

INSPECTION REPORT

HUGH MYDDELTON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Finsbury, London

LEA area: London Borough of Islington

Unique reference number: 131842

Headteacher: Mrs Pamela Gormally

Reporting inspector: John William Paull
22028

Dates of inspection: 6th - 10th March 2000

Inspection number: 181509

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Myddelton Street Finsbury London
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Alain Head
Date of previous inspection:	not applicable

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			How well the school is led and managed
			What the school should do to improve
Roger D Steel	Lay inspector		Attitudes, values and personal development
			How the school cares for pupils
			The partnership with parents
Sally Handford	Team inspector	English	
		English as an additional language	
		Design and technology	
Bimla Thakur	Team inspector	Mathematics	
		Art	
		Equal opportunities	
Vivienne P Stone	Team inspector	Information technology	
		Physical education	
		Religious education	
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Margaret Hart	Team inspector	Science	How well pupils are taught?
		Special educational needs	
Kanwaljit Singh	Team inspector	Geography	Curricular and other opportunities
		History	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Hugh Myddelton Primary School was formed in September 1998, by joining together former infant and junior schools. It has not been previously inspected. It caters for pupils aged three to 11-years-old, and there are 360 on roll, including a full-time equivalent of 52 in its nursery. It is bigger than most other primary schools. The numbers of boys and girls are roughly equal, although there are variations within year groups, especially in Years 3 and 4. The school is ethnically mixed, although most pupils are from families whose origins are within the United Kingdom. Between 45 and 50 per cent speak English as an additional language, which is much higher than in most schools. The school is situated in an inner-city area, where socio-economic circumstances are often lower than are found nationally. About 40 per cent of pupils have free school meals, which is well above average. Attainment on entry to the school is below what is usual and, mostly, well below. About 25 per cent of pupils have special educational needs, which is above the national average and five have a statement of special needs maintained by the local education authority, which is broadly in line with average for a school of its size.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school has made a good start since the amalgamation and it is improving effectively under the guidance of its headteacher and senior managers. Standards of attainment in Year 6 are currently below average, but there are clear signs of improvement and there are some strengths. For example, elements of music, art and physical education are strong and pupils have a good attitude to learning. Most of them are proud of their school and most parents are positive about it. The headteacher, deputy headteacher and staff, with the help of the local authority have put considerable effort into the monitoring of teaching and learning. In general, this has contributed to a good overall quality of teaching, although it is often better in classes for seven to 11-year-olds than in those for five to seven-year-olds. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Compared with similar schools, the 1999 National Curriculum test results for 11-year-olds are well above average in English and science. In science, they are also broadly in line with the national average for all schools. In mathematics, results are above average compared with similar schools.
- The overall quality of teaching is good.
- Pupils' attitudes to their work, their personal development and their standards of behaviour are generally good.
- Standards of work and behaviour are checked and monitored well.
- Learning opportunities in literacy and numeracy are good.
- There is good provision for pupils aged seven to 11, who speak English as an additional language.
- Good opportunities are provided for pupils' moral, social and cultural development.
- The headteacher, supported well by her deputy, offers very good leadership, which is producing a clear direction for the school's future development and improvement.

What could be improved

- By the time pupils leave the school, standards in English and mathematics are below national averages, and in information technology and religious education they are below national expectations.
- Standards at the age of seven are, generally, well below national averages and are not as good as at the age of 11.
- Although it is satisfactory, the quality of teaching in classes for five to seven-year-olds is not as good as in those for older pupils.
- Targets for pupils with special educational needs are not precise enough, which reduces their usefulness.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

As a recently opened school, based on the amalgamation of separate infant and junior schools, there is no previous inspection report that applies. However, a good start has been made in uniting the two previous schools, following the amalgamation. A new entrance area has been built, which clearly identifies it as one primary school. Its first National Curriculum test results are promising, especially in comparison with similar schools. The headteacher has a very good vision for improving upon the educational opportunities that were provided by the two former schools and the governors support it. This involves the introduction of good systems for senior managers, including subject co-ordinators, to monitor teaching, the quality of learning and curricular planning. Already, elements of this are established and beginning to occur. The National Literacy and Numeracy Projects have been successfully started and the overall quality of teaching is good. A clear policy of rewards and sanctions, including an innovative lunch club, which is run by the headteacher, is contributing to generally good standards of behaviour. The number of exclusions has fallen rapidly from high levels at the time of amalgamation.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11-year-olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
English	n/a	n/a	D	A	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
mathematics	n/a	n/a	E	B	
science	n/a	n/a	C	A	

The table shows that the results of National Curriculum tests of 11-year-olds are good when compared with similar schools. In English and science particularly, they are well above average and higher attainers do well. However, in comparison to all schools in the country, results are below average in English and well below in mathematics. In science, results are broadly in line with average. At the age of seven, results are not as good. They are well below average in reading and mathematics and, in writing, they are in the lowest five per cent nationally. In comparison with similar schools, results of seven-year-olds are well below average in writing and mathematics, but average in reading. Currently, there are strengths in art, dance and, especially, music and weaknesses in information technology and religious education. At the age of five, standards are often close to what is described in the nationally recommended desirable outcomes, although many children remain below these levels and only a few exceed them. Many children are at an early stage of English acquisition at this age, which is reflected by standards that are often well below the descriptions in language and literacy and knowledge and understanding of the world.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to the school are good. Those asked said that they like school, which is confirmed by responses in the parents' questionnaires. They show interest in lessons, listening well to their teachers.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in lessons and around the school is good. Pupils are polite to visitors, offering a greeting or a smile and holding doors. They are sensible in the classrooms and usually get on well with their work.
Personal development and relationships	Personal development is good. Pupils generally relate very well to each other and to adults. The school provides good opportunities for them to develop self-esteem. In music, for example, they help each other to learn and are involved in the teacher's assessment and monitoring of performances.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory – although improving, attendance is below the national average for primary schools and levels of unauthorised absence are high. Punctuality has improved since the last inspection.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Satisfactory	Good

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

The overall quality of teaching is good, which contributes to a good quality of learning and results in a good rate of overall progress. It is satisfactory or better in 93 per cent of lessons and good or better in 65 per cent, which includes 28 per cent that is very good. It is unsatisfactory in seven per cent, occurring slightly more frequently in classes for five to seven-years-old. The teaching of English and mathematics, including literacy and numeracy, is generally good, although it is much better in classes for older pupils than in those for pupils aged five up to seven. In lessons in the older age group, when class teachers teach in partnership with teachers of English as an additional language, a good quality of learning invariably results, which helps pupils to broaden their vocabulary and to use language more flexibly. However, this is not always the case in lessons for pupils aged five up to seven. There is, currently, insufficient support in some classes for pupils who have been identified as having special needs and who are on the earlier stages of the special needs register. Occasionally, support for pupils with special needs is not effectively targeted. Generally, teachers organise their classrooms well and the management of pupils is often very good. This contributes strongly to good attitudes and behaviour in lessons. The teaching of music is very good.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum has satisfactory breadth and balance, although elements of information technology are inadequately taught. The recommended areas of learning are followed closely for children under five. Statutory requirements for religious education are met. In music, the composing and performing elements are very strong and dance is also a strength.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	In general terms, pupils make sound progress towards the targets on their individual education plans. However, these targets are not always precise enough and therefore vary in their usefulness. There is good provision for pupils who have a statement of special educational needs and they make good progress. Information about individual education plans is not always passed on to those parents who do not attend review meetings.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress through the school. However, the quality of specialist support is inconsistent. It is less effective for younger age groups, but improves considerably in Year 3.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for personal development is good. Moral, social and cultural development are all good. Arrangements for spiritual development are sound and the statutory requirement for collective worship is met. There are particular strengths in music, in which there are opportunities for pupils to teach songs and a range of skills to each other.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school monitors pupils' progress in literacy and numeracy, behaviour and attendance well. It provides good advice and sets targets, rewarding good work and behaviour. Links and communications with parents are satisfactory.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher has a very good vision for the future development of the school, and very good strategies to realise it. She is well supported by her deputy head. Subject co-ordinators and other senior staff are beginning to evaluate their areas and this is improving the quality of pupils' learning.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors' influence on the work of the school is sound. They take their statutory responsibilities seriously and are supportive. They are beginning to monitor the school's finances more rigorously and thereby to ensure that the principles of best value are applied better than a year or so ago.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Teaching and learning, especially, are monitored and evaluated very well. This contributes strongly to good teaching and has identified areas for further improvement. The school has begun to analyse its results and uses the information to set both overall and individual targets for pupils, which is having an impact on learning.
The strategic use of resources	Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are adequate to the needs of pupils at the school. There is a lack of specialist support for children under five who speak English as an additional language and/or with special educational needs. Accommodation is good and is used well.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school and make good progress. • Teaching is good and children are expected to do their best. • The school is approachable and they feel that they can talk to staff about difficulties or problems. • Behaviour is good. • The school is managed well. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A significant number are not satisfied with amounts of homework. • The range of activities that the school provides outside lessons. • A few parents believe that they are not well informed about how their children get on and that the school does not involve them.

In the main, parents are positive about the school. A few believe that it went through "...a bad patch" just prior to the amalgamation. In the meeting, the majority felt that it is improving again and expressed confidence in the headteacher. Inspectors generally agree with them and found that the headteacher's vision for the school's future development is very good. Inspectors do not agree with parents who said that the school does not keep parents informed about their children's progress. The school is approachable and it arranges meetings for parents at least as often as is found in other schools, as well as a written annual report. However, inspectors agree that amounts of homework do not always increase consistently with pupils' ages. Inspectors also found a good range of after school and lunchtime activities, including sports. A residential school journey is also provided.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. On entry to the nursery, many children have knowledge, skills and understanding that are well below those of other children of the same age. Their language and communication skills are particularly low, because of the number learning English as an additional language. Although, by the age of five, the results of baseline assessments are usually in line with or slightly above the average for the Borough of Islington, inspectors' findings are that the attainment of many children is below that usually found nationally. For example, in language and literacy, and knowledge and understanding of the world, it is below and often well below what is described in the nationally recommended desirable outcomes. In mathematics, it remains a little below in most cases, although a few higher attaining pupils considerably exceed the descriptions in the desirable outcomes. In personal and social development, physical and creative development, attainment is often broadly in line with what is described.
2. As Hugh Myddelton Primary School was newly formed in September 1998, it has only its 1999 National Curriculum results on which to base judgements. In English, in comparison with all schools, standards by the age at which pupils leave the school are below average based on the average points scored. However, the percentage of pupils achieving Level 5 (which is higher than expected for the age group), is above the national average. In mathematics, the standard is well below average, whereas in science it is broadly in line with the national average. These results are good when compared with similar schools. In English and science, particularly, they are well above average and in mathematics they are above. At the age of seven, National Curriculum test results are not as good. Based on the average points scored, they are well below average in reading and mathematics and, in writing, they are in the lowest five per cent nationally. In comparison with similar schools, results are well below average in writing and mathematics, but average in reading. The better achievement in reading is based on the particular emphasis that the school places on it. The school is aware that its results for seven-year-olds are not good enough and it is seeking to strengthen the quality of teaching in the younger age groups. The deputy head, for example, has recently moved to a Year 2 class and this is working well, as standards are improving. The school has attempted an analysis of results in order to establish whether the targeting of particular ethnic groups might improve its overall standards. However, the evidence has proved difficult to gather and is anyway unreliable, because although ethnic minorities are well represented, each separate group is numerically small. Differences in the results of boys and girls have also been found, but the evidence is sometimes contradictory and no differences in the ways that pupils are treated have been found to account for it.
3. Inspectors' findings are that by the time they leave the school, pupils' current achievements are good when compared with levels of attainment on entry. This is especially so for pupils with English as an additional language, who often achieve expected levels by the time they leave the school. Achievements in science, music, dance and art are particularly good. At the ages of seven and 11, standards are below expectations in religious education.
4. Currently, speaking and listening skills throughout the school are good, because teachers have good strategies for questioning and there are good opportunities for discussion. This extends to opportunities for pupils to express their opinions in all areas of the curriculum. Older pupils are confident in giving answers and ideas. Year 6 pupils very effectively gave arguments for and against a local redevelopment plan. There are good opportunities for drama through links with the *Sadler's Wells Ballet Company* and, in classes, many pupils were able to project their voices well so that everyone could hear them. The National Literacy Strategy has been introduced carefully and the strong emphasis that the school places on it is having a beneficial effect on pupils' learning. For example, pupils use their reading and writing skills well in other curricular areas, despite a specific weakness in standards of handwriting. Most pupils, including those with special needs, make good progress in reading, so that by the age of 11, average and higher attaining pupils, including those with English as an additional language, are reading with fluency and accuracy. They are confident readers who glean a good understanding from different types of text. A good use of a range of strategies for early reading, including phonics, results in good progress in this aspect of English in classes for five to seven-year-olds. The

