

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **Grafton Primary School**

Holloway, London N7

LEA area: Islington

Unique Reference Number: 100406

Inspection Number: 181508

Headteacher: Ms Theonitsa Sergides

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Reporting inspector: John William Paull

Dates of inspection: 29 November - 3 December 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 706521

Inspection carried out under Section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary with nursery

Type of control: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 to 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Eburne Road  
Holloway  
Islington  
London  
N7 6AR

Telephone number: 0171 272 3284

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Jackie King

Date of previous inspection: 18 – 22 March 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

<b>Team members</b>	<b>Subject responsibilities</b>	<b>Aspect responsibilities</b>
John W Paull, RgI	Religious education Special educational needs	Attainment and progress
Candy Cooper, Lay Inspector		Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Links with parents and the community Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
Eileen Chadwick	Information technology Design and technology Art Children under five	Teaching
Kuldip Rai	English English as an additional Music Equal opportunities	Spiritual, moral, social and cultural
Andrew Bond	Mathematics Geography	Leadership and management The efficiency of the school
James Berry	Science History Physical education	The curriculum and assessment

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## MAIN FINDINGS

### What the school does well

- By the time that pupils leave, National Curriculum test results are well above the average of similar schools in English and mathematics, and very high in science. Compared with national averages, results are broadly in line in English, above average in mathematics and very high in science.
- Good provision for children under five results in good progress.
- Arrangements for developing spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good, contributing to very good attitudes, and very good relationships and personal development.
- Teaching is good across all stages.
- The school has good procedures for monitoring and reporting pupils' progress and personal development. Its systems for ensuring the progress of those with special educational needs and/or English as an additional language are very good.
- Procedures for promoting discipline and behaviour are good, resulting in good behaviour throughout the school.
- The school provides information of good quality to parents and the community, with which it maintains good links.
- Very good leadership ensures that the school achieves its aims of high standards of pastoral and academic care, resulting in an excellent climate for learning amongst its pupils.

### Where the school has weaknesses

- I. Pupils' handwriting is generally untidy, resulting in weaknesses in the presentation of work.
- II. Attendance is well below the national average, and there are weaknesses in promoting it.
- III. Too little time is spent on teaching design and technology, and geography, resulting in lower standards than at the time of the last inspection.
- IV. There are shortcomings in the knowledge of a few teachers relating to the school's procedures for child protection.

**Grafton is a good school. Its strengths clearly outweigh its weaknesses. The governors will include the weaknesses in an action plan, which will be sent to all parents and guardians of pupils at the school.**

### How the school has improved since the last inspection

Overall, the school has improved well since the last inspection. The headteacher, staff and governors have worked hard on the issues that were raised. Coherent schemes of work and policies have been developed for nearly all subjects, including handwriting, and the introduction of daily literacy and numeracy has been effective. These have had a strong impact in raising standards. National Curriculum test results are better, and in religious education, especially, considerable improvements have occurred. Attainment in religious education is now above what is expected at both seven and 11-years-old. However, in handwriting the new policy has not produced an improvement. The school is aware of this, and is seeking ways of teaching it more effectively. The emphasis on literacy and numeracy, including an increase in time spent on teaching them, has reduced the time available for other subjects. In general, the school has adapted to this well. However, it has resulted in lower standards in design and technology, and geography. The mezzanine floor, which was previously underused, now accommodates useful bases for work in special educational needs and English as an additional language. It has improved both the organisation and profile of these important areas, and has also had a direct impact on standards. The school has not been successful, however, in improving pupils' attendance and punctuality. Although the climate for learning, relationships and general support of pupils are all strengths, and parents overwhelmingly confirm that pupils like their school, levels of attendance remain stubbornly low. This is partly because procedures to promote it are not applied with sufficient rigour. A homework policy that is generally supported by parents has been produced and successfully put into place. Other improvements include a clearer structure for the co-ordination of subjects and stages, and improvements to the site.

The school’s good management, climate of self-evaluation and the support of governors and parents are strong features. Good morale, and a willingness to continue to develop and work hard are all signs that the capacity for further improvement is good.

• **Standards in subjects**

This table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds in 1999 based on the National Curriculum tests:

English	C	A
Mathematics	B	A
Science	A*	A*

The table shows that National Curriculum test results in English are average in comparison with all schools up and down the country, whilst they are above average in mathematics and very high in science. In comparison with schools with similar numbers that qualify for free school meals, standards are well above average in English and mathematics, and very high in science. These results have improved since the last inspection, with a sharp rise in English from 1997 to 1998, and improvements in mathematics and science from 1998 to 1999. Base-line assessments show that at the age of five a high proportion of pupils starts work on the National Curriculum with low skills, and especially so in language-related tasks. This reflects the large number for whom English is an additional language. Pupils make good progress from five to seven-years-old. However, by seven, overall standards still remain below and often well below national averages. Good progress continues from seven up to the age of 11. By the time pupils leave the school, standards in all three subjects, taken together, are above average, and very high compared with similar schools. Attainment in information technology is broadly in line with national expectations, and it is above what is expected in the agreed syllabus for religious education. There are further strengths in history, music and art, especially amongst five to seven-year-olds.

• **Quality of teaching**

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

The overall quality of teaching is good. About 97 per cent of lessons are satisfactory or better. Nearly seven lessons out of every ten are good, including over a quarter that are very good. An excellent lesson occurred in religious education. Three per cent, representing two lessons, were unsatisfactory. The highest proportions of good and very good teaching occur in English, mathematics, science, religious education and in classes for children under five. The specialist teaching of pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language is also good. An important feature is the way that the specialist teachers plan and teach collaboratively in a strong partnership with pupils’ class teachers, sharing knowledge and expertise that benefits all pupils.

*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**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Behaviour	Good. Pupils are usually polite to adults and to one another. They are orderly in lessons and around the school. Pupils' behaviour is very good, and sometimes excellent when they represent the school on visits.
Attendance	Poor. It is well below the national average, and several pupils are often late. Lessons, however, usually start and end on time.
Ethos*	Excellent. Pupils are very content at school. They work hard and with enjoyment. The climate for learning is excellent – teachers pursue high standards for their pupils.
Leadership and management	Very good. The headteacher, senior staff and governors offer clear leadership and direction for the school's development. Its aims and policies are applied well.
Curriculum	The curriculum is generally good. It is broad and balanced at all stages, including for children under five. Access and opportunity for pupils with special needs and/or English as an additional language are very good.
Pupils with special educational needs	Very good provision leads to good progress. Individual Education Plans set precise targets. These are pursued both in class and when pupils are taught separately. Parents are kept informed about provision and progress.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are all very good. Assemblies are a strength.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Staffing meets the needs of the National Curriculum and religious education in number, expertise and experience. It is enhanced by teachers and assistants with expertise in English as an additional language and special educational needs. Accommodation is sound, and has been improved by adding a library and a computer suite. Resources are satisfactory with areas of strength.
Value for money	The school achieves good value for money.

*\*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**

- V. They think it is approachable, encourages them to play an active part, and handles complaints well.
- VI. It achieves good standards, informs them well about progress, and explains what it teaches.
- VII. Their children are involved in more than just lessons, and they are satisfied with homework.
- VIII. The school has a positive effect on their children, and achieves a high standard of behaviour.
- IX. Their children enjoy school.

**What some parents are not happy about**

- X. There were very few negative comments, and they believe the school to be good.
- XI. A very small proportion is not satisfied with

Parents' views are very positive in response to questionnaires and at the pre-inspection meeting. Nearly all parents believe that Grafton is a good school and that the headteacher and staff work very hard on behalf of their children. There were very few negative responses to any questions that were put. The highest dissatisfaction, which was still very small, featured work that children are expected to do at home. In the main, however, inspectors felt that this was sound. A few parents expressed disappointment that the balance of men to women on the staff is not better, but they do not blame the school, recognising that the situation reflects a national imbalance. Many parents expressed very positive views of the example presented to their

children of unity amongst teachers of different cultural and ethnic origins. Generally, inspectors are in agreement with parents' positive opinions of the school.

## **KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION**

XII. The governors, headteacher and staff should continue to address a key issue of the last inspection; that is, they should improve standards of presentation in English and across the curriculum, by:

- i. introducing a more systematic means of teaching neat joined handwriting (*paragraphs 7, 11, 27, 37 and 96*)
- ii. insisting that pupils use it in all subjects at all appropriate times (*paragraphs 7, 11, 27, 59, 96, 114 and 143*).

• The governors, supported by the headteacher and staff, should raise attendance closer to the national average, by:

- i. ensuring that parents and pupils are more aware of the detrimental effect of absence on standards (*paragraphs 21, 22 and 51*)
- ii. adopting a more stringent attendance policy and actively seeking parents' support for it (*paragraph 51*).

The following less important weakness should be considered by governors for inclusion in an action plan:

• The governors, headteacher and staff must raise standards in design and technology, and geography to the levels of the previous inspection, by:

- a. improving teachers' expertise in both design and technology, and geography (*paragraphs 10, 12, 27, 37, 134 to 142*)
- b. allocating more time to the teaching of both these subjects (*paragraphs 14, 27, 34, 37, 134 to 142*).

• Establish a system to ensure greater clarity of child protection routines and responsibilities (*paragraphs 52 and 67*).

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Characteristics of the school**

1. Grafton is a mixed community primary for pupils aged three to 11-years-old. There are currently 71 children under five years old. On entry, many children speak only a little English, resulting in very low attainment compared with what is usually found at this stage. This affects most areas of learning. Most pupils attend the school's nursery before entering the main school. However, a significantly high proportion joins classes further up the school, and many leave before the usual age of transfer to secondary schools. Children are accepted into the nursery when they are three-years-old and all children attend part-time for the first half-term. After this, children attend either full-time or part-time for five morning or afternoon sessions each week. The children start in the reception classes at the beginning of the school year in which they are five and, at this stage, they attend full-time. In both the nursery and reception classes, children with birthdays from September to February begin in September, whilst children with birthdays from March to August begin half a term later in November. On entry to the nursery, many children speak only a little English, resulting in very low levels of vocabulary and uses of language. This affects most areas of learning.
2. The school is situated at Holloway, in the London Borough of Islington. It draws pupils mainly from

the surrounding inner-city area. In the main, socio-economic circumstances are much lower than usually found. Housing is predominantly a mixture of privately rented, housing association and ex-local authority homes. The school also draws pupils from a centre for the temporary accommodation of refugees. Around 63 per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is well above average. Much of the local building is Victorian, including the school's building, which has undergone several improvements and extensions over the years. The most recent have included the conversion of a hall into a pupils' library, and the provision of a computer suite. Including those in the nursery, there are 424 pupils on roll, which is much bigger than schools of a similar type. There are a few more boys than girls in most classes. There are 148 on the school's register of pupils with special educational needs, which is 38 per cent. This is well above the national average. Five of these have a Statement of Special Educational Need maintained by the local authority. Nearly 56 per cent of pupils are from homes where English is an additional language, which is very high.

3. The school's main aims include:
  - .creating a calm, happy and purposeful environment in a community, which reflects care, respect and support for one another;
  - .providing a stimulating working environment that is anti-sexist, anti-racist and non-elitist, ensuring equal opportunities;
  - .facilitating achievement by expecting high standards in a carefully planned programme of monitoring and assessment;
  - .responding to the benefits of interaction with the community.
  
1. Its targets and plans for future development include:
  - .improving attendance;
  - .continuing to raise standards in information technology;
  - .improving pupils' handwriting and presentation.

## Key indicators

### Attainment at Key Stage 1<sup>1</sup>

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for latest reporting year:		Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		1999	33	20	53

  

National Curriculum Test/Task		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
<b>Results</b>				
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	17	18	21
	Girls	20	16	19
	Total	37	34	40
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	70(62)	64(76)	75(67)
	National	82(80)	83(81)	87(85)

  

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	19	19	18
	Girls	20	20	20
	Total	39	39	38
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	74(62)	74(76)	72(86)
	National	82(81)	86(85)	87(86)

.....  
1 Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

### Attainment at Key Stage 2<sup>2</sup>

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for latest reporting year:		Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		1999	32	23	55

  

National Curriculum Test		English	Mathematics	Science
<b>Results</b>				
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	20	25	31
	Girls	17	17	22
	Total	37	42	53
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	67(55)	76(52)	96(84)
	National	70(65)	69(59)	78(69)

  

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	19	24	30
	Girls	17	16	19
	Total	36	40	49
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	66(40)	73(58)	89(68)
	National	68(65)	69(65)	75(72)

1 **Attendance**

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed			%
through absence for the latest complete	Authorised	School	8.3
reporting year:	Absence	National comparative data	5.7
	Unauthorised	School	0.2
	Absence	National comparative data	0.5

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1 **Exclusions**

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during		Number
the previous year:	Fixed period	1
	Permanent	0

1 **Quality of teaching**

Percentage of teaching observed which is:		%
	Very good or better	26
	Satisfactory or better	97
	Less than satisfactory	3

.....

