the capabilities of pupils now in Year 6 are broadly in line with national expectations for English. There is no significant difference in the attainment of pupils with English as an additional language and their monolingual peers, or between boys and girls. Pupils make satisfactory progress, overall, and, at times, their progress is better than satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs and those with Statements of special educational need attain in line with their prior attainment. They, too, make good progress. The wide variations of attainment and English language skills found within the year group-cohorts help explain fluctuations in test results, although the general trend is towards improvement. The national literacy strategy is proving effective in developing pupils' skills and understanding, overall.
97. The great majority of pupils are observed to have very good listening skills, with even the youngest able to sustain concentration for longer periods than would be expected for their age. Many pupils speak clearly and confidently when answering questions and when sharing ideas, notably in Key Stage 2. Confidence in making oral contributions (especially of girls) grows slowly. However, by the end of Key Stage 2, all pupils' speaking skills are judged to be broadly in line with expectations. Higher attaining pupils and some of average attainment achieve at above expected levels.
98. All pupils enjoy their reading and many can describe favourite stories they have enjoyed listening to, or they have read to themselves. They re-tell these with fair accuracy. Attainment in reading varies between year groups, with some technical skills of reading being attained more readily than overall comprehension. Attainment is satisfactory at the end of each key stage, with strengths evident amongst the older pupils. Pupils have good phonic strategies, 'sounding out' and putting together individual letters and syllables in order to pronounce unfamiliar words correctly. However, a significant number, especially of bilingual pupils in the lower Key Stage 2, apply such strategies to unknown words without knowing the words' meaning, or being able to derive this meaning from the content of what they read. Some pupils read with little expression or variety in voice tone. Pupils make steady to good progress in their reading. They are helped in this by the use of a variety of texts for differing purposes across the curriculum.
99. Attainment in writing is satisfactory in both key stages, although neat presentation and handwriting is at times a problem for some pupils. In Key Stage 1, many pupils write short pieces using basic punctuation. They spell simple words correctly. Pupils make good use of the word lists available to them to identify unfamiliar words. They show thought and imagination in selecting suitable adjectives for descriptive purposes, often using ideas generated in discussion. For example, when talking about descriptive words to include in their sentences, older pupils list such possibilities as 'prey', 'invisible' and 'musical'. In Key Stage 2, pupils in all classes write for a variety of purposes. They compare extracts from different texts and write reports and poetry. In the upper Key Stage 2, pupils of average and higher attainment know how to punctuate: they know how to use speech marks and other emphases for their writing. For example, pupils know the difference between direct and reported speech when studying a poem by Charles Causley. These pupils write at length in a neat cursive style. Higher-attaining pupils empathise well with different characters, explaining how these might feel in response to events. The previous inspection report identified a weakness in creative writing in both key stages. The school has successfully addressed this weakness, although time for extended writing is limited because of the need to meet the demands of the

literacy hour. Teachers help develop pupils' creativity and imagination by encouraging their creative writing where practicable. Increasingly, pupils across the school have good opportunities to apply their literacy skills to other subjects, for example, geography and history.

100. Frequently, pupils' response to lessons is good. They are very attentive in class discussions, show a keen interest in tasks and settle to work quickly. They collaborate well in group work. For example, in the lower Key Stage 2 they take turns sensibly within their groups and listen to each other's contributions when writing instructions for a task relating to their history work on the Aztecs.
101. The standard of teaching is good, overall. In Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching is good in three quarters of lessons and very good in a quarter. In Key Stage 2, teaching is satisfactory in 40 per cent of lessons and good in a further 40 per cent. Teaching is of very good quality in the remaining 20 per cent. Teachers frequently have high expectations of pupils' work and powers of concentration and match tasks carefully to pupils' needs. Planning, especially that for the national literacy strategy is very effective. Teachers have worked hard to establish this initiative which is noticeably aiding pupils' progress. Other teacher-strengths include a secure subject knowledge, precise learning objectives and their ability to deploy a wide variety of quality resources. Collaborative planning with support-teachers and classroom assistants is good. The support provided by such staff is frequently of a very good quality, contributing well to pupils' progress. The marking of pupils' work is often good. Helpful commentary is provided.
102. English is well managed and co-ordinated. Good procedures are in place for monitoring teachers' planning and pupils' work. However, these do not, yet, include the systematic monitoring of teaching and learning practices within classrooms. The governor with responsibility for literacy, who is involved in the monitoring process, gives strong support to the school through this means. Secure links with other subjects, such as history, geography and science, ensure that these subjects contribute to literacy standards, overall. A number of extra-curricular activities, such as theatre visits and workshops run by actors in the school, broaden the scope of the curriculum. Resources are good. The school library is very well stocked with quality information and fiction books, attractively presented and well used. The use of information and communication technology is developing well. Pupils in Key Stage 1 have good access to taped stories. Statutory requirements are met.
103. **Mathematics**
103. In the 1998 National Curriculum statutory assessment tests, attainment for seven-year-olds was found to be very low at the nationally expected Level 2 when compared to the national average and well below this average at the higher Level 3. Pupils' results were also discovered to be very low when compared with those of pupils in similar schools. Over the most recent three year period, pupils' attainments show a sharp rise from 1996 to meet national averages in 1997 and an equally sharp drop in 1998. Throughout this period, girls do rather less well than boys when comparisons within the school are made. In national comparisons, both genders do less well than their counterparts. The school states detailed reasons, upheld by inspection evidence, for these generally poor results (see paragraph 10). Moreover, early indications for 1999 are that results are considerably better than those attained in the previous year. No comparisons with national results are available. Inspection evidence shows the capabilities of pupils now in Year 2 to be broadly in line with national expectations. Pupils with special educational needs and those with Statements of special need attain in line with their prior attainment. A majority of bilingual pupils attains at least in line with its monolingual peers.
104. Eleven-year-olds attained close to national averages at the expected Level 4 and the higher Level 5 in the 1998 statutory assessment tests. One very able pupil achieved well above this at Level 6. In comparison with the results of pupils in similar schools, pupils' results were found to be well above the average. When examined again over the three year period beginning in 1996, pupils' attainments are seen to rise