school has identified that writing skills are below average and that handwriting is a particular area of weakness. Inspection evidence confirms this. While there are good examples of well-presented work displayed throughout the school, the unsatisfactory quality of presentation and handwriting in pupils' books has an adverse impact on standards. A strength is the level of consultation between teachers and pupils to identify targets for the improvement of work. All pupils keep the targets in their English books to remind them of their goals.

5. In mathematics, the numeracy strategy is having a positive effect on pupils' achievements. Most pupils understand place value to the level expected for their age and have a good sense of the relative sizes of numbers. They understand the uses of simple graphs, charts and diagrams and older pupils can usually interpret information from them accurately. Older pupils use good mental strategies to solve numerical problems; they make good estimates and read information well from charts and diagrams. The school's strategy for targeting groups of pupils in Year 6 is also likely to be effective in contributing to raising standards prior to National Curriculum testing in May. Targets are challenging, but realistic. By seven-years-old, standards, overall, are below average. Current levels of achievement amongst 11-year-olds are a little below average in most aspects of mathematics, except in the application of skills to solve numerical problems, where pupils often demonstrate good mental skills. Most pupils know how to round up numbers with two decimal places, going to the nearest tenth or the nearest whole number. They learn about decimal fractions and place them in an appropriate position on a number line. Pupils learn about quick strategies for solving problems on an independent basis, when necessary. They learn to decide which operation to use while solving problems, with the help of their calculator, although several experience difficulties in deciding which operation to use. Average and higher attaining pupils can plot and interpret a line graph and have a good understanding of horizontal and vertical axes.
6. In science, standards of attainment by the ages of seven and 11 are currently average. Seven-year-olds are aware of the need to make tests fair and are beginning to plan experiments with the help of teachers. Higher attaining pupils make their own predictions about what they expect to see. Nearly all pupils understand pushing and pulling forces and know that some materials are natural and some are man-made. They understand that there are different forms of matter, such as solids and liquids, and that some changes to materials, for example, through heating, are permanent and others reversible. Presentation is often poor, with untidy drawings and tables and lower attaining pupils, including those with special educational needs, write very little independently. By the age of 11, pupils have a good understanding of how to construct a fair test and they are beginning to draw inferences from their results. Higher attaining pupils are often very good at integrating new facts into their thinking – for example, noticing that both heating and cooling can have the effect of preserving food. They understand the working of major organs of the body, such as the eye and can recall specialised vocabulary. Pupils with English as an additional language also use the vocabulary of the subject well, naming parts of plants and putting labels on to food webs, life cycles and electric circuits. By contrast with what occurs at seven, 11-year-olds often present work very well, with neatly and carefully drawn diagrams and clear, legible tables of results. The school has maintained its sound standards for seven-year-olds since the amalgamation of the former schools and has improved on the standards achieved by 11-year-olds.
7. Realistic literacy and numeracy targets have been set and these include targets for higher attaining pupils. It is too early to say how effectively these are being met or whether they are contributing to raising standards. However, the tracking of individual pupils' progress is occurring, the results of which suggest that the school is on course to meeting them. Teachers are aware of higher attaining pupils in their classes and usually adapt the curriculum to their needs satisfactorily, which addresses their attainment and progress well. For example, in the important skills of literacy, the 1999 National Curriculum tests in English show that the proportion, which attains at a level above that normally expected, is above the national average. By 11, pupils with English as an additional language have made good progress and their overall attainment is similar to that of pupils as a whole. Pupils with special educational needs make progress at rates similar to other pupils.
8. The standard of the work that was seen in design and technology, geography, history and physical education is broadly in line with what is nationally expected. However, there are particular strengths in music, art and dance by the time that pupils leave the school. In music, standards in performing and composing are very strong. For example, far more pupils than in most schools play woodwind instruments such as the descant recorder to a high standard. The

link with the *Sadler's Wells Ballet Company* contributes to high standards in dance and the art work of pupils in Year 6 is good for their age. However, standards in information technology and religious education are below expectations. By the age of seven, although pupils use a drawing program to create pictures of the Fire of London, they are unable to name the parts of a computer, demonstrating weaknesses in their knowledge of the specific vocabulary of the subject. They learn how to display information, using a pictogram, but no pupils were observed doing this independently. By the age of 11, pupils use a CD-ROM to find out information about mould and yeast. The information is not then incorporated into their work. There is no evidence of the use of technology to control other devices, or of using computers to solve simple everyday tasks or to compare solutions to problems. Religious education is below what is expected because the agreed syllabus has not been sufficiently well planned in the past. As a result, teaching of parts of it has not occurred and pupils' lack sufficient knowledge and depth of understanding. The school is aware of this and a new co-ordinator is currently addressing the difficulty.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Overall, pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are good, including those of children under five and those with English as an additional language. Children under five in the nursery and reception usually behave well and listen to adults with interest. They develop a growing sense of right and wrong and learn from their mistakes. Throughout the school, pupils respond well to the generally good management strategies of their teachers and to the encouragement that they receive. Although a small minority is occasionally inattentive in lessons, it is rare. Inappropriate behaviour is quickly dealt with and pupils invariably settle back to work when teachers remind them of the importance of concentrating. Pupils with special educational needs of an emotional or behavioural kind usually respond to correction.
10. Nearly all pupils who were asked agreed that they enjoy coming to school. This confirms the overwhelming view of parents, expressed in the questionnaires, that their children like school. It leads to pupils who are generally well motivated and who take a real interest in all they do and thus contributes strongly to the quality of learning, overall.
11. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is often very good. A few parents at the pre-inspection meeting were concerned that less experienced teachers in classes for older pupils might result in lower standards of discipline. This was not evident during the inspection. In fact, the behaviour of older pupils was consistently good, and often very good. In the recent past, around the time of amalgamation, the rate of exclusions was too high. This has been recognised by the school and, since then, the rate has fallen. In the last two terms, it has been much lower.
12. Relationships between pupils and their teachers and other adults are usually very good. Pupils are generally well mannered and polite. For example, they opened and held doors for each other and adults alike. They were friendly to visitors, frequently offering a cheerful greeting or a ready smile, and several offered help.
13. Pupils show respect for their school, and for others' property. No evidence of vandalism or graffiti was found, and pupils frequently helped to pick up equipment or to carry it. They work in an atmosphere of calm throughout the school, with only a little evidence of aggressive behaviour overall. They understand the school rules and the reasons why they should be followed. Pupils also demonstrate that they understand and respect the feelings of others, particularly different cultures and faiths. For example, in the play areas groups of boys and girls of different ethnic origins play together freely and without embarrassment.
14. Currently, pupils' attendance is just below 95 per cent. However, over time, it is fairly constant at 93 per cent, which is below average for primary schools and, therefore, unsatisfactory. The recently higher figure is an improvement. A significant amount of unauthorised absence, including holidays during term-time, occurs.
15. Personal development is good and pupils generally accept responsibility readily. They are concerned about the plight of others less fortunate than themselves. They also take on duties around the school, such as monitoring behaviour on the stairs during lunchtime. The way that they help in the teaching and assessing processes by spreading their knowledge and advising

each other how to sing better or play the recorder produces excellent social development in music.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. The overall quality of teaching is good, which contributes to a good quality of learning, and results in a good rate of overall progress. It is satisfactory or better in 93 per cent of lessons and good or better in 65 per cent, which includes 28 per cent that are very good. It is unsatisfactory in seven per cent. Very good teaching is seen more frequently in classes for pupils aged seven to 11 and in English, science and music. It results in secure learning, good behaviour and good progress of most pupils. Teaching is unsatisfactory, overall, in information technology and leads to unsatisfactory standards in this subject and in its uses across the curriculum. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is generally good. Classroom teachers are aware of requirements. However, support is sometimes insufficient in classes for infant aged pupils, for those who are on the earlier stages of the special needs register and, occasionally, classroom assistants are not used efficiently, because it is unclear how they can best make a contribution. Until recently, the school's co-ordinator for special needs did not have the responsibility for a class. New systems are, therefore, being introduced. These systems include a more consistent emphasis on providing for pupils with special needs by all teachers throughout their lessons. The support of pupils with English as an additional language is good for pupils in older age groups, but shortcomings in planning sometimes lead to unsatisfactory provision in classes for five to seven-year-olds. There is insufficient specialist teaching of English as an additional language for children under five. Conversely, in lessons in the older age group, when class teachers teach in partnership with teachers of English as an additional language, a good quality of learning invariably results, which helps pupils to broaden their vocabulary and to use language more flexibly. However, this is not always the case in lessons for pupils aged five up to seven.
17. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach are generally good, although expectations of what can be achieved are often better in lessons for older pupils. There is excellent subject knowledge in music and teachers of the older pupils have very good knowledge of science, English and history. This enables them to set work that is challenging to pupils of different prior attainments, which again produces good responses amongst these pupils, who are often excited and engrossed by their work. In turn, this leads to good and often very good behaviour, which supports a better pace in lessons for older pupils and a higher proportion of good and very good teaching. Knowledge of methods and strategies for teaching children under five is sound in the nursery and there is good expertise in respect of these youngest children as they come into the main school. Progress is good in both the nursery and reception. Expertise in mathematics is satisfactory throughout the school and leads to sound learning and progress. Pupils respond particularly well to the lively mental mathematics sessions that begin many lessons and this produces a good standard in the use of numbers and strategies to solve numerical problems. Teachers' knowledge and understanding in information technology are unsatisfactory and this is reflected in the insecure knowledge and skills of many pupils in this area.
18. Lesson planning is generally good throughout the school. However, targets on individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are sometimes too general to be useful to teachers in planning pupils' learning. As a result, they are not used effectively to adapt the curriculum or to measure achievement. Lessons often start with an introductory session, which reminds pupils of what they have learnt before. Teachers are clear about what pupils should know by the end of lessons. This often includes work for pupils of different prior attainments and it results in appropriate tasks and good learning opportunities. However, this aspect of teaching is better in classes for seven to 11-year-olds than in those for younger pupils, where it occurs in only some lessons. During tasks, pupils work individually or in groups and, throughout the school, teachers sum up lessons well, offering pupils the chance to share and reinforce their learning. This effective structure contributes to secure learning and gives pupils a sense of direction and achievement. In many good lessons pupils are encouraged to take some responsibility for learning. In music, pupils who have mastered certain pieces pass their knowledge on to other pupils and help to assess performances of others under the guidance of the teacher. This is very effective and, as a result, the teacher is able to include a very high proportion of pupils in recorder, choral singing and groups that perform and compose. A boy and a girl in one lesson, for example, collaborated sensibly and accurately in drawing the

teacher's attention to those pupils who were "...acting the words of the songs in their expressions." In science, pupils take more initiative as they move through the school in planning tests and contributing original ideas to discussions. All pupils have personal targets for literacy and numeracy, often laminated to heighten their importance and attached to their exercise books. This sharing of targets with pupils helps them to be aware of their learning and progress. The good planning and regular opportunities for review and reinforcement of skills and knowledge are key factors in the good behaviour, good motivation, perseverance and concentration, which are seen in most lessons, consistently in the older age groups and in some of the classes for younger pupils.