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

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## **PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

### **1 EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL**

#### **1 Attainment and progress**

1. When children enter the nursery they have had a very wide range of experiences in both their language and personal and social developments. Their overall attainment is very low. Just over a half of all children speak very little English and the attainment of the remaining children is very variable in speaking and listening, ranging from average to a significant proportion that is well below average. Children's social development also varies considerably but overall it is well below average. Nearly all children enter reception classes after attending the nursery. However, half of the children in reception are new to the school. Whilst most have received other nursery or playgroup experiences, a small number of children are new to this country and enter with virtually no English. Progress through the school's nursery and reception classes is good, and results in improved attainment. However, on beginning the National Curriculum, achievement in language and literacy is well below the expected norms that are described in the national desirable learning outcomes for the age. It is below what is expected in mathematics and in knowledge and understanding of the world. It is close to expectations in physical development, and above in personal and social and creative development. The results of base-line assessments largely confirm the well-below average standards in language and literacy.
2. Since the inspection report of March 1996, there has been considerable improvement in attainment, judged at the age by which pupils leave the school. In English, mathematics, and religious education, standards are much better now. In science, the school's standards have nearly always been high, and still are. Overall, attainment in information technology has remained similar over time, although the inconsistencies referred to in 1996 are largely being eliminated. The results of National Curriculum tests of 11-year-olds have improved from well below average in English in 1996 to close to average now. In mathematics, they have improved from well below average to above average, and in science from well above average to very high. In comparison with similar schools, standards are currently well above average in English and mathematics, and very high in science. Overall, trends have generally been upwards, although there have been fluctuations from year to year. In National Curriculum tests of pupils aged seven, standards are not as high, either in comparison with all schools, in which they are usually below average, or with similar schools, where they are mostly in line with the average. An important reason for the difference is that over half the school's pupils enter as learners of English as an additional language. Until they acquire literacy skills in English, their general attainment and progress are understandably low. Provision and teaching of English as an additional language is consistently good, so that good progress occurs. Despite this, attainment has not caught up sufficiently to produce National Curriculum test results that match the averages of other seven-year-olds up and down the country. However, good teaching of English as an additional language continues in classes for older pupils. By 11, standards of literacy are catching up rapidly, such that pupils are able to achieve results that are at least average, and often better.
3. At the age of seven, current standards in English are below average. Year 2 pupils listen attentively, and are willing to talk about their work, sharing experiences and anecdotes. However, apart from higher attaining pupils, who respond appropriately to questions in discussions, many pupils are constrained by a limited vocabulary and a lack of standard forms of English. This affects reading and writing. A few higher attaining pupils are particularly fluent readers and use good expression. However, most pupils lack confidence in talking about characters and events, and about what is likely to happen next. Fewer pupils than usual are able to develop their ideas in a sequence of sentences, using capital letters and full stops. Handwriting is often untidy, and although a joined style is taught, many pupils do not use it generally. Over half the pupils learn English as an additional language when they enter the school, and although they make good progress, they have not yet caught up with natural speakers of English.
4. At seven-years-old, standards in mathematics are below average. However, pupils' numeracy skills are developing well. Many are beginning to recognise the relative values of numbers, and understand place

value to expected levels. They recognise shapes in the environment, and understand simple charts and diagrams. Most seven-year-olds understand numbers successfully. They add and subtract figures competently. Those with sufficient knowledge of English use terms such as 'greater than', 'less than', 'difference' and 'multiply'. In mental mathematics, pupils readily double and halve numbers in multiples of ten. They are familiar with three-dimensional shapes. Higher attaining pupils already have a secure knowledge of multiplication for the two, three and five times tables. When measuring time, higher attainers have a good understanding of the quarter hours. Several pupils are familiar with 'half-past' and know this is equivalent to 30 minutes. Nearly all pupils recognise the time on the hour.

5. Standards at the age of seven are below average in science. Factual knowledge is often restricted, because many pupils lack sufficient English to understand the logical nature of the subject. As a result, there are difficulties with recording and remembering their work. However, pupils contribute well to experimental and observational science. They measure the relative temperatures of different parts of the classroom, observing how quickly cubes of ice melt.
6. In information technology, attainment is close to average. Pupils use computers to communicate their ideas in words, pictures and charts effectively. They use graphics particularly well to create and modify pictures to fit a purpose. Standards in religious education are largely in line with those described for seven-year-olds in the locally agreed syllabus. There are strengths in attainment in art, history and music, and weaknesses in design and technology and geography. No physical education lessons were seen for pupils aged five to seven, but other evidence suggests that standards are satisfactory.
7. By the age of 11, attainment in English is close to average. Standards in speaking and listening are about average. Most pupils speak with confidence and their responses to questions and during discussions are generally well thought out. Most read competently, and have clear preferences in styles and authors. Generally, they are able to talk convincingly about characters and plot. They explain how to find books in a library, and know that CD-ROM and the Internet are alternative sources of factual information. Attainment in writing is close to average. Pupils write for a variety of purposes, including narratives, descriptions, letters, poems, and reports across the curriculum. Pupils understand the need for interesting beginnings, middles and endings for their stories, which has a positive effect on the quality of writing. However, except when work is produced to go on display, handwriting is often untidy, and many pupils revert to unjoined script inappropriately.
8. By 11, standards in mathematics are above average. Many pupils have a good mathematical vocabulary. Higher attainers especially understand terms such as 'multiples', 'inverse operation', 'squaring' and 'square root'. Pupils are quick to identify patterns in number. Mental recall is often good. Pupils recognise different types of symmetry in shapes in the environment, and they use line graphs, charts and diagrams to process and read information. In science, pupils understand complex ideas such as the flow of energy through living systems. They use food chains, webs and body-charts to help their presentation of such ideas. The detail with which knowledge is explored in the spring and summer of Year 6 is clearly having very positive effects on pupils' knowledge and understanding. It results in very high attainment by the time they leave. Nearly all pupils know many facts about the human body; how animals relate to environmental features of where they live; food chains and ecological systems. They understand about the properties of many different materials, including changes such as condensation, freezing, and similar phenomena. They experiment successfully with forces, using Newtons to measure variations, and can explain electrical circuits of different complexities, including parallel and series wiring, and their effects, advantages and disadvantages. Standards in information technology are close to expected levels. Pupils use complex software to amend, improve and present their work so that it fits its purpose. They are familiar with a range of options, controlling technology to alter font sizes and styles to achieve the best effect for their audience. Standards are clearly above average in religious education. Nearly all pupils understand the importance of symbolism in religious experience very well, and can use it in artefacts of their own design. There are further strengths in art, history and music, although there are weaknesses in understanding and the development of skills in design and technology and geography. Physical education is satisfactory, although swimming is a strength of the school, and high standards are achieved.

9. Progress through the school is good. It is based on good teaching. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language contributes strongly to it. Planning is often very good. Understanding of pupils' needs is shared very well between specialist teachers and teachers with class responsibilities in a close partnership. As a result, work closely matches the requirements of individuals and different groups, building on their previous knowledge well. Relationships between teachers and pupils are close, and pupils' trust and respect for teachers is high. This results in a willingness to work hard and try even when tasks seem difficult. A high level of concentration and attention also leads to good progress. This is the case in classes for five to seven-year-olds, and in those for seven to 11-year-olds. In English and mathematics, the introduction of literacy and numeracy hours has resulted in carefully built progression of skills and activities as pupils move through the school. What pupils do next relates closely to what they have done. Targets are carefully set, and are communicated well to pupils and parents so that they know what must be done to improve performances. In science, similar patterns emerge. Intensive work in the spring and summer terms is particularly effective. As a result, good progress accelerates to very good rates by the time pupils leave the school, and very high attainment is achieved.
10. Over half the pupils who enter the school are speakers of English as an additional language. Their understanding and knowledge of both colloquial and standard forms of English is generally much lower than those of native speakers. Considerable resources are employed in ensuring that they acquire English quickly, and specialised provision is good. By about seven, nearly all pupils have developed sufficient colloquial speech to understand and benefit from what the school's curriculum offers. However, their attainment in standard English and in subjects across the curriculum has not yet caught up with national averages. Many other pupils for whom English is the first language are also fairly restricted in their vocabulary and knowledge of standard grammar. They too benefit from good teaching and the considerable emphasis placed on literacy. Good progress continues from the age of seven to 11. By the time pupils leave, their knowledge and understanding of English is close to national average levels. Progress in mathematics and science is also good, with very rapid progress occurring towards the end of Year 6 in science. Progress in information technology is at sound rates throughout the school. The recent addition of a computer suite to the school's resources is beginning to accelerate progress currently. However, this is too soon to make an impact over time. In religious education, progress is good throughout. There are also instances of good progress in art and music, and in lessons in history. Progress is very good in swimming, and, from seven-years-old to 11, in a few lessons in dance. Progress is hampered by a lack of time spent on teaching design and technology and geography, and also by a lack of teachers' expertise in some classes in design and technology.

14. **personal development**

**Attitudes, behaviour and**

11. Pupils' attitude to learning is very good, and their behaviour across the school is good. Personal development and relationships between pupils and between pupils and staff are very good. These are strengths of the school and make important contributions towards the standards that pupils attain and the quality of life in the school. Pupils learning English as an additional language have very positive attitudes to learning. Their relationships with one another and with their teachers are very good. They listen to their teachers with attention and concentrate well in lessons. Pupils with special educational needs are optimistic about the eventual standards that they can achieve, and nearly all are well motivated and develop good attitudes and self-esteem. They are fully accepted by all other pupils.
12. Children under five in both nursery and reception classes behave well and learn successfully in small groups or as a whole class. They concentrate and carry out instructions well. At this young age, children are friendly and polite. The very good progress children make in their personal and social development is sustained throughout the early years. It has a very positive impact on their readiness to begin the National Curriculum.
13. Attitudes were positive in the last inspection. Currently, throughout the school, including the nursery and reception classes, pupils are very well motivated and show a high level of interest in their work.

They listen carefully and are keen to participate in lessons. They respond very well to teachers' questions and contribute answers enthusiastically. Pupils generally concentrate well and most sustain interest in individual activities for good lengths of time.

14. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. This is consistent with the findings of the previous report. Pupils are clear about the standard of behaviour expected. They move sensibly around the large building and on the staircases at breaks and lunchtimes, often without the need for direct supervision. They behave well in the dining hall and in the playground. Pupils in Year 6 behaved very well when travelling to the Bull Theatre to see a performance of *Romeo and Juliet*. Their behaviour during the performance was exemplary. Good behaviour on trips outside the school is consistent: pupils in Years 4 and 6, for example, were very well behaved on the way to the local swimming pool, and were well-behaved during the lesson. Behaviour in lessons is good, although a few examples of lost concentration or restless behaviour are occasionally found. Pupils in the school are courteous to staff and visitors, and are considerate to one another. They show respect for school equipment and property, and are trustworthy. No vandalism or graffiti was evident in the school. Nearly all parents who responded to the questionnaire and attended the meeting expressed satisfaction with levels of behaviour in the school. Inspectors agree with them. The school has had only one fixed-term exclusion in the last twelve months.
15. Relationships in the school are very good. These are based on the high level of mutual respect that underpins the school's excellent ethos and enables pupils to work with increasing maturity. Constructive relationships are formed between pupils and between pupils and staff. Pupils work well together in pairs and individually. Different ethnic, cultural and religious groups get on very well together, and this is another strength of the school. The school custom is for pupils to refer to their teachers by their first names. This works well in the school. There were no examples of pupils taking advantage of the informal approach. On the contrary, there were many indications of mutual respect and trust.
16. Pupils' personal development is very good. As they move through the school, most listen to one another in lessons, and display an increasing sense of responsibility and self-discipline. In most lessons, pupils settle to group work quickly and are able to work unsupervised, independently or in groups. They work well together in lessons when, for example, carrying out experiments in science or sharing computers. Pupils are confident, performing in weekly class assemblies to parents and to the rest of the school. For example, Year 2 pupils performed a version of *Rumpelstiltskin* in a class assembly. They spoke, sang and moved with considerable confidence and conviction. Although pupils are not formally involved in the daily routines of the school, volunteer dinner monitors are conscientious in their duties, and pupils from quite young ages help to give out books and equipment in their classes. Pupils elected to serve with the School Council have a sense of responsibility. The Council enables pupils to be involved in the decision-making process in the school. Pupils in Year 6 recently participated in a Junior Citizenship programme where they won the first prize.
20. **Attendance**
17. Levels of attendance in the school are well below average. This is a significant weakness. Although the previous inspection judged attendance to be satisfactory, levels of attendance, then, were in fact below the national average, and have been consistently. The high levels of pupil mobility that were identified in the previous inspection remain a feature. In addition, a significant number of pupils stay away for relatively minor health problems. Other pupils take extended holidays during term-time and, as found previously, there is still a significant proportion of pupils being kept home for the benefit of other family members, rather than their own. Recently, reported levels of unauthorised absence were well above the national average. This is due to the difficulties the school has in obtaining reasons for absence from a few parents. This is worsened by a lack of rigour in following-up absences, and ensuring that valid reasons are given.
18. Punctuality is also poor. This is a major problem in the school. Many pupils arrive late, including a relatively high number of persistent latecomers. A significant proportion of pupils and parents has a

lack of urgency about arriving on time. They dawdle into school after the bell has rung, and a few arrive even after the registers have closed.

22.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

### **22. Teaching**

19. The quality of teaching is a strength of the school. It is at least satisfactory in slightly over 97 per cent of lessons. It has improved since the last inspection, when five out of ten lessons were good or better. This is now the case in seven out of every ten lessons and it is very good in over a quarter. These proportions of teaching of good quality and better are impressive. It is ensuring that pupils make good progress; achieve at least the standards expected by the age of eleven, and have very good attitudes to learning. The amount of unsatisfactory teaching is very small, as only three per cent of lessons is unsatisfactory.
20. The teaching of children under five is good. It is at least good in six out of ten lessons and it is very good in three out of every ten. In the rest of the school, the proportions of good teaching are high and are the same, at seven out of every ten lessons. The proportion of very good teaching is slightly higher in classes for five to seven-year-olds, at four out of ten lessons compared with one quarter in those for older pupils. However, an excellent lesson was observed in Year 6, in religious education.
21. Teaching is good in the nursery and one third of all lessons is very good. Teaching and support staff have good knowledge of how best to teach children under five and work very effectively as a team in order to provide a high quality learning environment. The teaching of language and literacy and personal and social development is very good, and is a very high priority. This ensures that the children make very good progress in settling into nursery, and into English routines, and, in speaking and listening. The teaching of all other areas of learning is good overall. However, in mathematical development, the range, and quality of mathematical activities for the children to choose during play, is satisfactory. The teachers in nursery and reception classes work closely as a team to provide continuous experiences. Children's attainment on entry and their progress are assessed thoroughly and very effective use is made of assessments for planning children's work and their purposeful play. In both nursery and reception, the quality of relationships between all staff and children is excellent.
22. Teaching of the under-fives in reception is good overall. It has many strengths and few weaknesses. Most lessons are at least satisfactory and six out of ten are good. However, there is a wider variation in the quality of teaching than in the nursery, as although one quarter of lessons is very good, there is a small proportion of unsatisfactory teaching in physical development. Teachers successfully introduce literacy and numeracy hours. There is a good balance between whole-class, group work and learning through structured play. All are well-matched to children's previous experiences. Much of the teaching has a practical content and is very relevant to children's daily lives. Language and literacy and numeracy sessions are lively, creatively planned and are designed to capture the children's interest. There is a very good emphasis upon children learning through talk. The teaching of all other areas of learning, except physical development, is good. Teachers build successfully upon children's previous experiences and prepare children well for beginning the National Curriculum. In physical development, during hall sessions, teaching ranges from very good to unsatisfactory. In the very good lessons time is used very well, children learn at a fast pace, teaching is energetic and enthusiastic, and there is a very good balance between the teaching of skills and children's own creativity. When teaching is unsatisfactory, the opposite is found, and children spend too much of the lesson waiting for the apparatus to be put out. The school has made good progress in improving the quality of teaching for children under the age of five since the last inspection, when teaching was satisfactory rather than good. Time is now used more effectively, as then children spent too long listening rather than being actively engaged in practical activity. However, there is still a weakness in physical development in this respect.

