

INSPECTION REPORT

Hunters Hall Primary School

Dagenham

LEA area : Barking and Dagenham

Unique Reference Number : 131844

Inspection Number: 181582

Headteacher : Miss P. Nuttall

Reporting inspector: Ms. J. Dyson
15926

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Information about the school

Type of school :	Infants and Junior
Type of control :	County
Age range of pupils :	4-11
Gender of pupils :	Mixed
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Appropriate authority :	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors :	Mr. J. Fryer
Date of the previous inspection:	31 October–3 November 1994 – Infant School 2-5 October 1996 – Junior School

Information about the inspection team

Team Members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
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Mrs. R. Hall		Attendance Support, guidance and pupils welfare Partnership with parents and the community
Mrs. C. Pryor	English Under Fives	The curriculum and assessment The efficiency of the school
Mr. D. Reedy	English	
Mr. S. Lucock	Information Technology	
Mr. S. Rowe	Mathematics History Geography	
Mr. N. Sagar	Design and Technology Art Physical Education	
Mr. B. Singh	Science Equal Opportunities	Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- Teaching in Key Stage 2 is strong.
- Attainment in science at the end of both key stages is very high.
- Music is a strength of the school.
- The quality of provision for children under five and for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- The quality of provision for all aspects of the personal development of pupils is a strength of the school.
- Behaviour is very good and the school has excellent procedures for monitoring and promoting discipline and good behaviour.
- The quality of information which the school provides for parents is very good.
- The headteacher provides strong and effective leadership
- Financial control and administration are very good.

Where the school has weaknesses

- I. Standards in English, although showing considerable improvement since the previous inspection, are still not high enough.
- II. Standards in information technology at the end of Key Stage 2 are not high enough.
- III. Literacy and numeracy are not yet co-ordinated across the subjects of the curriculum.

The school has considerably more strengths than weaknesses. The governors' action plan will set out how the weaknesses identified during the inspection will be tackled. The plan will be sent to all parents and guardians of pupils at the school.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school has developed very well since the inspections of the then infant and junior schools in 1994 and 1996 respectively. Attainment in English, mathematics and science at the end of both key stages has improved significantly. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 has improved considerably and is now at least satisfactory and often good. The quality of teaching in mathematics has improved. It is consistently good and effectively supports pupils' progress. The assessment and provision for pupils with special educational needs (SEN) has improved and the school and the SEN Base now identify, assess and monitor pupils with SEN with great care. The amalgamation of the two schools has been managed very successfully and the school is well placed to sustain its development.

Standards in subjects

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

Performance in:	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools
English	D	D
Mathematics	C	C
Science	A	A

Key	
<i>well above average</i>	A
<i>above average</i>	B
<i>average</i>	C
<i>below average</i>	D
<i>well below average</i>	E

(These letter comparisons are normally supplied by OFSTED. For technical reasons they were not available for this inspection. They have therefore been calculated by the registered Inspector using the 1999 Autumn Package. This makes comparisons with similar schools on the basis of free school meals. As the school's free school meals figure has varied significantly over the past nine months, from 15-23%, and was at the time of the tests just above the 20% boundary of two bands, the mid-

point figures between the two bands have been used for this calculation.)

Results of National Curriculum tests show that standards in mathematics are average in comparison with all schools and with similar schools and standards in science are well above average for all and for similar schools. Standards in English have improved considerably since 1998 but are below average in comparison with all schools and with similar schools.

Quality of teaching

Teaching in:	Under 5	5 - 7 Years	7 – 11 Years
English	Good	Satisfactory	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good	Good
Science		Satisfactory	Good
Information Technology	Good	Good	Good
Religious Education	Good	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Other subjects	Good	Satisfactory	Good

The quality of teaching is satisfactory or better in almost 98% of lessons overall. It is satisfactory or better in all lessons for pupils under five where 93% of lessons had good or very good features. In Key Stage 1 97% of lessons were satisfactory or better with 44% of lessons having good or very good features. This shows a considerable improvement since the previous inspection of the infants' school. In Key Stage 2 teaching was satisfactory or better in 97% of lessons with almost 70% of lessons having good or very good features. The school has maintained the high quality of teaching identified in the previous inspection of the junior school. The teaching of pupils with special needs is very good.