19. The quality of marking is good, although there are occasions in mathematics when work is not marked adequately. Conversely, most marking, in line with the good marking policy, highlights for pupils what they need to do to make their work better. This aspect is often done well in English. All teachers know their pupils well and make good informal assessments of their progress. Not all teachers make formal evaluations of lessons and this limits the extent to which assessment leads to an adjustment in future planning. Formal assessment is strong in literacy and sound in numeracy, especially in the years that pupils take National Curriculum tests. It is not consistently practised in subjects across the curriculum. Homework is often appropriately used in mathematics and English, but the lack of a homework policy leads to some inconsistency in the quantities that are set and when and how it is marked, which has also been pointed out by parents.
20. The school has implemented the National Literacy Strategy and is using it well. Teachers are competent in teaching the skills needed for reading and spelling. The literacy hour is having a positive effect on standards throughout the school, although the skills of handwriting and presentation are not taught consistently through all classes. The school has also implemented the National Numeracy Strategy and this, too, is having a positive impact; pupils are developing knowledge, skills and strategies and teachers are focusing well on speed and accuracy, mathematical language and a thorough understanding of strategies used.

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

21. Throughout the school, the curriculum has satisfactory breadth and balance and meets the statutory requirements for the National Curriculum and religious education, which follows the relevant locally agreed syllabus, although there is evidence that this was not the case until recently. However, there is inadequate coverage of elements of information technology. The development of literacy is well supported across the curriculum and numeracy is well used in subjects such as geography, art, science and design and technology. The curriculum for children under five years old is also satisfactory and follows the nationally recommended areas of learning for the age group. Overall provision for pupils' personal development is good. Opportunities for spiritual development are sound and the statutory requirement for a daily act of collective worship is met. Opportunities for moral, social and cultural development are good.
22. The school's total amount of teaching time for pupils aged five up to seven is 21¼ hours and for older pupils it is 23½ hours. This meets national recommendations. Sufficient time is allocated to teach literacy and numeracy. All classes have daily literacy and numeracy hours, which are generally effective. Other subjects are timetabled separately. Although the school has not yet identified how much time is spent on each subject area, what occurred during the week of inspection was satisfactory in this respect.
23. The school has an appropriate policy and scheme of work in personal, social and health education. This policy supports pupils' personal development well. For example, pupils' knowledge and understanding of roles and responsibilities of citizens in a modern democracy are well developed through opportunities to sit in a circle and hold discussions. These occasions also provide good opportunities for pupils' moral development, when they discuss real situations that occur on the playground with their friends and seek solutions to any difficulties that they encounter. Knowledge of their cultural heritage is also developed well in subjects like art, music, history and geography. There is no written policy on sex education or on teaching the dangers of misusing drugs, but the school's practice is good. Sex education is taught through science, personal, social and health education in a context of loving relationships. The dangers of misusing drugs are raised through drama and science.

24. Although at present there is no formal policy for ensuring equal access to the curriculum, the school's educational aims and philosophy include a statement that all pupils have the right to achieve their full potential. Furthermore, this has been identified for development in the current year's school development plan. Newly drafted policies, such as the mathematics policy, include a statement on equal opportunities. In practice, in nearly all classes for seven to 11-year-olds and in some for five to seven-year-olds, the school often groups pupils according to their prior attainment and provides work to match. In classes for children under five, teachers know and provide for the needs of different children well. However, there is a lack of specialist support for children with English as an additional language. In the case of those at an early stage of English, this restricts progress. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory throughout the school and the policy document is of good quality. However, there are occasions when targets for those with special educational needs are imprecise. This factor limits opportunities to adapt work successfully for them. Currently, there is insufficient support in some classes, including the nursery, to meet pupils' special needs. The school's systems are in a transitional stage. In the past, much of the support was offered by a special needs co-ordinator, who had no class teaching role. The school is now in the process of finding different ways of working, as the co-ordinator has only one day per week for specific special needs' duties. A sound start has begun in altering practice to adapt to this new situation.
25. The school has implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies well. These have improved teachers' lesson planning, with a positive impact on the progress made by the majority of pupils in English and mathematics. There are policies and schemes of work for science, art, music and physical education to guide teachers and these are used effectively to plan and teach these subjects. There is a good contribution to opportunities for cultural development. For example, the dance element of physical education and performing and composing in music are particularly strong. There are no policies for history, geography, design and technology and information technology, but the school has adopted the schemes of work recommended by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority, which is appropriate to its needs. The progression and continuity in learning are satisfactorily planned through these schemes of work. There is a sound policy for religious education and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education provides similar continuity.
26. The curriculum is well planned. Teachers are clear about what their classes should learn and when and this makes a strong contribution to the good, overall quality of teaching. Classes are often grouped according to pupils' prior attainment and some grouping occurs across classes in literacy and numeracy. However, this aspect is not consistent through the school and it is often better in classes for older pupils, which provides a better level of challenge to pupils of different attainments.
27. Co-ordinators have been appointed for all subjects except for geography. They effectively support and monitor planning in their subjects to ensure that the curriculum is covered and appropriate resources are available for their use. The co-ordinators for English, mathematics and science receive non-teaching time to monitor teaching or support colleagues in their classrooms. As a result, good practice is beginning to be spread effectively through the school, although the impact has so far been stronger in classes for older pupils than in those for pupils aged five to seven.
28. There is no written homework policy, but there is agreed practice to send work home either to extend learning or to complete work that was not finished at school. As it stands, this practice results in different amounts of homework at different times, both within the same class and across classes and year groups. In the meeting and on questionnaires, parents feel that amounts of homework are inconsistent and this judgement supports that view. This work is marked and discussed with the pupils. The pupils take books home to read, encouraging the development of a reading habit. The curriculum is enriched through outings and visits to museums and by a residential school trip for older pupils.
29. The provision for extra-curricular activities is good. It includes, for example, football and hockey. There are also many lunchtime and after school clubs such as music, recorder, and dance groups. The school has good links with Sadler's Wells Theatre and this has enabled pupils to make good progress in dance. They are taking part in the Islington Dance Festival at the theatre. These opportunities also contribute strongly to the school's provision of social and cultural development. The school is beginning to develop links with other schools through

playing football matches. Year 6 pupils visit their prospective secondary schools. However, the school has decided not to offer placements to student-teachers until its own procedures are well established, following the amalgamation of the two former schools.

30. Provision for spiritual development is sound. Assemblies provide appropriate opportunities to consider values and beliefs, and experiences with which pupils might sympathise. Opportunities for moral, social and cultural development are good. Teachers provide good role models, working hard themselves and offering examples of co-operative working. The school has a good system for encouraging pupils' sense of right and wrong, rewarding them with appropriate praise and awards, and introducing fair, but clear sanctions. Social development is promoted by good opportunities to collaborate in subjects such as literacy, dance and science and to co-operate with equipment. Pupils are also given opportunities to take responsibility, acting as monitors or discussing events in the school's Millennium Council. Cultural development is promoted well in art, music and dance and the United Kingdom's heritage is well taught in history.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

31. The school cares well for its pupils. Whole school provision for the welfare, safety and monitoring of pupils' progress has been set up well since the amalgamation. The staff's good knowledge of pupils and the good quality of relationships within the school underpin it.
32. Procedures for child protection and health and safety are good, which results in a safe and secure environment for children's learning to take place. The governing body has a clear understanding of its responsibilities in this respect and it ensures that regular safety inspections and risk assessments are carried out.
33. The school's arrangements for the care and welfare of pupils are good. A particularly close check is kept on progress in literacy and numeracy and in the nursery and reception for children under five-years-old. Assessments that teachers make are kept in pupils' records and are used to monitor progress. The relevant co-ordinators, including the deputy head teacher have worked hard to establish these systems. The outcomes are used to set realistic targets in literacy and numeracy, which are communicated well to pupils, although they are not used consistently to adapt the curriculum to the needs of groups of different prior attainment. Formal, whole school assessments of achievement are not as established as this in other subjects. There are several teachers through the school who keep thorough records of their own, but it is inconsistent in terms of the school as a whole. The effectiveness in adapting the curriculum to individuals' needs is therefore limited. All teachers advise pupils well, giving them help and offering support. Pupils with English as an additional language are monitored and assessed to provide an accurate picture of their attainment, progress and needs.
34. Pupils' good work and behaviour are celebrated by a system of rewards and there are adequate sanctions for lapses of behaviour. The school has good systems of record keeping, including the *Blue Book*. The headteacher runs an innovative and effective lunchtime club for pupils to discuss difficulties of behaviour, including relationships with friends, or progress at school.
35. Registers of attendance are kept accurately, including reasons for absence. Patterns of absence are monitored and the school conveys the importance of daily attendance to its pupils and also to parents through newsletters and reports. Recently, the school has acquired the services of a Home/School Liaison Officer to raise awareness of these matters. She is beginning her work in classes for younger age groups, in order to establish routines that can then be followed as pupils move through the school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

36. Most parents, who responded to the questionnaire and attended the meeting, are satisfied with the school and the way that it works with them, although a significant minority indicated that they were not. Communications with parents are generally satisfactory and include regular informative newsletters, an easily understood Governors' Annual Report and generally clear and precise annual reports of pupils' progress. The school's staff is also willing to meet parents after school, whenever possible, and, during the inspection, several were seen in discussion with teachers, taking this opportunity.