23. The quality of teaching is good in English and mathematics, including literacy and numeracy, science, and religious education throughout the school. It is good in aspects of history that were seen, and in physical education in classes for seven to 11-year-olds. Teachers' subject knowledge is good in all of these subjects, although teachers do not consistently insist on the use of joined handwriting at all appropriate times. It is good in art, in lessons seen for five to seven-year-olds and satisfactory in classes for older pupils, although it is good in Years 5 and 6. It is mainly very good in music, due to specialist teaching, although one unsatisfactory lesson, which was taught by a non-specialist class teacher was observed in a lesson for older juniors. On this occasion, subject knowledge was a weakness. The teaching of geography, although satisfactory in lessons observed, is generally unsatisfactory. Examination of previous work shows that in both geography and design and technology, planning is unsatisfactory and not enough time is devoted to teaching these subjects. Teachers' subject knowledge and skills in design and technology are weak.
24. The teaching of information technology is satisfactory. The lessons observed were mainly good, but examination of previous work shows that teachers' subject knowledge, although satisfactory for the graphics work taught during the inspection, still has some weaknesses. The new computer suite is used effectively and teachers make good use of time by teaching the whole class at the same time. Teachers are still receiving training in information technology. The increased subject knowledge is having a very positive impact on the quality of teaching provided.
25. Teachers' knowledge of how best to implement the literacy and numeracy hours is good and time is well used. In literacy hours throughout the school, a small proportion of very good teaching occurs. It is found in Years 1 and 2, although it is not consistent across the years. Teaching of literacy is very good in both the Year 6 classes. This is raising pupils' attainment in English very effectively by the time they leave the school. In numeracy, very good teaching is found in Years 1, 5 and 6, but it is not consistently very good in any one year. In very good lessons, teachers' subject knowledge is good, lessons have a brisk pace, and time is used very effectively for whole-class teaching and group work. Class management is very good and teachers' questioning extends pupils' thinking well. Planning for literacy and numeracy is good throughout the school and teachers are implementing both the literacy and numeracy hours effectively. There is particularly good assessment and this is successfully used to match work to the prior attainment of pupils. Setting, that is the arrangements for teaching pupils according to their prior attainment, is having a good impact on raising standards in literacy and numeracy.
26. Often, expectations of what pupils can achieve in lessons are high. For example, this is particularly the case in Years 1, 2 and 6 in literacy and numeracy hours. It is also the case in literacy, in Y5. In science, expectations are high in Year 1, and very high in Year 6. Instances of high expectations occur in a range of lessons throughout the school. Other examples are in religious education in Year 6, or when pupils go swimming, and when the specialist teaches music. Examples also occur in lessons for children under five.
27. Teachers' planning is good throughout the school, and particularly for the under-fives. It is thorough and detailed. It clearly identifies what teachers intend pupils to learn and teachers' purposes are clearly matched to the school's longer-term planning for the National Curriculum or for recent government guidelines. Teachers fine-tune their planning to accommodate the diverse needs of pupils of quite different previous attainment, including those with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs. Learning resources are carefully prepared to meet these needs. Specialist teachers for pupils with English as an additional language, and for pupils with special educational needs, plan very carefully with class teachers. This leads to very effective team-teaching between language teachers and class teachers for classes with very high proportions of pupils with limited spoken English. This ensures that pupils make good progress through the school.
28. Teachers' class management is very good throughout the school. Relationships between teachers and pupils are very good and there is a positive, caring atmosphere in all classes. Teachers design lessons so that there is a successful balance between whole-class, group work and individual work. They know pupils well and ensure that the needs of different pupils are met. Teachers organise and manage pupils

very efficiently, and patiently ensure that all pupils know the purpose of each lesson and what they are trying to achieve. Teachers' discipline and control is firm but unobtrusive, and teachers throughout have very high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Frequent praise and encouragement enhances pupils' confidence and self-esteem.

29. Lesson time is used efficiently. Lessons start promptly and end at designated times. Teachers use resources well and use outside visits, for example, to the theatre, very well to enrich their teaching. Homework is used well to extend pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy. Marking is effective and usually tells pupils how they can improve their knowledge and skills. The day-to-day assessment of pupils is very good for the under-fives and good in Key Stages 1 and 2, and teachers constantly check to see if pupils have understood what they are teaching.

33. **The curriculum and assessment**

33. Curriculum

30. Overall, the school is offering a good curriculum that is appropriately broad and balanced, matching the particular needs of its pupils well. For example, there is a strong emphasis on literacy, including additional time for English, which focuses mainly on reading and extended writing. In this way, the school is able to maximise access to its curriculum for the large number of pupils whose first language is not English. It also caters for the relatively high number that arrives at the school in Years 2 to 6, and pupils with a restricted knowledge of English. The curriculum for children under five covers all the nationally recommended areas of learning, and includes very good opportunities for spiritual development. All subjects of the National Curriculum are taught to pupils from the age of five, and literacy and numeracy hours are included on the timetable every day. However, the justifiably increased time that is spent on English, as a consequence reduces time for subjects such as design and technology, and geography. This has affected standards in these subjects and they are not as high as found in the last inspection. The time devoted to science varies throughout the year, but a full coverage of the National Curriculum is given and excellent standards are achieved. Information technology is taught more effectively than at the last inspection. The recently developed computer suite is contributing very well to improvements. Religious education is dealt with well. The locally agreed syllabus is used as an important planning tool. The curriculum makes provision for personal, social and health education, including suitable sex education and information about the proper use of medicines and the dangers of misusing drugs. It occurs in different curricular areas and includes outside visitors. However, the provision lacks an overarching scheme of work, showing what is covered, how, when and by whom.

31. The provision to ensure that all pupils have equal access to, and opportunity to benefit from the curriculum is very good. A major factor is the emphasis on developing English skills to maximise understanding of all curricular areas. It begins in the nursery and develops throughout the school. Whilst part of this is achieved by increasing the time spent on language work, another major feature is the support for pupils with English as an additional language and also for those with special educational needs. Specialist teachers in both areas use their expertise well, planning and working on the curriculum in partnership with classroom teachers. They often share class teaching where they have particular subject knowledge. Not only does this support the needs of particular groups and individuals, but it also heightens available curricular expertise for all pupils. It enhances access to a suitably broad and balanced curriculum.

32. Pupils with special educational needs are given precisely achievable targets on their Individual Education Plans, which are regularly reviewed. They are also well supported by additional teachers and helpers and their own class teachers, who are fully involved with setting up their education plans. A few pupils are withdrawn from class at times for individual help. At present, the school has no systems to ensure that the pattern for an individual minimises the amount of each subject that is missed. Setting of English and mathematics for older pupils is producing better results by ensuring a good match of work to individual needs, based on a closer match to prior attainment. Flexibility to move between sets is maintained.

33. Planning for continuity and progression of skills was criticised in the last report. There has been considerable improvement since then. Teachers of children under five plan a stimulating and interesting environment, which promotes learning very well through talk and practical activity. Planning of the National Curriculum is generally sound. However, minor weaknesses remain in handwriting, geography, and design and technology. Whilst all subjects now have a scheme of work, there is a tendency to adopt a commercially produced one, or that of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, and not to personalise or amplify it for the specific needs of Grafton school. However, the impact of the curriculum in practice is regularly reviewed. Termly planning meetings between class teachers, the headteacher, the special needs co-ordinator and language staff help to mould it into a suitable form for pupils. Since the last report, a homework policy has been written and homework now makes a significant contribution to pupils' learning. Cross-curricular links are well-established in the school. They are especially evident in science, history, art and music. For example, the influence of costume on Tudor styles of dance and, therefore, musical tastes is taught very well. Extra-curricular activities are sound. The curriculum is enriched by many visits to and from the school. There are sporting clubs for football, cricket, including a girls' team, and netball. Pupils have visited Lords for the coaching of cricket. There is a choir, a recorder group and a homework club. A residential school journey to the Isle of Wight is arranged for older pupils.

37. Assessment

34. The attainment of pupils targeted for additional support for English as an additional language is thoroughly assessed and records of their progress are regularly kept up to date. Assessment information is used effectively for future planning. This is used in classrooms at pupil level and in sharing planning and evaluation between class teachers and the special needs co-ordinator.

35. The school employs many assessment systems, starting with base-line assessment for five-year-olds and ending with National Curriculum tests. Taken as a whole, they are very effective. Assessment is especially good in English and mathematics and in science from seven to eleven-years-old. The methods include non-statutory National Curriculum tests for Years 3, 4 and 5. In religious education, assessment is mostly informal, but sound. Other subjects employ a range of procedures, most of which provide good information about pupils' progress.

36. For literacy, good assessment sheets for individuals' reading and writing as well as the primary literacy record are kept, and for numeracy there are documents to cover attainment in the various skills. Samples of work in the core subjects are assessed against the level descriptions in the National Curriculum. Periodic record sheets are often used in other subjects to record how well each part of a topic has been understood.

37. Assessment is well used to plan the curriculum for individuals. Reviews of pupils' learning, reading and writing samples, individuals' records of numeracy and numerous other assessments lead to the identification of needs. Generally, especially in the areas of literacy and numeracy, they lead to individual target setting decided by teacher and pupil. This system works well, and has done much to raise the attainment of individuals by identifying needs that can then be met.

#### 41. **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

38. Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good, and as in the previous inspection, it is a strength of the school. The school promotes clear and consistent principles, which are evident in its policies and practice. Its multicultural ethos features strongly in its work. Pupils are taught to show respect and tolerance for other others, regardless of gender, race, religion or culture. This is greatly appreciated by the parents.

39. Spiritual development is fostered through very good assemblies, and the very calm atmosphere in the school. The school's aims clearly state its commitment to creating a calm, happy and purposeful environment. The school's ethos and code of conduct contribute to pupils' valuing one another's work and celebrating one another's achievement. In lessons, teachers welcome pupils' ideas across the

curriculum, and give them appropriate praise and encouragement. Everyday values such as fairness, thoughtfulness and regard for others, are regularly emphasised. There is also good provision for spiritual development through the curriculum as a whole. This has improved since the last inspection. There are very good opportunities for spiritual growth. For example, in religious education, English, music, art, history, and personal, social and health education, pupils are given opportunities to express their wonder, opinions and understanding of the created world. There is provision for pupils to attend daily assemblies, which offer them good opportunities to learn about, and develop respect for one another's religions. They are also used as occasions for celebrating pupils' achievements and for thanking and praising God. The school meets the legal requirements of a daily act of collective worship.

40. The provision for moral development is very good, with the school providing good teaching on right and wrong. The code of behaviour is fully understood by pupils. There are clear expectations of behaviour that promote very good standards of conduct in lessons, and around the school. Pupils understand the concept of fairness and show respect for others. Adults in the school provide good role models of behaviour by their courtesy and respect for pupils. Relationships between staff and pupils, and between pupils themselves, are very good. The relationships between girls and boys, and pupils from different minority ethnic groups are also very good.
41. There are very good opportunities for pupils to develop their social skills in lessons, assemblies and life in the school generally. The school helps pupils to work co-operatively in class, and to develop positive attitudes to good social behaviour and self-discipline. The older pupils help the younger ones, particularly those who are new to the school, in the playground. There is very good provision for developing an understanding of citizenship and democracy through the School Council. It has two representatives from each class and meets fortnightly to discuss ideas to improve the school. For example, in the past pupils had opportunities to devise floor games in the playground and these are still in use, and to develop the dress code. Pupils take part in the local Junior Citizenship Scheme, which is run by the police to promote an understanding of risks and dangers. Last year they won a medal for the school.
42. The school makes very good provision to support pupils' cultural development. The linguistic diversity within the school is celebrated and recognised as an asset for learning; for example, through notices, displays and resources in different languages as well as through pupils and parents working together to write dual language stories. The school's religious education programme, history, music and art make good contributions to help pupils to appreciate their own cultural and religious traditions, and those of others. There is good provision for visits to museums and art galleries, and for working with artists and performers to enhance pupils' cultural development. During the inspection week, Year 6 pupils had the opportunity to visit the Bull Theatre to see a performance of *Romeo and Juliet* to increase their understanding and appreciation of the play.
46. **Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**
43. The school provides good support and guidance for pupils. It provides a caring environment where the headteacher and staff know pupils well and demonstrate a high degree of concern to ensure their well-being. Pupils are well supported by very good relationships with teachers. Pupils learning English as an additional language are also well-catered for. There is sound advice in the school's 'Policy on Bilingualism', particularly in relation to the support available for the induction of new arrivals. Pupils with special educational needs are also supported well. Individual Education Plans contain precise details about the approaches to be used. The school has several useful policies, guides and procedures in place that promote well-being and enable pupils to take advantage of educational opportunities.
44. Procedures for pupils entering school are good. These include home visits and opportunities for children under five to become familiar with their surroundings. Transfer from nursery to reception classes is good. Procedures for pupils going to secondary schools are also appropriate, and include contact between the relevant staffs and visits by pupils to their new school.