The high quality of teaching across the school is effectively supporting both the academic and the personal development of the pupils.

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

Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Behaviour is very good. The school's procedures for monitoring and promoting discipline and good behaviour are excellent.
Attendance	Attendance is in line with the national average and has improved since the last inspection.
Ethos*	The ethos of the school is positive, shared and consistent. Attitudes to learning are very good. Relationships are very good across the school. The school's strong focus on the personal development of pupils as an essential basis for raising standards provides a strong foundation for the life of the school.
Leadership and management	The headteacher works effectively with the deputies, other senior managers and the governing body to provide strong leadership and management. The curriculum co-ordinators and year heads carry out their management roles effectively. The amalgamation of the two schools has been successfully managed.
Curriculum	The curriculum is appropriately broad and balanced at all key stages. Equality of access and opportunity is good.
Pupils with special educational needs	Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and they make good progress.
Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school makes very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This provides a firm foundation for all the other aspects of the work of the school and effectively supports pupils' attainment and progress.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	All these aspects are good overall and effectively and efficiently deployed. The quality of displays throughout the school is very high. The dining hall is inadequate.
Value for money	The school is providing good value for money.

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

• **The parents' views of the school**

What most parents like about the School	What some parents are not happy about
IV. The successful amalgamation has resulted in a consistent ethos across the school V. The school promotes positive attitudes and the quality of relationships between the children is good.	VI. A small minority of parents felt that they VII. A few parents felt that they did not have culum.

The inspection found that parents are informed about their children's progress at parents' meetings, which are well attended, and through the annual report, which is detailed and meets requirements. The school responded very quickly to parents' concern about curriculum information and now provides detailed information to parents about what will be taught to children in each year group.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

In order to raise standards further and continue the improvement of the pupils' quality of education, the governors, headteacher, senior managers and staff need to:

- VIII. build on the existing improvement in English and continue to raise standards by:
- (i) maintaining the current focus on literacy; (see paras. 6, 11, 97)
 - (ii) ensuring that the literacy strategy is appropriately co-ordinated so that opportunities for developing reading and writing are fully exploited across all aspects of the curriculum; (see paras. 9, 99)
- (●) build the teaching of numeracy more systematically across the other subjects of the curriculum; (see para. 116)
 - (●) raise standards in IT. (See paras. 8, 12, 142)

In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan. These are indicated in paragraphs 25, 31, 32, 33, 36, 138 and 141.

- (●) improve medium and short term planning, particularly in the non-core subjects, by ensuring a clearer focus on learning objectives and learning outcomes;
- (●) strengthen the quality of teaching in the foundation subjects by:
 - (i) developing teachers' subject knowledge;
 - (ii) improving their understanding of the national expectations for the foundation subjects;
 - (iii) developing accurate, ongoing and manageable strategies for assessing pupils' progress.

(iii) **INTRODUCTION**

(iii) **Characteristics of the school**

1. Hunters Hall Primary School came into being in January 1998 as a result of the amalgamation of Hunters Hall Infant and Junior Schools. The school is in Dagenham in the Alibon Ward. The majority of the pupils live locally. Only 2.0% of the adults have higher education in comparison with the national figure of 13.5%. 7.4% of the pupils are from high social class households but 27.1% are in overcrowded households.

2. There are currently 619 pupils on roll and 66 children in the Nursery. There are 21 classes in the school. The school has a Speech and Language Unit, which opened in 1991, catering for children with specific speech and language disorders who are brought in by bus from other parts of the Borough. 8.4% of pupils are from minority ethnic backgrounds. There are 17 pupils for whom English is an additional language. 49 pupils are currently at stages 3-5 of the Code of Practice. The percentage of pupils identified as having special needs is 8%. 2.6% of pupils have statements of special needs which is above the average for maintained primary schools and slightly above the Borough average. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals has fluctuated. It ranges from just over 20% in May 1999 to 22.3% at the time of the inspection. This is above the national average.