37. The impact of parents' involvement on standards in the school is inconsistent. Pupils are frequently encouraged to take reading books home and, in most classes, homework is set regularly. However, although most parents are satisfied, a few indicated that they do not feel sufficiently involved in the work of the school. They questioned the amount of homework that is set and how and when teachers correct it. Inconsistencies found by inspectors are the most likely cause of these differences of a few parents from the opinions of most. In a few classes, homework is not set and marked as regularly as it is in others. Evidence was also found that not all parents support their children with the work that they take home and do not ensure that pupils complete it. Shortly after the amalgamation, the "Friends of the Myddelton Schools Association", which raised funds, ceased functioning. A new Parents' and Teachers' Association has recently been formed by a committed group of parents, teachers and governors. This now has a formal constitution and aims to support the school's fund-raising efforts and promote further parental support.
38. The school's arrangements for explaining pupils' progress are good. As well as annual written reports, it holds regular meetings for parents, in order to explain curricular changes and to discuss academic progress. An improvement since the amalgamation is that parents have the opportunity to comment on individual targets that are set for their children. When these meetings occur, pupils are also present, so that their views are heard. Nearly all parents who responded were pleased that such meetings are held. Pupils, too, indicated that they find it helpful to know where to make a key effort in order to improve their learning.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

39. Leadership and management are very good. The headteacher has a very good vision for the future development of the school, which is well communicated to senior managers and staff. This leads to very clear educational direction. Parents and the Chair of Governors confirm that there was an unsettled period around the time of the amalgamation of two former schools, which joined to form the present primary school. Since then, time has been used effectively, establishing aims and policies for the newly formed school and team building, in order to ensure whole school practices. The headteacher is well supported by her deputy, who manages her responsibilities well. Other senior staff, to whom she has delegated responsibility for areas of the curriculum and planning for different age groups through the school, are also working effectively.
40. Governors fulfil their responsibilities adequately; are fully supportive and share the headteacher's vision. However, several of them have only recently taken on the role. The governing body is beginning to act effectively as a unit in checking and monitoring the school's provision, although at the moment they are often dependent on the headteacher for information about standards and, until recently, on the local authority to track spending. A budget deficit occurred in the financial year that ended in April 1999, which was not recognised early enough. A new Chair of Finance is now beginning to introduce systems to monitor spending more independently, in order to ensure that the school has the information that it needs when it needs it. Governors have a sound understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and comment upon and are involved in developmental planning.
41. Monitoring and evaluation of the school's standards and effectiveness are good. The information that is gained is used well to promote effective action. For example, the headteacher identified that there were elements of teaching that required improvement. She sought help from the local authority's advisory team and key members of staff were involved in a very good programme, which led to classroom observations, monitoring of planning and feedback to teachers. It worked well, because the criteria that were being used could be shared with co-ordinators and other staff, resulting in greater expertise for the school to monitor and evaluate itself. The good overall quality of teaching found in the inspection is further evidence of the effectiveness of this strategy. Subject co-ordinators currently monitor planning and use the information well to check the breadth and balance of what is taught. Although, currently, there are no formal appraisal arrangements, the headteacher is planning the introduction of staff development interviews, which will be linked to developmental planning and training. The school's priorities for future developmental planning, which include further improvements to the quality of teaching, improvements in the provision of information technology and a review of links with parents are appropriate. Governors' involvement in costing developments, prioritising

decisions and monitoring are improving. Based on the headteacher's very good leadership with the support of her governors and senior managers, the school's capacity to succeed in achieving its aims and targets is good.

42. Currently, the school is using its financial and other resources well. The budget that has been set for 2000 to 2001 has reduced the school's deficit considerably, although it has not been possible to allow for a contingency fund, which is a weakness. In other respects, finances are being used effectively to meet curricular, staffing and other costs and to support identified areas of development well. A specific grant to improve the internal layout of the nursery has recently been allocated and the school has sound systems to ensure that special funds of this kind are spent correctly and appropriately. Levels of staffing are generally adequate and teachers and classroom support assistants are generally deployed satisfactorily. However, there is a shortage of expertise in some classes for children under five years old, including the nursery. Furthermore, the use of specialist teaching of pupils with English as an additional language and special educational needs is not as good in the nursery and in classes for pupils aged five up to seven, as it is further up the school. Parents would prefer to see an ethnic mix on the staff that better matches that of pupils, in order that there are role models for different groups. The headteacher and governors are aware of this factor and the school has a sound equal opportunities policy in matters of employment. The use of new technology in the classrooms is currently unsatisfactory. There is a shortage of equipment and the school has not yet formed its action plan for inclusion in the National Grid for Learning. By contrast, the use of technology by administrative staff is good. The secretary is efficient, very competent and provides a friendly and helpful welcome to visitors. Accommodation is satisfactory, although the school does not have its own field for sports and games. However, local facilities that are a short walk away are used instead. There is a good library, two halls and adequate classroom space. The overall quality of resources are sound. However, in information technology, although the school has enough computers for CD-ROM to be available in its classrooms, it has not yet made use of national funding to access the National Grid for Learning.
43. Governors are beginning to introduce principles by which best value for money can be ensured. They seek estimates for capital expenditure and take advice before carrying out projects. The information that they gain is then used well to plan expenditure.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

Hugh Myddelton Primary School has made a good start since opening in September 1998. Its headteacher, staff and governors are seeking to improve it further. They are already working on improvements in information technology and have identified the differences in standards and provision between different stages of education that the inspection has confirmed. Its development plan contains a reference to ensuring that foundation subjects are reviewed to meet the requirements of the new National Curriculum on its introduction in September and undertaking a review of parents' involvement. A Home/School Liaison Officer has recently been engaged to address weaknesses in attendance.

The governors, headteacher and staff should:

- i. Raise standards in English and mathematics, by:
 - a) ensuring that what is planned and taught in classes for pupils aged five up to seven-years-old matches their needs as effectively as in classes for older pupils (see paragraphs 16, 18, 19, 24, 26, 33, 66 and 71);
 - b) improving standards of handwriting and presentation (see paragraphs 20 and 58).

- ii. Raise standards in information technology and religious education, by
 - a) ensuring that the full requirements of the subjects' schemes of work are taught (paragraphs 21, 59, 101, 113 and 116);
 - b) raising teachers' knowledge and expertise (see paragraphs 17 and 114); and
 - c) in the case of information technology, improving resources as quickly as possible (see paragraphs 42 and 103).
- iii. Raise the quality of teaching in classes for five to seven-year-olds to match that in classes for older pupils, by:
 - a) setting work that is consistently challenging to pupils of different prior attainments and ensuring that expectations are always high (see paragraphs 17, 18, 26, 60, 69, 71 and 102),
 - b) improving support for pupils with special needs and English as an additional language (see paragraphs 16, 24, 33, 42, 60 and 63); and
 - c) matching the pace of lessons more appropriately to meet pupils' needs (see paragraphs 17, 60 and 81).
- iv. Improve the usefulness of targets for pupils with special educational needs by writing and reviewing them more precisely to match pupils' present requirements (see paragraphs 18, 24 and 71).

Other less important points that governors should consider for inclusion in their action plan:

- Raise attendance closer to the national average, by:
 - (a) spreading information to parents and the good practice introduced by the new Home/School Liaison Officer as quickly as possible (see paragraph 35); and
 - (b) reducing the incidence of unauthorised absence and holidays during term-time (see paragraph 14).
- Enlist the support of parents to review their involvement in the work of the school, including homework, then use the outcomes of the review to ensure that any differences between stages and/or classes are resolved, establishing a consistent whole-school policy that parents understand (see paragraphs 19, 36, 37, 41, 62 and 71).
- Improve outdoor facilities for children under five-years-old (see paragraph 50).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	75
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	33

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	28	37	28	7	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	52	308
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	N/a	145

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	4	89

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	147

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	59
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	56

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.3
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	3.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	1999	23	34	57

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	12	15
	Girls	19	17	27
	Total	32	29	42
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	67	58	74
	National	82	83	87

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
	Boys	15	13	15

Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Girls	24	30	26
	Total	39	43	41
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	68	76	72
	National	82	86	87

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	30	24	54

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	20	21	26
	Girls	16	12	16
	Total	36	33	42
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	67	63	78
	National	70	69	75

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	18	29	21
	Girls	13	13	17
	Total	31	42	38
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	64	52	63
	National	68	69	75

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	39
Black – African heritage	37
Black – other	6
Indian	0
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	21
Chinese	4
White	160
Any other minority ethnic group	39

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	3	0
Black – other	2	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	4	1
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Average class size	26

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	102

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	65

Number of pupils per FTE adult	13
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1998-9
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	£
Total income	824,359
Total expenditure	844,703
Expenditure per pupil	2,217
Balance brought forward from previous year	10,825
Balance carried forward to next year	- 9,520

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	360
Number of questionnaires returned	42

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	71	24	5	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	44	44	7	5	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	54	28	8	5	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	39	39	15	2	5
The teaching is good.	55	36	5	2	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	48	38	7	7	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	61	32	5	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	64	24	10	2	0
The school works closely with parents.	51	27	15	5	1
The school is well led and managed.	50	33	12	0	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	59	24	10	2	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	38	21	21	5	15

Summary of parents' and carers' responses

In the main, parents are positive about the school and, in general, inspectors agree with them. Inspectors do not agree with parents who say that the school does not keep them informed about their children's progress. The school is approachable and it arranges meetings for parents at least as often as is found in other schools and supplies a written annual report of sound quality. A fairly high proportion of parents believes that the school does not provide an interesting range of activities outside lessons. Inspectors found a good range of after school and lunchtime activities, including sports. A residential school journey is also provided.

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

44. On entry to the nursery, a high proportion of children have levels of knowledge, skills and understanding that are below those of other children of the same age in the country as a whole. Their language and communication skills are particularly low because of the high proportion that is at an early stage of learning English. Children enter the nursery during their fourth year and transfer to one of two reception classes either in the September or January before their fifth birthday. There are 36 part-time and 34 full time children currently in the nursery and 53 children in two reception classes. Of these, 46 are at early stages of acquiring English and 14 children have been registered as having special educational needs. Nevertheless, by the time children reach the age of five, their attainment in social development, mathematics, physical and creative development is often close to what is described in the nationally recommended desirable outcomes for the age-group, although many children remain below and only a few are above. Attainment in language and literacy and knowledge and understanding of the world remains generally below what is described and, in several cases, remains well below. The results of baseline assessments of pupils beginning the National Curriculum are mostly in line with or above the average for the Borough of Islington. Staffing in classes for children under five is sufficient and although most teachers in both the nursery and reception are inexperienced in the age group, it contributes to good teaching. There are two qualified nursery nurses, who support teaching well.
45. The classrooms provide sufficient space for a wide range of activities and children in the nursery and reception classes have access to secure play areas out of doors. However, the space around the nursery quickly becomes muddy after rain, which reduces its usefulness and the area provided for the reception children has not been specifically designed to meet the needs of children under five. This deficiency results in a lack of large toys or vehicles with wheels and outdoor climbing and balancing apparatus. Whilst teachers in the nursery are supported consistently by well qualified staff, teachers in the reception classes have less support. This reduces the adults to children ratio, leading to a less favourable ratio in the reception than in the nursery. Parents are welcome in both the nursery and reception classes and there are good opportunities for meeting teachers and other staff. Children in the reception classes have reading bags to take home and parents are encouraged to read with their children on a regular basis.