45. Procedures for keeping a check on progress and personal development are good. The school has very good ways of checking pupils' academic progress. Personal development is well supported through the excellent climate for learning and very good relationships in the school. Emphasis is placed on developing self-esteem and independence. The 'Good Work' assembly and 'Golden Book' contribute to the promotion of personal development by recognising good work and effort.
46. Procedures to establish discipline and good behaviour are good. The school has clear expectations of pupils' behaviour and has worked hard to tell pupils and parents about it. A booklet entitled *Encouraging Positive Behaviour* sets out a joint approach between parents, pupils and staff, including a framework of suitable rewards and sanctions. It provides guidance on how to deal with bad behaviour and on when to apply rewards, which is nonetheless left to the professionalism of individual staff. In general, class teachers have effective classroom management skills that have a positive influence on high standards of behaviour. An 'incident book' is used to record serious breaches of discipline or bullying, and there is a 'thinking time' book, which records pupils who are kept in at break-time to "...think about their behaviour and what they should do next." The school acknowledges that bullying occurs occasionally. However, no incidents were found during the inspection and appropriate procedures are in place to deal with what occurs.
47. Procedures for promoting good attendance are unsatisfactory. This is because of insufficient rigour in following-up absences and checking the reasons that are given. The approach to lateness is also insufficiently relentless to ensure improvements in punctuality. For example, errors in registers were found during the time of inspection, whereby authorised and unauthorised absences were not clearly distinguished.
48. The procedures for child protection and promoting pupils' well being and health and safety are satisfactory overall. However, the school does not have a separate policy for child protection, which results in some lack of clarity about procedures. The headteacher, as designated person, and the special needs co-ordinator have received recent training. There has also been training to heighten staff awareness of important issues. However, when asked, a few teachers were not sure of the designated member of staff, or the immediate action to take in the event of a concern. Day-to-day welfare is good. There are sufficient first-aiders, and records are kept of all accidents involving pupils. Regular checks of the site, premises and equipment are carried out and documented.
52. **Partnership with parents and the community**
49. The school has positive links with parents and the community. The headteacher has encouraged initiatives to enable parents to work more closely with the school to support the education of pupils. These include informal coffee mornings run by the Home-School Association, and classes for parents and children to improve parenting skills and literacy. Parents are invited to class assemblies. Most parents support the school, although the number helping in classrooms is low. Pupils are encouraged to take reading books home regularly, but only some parents share reading with their children. To involve parents of different cultures, the school makes good use of community languages. Currently, specialist teachers of English as an additional language are involved in a book making project. Pupils and parents work together to produce dual language story books in English and Bengali, or English and Turkish. The school has also recently joined the Local Education Authority's Family Literacy Project, which aims to raise standards of literacy among both parents and children, and to extend ways in which parents support their children's language and literacy. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are invited to meetings to help to establish their children's requirements and to comment on reviews of their progress. They are involved well in decisions, and the staff work hard to ensure that translators are found if there is a risk that lack of English might prevent a proper involvement.
50. Parents have the opportunity to comment on reading at home on home-school reading sheets, but again few do so. In response to a key issue in the previous inspection, the school developed a homework policy that it recently updated further. It outlines general guidance on homework, although it does not make expectations clear enough to be sufficiently helpful to parents. However, most parents are happy

with the levels of homework. A small active school association organises fund-raising events, including the 'family supper'. Communication with parents is good. Most documents are available in community languages, and meetings are organised when translators are available. The 'home-school agreement' has recently been sent to all parents.

51. The quality of information provided by the school for parents is good. Regular newsletters, including the 'Grafton News', ensure parents are kept well-informed about school matters, key dates and events in the school. Curriculum reports provide parents with information about the curriculum and topic work each term. The prospectus provides useful information on school routines and procedures, although, together with the governing body's report to parents, it lacks some minor aspects. Information about special educational needs and how to approach the school with concerns is generally sound. Meetings have begun to be held to explain curricular initiatives, such as the literacy and numeracy hours, and a recent meeting for parents, teachers and children was held to help parents' support reading at home. Parents' meetings are held each term to discuss progress and any concerns. Annual reports on pupils' progress are satisfactory. They are detailed, and provide useful information on what pupils understand and can do. However, there is no clear separation of information technology and design and technology. Furthermore, they do not consistently provide information on strengths and weaknesses and targets for future learning.
52. The school has good links with the community, and is involved in a number of community initiatives. As part of a 'Community Services Volunteer' programme members of the community regularly work in school and hear pupils read. Pupils have performed in the local '600 Voices' concert. Pupils benefit from a number of visits to places of interest. For example, Year 6 went to a performance of *Romeo and Juliet* during the inspection. Visits to the Geffrye Museum, the House of Commons, the National Gallery and farms are also planned. Visitors include workshops associated with Science Week, naturalists, the local community police officer, story-tellers, musical groups and representatives of religions.

## 56. **THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL**

### 56. **Leadership and management**

53. The headteacher provides very good leadership for the educational development of the school. She is supported effectively by the school's governing body and members of the senior management team. The headteacher has guided the school very successfully through a period of uncertainty by uniting the community and strengthening its resolve to keep a school on the present site. There is a clear commitment to raising standards of achievement, and this has been realised with the improvements in National Curriculum test results in English, mathematics and science. The pupils have benefited from the headteacher's foresight in joining national and local projects at an early stage. As a result, curricular development and resources have been enhanced.
54. The school has several very committed governors who make a positive contribution to leadership. There are appropriate committees, which help to keep a check on the work of the school and give advice on priorities. There are named governors who have accepted a responsibility to liaise with the school on literacy, numeracy and special educational needs. The headteacher and chair of governors work closely together to work out priorities and key targets for development. The senior management team and co-ordinators of the core subjects also have an influential role in developments. Their expertise and enthusiasm have a positive impact on what is taught. Curricular plans are prepared for all subjects. Although the school is operating without a deputy headteacher at present, delegation of responsibilities is clear, and morale is high. The governors have plans to make an appointment in the New Year. The management of special educational needs and English as an additional language are particularly effective in providing very good support for pupils. Both are seen as integral parts of the school's policies and practice. There is good provision for the celebration of linguistic and cultural diversity in displays and resources.

55. The school has addressed the key issues from its previous inspection, although some of the targets that it set itself are yet to be completed. For example, the introduction of a new handwriting policy has not yet resulted in better presentation of work in pupils' books. Suitable schemes of work are in place for the majority of subjects, and split into expectations of work for each year group. The recently published guidelines of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority have been recommended to teachers and distributed. However, geography and design and technology do not have clearly defined Programmes of Study tailored to the school's needs. Recently, the school has developed a handwriting policy for use at all stages, but this has not yet had a significant impact on standards across the curriculum as a whole. Subject managers are far more involved in the development of what is taught. The marking of pupils' work is undertaken regularly but the use of the information gained from marking is not used consistently to set short-term targets for improvements.
56. The school has a very good structure in place for monitoring teaching and curriculum development. The headteacher has a clear picture of the quality of teaching in the school through informal and formal monitoring systems. There is a standard format for the review of teaching, and staff are given an evaluation of their performance and pointers for improvement. Senior staff also participate in the programme, so building a climate of mutual trust and professionalism in the school. Constructive staff appraisal also takes place, which results in appropriate training being provided. The school sets a high priority for whole-staff development through in-service training days, enabling a school philosophy to be built up. Key subject areas are monitored by co-ordinators, but the school's main thrust has been towards the core subjects, leaving some non-core subjects in a state of stagnation. The monitoring of teaching and of pupils' work has not been undertaken in some areas and as a result progress has been limited.
57. The school has clear aims, values and policies, and these are clearly reflected in its work. The school is a happy, purposeful, stimulating working environment. There is an underlying philosophy, which provides for equality of opportunity for all regardless of gender, race, culture or physical and academic ability. High expectations are set for pupils, which facilitates high achievement. Pupils benefit from good links with the local and wider community. Parents in responses to questionnaires and at their meeting before the inspection, local residents and visitors to the school, have a high regard for it. Their opinions are often founded on first-hand evidence, such as the way that pupils conduct themselves on visits and on a school journey.
58. The school development planning is very good. Targets for improvement are clearly defined, and appropriate finance, resources, time-scales and personnel are identified. There are proper systems for the involvement of staff and governors to contribute to the plan and mechanisms for the review of the achievement of targets. The implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has been particularly successful through good planning. Some long-term targets are still to be achieved but the school is making good progress towards achievement of its goals. Its capacity for improvement is judged to be good.
59. The school's ethos is excellent. It provides an environment that is conducive to development of high standards, both academically and socially. The school community is representative of a wide range of cultures and social backgrounds and it successfully blends these elements into a harmonious unit through the promotion of good relationships and equality of opportunity. The school expectation of high achievement is largely realised through good teaching, a very supportive social framework, and very good leadership and management. The leadership and management aspect of the school is judged to have shown a good level of improvement since the last inspection.
60. The governors generally fulfil their statutory requirements, but there is a total of five minor omissions from the school's prospectus and the annual governors' report to parents that the school is already in the process of correcting.
64. **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

61. The school has sufficient staff with a suitable range of experience and qualifications to meet the needs of all pupils, including under-fives, the requirements of the National Curriculum and religious education. Pupils with English as an additional language receive support from specialist teachers and an instructor from the Ethnic Minority Achievement Project. There is a good spread of experience amongst staff, ranging from a newly qualified teacher to staff with many years' experience. There is a good range of subject expertise across the curriculum.
62. The school benefits from a good number of classroom assistants. They are appropriately qualified, well-deployed and contribute well to the needs of pupils. Non-teaching staff involved in supporting pupils with special educational needs are appropriately qualified and experienced. They make a significant contribution towards the attainment and progress of these pupils.
63. The arrangements for the professional development of teachers and support staff are good. The school provides useful in-service training, most of which is currently being focused on the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Training for staff development is linked to individual needs, as well as those arising from the School Development Plan. Support staff are fully integrated into the school and receive regular training. Arrangements for the professional development of all staff in relation to English as an additional language are good. The school has a good induction programme; it is well structured and offers effective support, which includes special systems for newly qualified teachers. However, a few teachers are unsure whether there has been recent training in child protection routines. The appraisal of teachers is up to date and is linked to the School Development Plan as well as individual needs.
64. Accommodation is satisfactory. The school is a large Victorian building on three floors, with sufficient classrooms and spaces to teach the curriculum. However, there are variations in the sizes of classrooms with a few classes being quite small. Maximum use is made of space. For example, the mezzanine floor, which was judged to be underused at the time of the last inspection, is now the base for specialist staff dealing with special educational needs and English as an additional language. This is clearly an improvement. Other improvements of a direct benefit to standards are the new room for computers and a library on the top floor, which is the result of converting a hall. The school now has two halls. Although neither is large enough to accommodate the whole school for assembly, good arrangements for performances, celebrations of good work and similar activities are made.
65. Outside, the school benefits from large playgrounds that are good for physical education. The outside area includes a full-sized football pitch, a suitably sized grassed area, used as a garden and quiet space in the summer, and a wild garden that is currently being redeveloped to include a pond. The playground area includes a climbing frame, markings on the ground for various games, and a fenced space for children under five. The outdoor space has been improved by planting small trees and flowers.
66. The school is generally well maintained, although many of the windows need attention and the building is still being monitored to establish the extent of subsidence and further action that may be needed to correct it.
67. Generally, the quality and quantity of learning resources are good. This is the case in many subjects, including mathematics, science and art. The new computer suite is well-resourced with both hardware and software, although pupils do not always have daily access to computers in their classrooms. Resources in English are very good and include a wide range of new 'big books', sets of books, and well-organised reading books. Resources to meet the needs of pupils learning English as an additional language are very good. Resources are at least satisfactory in all other subjects, except for design and technology where there are shortcomings. Resources are readily available, except for physical education where equipment is still difficult to store and manoeuvre. Good use is made of resources beyond the school, such as the residential visit to the Isle of Wight, and visits to the Imperial War Museum and the National Gallery.

71. **The efficiency of the school**

68. The school's financial planning is good; it supports educational developments. Finance from the school's budget is well-matched to school priorities for future development. The school spends a comparatively high proportion of funding on learning resources; however, this is proving effective in improving pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science. Expenditure on information technology equipment is also beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' learning. The cost of employing a large number of well-qualified classroom assistants and specialist teachers to support pupils with special educational needs and those pupils who have English as an additional language is well justified. They give good quality support in the classroom and in situations where pupils are withdrawn from the class for a particular reason. They also offer and provide valuable advice on developing pupils' proficiency, particularly in English and mathematics. The school's budget for teacher training is small for its size. However, the philosophy of involving all staff in training and planning is particularly effective. For example, the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has been based on good training, using the school's own resources as well as national materials. Co-ordinators usually manage a budget for their subject and have an influence on deciding the priorities for spending. Governors receive up-to-date information and training, and exercise their strategic responsibility properly by checking what is spent. The governors have a growing awareness of the need to evaluate decisions on expenditure. The school prudently retains an appropriate sum for contingency purposes. The annual sum carried forward from the previous year's budget is well within national recommendations. However, the projected underspend in the current year is higher than that usually recommended. This is partly due to the decision not to appoint a deputy headteacher, and the consequent saving of the salary.
69. Specific grants for pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language are properly used to further developmental priorities.
70. Teachers and support staff are deployed appropriately. The school has delayed the appointment of a deputy headteacher until the summer term. In the meantime, the role is being fulfilled adequately by senior staff. Co-ordinators are fulfilling their advisory role successfully, but the majority of non-core subject co-ordinators have had few opportunities recently to monitor teaching and pupil's learning. This is a direct result of recent national initiatives in literacy, numeracy and information technology, which has resulted in these subjects becoming the focus for attention. Learning resources are used effectively in the classroom. There are good examples in many subject areas of pupils making gains in knowledge and understanding through the use of equipment and artefacts. Resources in mathematics and religious education are particularly well used. The accommodation is used successfully to teach the school curriculum. Specialist rooms such as the library provide a positive learning environment. They are well-equipped and are used frequently. The halls, although small, are timetabled effectively, to ensure good use for a whole range of activities.
71. Daily administration and financial procedures are undertaken well. Appropriate procedures are in place to ensure that school routines operate smoothly. The headteacher and staff have access to accurate financial information for the budget areas for which they are responsible. The most recent audit report arrived in the school at the end of the inspection. It was shared with inspectors very willingly, and its few recommendations have already been communicated to governors for inclusion on the agenda of their next meeting.
72. Pupils generally enter school with a low level of attainment for a variety of reasons, including unfavourable social and economic backgrounds, and a lack of English. They make good progress throughout the school and achieve standards close to national expectations or better by the time they leave. Pupils receive a good quality of education. Their behaviour is good and attitudes and personal development are very good. The cost of educating each pupil is high, even for a school in a London borough. However, taking these factors into account, it provides good value for money.

## **PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

### **76. AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE**

73. Since the last inspection, the school has made good progress in improving provision for children under the age of five. The quality of teaching has improved. Teaching is mainly good, and over one quarter of lessons are now very good. The proportion of unsatisfactory teaching has decreased.