3. The infant school was last inspected in 1994 and the junior school was last inspected in 1996.

4. The targets set by the school are appropriate and its capacity for continued improvement is very good.

Key indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 1¹

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	42	49	91

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or Above	Boys	34	38	39
	Girls	44	46	48
	Total	78	84	87
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	87 (80)	93 (83)	97 (86)
	National	(80)	(81)	(85)
Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or Above	Boys	35	38	35
	Girls	44	44	45
	Total	79	82	80
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	88 (83)	91 (84)	89 (84)
	National	(81)	(85)	(86)

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

Attainment at Key Stage 2²

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for latest reporting year:

		Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		1999	49	40	89
National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science	
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	28	34	44	
	Girls	29	27	34	
	Total	57	61	78	
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	67 (53)	72 (53)	92 (71)	
	National	(64)	(58)	(69)	
Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science	
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	30	33	35	
	Girls	27	30	33	
	Total	57	63	68	
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	67 (55)	74 (60)	80 (66)	
	National	(63)	(63)	(69)	

(iii) Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year :

		%
Authorised Absence	School	5.8
	National comparative data	5.7
Unauthorised Absence	School	0.7
	National comparative data	0.5

Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year :

	Number
Fixed period	1
Permanent	0

Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is :

	%
Very good or better	21.60
Satisfactory or better	97.60
Less than satisfactory	2.40

(iii)

(iii) **PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

(iii) **EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL**

(iii) **Attainment and progress**

5. The attainment of children on entry to the school is below average. Children in the nursery and reception classes are making good progress in all areas of learning and are on course to meet the expected standard by the age of five. At the end of Key Stage 1 attainment in English is in line with the national average. Attainment in mathematics is above the national average. This is supported by the most recent national test results. In the most recent end of key stage tests at Key Stage 1 in 1999, results for reading were in line with national averages and in line with averages for similar schools. In writing, results were above the national average for all schools and for similar schools. In mathematics, test results were well above average by both measures. Attainment in science at the end of Key Stage 1 is in line with the national average.

6. At the end of Key Stage 2 overall attainment in English is below average. Attainment in mathematics is in line with the national average whilst attainment in science is well above average. Again this is supported by the most recent national test results. In the end of Key Stage 2 tests in 1999 pupils' combined average points score for all three core subjects was broadly in line with national averages for all and for similar schools. The proportion of pupils achieving Level 4 is just below the national average for English, in line with the national average for mathematics and well above it for science. In terms of average points score, performance in English was below the national average for all schools and for similar schools. By the same measure, performance in mathematics was in line with the average for all schools and for similar schools. Attainment in science was again well above the average by both measures. This represents a significant improvement in attainment for all three core subjects over the performance in 1996 at Key Stage 2, at the time of the last inspection report for the then junior school.

7. Although the 1999 test results point towards a slightly lower performance by boys in comparison to girls, in reading at Key Stage 1 and in English at Key Stage 2, inspection evidence showed no significant difference in attainment and progress between boys and girls across the subjects.

8. Attainment in information technology is in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and below the national expectation for the oldest pupils in Key Stage 2. In religious education the attainment of the oldest pupils in both key stages is at least in line with the expectations of the local Agreed Syllabus.

9. In order for the school's literacy strategy to be more effective in raising standards the school needs to make sure that there is a more coherent focus on literacy across the curriculum. Plans are not yet in place to develop numeracy appropriately in other areas of the school curriculum.

10. Children in the nursery and reception classes make particularly good progress with the systematic development of personal, social, speaking, listening and literacy skills. At the time of the inspection these children had only been in school for six weeks but attainment of children at the beginning of Year 1 supports the view that they will reach the expected standard by the age of five.

11. Current progress in English and literacy is at least satisfactory across the school. This has not been the case for all children in the past and there is still ground to be made up for the older children. The school's additional literacy strategy is particularly effective in helping lower attaining pupils to catch up. However, the literacy strategy is not yet sufficiently co-ordinated across all aspects of the curriculum to maximise its effect. The range of writing in subjects other than English is limited and this has a negative impact on progress. Progress in speaking and listening is good throughout the school. Pupils' progress in mathematics is now at least satisfactory and often good. Progress in science is sound in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2.