considerably in 1997 then to level out and remain in line with national trends. Over this same period, girls are seen to do rather better than boys within the school. In terms of national comparisons, girls attain broadly in line with national averages for their peer group but boys' attainment is below this average. Early indications for the 1999 statutory test results are that pupils' attainment has fallen below the levels reached in the previous year. No national comparisons are available. The school undertook a careful analysis of these indicated poor results to determine what might lie behind them (see paragraph 4). Inspection evidence shows pupils' achievements at the end of the key stage to be broadly in line with national expectations at this point in the school term. There is no significant difference discernible between the attainment of boys and girls or between that of pupils with English as an additional language and their monolingual peers. Pupils with special educational needs and those with Statements of special need attain in line with their prior attainment.

105. Almost all pupils in the lower Key Stage 1 (90 per cent) can select the correct number to hold up from their set of digits from zero to ten when asked to show a number less than five. They understand the language of subtraction. Approximately half the pupils respond confidently to a teacher's demonstration of how to complete worksheets recording the subtraction of numbers below 10. Higher attaining pupils can transfer this understanding to their own work with some success although they benefit from adult questioning about what they do. All pupils can confidently use mathematical apparatus to 'take away' one number from another and know that the number difference is what is left. At the end of the key stage, about 75 per cent of pupils can count in fives in unison to 100 from a given starting point such as 25 or 40. They use a number vocabulary (such as digit and zero) with assurance. These older pupils grasp what it means to "estimate" the length of objects and know that their guesses should come reasonably close to an actual measurement. All pupils can measure accurately with a 10 centimetre strip of paper. Higher attainers deploy their knowledge of counting in tens to discover immediately that three strips of paper will be 30 centimetres long.
106. In Key Stage 2, younger pupils of low attainment fold shapes such as squares, oblongs and circles along lines of symmetry. They identify one or two lines correctly. Higher attainers distinguish between symmetrical and non-symmetrical shapes and identify all lines of symmetry. Most older pupils in the lower Key Stage 2 can double numbers up to 50 with reasonable speed in a 'mental maths' session to answer differently formulated questions. Some make the reverse inference that halving numbers means they are divided by two. In the upper key stage, younger pupils know that some multiplication facts can occur in more than one 'times table' and that they are reversible. They identify such reversible patterns in the 8 and 9 times tables, for example. About a third of the pupils have a well established concept of equivalence, employed when looking at fractions such as thirds and sixths for oral work. At the end of the key stage, pupils know that fractions can be represented in decimal form. They can organise decimal numbers along a number line. Higher attainers are confident when seriating numbers with irregular gaps. Lower attaining pupils can manage to work with numbers of a more predictable sequence.
107. Pupils in both key stages frequently make good progress in lessons. Their progress is reinforced by teachers' planning for different learning needs and by an emphasis placed on the use of practical apparatus. The youngest pupils in Key Stage 1, for example, are helped to identify the difference between two numbers when they compare 'sticks' of cubes they have counted. Older pupils in Key Stage 2 similarly consolidate and extend their understanding of equivalence in fractions when they shade in squares on paper. In addition, pupils with special educational needs and some bilingual pupils benefit from the quality attention they receive both from class teachers and support staff. This attention takes into account the mathematical content pupils find hard to understand and where there are difficulties with subject specific vocabulary. At times, plenary sessions usefully help pupils to see the progress they have made by reminding them of what they have learned in the course of a lesson. Pupils apply their numeracy skills to other subjects where appropriate, as when creating graphs to record findings in science for example.
108. Pupils in both key stages enjoy mathematical work. They particularly enjoy the 'mental maths' sessions when they are challenged by the level and pace of questions to think and respond quickly. They like the element of fun that can come in to such sessions when teachers are particularly skilful. At these times, as

well as at the end of lessons, pupils are keen to show how they arrived at answers to problems by working out their answers on a whiteboard. Pupils apply themselves well when working individually and mostly strive hard to complete tasks in the time given.