74. Children are accepted into the nursery when they are three years old and all children attend part-time for the first half-term. After this, children attend either full-time or part-time for five morning or afternoon sessions each week. The children start in the reception classes at the beginning of the school year in which they are five and, at this stage, the children attend full-time. In both the nursery and reception classes, children with birthdays from September to February begin in September whilst children with birthdays from March to August, begin half a term later in November. At the time of the inspection there were 39 children in the nursery, 19 were full-time and 20 were part-time. There were 32 children under the age of five in the reception classes. When children enter the nursery they have had a very wide range of experiences in their language and personal and social developments. Their overall attainment is very low. Just over a half of all children speak very little English, and the attainment of the remaining children is very variable in speaking and listening and ranges from average to below average. Children's social development also varies considerably but overall it is well below average. Nearly all children enter reception classes after attending the nursery. However, half of all the entrants to reception are new to the school. Whilst most have received other nursery or playgroup experiences, a small number of children are new to this country and enter with virtually no English. Overall, attainment on entry to reception is low, although there are a few higher attaining children at this stage.

75. The nursery provides a very secure and caring learning environment in which children thrive. They make good overall progress, including progress at a very good rate in personal and social development. On moving into reception classes, most children's personal and social, creative and physical developments match expectations. However, the number of children whose attainment matches expectations in language and literacy, mathematical development and knowledge and understanding of the world remains low due to the very high proportion of children with limited speaking and listening skills in English. The reception classes successfully promote good progress in all areas of learning, except physical development where progress is satisfactory. The learning environment continues to be very caring and secure. Teachers provide a stimulating and interesting environment where learning through talk and practical activity is encouraged. By five, most children exceed the national expectations in their personal and social development and creative development and meet expectations in their physical development. The attainment of the majority of children is below what is described in the desirable outcomes for mathematical development and in knowledge and understanding of the world, whilst they are well below in language and literacy.

### **79. Personal and social development**

76. By the age of five, most children's personal and social development exceeds the national expectations. In the nursery, children begin to make very good relationships with one another and all the adults with whom they come into contact. They learn to value themselves and one another. They learn to play and work effectively in small groups and to mix with children from a very wide range of cultures and backgrounds. They learn classroom routines thoroughly, to behave well, and to share. For example, when playing in the home corner or sharing their large wheeled toys in their own secure area, they share and willingly take turns. By the time they enter the reception classes, they are happy, confident and enthusiastic learners. Children behave well and learn successfully in small groups or as a whole class. By five, they learn well through purposeful play or working together as a class. For example, during water play, they count swimming teddies with the minimum supervision or, when working as a whole class, they count to 20 by clapping or stamping out their numbers with their feet in unison, all joining in and learning joyfully. They concentrate and carry out instructions well, or confidently

generate their own ideas. Children are friendly, polite and know the importance of good manners. The very good progress children make in their personal and social development is sustained throughout the early years and this has a very positive impact on their readiness to begin the National Curriculum.

77. Teaching of personal and social development is very good. Teachers plan very well for activities to promote personal and social development in all classes for children under five. They sit with the children and discuss situations to encourage their good behaviour, and to help them form constructive relationships with one another.

81. **Language and literacy**

78. By the age of five, most children's attainment is well below average, although about a quarter attain higher standards in speaking, listening and early reading and writing. Children make at least good progress throughout nursery and reception classes, including higher attainers and those with special educational needs. Children with English as an additional language make very good progress, and by five, most can use at least a few words to describe their observations and express their needs. The more advanced children, who have English as an additional language, can hold conversations and talk about their experiences although their vocabulary and fluency is often still limited. Children in the nursery listen attentively, and through the high quality and range of practical activities provided, they extend their speaking and listening skills successfully. Practical tasks such as making 'Frosty Freddie's' for their class Christmas decorations, or smelling and tasting bread from different lands, enrich the children's vocabulary and experiences. The teacher, the nursery nurse and the assistant support structured tasks and play well by extending children's speaking and listening skills according to their individual needs. By the time they are five, about half are articulate and are developing a wider vocabulary. Many listen with rapt attention to stories and join in successfully when singing or reciting songs and rhymes. In the nursery, they learn to sing simple phrases from their large class book 'I Like the Rain', which helps their articulation. They develop pre-reading skills well in the nursery; they enjoy books; understand that words and print carry meaning, and learn to handle books carefully. In reception, children successfully take part in the literacy hour and make good progress in learning sounds and recognising words. The nursery and reception classrooms are both well-organised to develop reading skills with clear alphabets, labels, notices and word lists, and there are many good opportunities to learn through talk.

79. By five, children's ability to read ranges from well above to well below average. Just over a half are able to read very simple texts and recognise letter sounds; a few high attainers can read harder texts successfully and already use sounds to work out new words. But there are also children with very limited English, who have not begun to read due to their lack of fluency in spoken English. Children enjoy early writing activities and, by five, many can write their own names. About half attain expectations: they write their names with the correct use of lower and upper case letters; their writing is well-formed, and they know many sounds.

80. The teaching of language and literacy is good. There are many relevant opportunities for speaking, listening, and early reading, which develop pupils' skills effectively. Teachers of reception classes introduce children successfully to daily literacy sessions, which successfully combine whole-class teaching with group work based on exciting practical experiences. For example, children read and write for real purposes in the class café or use magnetic letters to spell simple words through guided play. A very good lesson was observed in the nursery. The whole class read a 'big book' with their teacher and sang responses. Work is well-matched to children's needs and effective use is made of children's base-line and continuous assessments.

84.

**Mathematical development**

81. Attainment in mathematics is below expectations by five years old, after good progress through the nursery and reception classes. About two-thirds can count to ten, arrange numbers to ten and

successfully match the right number of objects or actions to a digit. These children are beginning to add and subtract and recognise larger numbers. A few very highly attaining children can add and subtract to 20 and are already developing mental skills. However, up to a third are still developing language and numeracy skills that will enable them to match objects to numbers up to 5 and to recognise single digits in print. Children use their numeracy well; when using coins within the numeracy hour they buy and sell small toys or toy food in their play café. Most children learn to count to five in the nursery, can match numbers with their fingers and recognise higher numbers. However, limited English prevents some children from getting as far as this. In the nursery and reception, children learn to count very well through songs and rhymes and using body actions to show numbers. In the nursery, children sing 'Five currant buns'; count buns up to five, and are beginning to be aware of the effects of adding and subtracting one bun. In reception, most children make good progress through their daily numeracy sessions, when they practise counting and work together in small groups on practical tasks. However, a few very high attaining children could make more progress, as they are capable of harder mental work than they are sometimes given. In the nursery, good adult questioning at suitable moments during play or mathematics activity time extends individual children in their mathematical language and thinking. However, in the nursery the range and use of mathematical activities for play is satisfactory and not as good as other provision. Progress in one reception class has been rapid since the beginning of term due to a very effective balance between whole-class, group practical tasks and learning through play. Children learn to recognise simple two-dimensional shapes in the nursery and this is extended in reception to include three-dimensional shapes.

82. The teaching of mathematical development is good. There are many relevant opportunities for counting, which effectively develop early numeracy skills. There are daily whole-class sessions, combining whole-class teaching with group work. In very good numeracy lessons, class introductions involve all the children in counting, using actions such as clapping and stamping as well as chanting numbers. There is much emphasis on children learning through talk and practical activity. Teaching is purposeful, energetic and makes learning fun. Work is well-matched to most children's needs in both reception and nursery classes. However, for a few very highly attaining children, there is insufficient extension of activities.

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

83. By five, children's attainment is below expectations. Children's progress is good in their knowledge and understanding of the world in both nursery and reception classes. Although many have average attainment, about a third cannot yet use English adequately to describe observations and express scientific questions. In the nursery, children make very good progress in science and information technology. In science, children are inquisitive and develop their knowledge of materials very well. For example, they know that some solids, such as jelly and coffee granules, disappear when put in water and others do not. Children make very good progress due to very high quality teaching, where the teacher's questioning and repetition of key language enables all to make very good progress. In reception classes, children make good progress through learning through investigations and their senses. Children observe carefully and try ideas out; for example, they select dressing up clothes for their reflective qualities and try these out by wearing them in their large dark box. Children know that some objects, such as torches and televisions give out light whilst others do not. Children's computer skills match expectations: they use the mouse skilfully and select which letter they will learn from *Doctor Seuss* ABC program', or when they design and make pictures using graphics software. Children learn about different lands and cultures from their own experiences, for example, of tasting bread from different parts of the world and observing the differences in other children's preferences. In reception, children learn about the purpose of different shops and about the jobs of people in the café. Children make very good progress in learning about different religions and learning to respect other children's faiths through important religious celebrations during the year. However, when children use construction kits in both nursery and reception classes, their knowledge of strong and weak structures and moving parts is underdeveloped. Children's knowledge of different products and inventions in their daily lives is also less than usually found.

84. The teaching of most aspects of knowledge and understanding of the world is good. Knowledge of the area of learning and the related desirable outcomes are generally good. Teachers assess what children

do and use the results to plan well. However, there is little teaching of structures, moving parts or the disassembly of existing products.

88. **Physical development**

85. By five, children's attainment in physical development matches the desirable outcomes after they have made good progress in nursery and satisfactory progress in reception classes. The children have a good range of activities to develop their physical skills in the nursery. They develop their manipulative skills through using a wide range of writing and other tools, including brushes, clay tools and spoons. They learn how to dress themselves and fasten zips and buttons when preparing to go outside. They develop their ability to run, climb, jump and balance when they play outside on the wide range of wheeled toys, slide or climbing equipment in the good secure area. In the nursery and reception classes, children's practical skills are developed through their play with a wide range of construction kits. In the reception classes, children's skills are developed through physical education lessons in the hall, although provision is not consistently good across the two classes.

86. The teaching of physical development is satisfactory overall. It is good in nursery and satisfactory in reception classes in activities that promote children's co-ordination of hand and eye movement; for example, when they use tools such as scissors, brushes, crayons and pencils. In reception, the teaching of skills in running, jumping and balancing was very good in one lesson, and unsatisfactory in the other. In the very good lesson, time was used well and there was a very good balance between the teaching of skills and creative movement. The unsatisfactory lesson had a slow pace, losing a lot of time whilst apparatus was put out.

90. **Creative development**

87. Children make good progress in their creative development and achieve above-average standards. In the nursery and reception classes, children have access to a wide range of activities and materials, such as printing, modelling, playdough, clay, and recycled materials such as egg cartons and balsa wood. They make good progress, through good practical teaching of skills and opportunities for them to express ideas. When making pictures about "Going on a Bear Hunt", after listening to the poem, children show their ideas in paint very well. Children develop a good awareness of colour and of how other artists, such as African artists, use colour and different techniques. By reception they are able to use this knowledge when making their own pictures and children make pictures that are easily recognised as animals or people. Children make good progress in music throughout. They develop their ability to sing, move and clap rhythmically. They identify and use a wide range of instruments from different lands and create simple patterns of sound very well. Children make and modify objects of their own, choosing satisfactorily when using clay, paint, or coloured crayons.

88. Teaching is good throughout for creative development. Teachers' knowledge and expectations are good in both reception and nursery classes, resulting in good progress.

92. **Teaching**

89. The overall quality of teaching is good. In the nursery one-third of all observed lessons was very good, one-third was good and another third was satisfactory. This high quality of teaching is impressive and ensures that children make good progress. In reception classes, two-thirds of lessons were good or better, a quarter of all lessons was very good, and a quarter of lessons was satisfactory, although one lesson, in physical development, was unsatisfactory. The teaching of personal and social development is very good throughout. The nursery teacher provides a very secure and welcoming atmosphere and encourages the children to value themselves and one another. She introduces the children to classroom routines, which are consistently reinforced by the nursery nurse and assistant. This is continued sensitively and very effectively in the reception classes. Expectations of children are similar throughout all classes. This provides a very secure foundation for learning. Children respond by listening well, and carrying out tasks across all areas of learning effectively. The management and

control of pupils is usually good. The curriculum is very well planned. Nursery and reception teachers' assessments are thorough, and effective use is made of them, including those for pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs. In both nursery and reception the quality of relationships between all staff and children is excellent. Homework tasks that are relevant to children's age are sent home, and contribute well to progress.

93. **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

93. **English**

90. The previous inspection report indicates, that in 1996, standards in English lessons were mostly in line with national expectations, not taking pupils with English as an additional language into account. At that time, over half the pupils spoke English as an additional language, so overall attainment was in fact probably quite low. In this inspection, overall attainment is broadly in line with national averages at 11-years-old. This includes pupils with English as an additional language. The school has therefore made considerable improvement. The 1999 National Curriculum test results of 11-year-olds are close to national averages, and when compared with similar schools, they are well above average. The trend since 1996 is upwards, with a sharp rise from 1997 to 1998, with a further improvement in 1999. Differences between groups of different ethnicity, and between the performances of girls and boys are small, reflecting the school's policy for equality of opportunity very well. Test results for 1999 at the age of seven, show that standards in both reading and writing are well below national averages. However, when compared with schools of a similar type, attainment is in line with the national average. Analysis of test results from 1996 to 1998 indicates that there was a significant improvement in both reading and writing standards in 1997, but in 1998, they fell back again so that they were only slightly better than in 1996. Very high numbers of pupils with English as an additional language account for the lower test results at the age of seven compared with those of 11. Many pupils have only limited English when they begin school. They make good progress, but nonetheless remain well below average, which reduces overall levels of attainment. However, further good progress continues from seven to 11-years-old. By 11, many of these pupils are close to, or reach, average levels of attainment.
91. Evidence in the inspection suggests that overall attainment is currently below average amongst seven-year-olds, and around average by the time pupils leave the school. Attainment in speaking and listening is below national expectations in Year 2. Most pupils listen attentively, and are willing to talk about their work, sharing experiences and anecdotes. Year 2 pupils in an assembly projected their voices well, showing an awareness of the needs of an audience. However, apart from higher attaining pupils who respond appropriately to questions in discussions, pupils are constrained by a limited vocabulary and lack of standard forms of English. By 11, standards in speaking and listening are about average. Most pupils speak with confidence and their responses to questions are generally well thought out. In a Year 6 lesson on poetry, pupils responded confidently in a discussion. Most pupils are able to talk about their work clearly, often using standard English. They talk in detail about plots and characters in stories. They are, however, less certain when asked to justify their opinions, or when making comparisons. At seven-years-old, standards in reading are below average, but by 11, they are close to average. Seven-year-olds read simple texts satisfactorily. A few higher attaining pupils are fluent readers and use good expression. They show understanding by retelling stories that they have read. Nearly all pupils read regularly at home, and they enjoy books. However, most pupils lack confidence in talking about characters and events, and about what is likely to happen next. Most pupils locate information well by using contents and index pages, but only a few have developed preferences for favourite authors or subjects. Most 11-year-olds read competently, choosing to read for pleasure. Many have clear preferences in their personal reading. Generally, they are able to talk convincingly about characters and plot. Although evidence of note-taking was seen, pupils make insufficient use of skimming and scanning to locate information quickly. However, they explain how to find books in a library, and know that CD-ROMs and the Internet are alternative sources of factual information.
92. Writing is below average amongst seven-year-olds. Fewer Year 2 pupils than usual are able to develop their ideas in a sequence of sentences, using capital letters and full stops. Higher attaining pupils are

beginning to write good stories with settings and descriptions of characters. Their punctuation, handwriting and spellings is satisfactory. However, spelling and handwriting of lower attaining and often average attaining pupils is unsatisfactory. Many use punctuation very inconsistently. By 11, attainment in writing is close to average. Pupils write for a variety of purposes, including narratives, descriptions, letters, poems, and reports across the curriculum. Pupils understand the need for interesting beginnings, middles and endings for their stories, which has a positive effect on the quality of writing. Many pupils write complex stories, including rich descriptions of a setting, and the feelings of characters. Some long pieces of writing, produced by higher attainers in Year 6 are of a very high standard. For example, they tell the story of *Romeo and Juliet* with considerable detail, sympathy for the characters and mature emotional content. However, a significant proportion is unable to present thoughts coherently because of restricted grammar, vocabulary and punctuation. Several lower attaining pupils frequently make grammatical errors in relation to agreements between subjects and verbs. Standards of presentation and handwriting are unsatisfactory, with many pupils producing untidy work in unjoined handwriting. This was a key issue in the previous inspection, and it has not yet been addressed effectively. However, the presentation of displayed work is better than that in pupils' books, and there is evidence of improvement in individual classes. For example, in a handwriting lesson in Year 2, pupils worked very hard, producing neat, legible and cursive writing. However, this does not always extend to their writing at other times.