12. Progress in the other subjects of the curriculum is generally sound across the age range.

However, progress in physical education and music is good in both key stages. In religious education, although it is generally satisfactory, it is very good in Year 6. In information technology progress seen during the week of the inspection was satisfactory, partly due to the introduction of a new scheme of work and method of teaching, but progress over time in information technology has been unsatisfactory in Key Stage 2.

13. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress. Pupils who are learning more slowly or have other forms of special educational need are identified early and specifically targeted programmes are set up to meet their needs. Progress is regularly checked. The pupils in the speech and language base are also making very good progress and are achieving so well that a number are able to leave the base provision. This is a notable improvement since the last Key Stage 1 inspection.

(iii) **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

14. Overall attitudes to learning are very good. Children engage with the tasks given. Most are willing to answer questions and the juniors often ask pertinent questions. Most children come to lessons well equipped and fully prepared to gain maximum benefit from their time in class.

15. Behaviour is very good overall. Children behave very well in and around the school. They are courteous and polite and show respect for the school's and other children's property. There was one fixed term exclusion and no permanent exclusion in the year prior to the inspection.

16. Relationships in the school are very good. Children share books and other resources. In physical education and science, for example, they share apparatus and equipment well. There is a genuine sense of mutual respect between the children and the adults who work in the school. Adults provide good models of positive attitudes and high expectations. The relationships between teachers, other adults and the children are of high quality.

17. Children's personal development is also good. Most children are willing and able to take responsibility when opportunities arise. Junior children, for example, help the infants without being asked to do so. Year 6 children contribute considerably to the arrangements for assemblies.

18. The school provides a caring, safe and positive environment for learning.

(iii) **Attendance**

19. The figures for attendance are in line with the national average and have improved since the last inspection. The number of holidays taken during term time, which was highlighted in the last inspection report for the junior school, remains a concern to the school. The school's procedures for recording and monitoring attendance are very good. Unauthorised absence is followed up rigorously and the school is tackling the problem of those pupils whose attendance is patchy, well. Rewards for attendance and punctuality are valued by the pupils.

20. A few pupils are late. In the previous report for the infant school, punctuality was raised as a particular weakness but this is no longer the case. Those pupils across both key stages who are late are challenged, recorded and letters are sent home if more than four instances occur. Throughout the school day sessions start punctually and little time is wasted coming in from the playground.

(iii) **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

(iii) **Teaching**

21. The quality of teaching is satisfactory or better in almost 98% of lessons overall. It is satisfactory or better in all lessons for pupils under 5 where 93% of lessons had good or very good features. In Key Stage 1 97% of lessons were satisfactory or better with 44% of lessons having good or very good features. This shows a considerable improvement since the previous inspection when 18% of lessons had unsatisfactory features. In Key Stage 2 teaching was satisfactory or better in 97% of lessons with almost 70% of lessons having good or very good features. The school has maintained the high quality of teaching identified in the previous inspection. Very good features were identified in 22% of lessons overall, 29% at Key Stage 2, 8% at Key Stage 1 and 21% for under 5s.

22. The high quality of teaching across the school is effectively supporting both the academic and the personal development of the pupils.

23. The teaching of children under five is good. Pupils are well managed. Praise is well used to reinforce good behaviour and encourage the children's confidence in their learning. Teachers and support staff work effectively as a team and are clear about their respective roles. The generous allocation of staffing in the nursery enables high levels of interaction with the children as they play. Questioning is used well to develop the children's understanding and language and there are high expectations of speaking and listening. Early reading and writing skills are taught systematically.