109. Teaching varies from satisfactory to good in both key stages but is, mostly, consistently good. It is good in two thirds of the lessons seen in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory in the other third. In the later key stage, teaching is good in three quarters of lessons and satisfactory in a quarter. Lesson plans are well-matched to suit different levels of learning need, with objectives, key vocabulary and resources, for example, well identified. Teachers build very effectively on previous learning and consistently make explicit links to it. In the best lessons, a good pace is maintained throughout and efficient organisation ensures that pupils do not waste time in getting on with tasks. As lessons proceed, teachers remind pupils how much time they have left to complete these. Teachers monitor round the classroom very efficiently to check on progress and see where additional support is needed. Astute questioning frequently identifies such need. Important to the success of such practices is the deployment of support staff for bilingual pupils and those with special educational needs, including pupils with Statements of special need.
110. Since the beginning of term, the subject is being managed on a temporary basis pending new arrangements, owing to the previous Co-ordinator moving on. The school has prepared well for the implementation of the numeracy strategy and its continuing emphasis helps teaching and learning practices to fulfil requirements and meet the needs of the school. A governor for numeracy has undertaken training and is keenly interested in supporting the school's work, especially, although not solely, in relation to the strategy's impact on the achievements of pupils for whom English is an additional language. Pupils' attainment is rigorously assessed in a number of ways, in addition to the use of statutory tests at the end of key stages. Assessment information is recorded meticulously and informs future planning. Teachers' marking, however, is not always informative, consisting mainly of 'ticks' accompanied by a few helpful comments. This is in contrast to the good quality of much ongoing assessment and verbal feedback teachers give to pupils in the course of classroom work. To date, systematic monitoring of teaching and learning in the classroom does not take place. Resources are sufficient and easily accessed. The school is mindful of monitoring the use and appropriateness of these in relation to the demands of the numeracy strategy, so that 'gaps' can be filled. Statutory requirements are met.
111. **Science**
111. In the 1998 National Curriculum teacher assessed tasks, the attainment of seven-year-olds was very low in comparison with the national average at the nationally expected Level 2. It was in line with this average at the higher Level 3. When compared to pupils in similar schools, pupils' results are found, similarly, to be well below the average at Level 2, but well above the average attained by their peers at the higher Level 3. The school identifies reasons for these poor results and inspection evidence supports the school's position (see paragraph 10). Early indications for the 1999 teacher assessed tasks are that results are better, overall, than those for the previous year, although at the higher Level 3 they are not as good as previously. Figures for national comparison are not available.
112. In the 1998 National Curriculum statutory assessment tests, pupils of eleven attained close to national averages at the nationally expected Level 4 and the higher Level 5. When compared to pupils in similar schools, their results were well above the average. Indeed, the school has improved over a three year period, with a rise to meet national standards in 1997 followed by a leveling out, broadly in line with national trends. Gender differences have fluctuated with different groups of pupils each year, with girls doing rather better than boys, overall. Early indications for 1999 show results to be well below those for last year. There are no figures available for national comparisons. The school does explain these latest poor results (see paragraph 4). Inspection judgements are that the scientific knowledge and investigative skills of a majority of pupils currently at the end of both key stages are average. Higher-attaining pupils and some pupils of average attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 do better than this. This fact confirms a

general trend of gradual improvement in science.

113. At the end of Key Stage 1, a majority of pupils can explain which foods are part of a healthy diet after studying different kinds. They correctly categorise fruits and vegetables. Pupils use block graphs to record their investigations into favourite foods. Pupils identify similarities and differences between plants and animals, using this knowledge to understand the basic conditions that plants need in order to survive. They begin to appreciate how different animals live in habitats that suit them.
114. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils with special educational needs have made significant gains in their knowledge and skills through good classroom support and attain better than might be expected. Others, however, reach above average levels of scientific understanding, especially in relation to the way plant and animal life adapts environmentally, through independent effort. These pupils understand different methods of seed dispersal and the processes of condensation. As well as having early ideas about the chemistry of matter, they explain how tightening an instrument's strings raises its pitch. Well before the end of the stage, most pupils understand filtration and its application to water treatment. They can carry out methodical investigations into how to make substances dissolve faster. Pupils make and test sensible predictions before constructing good reports, illustrated with diagrams. When discussing investigations into saturation, their hypotheses show their grasp of relevant scientific principles.
115. Overall, progress is good in Key Stage 1, as found in the previous inspection. In lessons, progress varies from satisfactory to good, depending on the quality of teaching. Bilingual pupils' ability to communicate their knowledge orally and in writing develops particularly well, because of the support they receive and through their general progress in acquiring and using English. Pupils make good progress from listing parts of the body to describing bodily functions. Investigations of materials lead them to compare what can be done to the materials, tearing, squashing and melting for example. With support, pupils with special needs develop their scientific knowledge, but they do not always develop their scientific understanding.
116. Progress is satisfactory in Key Stage 2. In relation to the quality of teaching, it varies from unsatisfactory to very good. There are no examples of the poor pupil progress reported at the previous inspection. Through frequent experiments, pupils soon learn about fair testing, applying what they know, for example to investigations into the way water can become saturated with salt. After systematically testing hypotheses about restoring dissolved sugar to its prior state through evaporation, pupils reveal increasingly sophisticated, independent, reporting skills. Again, pupils with special needs learn to carry out experiments satisfactorily because of good support, but do not always grasp the scientific ideas involved.
117. Mainly, pupils are keen and well motivated in lessons. Attitudes are consistently good in Key Stage 1, varying from unsatisfactory to very good in Key Stage 2. Pupils' presentation of work is satisfactory, overall. As observed at the last inspection, pupils involve themselves enthusiastically when they are interested in what they are being taught. They also behave well and are courteous to each other in discussions. In Key Stage 2, many pupils ask sensible questions and show original thinking in discussions about ways to test out ideas about dissolving sugar, for example. However, in half the lessons observed, pupils are restless, inattentive and noisy when changing from one activity to another. The poor progress noted in the previous report has on the whole been successfully addressed. Unsatisfactory progress occurs in a minority of lessons.
118. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, overall. In Key Stage 1 it is consistently good. In Key Stage 2, two thirds of lessons are satisfactory or better, with a third being very good. Teaching is judged to be unsatisfactory in the other third. Where it is very good, the revision of work is held at a brisk pace that stimulates pupils to answer questions. Clear initial explanations and instructions, based on very good planning, lead to effective research by pupils into such matters as what causes the increasing and