Personal and social development

46. Children's personal and social development is well promoted in the nursery and reception classes so that, by the age of five, most children are close to meeting the desirable outcomes. Children respond positively to the consistently good expectations of behaviour and consideration for others that are set by the staff. Children generally behave well and listen to adults with interest. They develop a growing sense of right and wrong and learn from their mistakes in a positive and caring environment, which is secure and supportive. Reception and nursery teachers provide a good range of opportunities for children to play and work with others so that they learn to share, take turns and co-operate in a range of situations. Children are familiar with classroom routines; move sensibly to appropriate tasks and concentrate for increasing amounts of time. They demonstrate a growing independence in choosing activities for themselves and in taking responsibility for clearing away and tidying up at the end of sessions.

Language and literacy

47. When children enter the nursery, their speaking and listening skills are often well below those usually found nationally. Many children have only a very limited English vocabulary. However, they make good progress and, by the age of five, although the overall standard is well below what is usually found in terms of the recommended desirable outcomes for the age, most can listen attentively to teachers and other adults. However, fewer of them develop flexibility of patterns of speech and vocabulary to the standard expected of children of this age. Whilst teachers provide activities where children can engage in talk, there are not enough

opportunities planned specifically to support the learning of those with English as an additional language. For example, when children were observing and drawing flowers in a jug, they were not told the names of the different parts of the flower or asked enough questions that required answers of more than one word. Consequently, children at an early stage of English acquisition do not make as much progress as they otherwise might. The teaching of phonics to all children is good and occasions when children are gathered together to listen to stories, prepare them well for the literacy hours that they will meet further up the school. These sessions make a positive contribution to children's learning in reading and spelling. There is good progress in recognising letters and sounds. By the age of five, higher attaining children are able to spell common words such as 'on', 'the', 'my' and 'is', and to use their knowledge of sound-patterns to attempt spellings of other words when they write. They are able to recognise and read simple words in texts. Several children recognise and can write their own names, but only a few use accurate letter shapes. Teaching is usually good, although, on occasions, opportunities are missed to provide greater challenge for children of higher prior attainment.

Mathematics

48. When children enter the nursery, their attainment in mathematics is below that of most children of the same age. They make good progress in the nursery and reception classes so that, by the age of five, the attainment of most is only a little below what is described in the desirable outcomes. Several match or exceed them. Children develop their awareness of numbers through songs, rhymes and stories, and incidental play activities, such as matching the number of plates to people in a role play and making numerals from dough. By the age of five, most children can count reliably up to 10 and recognise the numerals. They are beginning to perform simple number operations such as adding 2 to a given number, and higher achieving children can sequence numbers up to 20 and identify missing numbers in the sequence. Several children can name common two-dimensional shapes such as circle and square, although those at an early stage of English acquisition find the task hard to achieve, due to insufficient specialist support. The teaching of mathematics is generally good, but opportunities are sometimes missed in the nursery to extend the mathematical thinking of the children when they are playing outside. Teachers in the reception classes often teach in a style similar to that required by the National Numeracy Strategy, which is making a positive contribution to children's progress, preparing them well for the routines that they will meet further up the school. However, the match of tasks to the requirements of children with special educational needs is sometimes inappropriate.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

49. When children enter the nursery, many of them have difficulty in expressing their knowledge and understanding of the world as they are at an early stage of learning English. All children are provided with a wide range of activities to promote knowledge and understanding of the world. They explore the properties of materials such as water, paint and dough and are taught the use of various mark-making tools, such as pencils, crayons and marker pens. They use *Lego* and construction toys to build. They practise folding, cutting and sticking paper into various representational shapes, including the letters of the alphabet. They put writing into envelopes and wrap presents, acting out roles for a party. By the age of five, insects and other minibeasts fascinate the children and they are ready to observe their movements and behaviour carefully. They recognise some of the basic differences between land mammals, water animals and insects. Children make a good start in using information and communications technology when they play language and numeracy games and use it for writing and drawing. They can use a keyboard or mouse to control the cursor on a computer screen and operate a cassette player to listen to stories and music. However, despite this secure learning, which produces good progress, many children are still not reaching the descriptions in the desirable outcomes, and overall standards are well below what is usually found. Many with English as an additional language are not receiving sufficient specialised support to acquire the vocabulary in this area at a fast enough rate. However, the nursery and reception teaching is often good. It is most effective when direct intervention from adults is planned and occurs. This is because the needs of those with only a little English are better met, so that the acquisition of vocabulary and understanding are ensured. In the reception classes the outdoor environment is not consistently used for activities that promote knowledge and understanding as fully as possible.

Physical development

50. By the age of five, children's physical development is appropriate for their age. In the hall, small apparatus is used to develop pupils' co-ordination of hand and eye, developing skills in catching and throwing. Children in reception develop their ability to climb and balance on large apparatus. In the nursery, they use the outside play area to become increasingly aware of their own and other's space. They use vehicles and tricycles imaginatively as they steer them around obstacles, use apparatus to develop climbing and balancing skills. They develop their co-ordination by using bats to strike balls hanging from a line. Children in reception classes have restricted opportunities to develop their skills due to the lack of large wheeled toys in their area. Children in the nursery and reception classes are encouraged to develop and refine the use of their hands and fingers by using pencils, glue, crayons, dough and scissors with increasing dexterity. Teaching in this area is satisfactory in both the reception and nursery age groups.

Creative development

51. Attainment in creative development by the age of five is in line with that expected for their age. Children use pencils, pens, crayons, paints and chalks confidently and present their ideas through drawing, modelling and painting. They are given opportunities to experiment with a range of art materials and techniques and play imaginatively with small toys and in role-play. They dance appropriately in response to music and, when listening to a story, they talk about characters' feelings. They recognise and can name a range of colours. Teaching in this area is generally satisfactory and often good. When it is good, the teacher's planning leads to clear explanations and demonstration, but at other times there is too much reliance on children learning incidentally.

Other factors which have a bearing on achievement

52. Children have a good attitude to learning, demonstrating interest in their work and trying very hard. They put a great deal of intellectual, physical and creative effort into the tasks that they are given. This has a positive effect on their progress and achievement.
53. The overall quality of teaching is good. Teachers in the nursery are supported well by qualified nursery nurses. All adults plan together effectively, using objectives that are based firmly on the requirements of each of the areas of learning, which ensures good curricular coverage. However, lack of experience of teaching under fives by some staff occasionally reduces the effectiveness of their assessments of individual children's needs. When this occurs, it results in less challenging work and reduces rates of progress. Children in the nursery with special educational needs or who speak English as an additional language do not have educational plans with measurable targets. The early years' co-ordinator gives good leadership. She monitors planning and has developed and implemented an action plan to improve provision. Currently, however, she has little available time to monitor teaching to identify areas of strength and weakness or to support teachers in developing their skills in assessing and setting targets.

ENGLISH

54. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests, compared with all schools in the country, results for pupils at the age of seven were well below average in reading and writing. In writing they are in the bottom five per cent nationally. In comparison with similar schools, these results are well below those of other schools for writing, but in reading, results are in line with similar schools. Currently, standards are improving in reading and writing, due to the impact of the National Literacy Strategy and more focused teaching in Year 2. Pupils enter the school with skills in language and literacy that are well below average. Many speak English as an additional language and, when they begin the National Curriculum, their speaking, listening, reading and writing are understandably very low compared with what is usually found across the country. Although these pupils generally make good progress in acquiring English, they often remain below average through the ages of five to seven. Additionally, a significant proportion of pupils have entered the school within the last three years. Inspection evidence is that, while their progress in colloquial and spoken English is good, there is insufficient specialised support to enable them to achieve their full potential, especially in the early years and up to seven-years-old.

55. Based on the average points scored, at the age of 11, the results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests were below the average of all schools, although the percentage of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 is above the national average. In comparison with similar schools, pupils' results were well above average. Current standards in Year 6 are not quite as good, because there are fewer working at Level 5. Pupils' reading skills are usually good and teachers are working hard to bring this about. However, there are weaknesses in handwriting and the presentation of work and in the structure and organisation of writing.
56. Standards in English are currently below average at the ages of seven and 11-years-old. Pupils' listening and speaking skills are good because teachers have good strategies for questioning, and pupils are given good opportunities for discussion and to express their opinions in all areas of the curriculum. Older pupils of all ages are confident and articulate. They are keen to share their ideas with their peers and with the adults who work with them. Throughout the school, teachers select texts which stimulate pupils, and to which they respond positively. In Year 2, pupils enjoy the stories of *Anancy*, *Mr Drybones* and *Miss Louise* and are confident to answer questions on the text and show that they appreciate the humour and "trickery" in the stories. Year 3 pupils show a sound understanding of traditional tales; they are keen to share this knowledge and can identify the characteristics of the main characters in *Hedda* and *the Ogre*, giving reasons for their answers. Year 6 pupils very effectively demonstrate that they can formulate arguments for and against a local redevelopment project. They express their ideas clearly, introducing knowledge that they have gained from other aspects of the curriculum, such as the impact of pollution on the environment. Teachers use this topic to provide the stimulus for an extended literacy session, which allows time for teaching the speaking and listening skills needed to present an argument. There are some opportunities for drama through links with the *Sadler's Wells Ballet Company*.
57. The school has an effective reading strategy. Most pupils make good progress, so that by the age of 11, average and higher attaining pupils, including those with English as an additional language, are reaching at least the expected level, reading with fluency and accuracy. They are confident readers who have a good understanding of what they are reading. Older pupils choose appropriately challenging books for their personal reading. There is good provision for pupils to spend time with the teacher, discussing their home reading books. Pupils are introduced to a good range of literature through the literacy hour, although the range of reading material for pupils from the age of five up to seven is more limited and does not provide for a selection of non-fiction reading books. Pupils of average and higher attainment read with confidence and fluency, although not all are reading with expression. Pupils are keen to talk about their books and have a good understanding of the story. Procedures to monitor and evaluate pupils' attainment and progress during guided reading sessions are not used consistently in every lesson to diagnose areas for improvement. All pupils have the opportunity to visit the local public library.
58. The school has identified writing skills and, in particular, handwriting as an area of weakness. Inspection evidence confirms this. While there are good examples of well-presented work displayed throughout the school, handwriting in pupils' books is often well below expected levels and has a negative impact on standards across the curriculum. The provision of guidelines for pupils, explaining how to organise writing and a planned approach for developing vocabulary and content are beginning to have an impact on the quality of written work. An example occurred when six-year-olds modelled their work closely on Michael Rosen's poem *A Busy Day*, reproducing the pattern and rhythm well. Older pupils in Year 6 presented a balanced report on a redevelopment issue, using key expressions provided by the teacher, thus demonstrating that they had understood what had been taught. The positive effects of giving such a tight structure are particularly evident in the standard of written work in science, where a framework to help with the recording of experiments is provided. This guides pupils well, enabling them to write good accounts of investigative and experimental work.
59. The National Literacy Strategy is clearly in place and has a strong emphasis. It is having a beneficial effect on pupils' learning. Throughout the school, there are good opportunities for pupils to develop their reading and writing skills in other curricular areas. While pupils use information technology to word-process their work, it is not used enough for research skills. Pupils with special educational needs generally make progress at rates similar to other pupils. A strength is the level of consultation between teachers and pupils to identify targets for the

improvement of their work. All pupils, including those with special educational needs or English as an additional language keep the targets in their English books to remind them of their goals.