24. There was good and very good teaching in all subjects across the school. It was best in physical education and music. Teaching in mathematics is consistently good. There is very good teaching of science in Key Stage 2. Where teaching has very good features expectations are appropriately high and teachers' subject knowledge is good. This is particularly so in the core subjects, in physical education, and design and technology. Teachers build effectively on previous learning and encourage all pupils to participate and respond, as was seen particularly in some science and music lessons. Many teachers use questions very well. Examples of the effective use of questioning were seen in English where questions were used to develop pupils' understanding of complicated language in poetry, and in music to encourage them to evaluate their performance and identify points for improvement. Questioning is also used well to extend and deepen their understanding in religious education. Lessons are generally well planned with clear learning objectives which are explained to pupils, effectively supporting their progress. Teachers are good at adapting work for lower attaining pupils. Class management of behaviour and oral work is very good in almost all cases. Learning resources are often used well, in history, for example, to capture pupils' interest and enthusiasm. The quality and use of day-to-day assessment is good across the school. It is very good for pupils under five.

25. In the very small number of lessons which had unsatisfactory features, and in some lessons which were just satisfactory, teachers' expectations of pupils' abilities to concentrate, think through problems and respond at a higher level were sometimes too low. There is some variation in teachers' knowledge in some of the foundation subjects - art, music, religious education and history, for example. The new schemes of work should help to address this but only if sufficient guidance is given to enable teachers to translate the outline planning of the schemes of work into effective teaching.

26. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good. Teachers and non-teaching staff are very positive about the pupils and encourage their confidence and independence. Teachers plan very well for the pupils and work is very well matched to their needs. There is good co-ordination between class teachers and staff who take additional classes and groups. There are very high expectations of the pupils in terms of their achievement, behaviour and concentration.

27. The teaching of pupils in the Speech and Language Base has much improved since the last Key Stage 1 inspection and is now very good. The planning is very detailed and carefully monitored with the base special support assistant. The teacher in charge of the base balances carefully the proportion of time pupils spend in their class, with the time they are withdrawn to the Base for special teaching. Class teachers are well supported by her to ensure that the needs of the Base pupils are addressed. The withdrawal teaching is specifically targeted to ensure pupils' language needs are addressed so that they can participate fully in the curriculum. Other children in the school also benefit from participating in these sessions.

28. Homework is used appropriately to support pupils' learning.

(iii) **The curriculum and assessment**

29. The school places a high emphasis on literacy and numeracy with over half of the available teaching time being given to English and mathematics in all years. Although all other subjects have been slimmed down to facilitate this, the curriculum continues to be broad and is making an effective contribution to pupils' attainment. Appropriate time is allocated to the various subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. There are satisfactory arrangements for sex education but a suitable drugs education programme has yet to be developed. The school makes very good provision for personal and social development. The total teaching time available to Key Stage 2 pupils is just below the recommended amount.

30. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. It is well planned and appropriate. Work in withdrawal groups is carefully targeted at the specific skills children require. The statutory requirements for pupils with statements of SEN are fully met.

31. The previous inspections of both infant and junior schools identified weaknesses in curriculum and planning arrangements. The school has made satisfactory progress in improving the process of long-term planning. There is now a suitable overview for every subject. The school makes effective use of curriculum frameworks and planning materials provided by the LEA for English and mathematics. These incorporate fully the requirements of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Unsatisfactory planning for science, technology and art were identified in the previous junior school inspection. While planning for science has improved considerably, there are still no schemes of work for art, technology or physical education. There are schemes for all other subjects, although those for religious education and information technology have only recently been introduced and have not yet impacted on pupil attainment.

32. Medium term planning is carried out collaboratively by staff in year groups led by year group leaders. This ensures that pupils in different classes receive a broadly similar education and have equal access to the curriculum. The resulting half-termly forecasts are closely monitored and helpful oral and written feedback is given to staff. There is no consistent format for this planning across the key stages or for different subjects and this would further facilitate the monitoring process.

33. There is discrepancy between the planning documents and how they directly inform the teaching of individual lessons in the non-core subjects. A greater focus on the skills and concepts pupils are to learn would help to provide greater continuity and progression in their learning. Similarly, short term planning in the non-core subjects needs to focus more explicitly on pupil outcomes which genuinely reflect the learning objectives.