diminishing levels of light intensity creating night and day. In both key stages, teachers show sound knowledge and understanding of science. They plan lessons well and have appropriate expectations of their pupils. Although attention is paid to accuracy when marking, teachers do not consistently expect pupils to correct mistakes. They make good use of continuous records of assessment to help them plan to meet pupils' needs.

119. The science curriculum and the procedures for assessing pupils' work are both very good. They have improved from the previous inspection, when they were already judged to be satisfactory. A thorough policy and scheme of work ensure that pupils have a broadly based curriculum, which includes investigation work. The co-ordinator exerts very knowledgeable and supportive leadership, based on her excellent vision for the subject. Scrupulous assessments of pupils' work and continuous evaluation of teachers' planning have a strong, positive impact on what is achieved. The Co-ordinator maintains detailed records of all assessment activities, including a portfolio of pupils' work. The school has not yet arranged for opportunities to monitor classroom teaching and learning practices. Resources for science are good, although computers are rarely used for pupils' investigations and recording.

OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

120. Art

120. Because of the way the time-table is structured, only three lessons were observed. In addition to these, evidence was gathered from displays of work, from talking to teachers and studying their planning, from examining portfolios of pupils' work, relevant photographs and a video. Standards achieved in art are satisfactory in both key stages. In some instances, good standards are reached, taking into account pupils' ages. Progress in lessons, including that of pupils with special educational needs and for whom English is an additional language, is satisfactory, overall. Evidence shows that pupils across all levels of attainment make better than satisfactory progress at times in both key stages.

121. In Key Stage 1, pupils build successfully on the skills developed in the nursery and reception classes. In some of their work, pupils show good levels of competence in drawing from observation, in painting and in three-dimensional work. Examples which can be cited include the youngest pupils using 'dragging' techniques to good effect, following their teacher's discussion and demonstration of techniques used in a painting by Andy Warhol. Pupils sometimes reach a good standard when recording what they see as observational drawings. They pay careful attention to detail in realising their perceptions of old vehicles, for example, after a visit to the Transport Museum in connection with geography studies. Similarly, older pupils in the key stage produce effective pictures of the Fire of London after finding out about this in the classroom, following a visit to a museum for history work. These show a lively appreciation of the colour and effects of the fire and the buildings standing out against the flames. In the lower Key Stage 2, pupils demonstrate good brush control when painting their designs on shields in connection with work on the Aztecs. They have produced sheets of attractive pattern work reflecting their studies of the patterns seen when studying Aztec weaving and clothing, as well as shields. This work shows careful use of paints with colours overlaid. Pupils know how to keep colours clean when mixing and can experimentally produce new shades to gain desired effects. Pupils at the end of the key stage learn to use a light pencil stroke and successfully apply water colours as a 'wash' when reproducing William Morris designs, following their teacher's thorough introduction. Pupils have exploited artwork in the production of an animated video, with specialist workshop support, to good effect.

122. As pupils grow older, their increasing use of varied media aids their progress, especially where teachers' planning recognises a need to explore techniques so that accompanying skills are well secured. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils extend their knowledge of media to include, for example, how to make appropriate use of 'wax resist', pastels, water colours and acrylic paint. They also develop their understanding of

printing techniques and the use of clay and other materials for three-dimensional work. Images created by such means are generally good in their conception and execution. It is evident that the quality of artwork varies throughout the school according to the attention given by teachers to making sure pupils understand the techniques being used and how these might be applied. Much work is associated with topic themes in other subjects and some of this is of good quality, demonstrating a good transference of skills learned. However, quality and attention to detail varies. It is not always clear, for instance, that pupils are encouraged to apply their knowledge of drawing, painting or modeling techniques to such work deliberately. Nor do they always pay attention to how these techniques can best be applied to the work in hand.