93. Standards of literacy are average by the time pupils leave the school. Pupils read and write for a variety of purposes, and understand the need to express themselves clearly. They know how to find information, understanding how to use alphabetical order to look up words in dictionaries or topics in an index. They use these skills both in English and across the curriculum, and are beginning to acquire a range of technical vocabularies.
94. Progress through the school is good. Pupils in Year 1 are given opportunities to practise speaking clearly and loudly. When reading from the 'The Hungry Giant', they learnt how to put on the giant's voice, speaking with expression and strong intonation for their listeners. Good modelling by the teacher, showing how to achieve such effects, was a key contributory factor in the good progress that occurred. Teachers build on previous skills well, so that in classes for seven to 11-year-olds, pupils show growing confidence. They have regular opportunities to contribute ideas to class discussions, particularly during the introductory parts of lessons. Teachers are aware of the linguistic needs of pupils, and use many opportunities to focus on standard English. This approach is helping all pupils, including those who are learning English as an additional language. Pupils make good progress in their reading skills throughout the school. Pupils learn phonic knowledge effectively. In a lesson in Year 1, pupils changed the first letter in monosyllabic words to make new words. In classes for older pupils, similar, but more complicated word-building skills are developed. Pupils' confidence in their reading skills grows steadily as they move through the school. The range of styles and types of text increases steadily. For example, by Year 5, they are learning about Shakespeare's *Macbeth*. The analytical skills that they acquire are used and further developed in Year 6 in a study of *Romeo and Juliet*. The previous inspection report indicated that progress in writing was not consistent in some classes for older pupils. This is no longer the case. Progress in writing is now good throughout the school. Activities undertaken in literacy hours are improving standards well. Pupils' early writing skills are carefully built on as pupils move through Years 1 and 2. By Year 4, pupils generate good ideas, learning strategies that help them to plan what they will write. However, in handwriting, there is generally a marked difference in progress between what is produced on a day-to-day basis in books and what pupils produce for displays. Whereas handwriting and presentation are good in displays, they are unsatisfactory in books. Pupils with special educational needs, and those with English as an additional language make overall good progress. Support teachers work in close co-operation with class teachers. This helps to spread knowledge and expertise of how to teach these groups, which helps them to make progress at good rates. Individual Education Plans are well-constructed, containing precise targets and methods to be used. As a result, tasks are well-matched to needs.
95. Pupils' attitudes to learning English are very good throughout the school. They are well-behaved and show interest in their work. They listen to their teachers with attention and are able to sustain concentration. Pupils are courteous and they work well together. Their relationships with one another and with their teachers are very good.

96. The overall quality of teaching is good, with a significant proportion of very good lessons. No unsatisfactory lessons occurred. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject and they generally identify clearly what they expect pupils to know at the end of lessons. Lessons are well planned and managed. Instructions and explanations are clear and teachers use questions effectively to assess pupils and move them on. Technical vocabulary is taught with great skill and confidence. Teachers have good relationships with pupils and manage them well. In very good lessons, expectations are particularly high, pace is very brisk throughout the lesson, and during independent work, tasks are very carefully selected to match the pupils' stage of learning.
97. The English curriculum is well co-ordinated. The school has produced a range of policies, which provide sound advice on teaching. The school's 'Framework for Teaching', alongside half-termly and weekly planning, supports the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy well. The provision for assessment and record-keeping is good. Assessment information is used to good effect to establish targets for pupils, which are shared with them. This is a strength that has contributed much to the steady rise in standards.

101. **English as an additional language**

98. The provision for pupils targeted for additional support through the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant is of good quality, which helps pupils to make good progress. Many pupils entering the school speak a language other than English. They settle quickly and begin to work hard, and their progress in the acquisition of English is generally good, and often rapid. This helps them to learn and benefit from a wide range of subjects. By the time they are seven-years-old, many pupils who began in the nursery are speaking effective colloquial English, enabling them to mix, collaborate, learn and socialise well. However, their knowledge of standard English forms is still well below that of native English speakers. As they move on, in classes for pupils aged seven to 11, good overall rates of progress continue. By 11, nearly all pupils have reached a standard that is close to the expectations in the National Curriculum for their age.
99. The specialist teaching of pupils with English as an additional language is good. Teachers are very knowledgeable, and have high expectations. They are deployed effectively, and their support is appropriately targeted at pupils who are at the lower level of proficiency in English. Teaching is integrated well into mainstream provision and support staff work well in partnership with class teachers, helping pupils to gain in confidence and to acquire access to the curriculum. Opportunities for joint planning are good and specialist staff and class teachers take both a lead and support role as appropriate, and use particular expertise and individual strengths in the knowledge of subjects very well to the benefit of all pupils. The bilingual instructor, who speaks Turkish, was seen supporting Turkish speaking pupils in a mathematics lesson. He made very good use of English and Turkish to teach these pupils. The school's Turkish pupils attain better than their ethnic group performs nationally.
100. In lessons where specialist language support is not available, class teachers give support of good quality to pupils learning English as an additional language. By explaining subject-related vocabulary clearly, and using imaginative and effective methods, they ensure that all pupils are fully involved in lessons. This also contributes strongly to attainment and progress.

104. **Mathematics**

101. Pupils' attainment in National Curriculum tests is below the national average for pupils aged seven, but above the national average for 11-year-olds. At the end of Year 6, almost three-quarters of pupils achieve the nationally expected level or above, which is in line with the national average. However, within this, a quarter of the year group achieves a level higher than expected, which raises the school's average score to above the national average. Compared with similar schools, the results of seven-year-olds are average and of 11-year-olds are well above average. The percentage of pupils reaching the

higher grades at both seven and 11-years-old indicates that the school is catering well for pupils of higher prior attainment. There has been a gradual improvement in National Curriculum test results in both age groups over the last few years, including a rapid improvement in the number of pupils achieving expected levels at 11, in the last school year. There are many contributory reasons for these improvements. The school analyses its results carefully, and introduces measures to meet its findings. This includes reallocating pupils in Years 5 and 6 to different classes for the teaching of mathematics. This is based on their prior attainment in the subject. Teaching has improved throughout the school, and the National Numeracy Project has been introduced successfully. A homework club in Year 6, which operates in the spring and summer terms, and the good quality of support for pupils with special needs, and with English as an additional language, also make significant contributions to improved standards.

102. By the age of seven, pupils have good numeracy skills. They recognise the relative values of numbers, and understand place value to expected levels. They know the names of a variety of shapes and recognise them in the environment. They understand simple charts and diagrams. Pupils use and understand numbers successfully. They add and subtract competently, understanding terms such as 'greater than', 'less than', 'difference' and 'multiply'. They draw accurate conclusions from information on a bar chart. For example, they read off the largest number of pupils travelling to school by different means of transport, and the smallest number. Higher attaining pupils explain differences that they find. In mental mathematics, pupils readily double and halve numbers in multiples of ten. They are familiar with three-dimensional shapes. The higher attaining pupils already have a secure knowledge of multiplication for two, three and five times tables. Pupils of average prior attainment measure accurately in centimetres, using a ruler. When measuring time, higher attainers have a good understanding of the quarter hours and translate these into minutes. Average attainers are familiar with 'half-past' and know this is equivalent to 30 minutes. Lower attaining pupils recognise the time on the hour. However, their figures tend to be reversed when writing answers.
103. By 11, standards are above average. Many pupils have a good mathematical vocabulary. Higher attainers especially understand terms such as 'multiples', 'inverse operation', 'squaring' and 'square root'. Pupils are quick to identify patterns in number and eagerly "unravel" a range of number sequences from Pascal's triangle. These pupils have particularly good skills in addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. They solve problems that require multiplying three-digit numbers by two-digit numbers capably. A clear majority knows and recognises different types of symmetry, using it in art and religious education when they explore the significance of Rangoli patterns to Hindus. Pupils are familiar with line graphs and construct and interpret information accurately. Lower attaining pupils are developing their competence in multiplication tables. They have a secure knowledge of many tables but find seven, eight and nine times tables difficult to recall quickly. However, pupils at this level have a clear understanding of division and are aware of remainders when dividing two-digit numbers.
104. Overall, progress through the school is good. Pupils make good progress from the age of five up to seven. They develop and consolidate their number skills by regular practice. The daily mental sessions aid their thinking processes and support the recall of number facts well. Concepts are built through a range of different activities, such as compiling bar charts and pictograms. Teachers set well-matched and challenging tasks in group work. This enhances rates of pupils' progress. Good quality classroom support and the use of appropriate mathematical materials are also instrumental in ensuring that pupils make good progress in lessons. From the age of seven up to 11, pupils make good progress. The foundations laid in younger age groups are built upon successfully. An additional lesson is timetabled each week to give pupils the opportunity to use their skills on investigative problems. They apply their knowledge in finding their own solutions and methods. The opening part of lessons is dedicated to mental work that aids pupils' proficiency in calculation. The plenary session at the conclusion of lessons is effective in consolidating earlier learning. Regular homework, which is largely geared to developing basic skills, boosts pupils' progress. The homework club in Year 6 also has the beneficial effect of sharpening pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding prior to National Curriculum tests.
105. Pupils throughout the school have a positive attitude to mathematics lessons. They are enthusiastic and interested in their work. Occasionally, younger pupils become so excited that they lose

concentration. Behaviour is nearly always good and occasionally very good. Pupils work well together in groups and pairs. They are attentive and settle well to tasks, showing a good degree of perseverance even when tasks are difficult. Pupils usually produce a lot of work in the available time. However, their presentation of work is often untidy, lacking formality in the way that it is set out on the page.

106. The overall quality of teaching is good throughout the school. Two thirds of lessons are either good or very good. There is no unsatisfactory teaching to report. Teachers have good subject knowledge and high expectations of pupils. They set tasks that match pupils' capabilities well, thus helping them in their understanding, and enabling good progress to occur. Planning of lessons is thorough and follows the National Numeracy Strategy closely in lessons for pupils of all ages. A particular teaching strength is the management of pupils, which is very good. Teachers have good relationships with the pupils in the classrooms and give encouragement to increase self-esteem and promote high standards. Time in lessons and resources are in general used effectively to aid learning. Classroom support staff contribute successfully to lessons, particularly in supporting pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language. Pupils' work is assessed by teachers, both formally and informally in lessons, but the information gained is not always relayed back to pupils in order for further progress to be made.
107. The subject is well led by two enthusiastic co-ordinators. They set high standards in their own teaching and provide good role models. Monitoring of teaching in connection with the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy is thorough, and has had a positive impact on the quality of the curriculum. The ethos for learning is very good. There is careful consideration to ensure that all pupils have access to the curriculum, including pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. There have been several improvements in mathematics since the last inspection. The quality of teaching, levels of pupils' attainment, consistency in marking and the matching of appropriate tasks for pupils to undertake are examples of this.

111. **Science**

108. According to the 1999 Statutory Teachers' Assessments, attainment at the age of seven is well below the national average both for the proportion of pupils achieving expected levels and above, and for those at a higher level. It is below that found in similar schools for expected levels and above, but superior to it for a level higher than expected. Overall, girls attain better than boys, but the proportion of boys and girls' achieving at a level above average is broadly equal. At 11-years-old, attainment in National Curriculum tests is very high compared with the national average of all schools, both for the proportions of pupils attaining at expected levels and also at above the expected level. This level of achievement is also very high compared with similar schools. It is superior to performances in either English or mathematics. This pattern has been sustained over time, within an improving trend. Current observations of lessons, scrutiny of pupils' work and talking to them shows that the attainment of nearly all in Year 6 is already at expected levels by Christmas. However, a strong emphasis is placed on science in the spring and summer terms. The teaching is detailed and prepares pupils for the tests very well. It contributes to very high standards of knowledge and understanding, resulting in very high attainment in the tests. There is no significant difference in the performances of boys and girls.
109. Currently, attainment is a little below average in Year 2. Pupils understand the difference between a 'push' and a 'pull' and know that both are ways of applying forces. They offer good, simple ideas about how to increase the force on a toy to make it move faster. They can name the main parts of a variety of living things, including animals and flowering plants. Higher attaining pupils record their findings clearly. Generally, however, presentation is a weakness, and answers are often written briefly, lacking standard forms of English. In Year 6, attainment at the end of the autumn term is already above average. Nearly all pupils understand fair testing in detail, talking about how failure to control variables can seriously upset results. They understand complex ideas, such as the flow of energy through living systems. They use food chains, webs and body-charts to help their presentation of such ideas. Nearly all pupils know many facts about the human body; how animals relate to environmental features of where they live; food chains and ecological systems. They understand about the properties of many different materials, including changes such as condensation, freezing, and similar

phenomena. They experiment successfully with forces, using Newtons to measure variations, and can explain electrical circuits of different complexities, including parallel and series wiring, their effects, and advantages and disadvantages.