60. The overall quality of teaching is good, although it is satisfactory for five to seven-year-olds and includes almost a third that is very good in classes for older age groups. There is no unsatisfactory teaching in classes for seven to 11-year-olds and, where teaching was seen in partnership with a specialist teacher of English as an additional language, the impact on pupils' learning was good. It also contributes strongly to the support of pupils with English as an additional language. The quality of teaching is less consistent in classes for five to seven-year-olds and includes a significant proportion of unsatisfactory teaching. A lack of consistent additional adult support during literacy hours is a strong contributory factor, making it harder to keep pupils on task for extended periods of time. Teachers have good subject knowledge and a secure understanding of the organisation of the National Literacy Strategy. Planning is effective. Teachers of seven to 11-year-olds plan clearly what pupils ought to know by the end of lessons and explain it to them at the start of sessions, so that they know what is expected. Lessons are conducted at an appropriate pace and there is an appropriate balance between the different parts of the literacy hour, helping pupils to maintain interest and motivation. A stimulating and challenging English curriculum is generally provided, to which pupils respond positively. In classes for five to seven-year-olds, the challenge for pupils of above average ability is sometimes not strong enough, reducing the pace of lessons as it affects them. For example, in a potentially good lesson, group work was not accurately matched to pupils' needs, so that overall provision was in the end unsatisfactory. Work that was provided by a specialist teacher of English as an additional language was an unsuitable match to pupils' knowledge and prior learning. In classes for seven to 11-year-olds, classroom assistants provide good support to pupils with special educational needs. Teachers' control and management of pupils is nearly always good and, as a result, learning is enhanced by positive attitudes to work, based on good behaviour in most classes. Pupils respond confidently and co-operate in groups, supporting each other well. Teachers have ensured that pupils know the routines of the literacy hour and pupils organise themselves very well, moving into group activities and working independently when required.
61. Opportunities for social and moral development in English lessons are good. Pupils discuss issues raised in texts, debate moral issues and relationships between them are very good.
62. There is a newly appointed English co-ordinator for the school, who has identified areas for improvement. Plans to raise standards are appropriate. The previous co-ordinator for the junior school effectively managed the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy and ensured that teachers were well prepared, confident and knowledgeable. Resources, including appropriate texts for teaching the literacy hour, are sufficient. Class fiction collections promote pupils' enjoyment and they are encouraged to take their reading books home, including recently purchased non-fiction. However, reading material for younger pupils is not as extensive in its range as that for older age groups. A partnership scheme with parents (PACT) is about to be re-launched to enhance pupils' reading at home. The library has a good stock of fiction and non-fiction books. It is used for research purposes, by individuals or small group, but is not easily accessible to younger pupils. Regular formal assessment of pupils' reading, writing and spelling is satisfactory, but on-going procedures for the tracking of individual pupils' attainment are not fully in place. However, the headteacher has identified it as an area for review and development.

English as an additional language

63. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress in the acquisition of English. They are accepted well into the work of the classroom by other pupils and into their games in the playgrounds. This contributes to the acquisition of spoken English very well. However, there is a lack of support from specialist teachers or assistants in the nursery and, whilst it is usually satisfactory and often good, the quality of support is not consistent throughout the school. Specialist support is often good for pupils aged seven to 11. Particularly effective is the good use of partnership teaching, in which the specialist teacher shares her expertise with the class teacher in planning and teaching lessons. Support is often given in literacy hours and in other identified areas, such as history, where pupils need help to understand specific vocabulary. In the younger classes, shared planning is less successful, so that expertise is not consistently used well to develop pupils' language and literacy skills. By the time pupils reach the age of about seven, there are few at the early stages of acquiring English. However, in writing and the

breadth of vocabulary that they know and use, their standards understandably remain lower than those of indigenous speakers of English. It affected the 1999 National Curriculum test results at the age of seven, reducing performances in reading, writing and mathematics. However, specific statistical evidence for this is difficult to analyse as there are so many different language groups represented that the numbers within each are too low to make reliable comparisons. Nevertheless, the school has responded by providing focused specialist support in Year 3 and this is producing good progress.

64. Pupils with English as an additional language generally have good attitudes to work and are confident and well integrated into classes. They co-operate well with other pupils, who similarly work well with them. Teachers have had the opportunity to attend in-service training on the needs of pupils for whom English is an additional language. These factors both contribute well to the quality of learning through the school. Specialist teachers have good procedures for working with parents and conduct interviews to ensure that they are kept informed about the school and the curriculum.

MATHEMATICS

65. The 1999 National Curriculum tests of 11-year-olds show that the proportion of pupils that achieved the expected Level 4 and above is below national average. The proportion achieving at the higher Level 5 is also below average. Taking these results together, standards of attainment are well below the national average. However, in comparison with similar schools, standards are above average, and the school compares favourably with the borough's average score. It is clear that the school has made a good start since its amalgamation, particularly in the quality of teaching and learning, which has contributed well to these standards. The numeracy strategy is having a positive effect on achievement, as is the school's strategy for targeting groups of pupils in Year 6. Current standards amongst 11-year-olds are a little below average in most aspects of mathematics, except in the application of skills to solve numerical problems, where pupils often demonstrate good mental skills.
66. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests, standards indicated by the proportion of seven-year-olds attaining the expected Level 2 and above are well below the national average. In comparison with similar schools, attainment is also well below average. Standards of pupils currently in Year 2 are also well below levels expected nationally in most parts of the subject. This presents a very different picture from the results of 11-year-olds. There are two main reasons. First, teaching is often very good in classes for pupils aged seven to 11, which produces rapid progress. Secondly, pupils with English as an additional language, especially those who begin school at an early stage of English acquisition, have not had enough time to make sufficient progress to match the performance of other pupils. There are also differences between the attainment of boys and girls in mathematics. At 11-years-old, test results show boys performing better than girls, whereas at seven, the reverse is the case. No specific reasons in the teaching could be found for this, but the school is aware of it and intends to monitor the situation further.
67. By the age of 11, standards are currently a little below average. Most pupils know how to round up numbers with two decimal places, going to the nearest tenth or the nearest whole number. They learn about decimal fractions and place them in an appropriate position on a number line. Pupils use quick strategies for solving problems on an independent basis, when necessary. They decide which operation to use while solving problems, with the help of their calculator, although several experience difficulty in deciding which operation to use. Average and higher attaining pupils can plot and interpret a line graph and have a good understanding of horizontal and vertical axes. Pupils' knowledge is usually firmly based on what has been taught previously. For example, pupils in Year 4 learn to use their knowledge of doubling and doubling again to multiply two digit numbers quickly and accurately. They have developed a good understanding of multiplying and dividing numbers by 10, which is built on well and culminates in the decimal work in Year 6. Pupils in Year 3 work with three digit numbers and explore patterns in number bonds, using addition and subtraction. Pupils use a range of strategies to support their calculations and are gaining confidence as they succeed. Appropriate uses of mathematical vocabulary are stressed, which helps pupils with English as an additional language to broaden their flexibility in using English, by putting an emphasis on using words for precise meanings. Pupils throughout the school are encouraged to check the accuracy of their answers, using the strategies that they are taught.

68. Attainment at the age of seven is below average. For example, the proportion of pupils with a sound understanding of numbers to 100 is below average, although most understand the place value of each digit in two-digit numbers. They can use a number line and a number square to work out their number bonds to 20, involving addition or subtraction. They begin to understand the concept of doubling numbers and can count in twos and tens. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 learn about the order of numbers on a number line and link this knowledge to the corresponding letter of the alphabet. They order numbers up to 100, using their number square. In younger classes, pupils build on their previous knowledge of number rhymes and numbers up to 10 and begin to count to 20 and beyond.
69. Progress in relation to their targets is satisfactory for pupils with special educational needs and for those who speak English as an additional language. Progress is inconsistent through the school for high achievers, as there is sometimes a lack of challenge in activities at the higher level. The difference in pupils' progress at different stages of education, classes and between groups of pupils, is often linked to the differences in the quality of teaching.
70. Throughout the school, pupils' attitudes to learning are good. Good opportunities for mental and oral work, support from teachers in learning new strategies for calculation, good demonstration from teachers and the good use of resources, all help pupils to take interest in the subject. Pupils generally behave well and are keen to learn. On occasions, a few boys demonstrate immature attitudes, calling out at inappropriate times and drawing attention to themselves, preventing others from progressing. Pupils generally show good levels of concentration during their teachers' demonstrations at the front of classrooms. They enjoy calculating mentally and respond well to teachers' questioning. They work well with their classmates and help each other, where necessary.
71. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. Teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the subject. There is a high proportion of direct teaching. Explanations and demonstrations given by teachers are clear. Introductory activities at the start of lessons give due regard to pupils' mental and oral work and are used well to develop their skills for carrying out mental calculations. Pupils are involved through discussions and questioning. They are given strategies to check the accuracy of their answers and are encouraged to make a link between operations such as multiplication and division, and to learn a variety of methods to solve the same problem. Individual targets for improvement are set for pupils with special educational needs, but are occasionally imprecise, and for pupils who speak English as an additional language. In a minority of lessons, weaknesses in teaching include unclear explanations, leading to confused understanding of number bonds; assigning of less challenging work, due to low expectations, and insecure management of pupils. In these lessons, an unsatisfactory climate for learning results, adversely affecting pupils' progress. Teachers set homework on a weekly basis to consolidate the week's work, although it is used inconsistently as a resource for raising achievement. The introduction of the school's numeracy strategy last September has had a positive impact on teaching and learning and, thereby, pupils' achievements. Standards of numeracy are improving throughout the school. Numeracy sessions are well structured, following the national guidelines well. Teachers make good reference to the National Numeracy Strategy for their planning and are beginning to reflect on their lessons to refine practice, using daily assessments of pupils' learning well.
72. The co-ordinator for mathematics is enthusiastic and provides an effective lead in the subject with a very clear view for its development. He has devised an appropriate action plan to ensure the effective implementation of the numeracy strategy within the newly amalgamated school. He is well aware of the subject's strengths and the areas that need development. He has made very good use of data analysis to target groups of children and to raise achievements in line with national expectations. He is raising awareness of the uses of numeracy across the curriculum. Monitoring of teaching is used well to gather information about standards and the effectiveness of developments in the subject, as well as reviews of work in pupils' books. Useful comments and advice are passed back to teachers about the quality of marking, the presentation of work and progress made by pupils in the range of work provided. The co-ordinator has attended relevant courses and is providing appropriate guidance and training for the staff.