123. Pupils enjoy their art lessons. Most follow instructions well and take care with resources. They like to experiment with colours to find out what they can mix. Pupils take great pleasure when their work is displayed.
124. The quality of teaching was good in two out of the three lessons observed and satisfactory in the third. It is good, for example, where planning addresses the need to teach specific skills and where challenging tasks are set. Examples of good teaching include building up a lesson from suitable stimuli, matching clear introductions and technical demonstrations to tasks and organising resources appropriately, as in the lessons based on the work of Andy Warhol and William Morris. Planning at all levels is generally good and celebrates the artistic traditions of other cultures. However, limited attention is given to creative work using collage and textiles.
125. The previous report cited the aesthetic and creative development of pupils as a key issue. Now, because of the revised art curriculum, contributions made by artists in residence and specialist workshops and visits organised to art galleries, improvements in pupils' aesthetic and creative development are clearly evident. The school has also successfully addressed issues concerning the need for greater consistency in teachers' planning and providing a broader range of activities for pupils. There remains a tendency for art to be organised as a support for topic work, without teachers giving sufficient attention to teaching art techniques in their own right and helping pupils enjoy the skill of deploying these, so that the techniques can then be applied more widely.
126. An emphasis on providing pupils with good quality resources affects their work positively. Space for storage is limited and this constrains both the range of resources available at any one time and the ability of the school to store art work once it is completed. Pupils have good opportunities to participate in extra-curricular activities through the after school arts club. Here, they produce imaginative, well thought out paintings and models. The use of computer graphics for creative work is developing well. The standard of display is frequently good, especially in public spaces and in Key Stage 1. Such displays show pupils' work and the skills they acquire to advantage.

Design and technology

127. Only three lessons were seen during the inspection, all in Key Stage 2. Too little other evidence was available to indicate whether pupils make satisfactory progress in acquiring the expected range of skills, techniques and understanding for pupils across the primary age range. It is therefore not possible to state whether the school has sustained or improved on the progress identified in the previous inspection. The lessons seen, together with interviews with pupils and some photographic evidence, indicate that pupils consistently plan and evaluate their designs.
128. The quality of teaching was judged to be good in two out of the three lessons observed in Key Stage 2 and satisfactory in the third. Teachers' knowledge is secure, and planning is satisfactory, although planning does not always lead to clear explanations being given. Good teaching is characterised by very well

structured lessons and teachers' efficient organisation of pupils. For example, when making a model of a shelter for waiting parents the tasks set for the oldest pupils in the upper Key Stage 2 proved especially challenging. Lessons usually generate interest, which helps to sustain good behaviour. For example, teachers give good opportunities for pupils to apply their scientific understanding to the subject of pneumatics, as when pupils in the early Key Stage 2 make amusing models of monsters with moving parts.

Classroom assistants support pupils with special needs well so that the pupils make good progress with planning and making their models. Both teachers and classroom assistants assess pupils' progress effectively in lessons, in order to help pupils make necessary alterations to their plans. Overall, however, and in line with the subject more generally, assessment of pupils' work is underdeveloped.

129. Pupils enjoy design and technology. Attentiveness to lesson-introductions enables them to progress well in constructing models that work. Where necessary, pupils collaborate well. In the upper Key Stage 2, they talk confidently about their designs for sandals after the style worn by people in Ancient Greece. They use resources well and show good initiative in their ideas. In one lesson, pupils audibly expressed disappointment that the lesson had come to an end.
130. Design and technology has not been one of the school's priorities, in spite of the fact that the previous inspection identified it as a weakness. There is neither a co-ordinator nor adequate alternative guidance in place to support improvements. The school has recognised this inadequacy in its school development plan. However, skills are still not systematically taught and too little In-service training has taken place to ensure that pupils consistently gain from a good level of teacher expertise. The subject is taught in a rather 'ad hoc' manner and resources are inadequate to sustain high quality work. The subject is still confused with art, leading to pupils not being challenged to make working models very often. Nor do they regularly work with food and textiles.

131.

Geography

131. There is evidence of both satisfactory and good standards of work achieved in both key stages, relative to pupils' ages. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs and bilingual pupils, make good progress, overall.
132. In Key Stage 1, pupils develop a sound knowledge of the area around the school by being taken on walks, by studying photographs, by engaging in traffic surveys and through map making. They show a good level of awareness of the nature and purposes of maps. For example, the youngest pupils in Key Stage 1 can place the main buildings and other important features of a locality on their maps and can name the road closest to their school. They are beginning to understand words needed for map-work associated with direction and proximity, such as "opposite".
133. In Key Stage 2, work extends to comparing localities and associated weather patterns. Geographical features such as differences or similarities in rainfall are studied. The oldest pupils' knowledge of river features is expanding through organised field study trips. They have investigated the River Thames, for example. Investigations, often employing independent study, continue in school through exploiting a range of sources, including CD-Roms and the Internet. Good links are made with other subjects such as science and history. For example, in a history topic on ancient Egypt, the youngest pupils in Key Stage 2 also study the geographical features of the River Nile. Geography work in Key Stage 2 contributes well to the development of literacy skills. Pupils are encouraged to write at greater length to report their observations and investigations and to use an appropriate vocabulary in both written and oral activity.
134. Pupils' response to geography is good. They apply themselves to tasks with interest and perseverance and with attention to presentation. They collaborate well in groups.