110. Overall, progress through the school is very good. It is good from the age of five up to about seven, and speeds up from seven to 11, especially in Years 5 and 6. At first, pupils learn and record their results by using methods such as cut out and paste. There is only a small amount of writing and a few simple diagrams. As they move on, pupils undertake more complex practical work, which serves progress well. In Year 2, they build on recently acquired skills. For example, they design experiments, measuring the relative temperatures of different parts of the classroom by observing how quickly ice will melt. They also learn terms such as “condense” and “boil”. There is an increase in the volume of work that is recorded. Progress is good in Years 3 and 4, and sometimes very good. It is often very good in Year 5, and it accelerates rapidly in Year 6, as a result of an increased emphasis on science during the spring and summer terms. The extensive use of a homework club for older pupils also makes a strong contribution, helping to lift good progress in lessons to very good rates overall. Topics are clearly approached with increasing depth and breadth. Pupils consider complicated ideas, such as the flow of energy through living systems, including sugar in food, blood, muscles, and the effects of vigorous work and activity. They use complex food chains and webs. The work of higher attaining pupils suggests that they are offered enriched tasks that match their needs well. Pupils of all prior attainments make consistent progress of an at least good rate and often very good progress occurs. Despite these high standards, there are often weaknesses in presentation. This is largely due to untidy handwriting, which sometimes causes scrappiness in the appearance of work. However, there is a considerable development of practical skills. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets on their Individual Education Plans. While these targets do not relate directly to science their attainment usually benefits scientific tasks.
111. Pupils’ attitudes are good. They clearly enjoy science, especially the observational and experimental work. They usually concentrate well, especially when there is plenty for them to do. They work hard in groups towards a common aim. Apparatus is handled with care and increasing precision. They are usually keen to supply answers to questions. Older pupils are beginning to pose their own. Behaviour is generally good.
112. The overall quality of teaching is good in over half the lessons observed, including about a fifth that is very good. It is satisfactory in the remainder. All lessons are carefully planned and well resourced. Planning contains clearly focused aims and leads to well-structured lessons, characterised by a wide variety of appropriate approaches. Teachers include a good balance between factual knowledge and experimental science. In the most successful lessons, teachers revise what has gone before at the start of their lesson. Knowledge is drawn from pupils by skilful questioning. It is then amplified and broadened into a meaningful extension of pupils’ understanding, resulting in good progress. Many of these lessons are rich in cross-curricular links, which serve well to build up knowledge and skills, and to set understanding within a real context. For example, a lesson in Year 1 involved sampling most of the school’s musical instruments to make observations about the transmission of sound. However, lessons are slightly less successful when tasks are too repetitive or when experiments have not been fully tested under classroom conditions. Marking is nearly always up to date, in the sense that it is acknowledged with ticks. However, at its best, work is corrected with useful comments and future targets. Homework is set regularly for older pupils, and often makes a significant contribution to learning.
113. Co-ordination is very good. It includes checking how the curriculum is taught and helps to maximise the use of resources. A new scheme of work has recently been adopted. It is of good quality and includes all required elements of the National Curriculum. Assessment is prolific and is used effectively to identify individual needs, which are then addressed with targets. A ‘Science Week’ enriches the subject well, and there is a programme of visits and visitors, which heightens pupils’ interest by raising their awareness of the subject’s relevance. These include workshops lead by London Electricity, naturalists with animals, visits to the Royal Institution lectures, the Science Museum, a local ecology centre, farms, and a fossil museum on the Isle of Wight during a residential school journey.

117. **OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES**

117. **Information technology**

114. Since the last inspection, the school has made good progress in improving provision for information technology. There is now a new computer suite of networked computers and all pupils in a class receive teaching at the same time. This is leading to the rapid development of pupils' information technology skills. It is eliminating the inconsistencies in pupils' attainment and progress found at the time of the last inspection. The school is also implementing effectively a new scheme of work and providing systematic training for teachers and classroom assistants.
115. Seven-year-olds reach standards that match national expectations. They use the computer to communicate their ideas effectively in words, pictures and charts. They use graphics particularly well to create pictures and modify the results to fit their purpose. Pupils create sets of instructions for controlling the school's programmable toy "Pip". Pupils select from menus, open, save and close files and know how to print their work. Pupils' levels of skill when using the mouse are good, although keyboard skills are often slower. This is often as a result of pupils' lack of standard forms of English, which restricts their typing. By 11, pupils combine pictures and text to produce information booklets on mini-beasts in science. They use complex software to amend, improve and present their work so that it fits its purpose. They are familiar with a range of options, controlling technology to alter font sizes and styles to achieve the best effect for their audience. All pupils can open, interrogate and amend information that they have themselves stored. Pupils' keyboard skills are, however, still very variable, as they were at the last inspection. Whilst a few pupils are very skilled, most are more confident with the mouse. Pupils use spreadsheets to carry out calculations and explore how changes can affect results. Pupils learn to write procedures for controlling switches, which operate temperature, light sensors and electric motors.
116. Pupils' progress is satisfactory throughout the school, although there has been rapid development recently due to the systematic implementation of the Qualifications and Curriculum Agency's scheme of work and the regular and systematic use of the new computer suite. When using graphics software, Year 2 pupils select options for themselves when producing pictures in the style of famous artists, such as Matisse, and all can log on and log off. By Year 4, pupils learn to select from a wider range of options for their purposes more skilfully. For example, they produce more complex symmetrical graphic designs in the style of Turkish carpets. Pupils in Year 5 learn how to change font sizes, how to cut and paste and to use a spellchecker. Similar skills are further developed in Year 6, by showing pupils how to combine words with pictures for particular effects. Year 6 pupils are learn to use programs with sound buttons to create sound effects. However, pupils' keyboard skills are still slower than mouse skills, which restricts the speed with which they use the computer to develop what they write.
117. Pupils' attitudes are very good. They are very enthusiastic and want to develop their competence in information technology. They are very willing to practise and improve their work until they succeed. They co-operate in pairs very well and make joint decisions. Pupils' willingness to share resources so that there is fair use of available technology is very impressive. Pupils are very helpful to each other, and their behaviour is good. They are tolerant and polite towards each other when they collaborate.
118. Judged on the basis of planning and the results in a scrutiny of work, teaching is satisfactory. However, the quality in lessons during the inspection, which was mainly work in graphics, was mainly good. All teachers have satisfactory subject knowledge of graphics and word processing, but the school is still providing training to enable all teachers to teach all applications as well. Teachers plan well and follow the long-term scheme of work successfully. In the most successful lessons, teachers of younger classes provide instruction when pupils are seated on the carpet in the computer suite. This enables all pupils to attend without distractions. In these lessons, teachers make very effective use of a

'smartboard' (a large electronic display screen) for demonstrating skills, ensuring that all pupils can clearly see. Teachers usually balance the time well between instruction, questioning and time provided for pupils to practise and apply what they have learned. All teaching was at least satisfactory. Nevertheless, there were a few occasions when teachers spent too long giving instructions whilst pupils were sitting at their computer stations. This resulted in lapses of concentration. There is very good teamwork between class teachers and teachers of English as an additional language. This is very effective in providing equal opportunities for pupils with limited English to develop their computer competence.

119. Co-ordination is good. The scheme of work is well implemented and all aspects are covered, including data-handling, control, modelling and monitoring. The school has the necessary relevant software and computer equipment. Very careful thought has been given to the development of information technology within the context of relevant work. This is often linked well to cross-curricular themes, which include literacy, numeracy, science and art. Currently, most work takes place within the information technology suite. Some classes share class computers. This restricts pupils' ability to use computers within the context of everyday work. Time spent by each pupil on the computer has greatly improved since the installation of the network.

123. **Religious education**

120. The standards of achievement of pupils in Year 2 are generally in line with what is expected in the locally agreed syllabus. By Year 6, standards are above. At around seven-years-old, pupils know that each person is an individual. They have a sound understanding of festivals and celebrations and their importance to individuals. For example, they know that Christians accept Jesus as the Son of God, and that his birth is celebrated at Christmas. They also know that Divali, and Hanukkah are festivals of light that have significance to believers in other faiths. Pupils have a good sense of what is right and wrong, and explain how religious stories often contain strong morals. By 11, pupils explain clearly that those who go to any place of worship are part of a family, which is like their own family. They have good understanding of the importance of symbolism to believers. In an excellent lesson, in Year 6, pupils designed symbolic patterns of their own after looking at Rangoli patterns. Their results were both detailed and mature in content. They were able to explain their designs, often raising matters of considerable spiritual importance. A reason for good standards is found in the range of religions and faiths that are represented in the school. Because relationships are good, and pupils trust one another and their teachers, they share their knowledge and experiences willingly, raising the awareness of different beliefs and faiths very effectively.

121. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress over time in the areas of knowledge outlined in the locally agreed syllabus. Their progress is in both the areas of explicit knowledge of all faiths studied, and also in intrinsic knowledge gained from an understanding of the meaning of religion. They make sound progress in understanding the importance of tolerance towards those of different faiths, cultures and backgrounds, which has contributed to the harmony between all pupils throughout the school. Pupils make good progress in gaining a moral stance about issues, and higher attaining pupils understand that matters of right and wrong are not always straightforward. Pupils make good progress in lessons, understanding the topics, and completing tasks conscientiously.

122. Pupils' attitudes are good. They are interested in religious education, listening carefully to teachers and visiting speakers in assemblies and in their classrooms. They are ready to answer, and are thoughtful about the issues discussed. This shows up in their answers. For example, in response to a teacher's questions, pupils understood that the New Testament would have been originally written in Greek. They are curious about religious education. They wanted to know how those of the Jewish faith learnt Hebrew. Pupils work well in groups, arriving at conclusions without argument.

123. The quality of teaching throughout the school is nearly always at least good, including an excellent lesson in Year 6. There was one satisfactory lesson. Teachers' subject knowledge is well supported by a knowledgeable co-ordinator. As a result, lessons are planned well. Teachers question carefully to make pupils think. In the excellent lesson, pupils were questioned carefully about different facets of God in

Hinduism, and why there are many representations of God. Pupils were led to see that different attributes are symbolised by different figures. The lesson was brisk and lively, so that pupils' interest was maintained. Resources were very well used. Progress was therefore rapid. Good plenary sessions are a good feature of nearly all lessons, ensuring understanding and providing pupils with further issues to think about.

124. The co-ordinator is particularly effective. She has worked hard in raising the subject's profile. Resources are steadily improving and contribute well to the knowledge that pupils gain. The co-ordinator designs model lessons and places relevant artefacts and books together in plastic wallets. This is helping to develop teachers' knowledge and expertise.

128. **Art**

125. At the time of the last inspection, standards were judged to be good throughout the school. Currently, many strengths in attainment remain. In Years 1 and 2, pupils experiment with colour, shape and texture. They make observational drawings well and record pictures of famous London buildings. Drawings are often detailed and accurate for pupils' ages, and show good awareness of line, colour and shape. Pupils develop their knowledge of other artists, and after working with an African craftsperson, created masks to depict moods and feelings. They use colours and shapes particularly well. Pupils create finger puppets in textiles and use coloured decorations, such as sequins, effectively. Older pupils in Years 3 and 4 paint carefully, although the range of three-dimensional work is rather limited. In Year 5, pupils appraise Holbein's 'The Ambassadors', explaining its significance in the Age of Exploration. Pupils produce their own oil pastels in Holbein's style and show their own works, which represent the current age. Pupils draw Tudor musicians well, representing mood through colour, showing body movement with increasing skill. In Year 6, pupils make very good progress in creating sculptures of warriors for their *Romeo and Juliet* scenes. Pupils often demonstrate very imaginative ideas and make their sculptures skilfully from wire and bandages coated with *Plaster of Paris*. The finished works are of a high standard and express movement very well. Some very good charcoal drawings of objects from the Second World War have been executed in one class, although the quality is not consistent across the whole year.

126. Progress from five to seven-years-old, and then from nine to 11 is better than from seven-years-old up to nine, when it is satisfactory. The variation reflects differences in the quality of teaching. However, in general, pupils develop their ability to use a wide range of tools and materials including paint, textiles and clay. Good progress often occurs in Years 5 and 6, although it is not consistent across all classes in the same year. It is better when teachers' knowledge of the subject is strong, and is the result of clear understanding of how artistic skills can be developed.

127. Pupils' attitudes are very good. They participate well together and are patient when waiting for their turn to use resources. Behaviour is very good, and pupils listen to instructions carefully and suggest their own ideas very well.

128. Teaching is good in classes for pupils aged five up to seven, and satisfactory in classes for the older age group, although there are good lessons in Years 5 and 6. In fact, a very good lesson occurred in Year 6. It was based on high levels of subject knowledge and a very good use of time. Skills and techniques were taught very well through demonstration and instruction, and still included plenty of time for pupils to explore and create. However, high quality of teaching is not consistent for all media, and pupils are not provided with enough opportunities to select resources and materials for themselves. Teachers' class management is very good throughout the school. In classes up to and including Year 2, there is more systematic teaching of skills across a wide range of media than from Year 3 onwards. Throughout the school, pupils use information technology very well to show their ideas in graphics.

129. The scheme of work is good and sets out the development of skills and knowledge appropriately. The co-ordinator monitors medium-term planning, but does not have a specific brief or time without her classroom responsibilities in order to do it, which reduces its frequency of occurrence.

### 133. Design and technology

130. At the time of the last inspection, attainment in design and technology was judged as in line with national expectations, although only limited evidence was available. Little work in design and technology was seen during this inspection, suggesting a similar pattern. However, evidence was taken from displays, discussions with pupils and teachers, and teachers' planning. This shows that pupils use only a limited range of materials to make products, models and artefacts, and that the skills of designing and evaluating develop slowly. On this basis, standards have declined since the last inspection. There was no evidence of food technology during the inspection, and only limited amounts of work on construction in classes up to Year 2. Similarly, there was no evidence of design or use of work with textiles for older pupils.
131. On this evidence, pupils' progress through the school is unsatisfactory. Too little time is spent on the subject for it to be otherwise. The school attributes this to the need to spend more time on literacy and numeracy, and to focus all efforts on improving pupils' language skills. Design and technology has not figured as a priority in the School Development Plan and little time has therefore been available for its development. This has contributed to unsatisfactory rates of progress in acquiring both designing and making skills throughout the school. Pupils do not develop their knowledge of existing products, structures and moving parts adequately and do not apply knowledge appropriately to designing and making. Insufficient use is made of cross-curricular links. For example, in art in Year 2, pupils create simple finger puppets; although the quality of their ideas and craft skills when using tools and textiles are satisfactory, the opportunity to design and evaluate as required for design and technology is missed. Furthermore, pupils do not learn adequately about existing products, how they are joined or about other techniques that help with design. Older pupils do not develop their craft skills with a wide enough range of materials.
132. Based on what is displayed, pupils' attitudes are good. They are keen to make things and finish items conscientiously.
133. The quality of teaching is unsatisfactory. This is due to teachers' lack of subject knowledge and the small amount of time devoted to the subject. Although teachers are very willing to link design and technology with art and science, they do not have adequate knowledge of design and technology to help them do this. The government's guidelines have now been adopted as a scheme of work, but they are not being used consistently. The subject is poorly developed in the school. As a result, there are limited resources for construction and mechanisms. The availability of equipment for food technology is limited for older pupils.