SCIENCE

73. The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests of 11-year-olds show that standards in science are in line with the national average. In comparison with similar schools, they are well above average. Statutory Teachers' Assessments of seven-year-olds also show standards that are broadly in line with average and above the average of similar schools. Results for girls are well below those of boys; no explanation for this is apparent from observations of lessons during the inspection.
74. Standards of attainment by the ages of seven and 11 currently meet national expectations. By the age of seven, pupils are aware of the need to make tests fair and are beginning to plan tests with the support of teachers. They can make their own predictions about what might happen in an experiment and record their results, comparing them with their expectations. They understand pushing and pulling forces well and know that some materials are natural and some are man-made; they understand that there are different forms of matter, such as solids and liquids and that some changes to materials, for example, through heating, are permanent and others reversible. However, their presentation is often poor, with untidy drawings and tables. By the age of 11, nearly all pupils have a good understanding of how to construct a fair test and they are beginning to draw inferences from their results. Many integrate new facts into their thinking – for example, noticing that both heating and cooling can have the effect of preserving food. Most pupils understand the workings of the main organs of the body, such as the eye and the heart, and can recall specialised vocabulary; they can name parts of plants and they understand food webs, life cycles and electric circuits. Work is often well presented by eleven-year-olds with neatly and carefully drawn diagrams and clearly legible tables of results. The school has maintained its sound science standards for seven-year-olds since the amalgamation of infant and junior schools and has improved the standards achieved by pupils at the age of 11. Pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs make progress at rates similar to other pupils.
75. Teaching in science is good throughout the school and occasionally very good in classes nearer the top of the school. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of science are generally good and often very good. Teachers' planning is good, including clearly written guidance about what pupils should know by the end of lessons. Teachers share this information with pupils, which helps them to decide where a key effort is required. Expectations are usually high, which results in challenging work, promoting pupils' own thinking. Learning and progress are supported well by basing lessons firmly on previously acquired skills and knowledge. Lessons are well structured with a good introduction, a main activity, which is often practical and a final discussion session to review results and consolidate learning. This pattern allows pupils of all attainments, including those with special needs and those speaking English as an additional language, to build on their skills and knowledge systematically. As a result, they are secure in their learning, carrying out observations and making suggestions confidently. In the most successful lessons, the enthusiasm of the teacher generates excitement about science and pupils work with an enhanced commitment and energy.
76. The subject is developing well and is well co-ordinated. Planning and pupils' work are regularly monitored and opportunities for the professional development of teaching skills, including the modelling of science lessons by experienced teachers are underway. Good assessment procedures are in place in some classes, but are inconsistently used through the school. Resources for science, while generally satisfactory, need to be brought fully into line with the demands of the present scheme of work. This includes the availability of up to date programs to support the subject by the use of information technology. While teachers are generally aware of Health and Safety considerations, formal risk assessments are currently not carried out for science activities.

ART

77. The standards of attainment reached by the oldest pupils in the school are generally good for their age. Throughout their time in school, pupils make good progress in art. Efforts have been made to make the policy and plans of work more effective in covering a broad range of activities, developing pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding and making art relevant to the needs of the pupils of different ages.
78. By seven, standards are at least satisfactory. Pupils make use of their experiences, observations and imagination to create their prints, pictures and designs and often talk about these with some confidence. Pupils in Year 2 make press prints, using polystyrene tiles, blunt pencils, paints and a roller. They learn to evaluate their work by reflecting on techniques they

have learnt and talking about the ones that worked and which did not. Pupils in Year 2 also make use of the computer to draw their pictures and designs. Pupils in Year 1 work well to explore the elements of line, shape, form and colour and make effective observational drawings of flowers and other objects and artefacts. Younger pupils use a variety of materials, tools and techniques to create their two and three-dimensional pictures and models. They experiment with colours and a variety of materials to create bubble prints, string patterns and 'sprinkle pictures'. They use art well to express their ideas and feelings.

79. Throughout the school, pupils experiment with line, shape, space, colour, tone and texture to create observational drawings, paintings and sketches. Pupils in Year 6 experiment with the 'double primary system' to mix and match colours and to achieve their desired lighter or darker shades of red, blue and yellow. Year 6 work, based on Henry Moore's study *Sleepers on an Underground Platform* is very effective in showing the effect of time and place on the artist. Displayed where it is, in the hall, it provides a good stimulus for other classes. Pupils show a good awareness of the techniques and styles of artists, such as Kandinsky, Henry Moore and Andy Warhol. They enjoy imitating such styles, using skills to communicate their own ideas and feelings. Displays of work of pupils in Year 4 also show secure learning of techniques in exploring a wide variety of materials, including printing and drawing after careful observation of appropriate artefacts. Pupils in Year 5 have made good use of the local area to find suitable subjects for their work. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Most achieve standards that are similar to those of their classmates.
80. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They enjoy the subject and show good levels of concentration while working or while listening to their teachers. They take pride in what they achieve and are willing to repeat processes and techniques if they are not satisfied with an initial effort. They share resources well and co-operate with each other during collaborative activities.
81. The overall quality of teaching is good, although it is better in classes for older pupils than it is in those for five to seven-year-olds. The planning and preparation of activities are good. It produces good opportunities to develop knowledge and understanding of the work of artists from different periods and places. Pupils are encouraged to respond to the work of artists and craftspeople, including each other. Appreciation and enjoyment of art are improving as a result. There are limited opportunities, however, to reflect on art from non-western cultures. Where teaching is good, it is based on careful planning, introducing new techniques systematically. Stimulating resources are used well, developing skills and helping pupils to refine their own ideas. In Year 6, for example, pupils were carrying out a detailed study of a fish. They observed the fish closely, examined the proportion, form, shape, line and colour and used charcoal, chalk and a view-finder to develop their compositions. It helps pupils to experience success, including pupils with special educational needs. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate each other's work and to discuss the effects created by the use of different techniques. Where teaching is less effective, the management of pupils' behaviour is less successful, which reduces the pace of work and teachers do not encourage pupils to reflect enough on what they do.
82. Art is well led and managed. The co-ordinator's knowledge and enthusiasm have a strong impact. The draft policy and termly-plans for each year group provide appropriate guidance for planning, ensuring that skills develop progressively. Many opportunities for printing, painting, drawing, work with textiles, collage and clay are provided. The co-ordinator is in the process of getting advice and support for devising new schemes of work for use in September. Art contributes effectively to raising pupils' esteem and confidence and enhances the visual environment of the school.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

83. A newly appointed co-ordinator has recently introduced the recommended guidelines of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. Evidence shows that it is having a good impact on teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject and, thereby, the development of pupils' skills. Examples of work that was seen are generally in line with national expectations for the relevant ages.

84. Planning shows that in classes for younger pupils up to about the age of seven, appropriate skills are introduced. Pupils develop their competence in using simple tools and equipment such as scissors, adhesives, straws and split pins, for cutting, joining and decorating a range of materials. They use a variety of commercial construction kits to make effective models. Pupils in Year 2 make wheeled vehicles, using axles. The teacher has provided for a good build up of skills and work is linked well to forces in science. Pupils have made preparatory drawings and the development of their knowledge is supported by a good selection of resources. In classes for seven to 11-year-olds, teachers' planning allows good opportunities for planning, designing, making and evaluating. Pupils in Year 5 are currently making moving toys, which demonstrate how a rotary movement can be turned into a linear movement. They are working from their own designs and the teacher has organised groups so that each pupil has responsibility for an aspect of the construction that has been planned. They show a good understanding of what they are doing and can evaluate their work critically.
85. Throughout the school, pupils make satisfactory progress, including those pupils for whom English is an additional language and pupils with special educational needs. Responses to practical work are good. Pupils enjoy making things and are proud of their achievements. They use tools safely. In the lessons observed, pupils worked well individually or in groups and persevered to achieve good results. Teachers use opportunities for pupils to assess their work well and to remind the class of the need for accuracy and care.
86. Generally, teaching is satisfactory and teachers are developing their confidence and skills through the guidance and support of the co-ordinator and the new scheme of work. Teachers have the knowledge to demonstrate effectively what pupils need to do to make progress. Resources are well prepared and used successfully. Planning is organised to teach and build on skills and provides for a structured approach. Opportunities are good to compare products and pupils are using literacy skills to write letters to a local supermarket, asking to research sandwich fillings.
87. The co-ordinator has produced a good action plan for the subject and has selected appropriate topics for pupils to study from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's scheme of work. This enables teachers to plan together and share expertise. Currently, he is monitoring half-termly plans and offering advice and guidance. He is keen to develop the subject to produce a policy for the whole school.

GEOGRAPHY

88. Seven-year-olds achieve standards that are broadly in line with national expectations. They make good progress in the acquisition of mapping skills and in their knowledge and understanding of their local area. In a lesson in Year 1, pupils drew maps of their route from home to school, demonstrating their knowledge and understanding of what maps are expected to show. Year 2 pupils know the main features of their own locality and can compare and contrast it with the Isle of Struay. They use appropriate vocabulary such as "transport", "farming", and "island".
89. The work of 11-year-olds is broadly in line with national expectations. Studies of their own locality show that pupils can describe and understand changes that have occurred and have been planned by the local authority. They are beginning to understand how these processes can change the area and that changes affect the lives, jobs and leisure patterns of people. Pupils visited an area marked for development and read the public notices. They wrote to the council, communicating their views against or in favour of the proposed changes. Some pupils had written supporting the changes but asked for better compensation for those who would lose their homes and businesses. Pupils have a good attitude to the subject and enjoy debating the plans. In relation to the study of rivers, they visited the River Thames and were very keen to describe its value as a tourist attraction, for wildlife, use of land nearby and its history. Pupils enjoy their work and are keen to learn about the world in which they live. Good relationships between pupils and teachers contribute to a good climate for learning.
90. Teaching is good. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject and plan lessons suited to the ability of their pupils. Good cross-curricular links are established with literacy and numeracy. Good use is made of primary and secondary sources such as visits in the locality and photographs are taken and used to develop geographical skills. Year 5 pupils are taken on a

residential trip, which significantly enhances learning by developing skills in understanding the characteristics of localities. It also offers different recreational and academic activities.

91. There is no co-ordinator for the subject at present and no recent policy. However, the school has adopted the scheme of work recommended by the Qualification and Curriculum Authority. This guidance supports the development of the curriculum effectively. Teachers' long, medium and daily lesson planning indicates that a balance is achieved in teaching geographical knowledge and the necessary skills. Progression and continuity in pupils' learning are maintained well. There are sufficient resources to meet the broad range of the requirements of the National Curriculum. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and use the information gained to plan the next steps in learning.

HISTORY

92. Owing to the way in which history is timetabled, no lessons were observed in classes for pupils aged from five up to seven-years-old. However, a discussion with a group of pupils in Year 2 and a scrutiny of work shows that attainment is approaching standards that are in line with expectations and that good progress is occurring.
93. Pupils have developed a sense of the passage of time through their topics on Florence Nightingale and The Great Fire of London. They know about hospitals and medical knowledge in the past, making contrasts with the present. Many pupils explained in detail how the cause of many diseases was poor sanitary conditions. They were able to explain their understanding of first-hand sources of historical evidence, talking, for example, about Samuel Pepys's diary and the Great Fire of London. They often use correct vocabulary such as old, new, long ago, olden times and our times. They are able to talk about the past, referring to artefacts, photos, pictures and stories as evidence for what they say.
94. The work of 11-year-olds is broadly in line with national expectations, with several pupils exceeding them. Pupils are making good progress in lessons and over time. They acquire a wide range of knowledge and understanding about peoples and societies of the past, with good opportunities to learn about Tudor England, Vikings and Victorians. Pupils are able to describe the main features of these societies and times and write accounts and stories about the life of poor Victorian children. They speak in detail about the legal system and harsh punishments of the Tudor period and the sailing ability of the Vikings. They have a good understanding of chronology and use evidence well to draw their conclusions. Progress in the understanding of historical change is based on secure learning. The effects of change on the daily lives of people, such as the migration into towns brought by the industrial revolution, are well understood. Higher attaining pupils linked this well to the deterioration of conditions in Victorian cities and the consequent need for reforms. Pupils handle artefacts carefully. They understand the need to seek first-hand and secondary sources as historical evidence and to ask whether different types of evidence are consistent.
95. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good and they are keen to talk about history. Year 2 pupils responded enthusiastically when discussing the previous term's topic on Florence Nightingale. Older pupils described the life of children in Victorian times and their hard life, performing dangerous jobs as chimney sweeps and workers in factories.
96. Judged by the lessons seen, the overall quality of teaching is good. Teachers know the subject well and use all key elements of the National Curriculum to develop pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills. Expectations are generally high and management of pupils is good. However, skills in the interpretation of history, by looking at different points of view, are not as well developed as other skills.
97. There are sufficient artefacts, books and resources to extend understanding in history. Visits to places of interest, such as museums are used to extend learning. Pupils' experiences are further enriched through establishing cross-curricular links with subjects such as literacy, art, geography and information technology.
98. The co-ordinator took up responsibility in September 1999 and has made a sound start, contributing well to the development of the subject. She has audited resources and begun to fill gaps, ensuring that the National Curriculum requirements can be met. The co-ordinator

supports teaching through monitoring plans and by suggesting appropriate resources. There has as yet been no direct monitoring of teaching to improve standards and there is no written policy. However, the school has adopted the scheme of work recommended by the Qualification and Curriculum Authority. This guidance is used effectively and maintains progression and continuity, thereby supporting pupils' learning. Long and medium term plans and daily lesson plans ensure that there is sufficient balance in teaching historical skills and knowledge.