135. The quality of teaching is judged consistently good in the lessons seen in both key stages. The subject co-ordinator's contribution to teaching in Key Stage 2 is particularly effective. Teachers plan well, matching a lesson's pace and set tasks to pupils' identified needs, including providing extension work for more able pupils. Lessons are well introduced, clear instructions are given for individual and group work and to stimulate reflection and review of what has been learned. Questioning is used well to draw on pupils' existing knowledge. Pupils and resources are both managed effectively by teachers. Pupils with special educational needs or with English as an additional language receive good support from specialist teachers and classroom assistants.
136. Co-ordination and a good policy and scheme of work contribute to good standards. Considerable thought has been given to maintaining the interest of girls in the subject, and to promoting positive images of emergent nations such as Bangladesh. A good system of assessment and recording now addresses related weaknesses identified in the previous report. There are a wide range of good resources provided, including CD-Roms and videos. Information and communications technology is used regularly and effectively.
137. **History**
137. Pupils across all levels of attainment make satisfactory progress in lessons with evidence of good progress in both key stages. Standards achieved are sometimes better than might be expected for pupils' ages. Most pupils know how to use secondary sources to research about the past and realise that different points of view can be taken upon events by the time they are in the upper Key Stage 2. Higher attaining, older pupils refer to these different views explicitly in what they say and write.
138. Younger pupils in Key Stage 1 can make simple observations about 'now' and 'then' when talking about themselves as babies and how they have changed over time. Following carefully structured activities involving, for instance, a visit to the Transport Museum and a classroom discussion supported by visual materials, they sequence pictures of vehicles in a time-line correctly. At the end of the key stage, pupils talk knowledgeably about the Fire of London following classroom work and a museum visit that inspired their imagination. They recall important facts readily.
139. In Key Stage 2, the youngest pupils are interested in 'being historians'. They are stimulated by exploring an interesting range of postcards, posters, books and computer programs, including an Internet link-up, to find out what life was like in Ancient Egypt. They discover how shadufs were used to raise water. Also in the lower Key Stage 2, older pupils are able to pinpoint differences between an Aztec culture and their own. They can explain the system of bartering used by the Aztecs for the goods they needed in their markets, contrasting this system with the use of money to-day. In the upper Key Stage 2, most pupils can explain the nature of city states in Ancient Greece and higher attaining pupils have a good grasp of political democracy in relation to these. For example, they know that all free men were involved in making community decisions as opposed to a dictator deciding what should be done. Pupils recognise differences between such ancient democracies and those present day examples where all citizens above a certain age have the right to vote. At the end of the key stage, pupils across all levels of attainment have a good grasp of working conditions in Victorian times and know how various Acts of Parliament affected these. Higher attaining pupils write at length about these conditions and show a well-developed ability to empathise with what it must have been like to work in a factory.
140. Pupils enjoy their history lessons. They like finding out about the past and what it must have been like to live then. They work very well together in pairs or small groups, sharing information, and enthusiastically debating points about the pictures they study or the texts they read. Pupils are well supported in their learning by teachers' imaginative choice of resources and through the way activities are, mostly, carefully structured, enabling everyone to take part. At times, cross-curricular links are made effectively, as when pupils in the lower Key Stage 2 extend their knowledge of Aztec ceremonies by devising movement and

dance sequences they feel fit the spirit of these. Support staff frequently provide bilingual pupils and those with special educational needs with good quality support, mostly allowing these pupils to complete tasks alongside their peers. This support aids these pupils' progress in a general sense, especially where it is geared closely to matching a lesson's teaching and learning objectives.

141. In lessons observed, judgments of the quality of teaching were equally divided between satisfactory and good in each key stage. Teachers know and understand their subject. Good teaching is seen where teachers engage pupils' interest through those carefully planned lessons which set out to involve pupils in investigative work for most of the time. These lessons also allow pupils to share findings with their class and to explain what they have discovered through the work they have done. In a particularly effective lesson, older pupils were left for long periods to pursue their work on Ancient Greece whilst the teacher was, apparently, engaged in other things. However, it was evident that events were being monitored perceptively and judgements about when to intervene to support an individual or group carefully considered. Mutual levels of trust evident between teacher and pupils provided a secure framework for their independent study.
142. The curriculum is well planned to meet current National Curriculum requirements. Resources for classroom purposes are sufficient in quantity and of good quality. They are very well supplemented by the use of loan services and teachers' organizing of visits to match planned objectives. For example, the nearby British Museum is put to good use for a range of topic themes. Teachers put energy into searching out relevant resources. At times, they make their own, which usually work very well. For example, reproductions of paintings are used in a structured way to illustrate the Fire of London and stimulate written work in Key Stage 1. A member of the governing body also provided very good support by researching the immediate locality in relation to the Victorian period to provide back-up material for classroom work at the end of Key Stage 2. Planning is good, overall. It makes explicit references to previous learning in the sequence of lessons being taught and outlines the resources to be used and how different levels of need are to be met. Teachers make appropriate links with literacy lessons in their choice and use of history texts.
143. **Information technology**
143. Attainment and progress are satisfactory overall, with pupils reaching standards broadly in line with national expectations by the end of both key stages. The progress of pupils with special needs and of those with English as an additional language is well supported by access to computers and other resources, such as 'listening posts' for taped stories in Key Stage 1. Information and communications technology is developing satisfactorily as a subject. With good new resources and the attention paid to policy and planning since the previous inspection, its growing use across the curriculum is making a steady contribution to standards, particularly in English, geography, history and art. This growing application and development of the subject mark notable improvement since the previous report, where a number of weaknesses were identified and a key issue required that all aspects of the curriculum be planned for and taught. Control technology, while planned and resourced, remains to be implemented more fully in the context of pupils' general learning experiences.
144. In Key Stage 1, pupils build successfully on skills learned earlier in the Nursery and Reception classes. They use word processing techniques and simple graphs to present their work. They use graphics programs to communicate their ideas, for example, imitating the art of Mondrian. Pupils use a 'mouse', keyboard and screen-menus satisfactorily and are developing an appropriate subject vocabulary. Information and communications technology is contributing well to pupils' literacy and English language development. Computers are used to sort and sequence words and sentences and story tapes to assist in shared reading tasks.