### 137. Geography

134. The previous inspection made no overall judgement about standards in geography. At seven-years-old, attainment was broadly in line with expectations, but at 11 they were described as "variable". Currently there are weaknesses in the standards that are achieved. These are related to shortcomings in the quantity that is taught, due to shortages of time allocated to the subject, and the lack of a scheme that gives adequate guidance about the progression of skills through the school. However, skills associated with map-reading are broadly average through the school. For example, pupils in Year 1 complete a plan of their classroom, locating items of furniture. By viewing everyday objects from a side elevation and from a bird's eye-view, they begin to understand how features are represented on plans and maps. Older pupils, in Year 3, name the constituent countries of the United Kingdom. They have a sound knowledge of basic compass directions and use these successfully when locating cities in Europe. Visits around the immediate locality promote skills of geographical enquiry. Year 4 pupils are able to name major British cities on a map, and put weather symbols alongside them. Higher attaining pupils realise that weather patterns vary according to location, explaining why temperatures are likely to rise on a journey towards the Equator. However, lower attaining pupils find it difficult to identify simple features, such as an island, lake or river. By Year 6, most pupils have a sound understanding of mapping techniques and use their skills on a field trip to the Isle of Wight. Their knowledge is

increased by the first-hand experience of viewing coastal features. However, a scrutiny of work suggests that other aspects of the subject are not taught often enough for pupils to gain knowledge successfully.

135. Overall, progress is unsatisfactory. However, progress is made at a sound rate in the study of skills in using a map. The difficulty is that little other specific geography is attempted, other than when it arises incidentally in another subject.
136. Pupils have positive attitudes. They are attentive and interested when looking at features on maps, responding well to teachers' questions. Behaviour is generally good. Pupils relate well to one another and collaborate in activities. Even when tasks are difficult, pupils show good levels of perseverance.
137. The quality of teaching in the lessons observed is satisfactory. These were all in classes for pupils aged from seven to 11. However, overall planning and use of time is unsatisfactory, leading to unsatisfactory teaching overall. In what was seen, teachers had sound subject knowledge and their daily planning indicated what pupils should know at the end of lessons. However, lessons did not cater consistently for the wide range of prior attainments within classes. Lower attaining pupils and those with English as an additional language, had difficulty in understanding activities without considerable direct support. The management of pupils was of a good standard. Learning resources were used appropriately to increase pupils' learning.
138. The co-ordinator is aware of deficiencies in the subject. The focus on national initiatives as the school's recent priorities has meant that the development of geography has been limited. However, she is in the process of developing a scheme based on the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's guidelines. The present provision is not properly structured to give a smooth progression of skills, knowledge and understanding through the school, despite a strong, and successful emphasis, on the study of maps and the school's locality.

142. **History**

139. At the time of the last inspection, attainment in history was judged to be meeting national expectations. A scrutiny of pupils' books and teachers' planning, and examination of current displays and photographic evidence show that history is still thriving, such that standards have at least been maintained. For example, there are strengths in pupils' knowledge of Tudor England. Pupils in Year 5 explain the importance of the succession in Henry VIII's struggles with the Church of Rome. Pupils also demonstrate good skills of historical perspective when they understand that Spanish views of Queen Elizabeth I and her articulated private seamen might be quite different from English opinions of the time. Pupils also demonstrate good understanding of the 1930s, and some of the conditions in Germany that caused the rise of the Nazi party and Adolf Hitler. However, written work is not always well presented. Pupils often do not use their skills of joined handwriting when they record their ideas, resulting in poor setting out and appearance.
140. Pupils make good progress throughout the school in acquisition of knowledge and the skills of historical enquiry. This is based on a good scheme, containing a good development of skills with relevance to the different age groups. A lot of planning is carried out jointly by teachers, so that access to the curriculum is also good. Furthermore, pupils enjoy and value history, which is apparent from lessons, investigative work and the range and quality of displays. This, too, contributes to good rates of progress by ensuring that concentration is good. It was possible to observe only a small amount of teaching in the subject. However, what was seen was of good quality. It set the scene and then stimulated the pupils to evaluate and discuss the relative contributions of a number of factors in the failure of the Spanish Armada.
141. The teaching of history is well planned. It sets out to provoke thought and evaluation of evidence. Tasks are appropriate and relate closely to requirements in the National Curriculum. Pupils consider how objective sources of

evidence might be. They are encouraged to use cross-curricular links in their investigations. For instance, in the work on the Tudors, there is much related to art and music. Some of the extensive and informative written work in the displays, such as those on the 'Home Front' and the rise of Adolf Hitler, have been produced during the literacy hour. An imaginative and relevant programme of visits enhances pupils' knowledge well. These include the Geffrye Museum, the British Museum, Tower of London and walking around London to see its famous buildings. The ethnic composition of pupils at the school is also a strength, celebrated by time spent on studying non-European historical figures, such as Bessie Colman, Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King, and the part played by soldiers from the Commonwealth and Empire during World War II. There is no doubt that pupils are receiving a stimulating, informative programme of historical study that meets the current statutory requirements of providing a broad, balanced curriculum well.

145.

145. **Music**

142. The previous inspection report in 1996 stated that insufficient lessons were seen to make a judgement about standards in music. However, in the lessons seen, standards ranged from good at seven-years-old to poor at 11. There was little evidence of progression because similar activities were seen across a substantial age range. The findings of this inspection indicate that over time progress is good from five to seven-years-old, and satisfactory from seven to 11. Currently, progress in lessons is generally very good throughout the school, because the co-ordinator provides very good specialist teaching once a fortnight in each class. This is a significant improvement on the previous inspection.

143. In Year 1, pupils know the names of the instruments they play, and recognise their sounds. They know how to make long and short sounds on the same instrument. They are able to imitate and play simple rhythms. In assemblies, pupils in Years 1 and 2 sing with a good sense of rhythm and tune. They are aware of other performers as they sing and play instruments. In their singing, pupils are developing sensitivity for the audience, venue and occasion. Pupils in Year 3 understand 'ostinato', rhythm patterns, and the use of symbols, such as 'A-B-A' and 'A-B-A-C-A'. They hold a rhythm well, clapping it back to the teacher or holding an 'ostinato' against the patterns of other groups. They use simple notation. In Year 5, pupils are able to recognise how beats are grouped in a piece of music. They consolidate technical language and recognise instruments, such as the organ or lute, as they are played on the tape recorder. Pupils develop insights into links between dance style and fashions, and how this affects the musical rate of the pulse and rhythms that are used. Pupils are able to perform dance to music, using music set in a particular social context. Pupils in Year 6 continue to develop their knowledge of and skills in music further. They consolidate the concept of rhythm as a group of beats, and of 'ostinato' and syncopated rhythms. They practise these rhythms on tuned and untuned instruments.

144. Pupils have very good attitudes to music and are well-motivated. They listen very well and have generally high levels of concentration. Pupils' behaviour is very good. They listen and respond to questions well. Their relationships with one another and their teachers are good.

145. Music is taught every week for half an hour, and the co-ordinator and class teachers currently share teaching in every class. The co-ordinator teaches one week and the class teachers follow up themes in the next lesson. When pupils are taught by the co-ordinator, class teachers stay in lessons and participate in order to improve their knowledge and skills in the subject. Most teachers feel confident to follow up the lesson taught by the co-ordinator. The co-ordinator has very good subject knowledge and her teaching skills are generally very good. However, one lesson was unsatisfactory because the class teacher's subject knowledge was insufficient. Overall, therefore, teaching is satisfactory, although it is good in lessons for five to seven-year-olds. In teaching carried out by the co-ordinator, lessons were very well planned. They contained objectives, activities and clearly identified resources. Explanations and instructions were very clear and lessons were very well-structured. The teacher's expectations were very high and pace was very good. Control and management was also very good, with resources and time well used. Taken together, these features meant that pupils' needs were very well-served, resulting in fast rates of progress.

146. The music policy, and the scheme of work provide, for continuity and progression. The curriculum is enriched by a choir, a recorders' club and external visitors. The amount of time currently allocated to music is sufficient to teach the curriculum successfully. However, there are plans to reduce this time by half to improve the use of the library. It is doubtful whether the remaining time would be enough to ensure a broad and balanced curriculum in music. Assessment is currently underused, but there is evidence of its being in the process of development. The co-ordinator for music has a very good knowledge of the subject and provides high quality support to pupils and teachers. She is well-supported by a postholder for music lower down the school. Resources are satisfactory.

150. **Physical education**

147. It was not possible to observe classes for five to seven-year-olds. However, the performance of older pupils and the schemes of work suggest that they have a good grounding in games, gymnastics and swimming. Swimming is a strength, with nearly all pupils in Year 6 attaining twenty-five metres and many performing well in excess of it. Good standards are also achieved in games and gymnastics. At present, dance has a low profile, although it was well represented in a music lesson in Year 5, which also addressed cross-curricular themes in history. Pupils moved well in sequences with a partner, adopting Tudor-style steps and patterns. In outdoor and adventurous pursuits, pupils have the opportunity to undertake a school journey, which includes staying away from home for a week. However, not all pupils attend this provision.

148. Overall, progress is good. In swimming, it is very good. It is good in the development of ball skills. By Year 5, many boys and girls demonstrate considerable control in dribbling, trapping, passing and tackling. These good rates of progress are based on lessons that build carefully on what has been achieved previously.

149. Pupils' attitudes are very good. They really enjoy their physical education and almost all are prepared to commit themselves very vigorously. Behaviour is good. They are keen to learn and eager to volunteer. Demonstrations are watched and evaluated carefully. Newly-acquired skills are put to the test and practised well. Pupils co-operate well with one another and show a good sporting spirit.

150. The overall quality of teaching is good. It is very good in half the lessons seen, with all the remainder being good or satisfactory. The lessons are well planned. They include warm ups and appropriate emphasis on safety. Most feature a wide range of activities, each with enough time to be useful, but not long enough to bore. They proceed at a good pace and are aimed at acquiring new skills. They include good opportunities for practice and evaluation. What separates the better teaching from that which is otherwise satisfactory is a clear distinction between progression and repetition. Skills are developed and honed, and then followed by activities that require their utilisation.

151. There is an enthusiastic co-ordinator, who devotes a great deal of his time to encouraging sporting activities both in and out of school. The scheme of work is detailed and useful for gymnastics and quite useful for ball games, but other strands of the subject are less well depicted and so less easy to apply for non-specialist teachers. There is enough equipment, and it is maintained in good order. However, there are problems with storage and accessibility, both of which are unsatisfactory. Whilst there is a large playground which is suitable for many sports, including football, there is no access to a grass playing field. The halls are used for gymnastics and dance, but their size for the numbers involved restricts what can be done. Good use is made of the local swimming pool with its' qualified staff and the school has a sports day at Highgate Woods. There are after-school clubs for cricket, football, netball and the rounders league. The school reached the semi-finals of the Borough at Lords, from which promising players were identified for a two day residential cricket course. Since the last inspection, the high achievement in swimming has been maintained, but there is no longer any rock-climbing. Thus, it is a pity that the school has not yet looked toward the residential course it provides in the Isle of Wight to carry out outdoor and adventurous activities.

155. **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

155. **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

152. A team of six inspectors, including a lay inspector, carried out the inspection over a period of four and a half days. This involved 24½ inspector days. Inspectors observed 77 lessons or parts of lessons, amounting to 59 hours. A further 21 hours was spent scrutinising pupils' work in all subjects and talking to them about what they can do. A representative sample of pupils read to inspectors and talked about their books. In addition, selections of school assemblies and class registrations were attended.

153. Inspectors also gathered evidence from a wide range of other sources. These included, interviews with the headteacher, teachers, chair of governors, other members of the governing body, including parent governors, and support staff.

154. Inspectors considered a range of documents, which included the School Development Plans, policies, teachers' planning notes, schemes of work, financial information and pupils' reports and records. Information from a questionnaire sent to parents, which was returned by 26 per cent was analysed. A meeting was held for parents, of whom 32 attended.

158.

## 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	385	5	148	242
Nursery Unit	39	0	2	9

### 159. Teachers and classes

#### 159. Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	18.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	20.4

#### 159. Education support staff (YR – Y6)

Total number of education support staff:	13
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	293.7

#### 159. Qualified teachers (Nursery unit)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	39

#### 159. Education support staff (Nursery unit)

Total number of education support staff:	2
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	57.5
Average class size:	27

### 159. Financial data

Financial year:	1998-9
	£
Total Income	914,993
Total Expenditure	858,902
Expenditure per pupil	2,141.90
Balance brought forward from previous year	33,587
Balance carried forward to next year	89,678

## 160. PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out: 385

Number of questionnaires returned: 101

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	46	49	4	1	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	59	37	4	0	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	31	52	16	1	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	44	52	3	1	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	45	46	5	4	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	41	52	7	0	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	34	51	12	3	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	42	47	4	7	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	50	42	6	2	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	40	44	14	1	1
My child(ren) like(s) school	67	32	1	0	0

### 160. Other issues raised by parents

Parents' views were very positive towards the school, both on questionnaires and at the pre-inspection meeting. Nearly all parents believe that Grafton is a good school and that the headteacher and staff work very hard on behalf of their children. There were very few negative responses to any questions that were put. The highest dissatisfaction, which was still very small, featured work that children are expected to do at home. In the main, however, inspectors felt that this was generally sound, and are in agreement with parents' positive opinions. A few parents expressed disappointment that the balance of men to women on the staff is not better, but they do not blame the school, recognising that the situation reflects a national imbalance.