99. Teachers keep their own records of pupils' attainment, using day to day assessments to plan the curriculum, adapting it to the needs of pupils with different attainments, setting activities of appropriate challenge and difficulty. Work is marked regularly and most teachers write comments for pupils about what is good and how to improve further. However, it is not consistent through the school.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

100. Attainment by both the ages of seven and 11 is below national expectations. However, pupils with special educational needs in classes for older pupils make good progress in using information technology across the curriculum when working with classroom support staff.
101. By the age of seven, pupils use a drawing program to create pictures of the Fire of London. However, they are unable to name the parts of a computer, although they knew how to save work. They learn how to display information using a pictogram, but no pupils were observed doing this independently. Pupils in Year 5 used the same drawing program to support religious education, illustrating their work on Ash Wednesday. However, a lack of detailed understanding of the program prevented them from completing the task and many were unable to save their attempts without support. By the age of 11, pupils can use a CD-ROM to find out about mould and yeast to support work in science. However, the information was not then incorporated into their other work. There is little evidence of controlling, monitoring and modelling.
102. The overall quality of teaching is unsatisfactory. It is too inconsistent, depending on the confidence and subject knowledge of individual teachers. When teaching is good, there are well-paced demonstrations and questioning is used effectively to assess pupils' knowledge and understanding. Targeted pupils are used to demonstrate functions and all pupils are involved. When teaching is unsatisfactory, expectations are low and pupils have difficulty in following what they are expected to learn during whole class teaching. As a result, they quickly lose interest, reducing the impact of teaching on progress.
103. The newly appointed subject co-ordinator is enthusiastic and is fully aware that pupils' skills throughout the school are currently inadequate. There is a whole-school policy and the nationally recommended guidelines produced by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority have been adapted for use as the school's scheme of work. At present, a lack of resources means that this cannot be fully implemented. Consequently not all areas of the subject are taught. The co-ordinator has ensured that every class has at least one computer with CD-ROM capability, but as yet has had no opportunity to monitor teaching of the subject. The school has yet to agree its information technology strategy and undertake an audit of staff skills, although there are plans to move computers from the classrooms to a central area to improve teaching and learning facilities. The school does not currently have access to the National Grid for Learning and has not yet planned to use the New Opportunities Fund for training and staff development.

MUSIC

104. Standards in music are generally high. There are many strengths in the areas of composing and performing. Standards in listening and appraising are sound. Many 11-year-olds are confident performers, showing a willingness to sing songs and play instruments both in small groups and solo. They sing tunefully with good pitch, attempting pieces that employ complicated rhythms, often with lively, syncopated structures that demand considerable skill and concentration. In one lesson, pupils in Year 6 performed limericks that they had made up themselves, keeping in tune and maintaining the pattern very well. Pupils know a broad repertoire of light classics, English and American Folk Songs, popular music by singer-songwriters, such as Buddy Holly

and Abba, as well as examples of musical styles from other cultures. A performance of *Sing a Song of Sixpence in the style of Handel* by pupils in the Song Club was particularly impressive.

105. Throughout the school, very good teaching ensures pupils' use of the school's good range of musical instruments to accompany themselves. A wide range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments, recorders and, occasionally, pupils' own instruments are used well in every lesson. Provision for pupils of different attainment is very good. The co-ordinator, who teaches the subject to pupils aged seven to 11, has devised a scheme that ensures progression and continuity very well. Pupils learn a collection of songs or recorder pieces, for example, which require the acquisition of skills to a particular standard. When they master it, they move on to a more challenging set of pieces that requires a more demanding level of skills. At each level, performances are assessed carefully and very good teaching that is well matched to needs then occurs. Pupils who possess secure knowledge and perform competently help others to acquire the skills that they need. Pupils help to assess performance. A boy and a girl in one lesson, for example, collaborated sensibly and accurately in drawing the teacher's attention to those pupils who were "...acting the words of the songs in their expressions." These methods of teaching and assessing work very well as pupils move through the school. It allows large numbers to be taught to play the recorder to a high standard. It is also excellent for pupils' self-development, including them in the processes of teaching and learning. This allows them considerable responsibility and they respond well to the moral imperative of giving back to others something of what they have acquired themselves. The subject also provides opportunities for social and cultural development, as pupils of all ages sing, play instruments, compose together and perform for each other. Currently the school has well over 100 pupils learning the recorder. Older and higher attaining pupils reach a very high standard, sight-reading simple pieces from musical notation and playing with considerable accuracy and confidence. As pupils learn to perform, opportunities are provided for them to listen to their own performances and to appraise them, discussing with each other what needs to be done to improve. Often, the teacher sets a composing exercise based on the results of such appraisal. Further opportunities to listen and appraise occur during assemblies, when music is played for pupils to muster and leave. However, it was not possible to see one of these sessions during the inspection. Opportunities are provided for pupils to perform at local festivals for schools, contributing well to their confidence and personal development.
106. Pupils' very good attitudes to work stem from high levels of involvement in what they learn. They enjoy music and are always willing to listen to their teacher and to each other. Pupils with special educational needs or with English as an additional language are fully involved in the subject and respond well to the teachers' sensitive approach. Pupils from different cultures and backgrounds are encouraged to share their musical ideas.
107. The overall quality of teaching is very good and never falls below good. The teacher has excellent knowledge of the subject and employs very good methods that ensure that pupils learn at fast rates, progressing securely in their knowledge and skills. Management of pupils is very good. It includes a system for rewarding them for good work and attitudes, which feeds into the school's *Commendation Assembly*. Pupils are encouraged to practise at home and small tasks are set, such as writing lyrics and making up simple tunes, encouraging their interest and representing a good use of homework.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

108. By the ages of seven and 11, the attainment of most pupils in physical education is in line with national expectations, except in the area of dance, where, by the age of eleven, attainment is above what is expected and, sometimes, well above. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make good progress. Progress is particularly good in dance. By the age of seven, pupils use the floor and apparatus appropriately for planning, performing and evaluating a series of movements involving curling and stretching. They lift and move apparatus safely and show consideration of the needs of other pupils. By the age of 11, pupils use balance, different types of steps and travel, different levels and tension to create complex dances both for themselves and for public performances. They respond effectively to music from Africa and improve their work through evaluation, discussion and practice.
109. Overall, the quality of teaching is good throughout the school, including many very good lessons in classes for older pupils. Teachers' planning is concise, with clearly stated learning

objectives, resulting in good pace and clear instructions for pupils. When teaching is very good, expectations are high and teachers relate activities to health education. Pupils are given strong encouragement to improve their performance and guidance on how they can achieve it. Teachers use demonstrations well to illustrate teaching points, asking higher attaining pupils to model activities. Evaluation forms an integral part of the lesson, enabling pupils to make tangible progress and there is clear progression from one lesson to the next, building on their knowledge, skills and understanding.

110. The subject co-ordinator has been in post only since last September and since then has done a great deal to raise the profile of the subject, which has been a priority for development. This has enabled both key stages to be adequately resourced for all areas of the physical education programme. The co-ordinator is a qualified sports-trainer and has led staff meetings to share his expertise.
111. Although the school does not have a playing field, good use is made of its two halls, outside play area and the local swimming pool to ensure that all pupils receive a broad curriculum.
112. A policy has been agreed and an outline scheme of work has been produced. Teachers are supported by the co-ordinator through individual advice, but monitoring and evaluation of the subject does not yet take place. The links established with the Sadler's Wells company ensure that every class is taught dance by an expert, which makes a valuable contribution to standards and provides extra-curricular opportunities for pupils to develop their skills and enthusiasm. Links with Arsenal Football Club and Islington Boat Club are also used to provide expert coaching in extra-curricular hockey and rowing. A small number of parents raised doubts about the quality of the school's provision of physical education. Inspectors do not agree with them and find that it is generally good.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

113. Religious education is not well developed in the school and attainment by the age of 11 is below expectations. During the inspection, no lessons for five to seven-year-olds were seen and only very recent work of pupils of all ages was available for analysis. Because planning for the subject throughout the school is new, it is difficult to make judgements about progress over time. However, the school accepts that there are shortcomings in the subject. The newly produced policy and outline of topics to be taught to each year group conform with the agreed syllabus. However, it is not fully in place in practice. Nevertheless, pupils are beginning to develop their knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other world faiths. Pupils in Year 6 are familiar with Buddhist precepts and can relate them effectively to their own experiences and pupils in Year 4 are able to compare some beliefs and practices of Islam and Christianity.
114. The quality of teaching in inspected lessons is at least satisfactory and sometimes very good. Effective questioning is used to assess what pupils know and understand and teachers' planning indicates that they have the appropriate knowledge to ensure that the factual content of teaching is accurate and clear. In the lessons seen, teachers used the wide range of religions represented by the pupils as a resource to supply first-hand information and to develop respect for different beliefs. Clear links are made between the content of lessons and its relevance to pupils' own lives, as when pupils in Year 4 discussed resisting temptations based on their knowledge of Lent. Teachers also use the subject effectively to support literacy. For example, pupils design their own questions and are reminded of their literacy targets when recording work. As yet, there is no evidence of pupils visiting places of worship or having the opportunity to meet and listen to leaders and representatives of different faiths in the local community. The time allowed for some lessons is too short to allow a full exploration of the topics being covered.
115. Pupils behave well in lessons. They listen to each other and are interested in the subjects being studied, which contributes to the quality of their learning.
116. The co-ordinator's main aim since amalgamation has been to ensure that religious education is taught in every class and that the requirements of the agreed syllabus are met. Some resources have been bought to support the curriculum. There has, however, been no opportunity to monitor or evaluate the teaching of the subject yet, although the co-ordinator is aware that more varied methods of teaching and learning are required. It is planned that ideas to address

this will be incorporated into a full scheme of work, which will also suggest visits, visitors and links across the curriculum.