145. In Key Stage 2, pupils access a variety of software programs using refined 'mouse' and keyboard skills. Word-processing techniques are adapted effectively to the presentation of reports and poems. Pupils make sound use of screen-menus and icons, can manipulate and change fonts and are familiar with actions such as 'copying', 'pasting', 'saving' and 'printing'. Graphics' programs are used in a variety of ways. For example, they are turned to by pupils for selecting 'clip art' to illustrate work on Ancient Greece. Access to the Internet and CD-Roms adds to pupils' knowledge and skills, particularly in history and geography. New experiences arranged for pupils include combining media such as music and graphics. A particularly good project involved their working with specialists to put together a video of animated stories combining artwork with story-telling. Most pupils are developing a satisfactory subject vocabulary.
146. Pupils respond well. They behave sensibly and help each other when working without adult support on the computer or when listening to story tapes. Pupils show interest and enthusiasm and treat equipment carefully. While the majority of pupils have access to computers only at school, the regularity of use in school is gradually building their confidence.
147. Only one instance of direct class teaching was observed but teachers were seen interacting with pupils during the course of lessons in both key stages. On this basis, teaching is judged satisfactory. Teaching strengths include teachers having a sound knowledge of the subject and knowing how to organise pupils and resources for tasks across the curriculum where this is practicable. Teachers are making good gains in their comprehension of how to support pupils' learning in different curricular areas through the use of computer programs. New tasks and vocabulary are introduced to pupils in demonstration sessions, where questions and reference to previous work prove to be very helpful.
148. The co-ordination of the subject is good. A sound policy, comprehensive scheme of work and well-devised practical plans extend the curriculum and inspire teacher-confidence. An after-school computer club provides good additional experiences for pupils. Methods of assessing pupils' progress are being devised, using, for example, pupil-skills' checklists. Computer resources, including colour printers, have been augmented to achieve a ratio of computers to pupils (1:19) which is average. Other equipment, such as television, video, cameras and tape recorders, are also organised efficiently and effectively for educational purposes.
149. **Music**
149. Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress in music. In fact, in Key Stage 1, pupils sing much better than is to be expected for their age, with accurate intonation, rhythmic precision and strong volume noticeable. Pupils soon vary dynamics very successfully. Many pupils have a natural flair for playing percussive instruments rhythmically and sensitively and listen well to one another until they can synchronise different phrases. Pupils produce the precise rhythms of a song, showing how well they have been listening. Such high standards are maintained into Key Stage 2 where pupils learn more complex songs. However, while their singing is invariably good, their rhythmic percussion work is often very limited in complexity. In both key stages, boys' and girls' progress is not significantly different, and pupils with special needs keep up with their peers. However, what most determines pupils' progress is the level of their current teacher's confidence in teaching the subject.
150. Overall, pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. They thoroughly enjoy the wide range of songs they learn in lessons and assemblies. Where teaching is good or better, their attentiveness and enthusiasm ensure that they learn quickly. Pupils collect and play their instruments very carefully and perform music in a confident, controlled manner. In Key Stage 2, however, pupils are sometimes silly and uncontrolled in the way they strike instruments. In these same lessons, lack of challenge in the tasks organised is associated with noisy group work and a lack of collaboration between pupils.

151. The quality of teaching ranges from poor to excellent and is generally good. The music specialist provides consistently excellent teaching in both key stages. In other lessons seen in Key Stage 2, a third was judged satisfactory and two thirds as less than satisfactory. Where teaching is excellent, the lessons are exciting and demanding. They change from one interesting and rewarding activity to another, with sufficient time allowed to ensure progress, but sufficient pace to sustain thorough enjoyment. Very high expectations of thinking, behaviour and performance guarantee that standards stay at a very good level. Where teaching is weak, there are very low expectations of attainment and unsatisfactory management of misbehaviour. Too much time is spent talking rather than performing and lessons lack pace. Lesson plans, whilst appropriate, stay unrealised.
152. The school has maintained a broad music curriculum. Lessons are regular, and pupils learn to listen and appraise as well as to perform music. Teachers watch and try to follow up work done by the music specialist, but frequently lack sufficient confidence in their own musical abilities to succeed. In spite of much good in-service training, many teachers still cannot help pupils progress, nor can they make meaningful assessments of pupils' work. There is a good range of high quality instruments, which is not fully used to extend pupils' compositions. Teachers allow pupils to use technological aids to a limited extent for recording their compositions. Pupils have a good range of extra-curricular opportunities to develop musical talents. These opportunities include their becoming members of a rapidly growing singing group. Some pupils have performed in a local music festival and at the Albert Hall. Since the last inspection, the introduction of a music specialist has strongly accelerated the subject's development. However, there is now more variability in teaching and behaviour and too little progress has been made in developing the use of melody in composition. The school has a long tradition of very good singing and this is now being successfully channelled into the activities of a choir.
153. **Physical education**
153. Pupils make satisfactory progress in physical education in Key Stage 1, reaching standards expected for their age. The youngest pupils slowly gain control of their bodies, but find it hard to stand still. They cannot assume different shapes whilst moving about apparatus. Most older pupils in the key stage gain mastery over their movements, although some still do not control landings skilfully. They can, however, vary activities around a theme, supporting their bodies in different ways on the apparatus, for example. Overall, pupils continue to make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 2. In the lower key stage, they soon sequence interesting movement patterns, often involving balance and controlled pulling and pushing. In dance especially, pupils collaborate satisfactorily to produce dramatic group sequences. During a reconstruction of the life of the Aztecs, for example, pupils' movements vary in quality, but some groups create an effective impression of a sacrifice. Older pupils in the key stage collaborate to mirror movement-sequences. However, inappropriate behaviour, especially in games, to an extent prevents satisfactory progress. Overall, pupils are not developing the above-average skills they were judged to be developing at the previous inspection. The majority of pupils (approximately 75 per cent) achieve 25 metres in swimming by the time they leave school.
154. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are satisfactory, overall. In Key Stage 1, pupils enjoy moving about with speed and change from one activity to another sensibly. They still talk through instructions, however, and are inconsistent in how much effort they make. Pupils can set up and put back apparatus independently, but they show little initiative during lessons. In Key Stage 2, most pupils behave satisfactorily. Younger pupils try hard and watch one another's demonstrations with respect and appreciation. They discuss group sequences calmly and co-operatively and show enthusiasm for the tasks set. However, a significant number of the older pupils often appear immature, behaving aggressively towards each other at times. They talk continuously during instructions and sometimes have to be excluded from the lesson for their poor behaviour.
155. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, overall. In Key Stage 1, it is consistently satisfactory. Here

teachers demonstrate secure knowledge and understanding of the National Curriculum programme of study and prepare and execute their planned lessons successfully. They are careful to draw pupils' attention to matters of safety. Teachers often spend a great deal of time discussing activities rather than keeping pupils active. The quality of teaching is more variable in Key Stage 2, with 60 per cent of it being less than satisfactory whilst the remaining 40 per cent is judged good. Where teaching is good, lessons are brisk and interesting so pupils remain well behaved. Planning, too, is good, building on previous work and providing challenging activities. Where teaching is unsatisfactory or poor, discipline becomes a major problem and inappropriate strategies are employed to deal with immature behaviour. Consequently, a great deal of time is wasted and progress in developing skills is poor. The quality of teaching is not as good as it was judged to be at the previous inspection.

156. The school provides a good, broad and balanced curriculum. The co-ordinator has successfully introduced a wide variety of games to all pupils, and ensures that staff receive necessary training. Consequently, pupils have achieved well in some inter-school competitions. Because the school lacks a green site of its own, good use is made of the nearby Coram's Fields for extending teaching and learning activities relating to games and athletics. Swimming remains an important part of the school's programme, but no longer dominates the timetable.

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

157. The inspection was carried out by a team of four inspectors, consisting of one lead inspector, two team members and a lay inspector who, between them spent a total of 15 inspection days in school. During the inspection, the team observed 70 lessons or parts of lessons in classrooms for a total of 44 hours. A further 32 hours were spent in :

- Hearing pupils read and talking to them about their work;
- Scrutinising samples of pupils' work;
- Attending assemblies;
- Planned discussions with governors, staff and parents;
- Observing registration sessions; and
- Observing pupils in the playground and during the lunch hour.

In addition, the team scrutinised:

- Attendance registers;
- The school's policy statements and development planning;
- Curricular policies and schemes of work;
- Pupils' records and reports;
- Minutes of meetings, for example, of the Governing Body;
- Information sent out to parents and other related matters; and
- Extra-curricular activities.

Prior to the inspection, a meeting was held with parents, of whom 44 attended. Responses to the questionnaire sent out to parents were also analysed.

159. DATA AND INDICATORS

159. Pupil data

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR – Y6	190	4	56	100
Nursery	25	0	1	9
Unit/School				

159. Teachers and classes

159. Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	10.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	17.6

159. Education support staff (YR – Y6)

Total number of education support staff:	7
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	80

159. Qualified teachers (Nursery school, classes or unit)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	22

159. Education support staff (Nursery school, classes or unit)

Total number of education support staff:	4
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	62.5
Average class size:	22

159. Financial data

Financial year:	1998/99
	£
Total Income	551,804
Total Expenditure	550,361
Expenditure per pupil	2,413.86
Balance brought forward from previous year	25,256
Balance carried forward to next year	26,699

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out: 180

Number of questionnaires returned: 50

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	42	50	2	4	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	50	44	0	4	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	34	40	12	4	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	44	44	8	4	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	48	44	4	4	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	34	52	6	2	2
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	48	42	6	4	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	32	44	4	8	6
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	48	42	4	2	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	56	34	4	2	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	60	36	4	0	0

¹ These are set out in "The Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning" published by the DfEE in 1996 and describe what is expected of children by the time they enter compulsory education at five.

² Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

³ Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

For ease of reference, these pupils will sometimes be referred to as 'bilingual pupils' although it is recognised that they may be proficient in more than one language other than English and may also be literate in another language.