34. The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of extra-curricular activities and educational visits.

35. The arrangements for assessing pupils' progress in the core subjects are satisfactory. Assessments in English and mathematics are suitably incorporated into the units of work. Teachers use assessment information to identify gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding and so inform the next teaching steps and materials.

36. The previous inspections of both schools highlighted the need for more consistent use to be made of assessment to inform planning, particularly in relation to the non-core subjects. This continues to be unsatisfactory. In general, assessment arrangements need to be informed by medium and short term curriculum plans which specify clearly the learning objectives and the standards of work expected from the children.

37. The previous inspection of the infant school identified the need for improved assessment and provision for children with SEN as a key issue. This has been thoroughly addressed. The school and the SEN base identify, assess and monitor pupils with SEN with great care. Individual and group education plans set appropriate targets and these inform the curriculum in classes, the base and in additional classes and groups. Pupils with SEN are identified early and are well supported. The statutory requirements for pupils with statements of SEN are fully met and very good provision is made for them.

38. Assessment information and data such as SATs results are rigorously analysed by the headteacher in order to pinpoint areas for development. Teaching and pupils' work are also systematically monitored for coverage, consistency and standards.

(iii) **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

39. The school is making very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This provides a firm foundation for all the other aspects of the school's work, and effectively supports pupils' attainment and progress.

40. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. It is clear that careful thought has been given to this aspect of their personal development and how it can be established within the life of the school. The pupils' capacity for quiet reflection is well developed across the school. There are regular times set aside for reflection in class, often signalled by the lighting of a candle. In the nursery there are opportunities for the children to think quietly. Religious education contributes very effectively to this aspect. For example, pupils in Year 2 reflected on the story of Jonah and shared their thoughts about times when they had been disobedient. Pupils show that they value these opportunities for reflection. Year 5 pupils asked for the class candle to be lit, so that they could spend time in quiet reflection, when they had news of the serious illness of a member of staff. The quality of assemblies is good and they make a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual development. Assemblies are firmly rooted in the everyday business of school life but are planned to allow time for worship and reflection. There is a school prayer, written by a pupil, which is an integral part of all assemblies.

41. The school is effectively providing pupils with knowledge and insight into beliefs and values and enables them to reflect on their experiences in ways which develop their self-knowledge and spiritual awareness. There are many opportunities in lessons for pupils to engage with questions of meaning and purpose and to explore feelings, emotions and aspects of the human condition in depth. Year 6 pupils responded with considerable feeling to Tennyson's poem 'The Lady of Shalott'. In religious education Year 5 pupils explored the symbolism of Christian weddings and funerals. Year 6 explained the implications of religious beliefs about the creation of the world for the way people treat the environment.

42. The school's provision for pupils' moral development is very good. There is a clear foundation of values which underpins the whole life of the school. This is reinforced in assemblies and by class teachers. Adults provide very good models, treating each other and children with respect. The school sets high expectations regarding behaviour, and courtesy to others and pupils know what is expected and respond accordingly. Teaching about right and wrong is constantly reinforced. Discussions with pupils shows that they know and understand the 'golden rules'. They feel that things get sorted out appropriately saying, 'people talk it through' and 'teachers are fair.'

43. The school's provision for pupils' social development is very good. Pupils relate positively to others. The part they play in the life of the school is established from the nursery upwards. There is an expectation that pupils will take on responsibilities from the moment they start school. Nursery children help with milk and biscuits, there are lunch box monitors throughout the school; Year 6 pupils set up the hall for assembly, and choose the music themselves. They also help in the nursery. This is very effective in developing their sense of responsibility. Their understanding of their responsibilities as citizens is developing very well. Pupils participate in the school, local and international communities. The school sponsors the education of a child in India. Harvest gifts from the school are taken to local elderly people by Year 5 pupils. Letters received by the school show how much these are appreciated and commend the behaviour of the children.

44. There is very good provision for pupils' cultural development. The school teaches them to appreciate their own cultural traditions and also the diversity and richness of other cultures, through introducing them to a wide range of art, music and literature. Children in the nursery made a range of types of bread that would be made by people from different cultural backgrounds. Work in art has

focused on well known artists such as Van Gogh and Paul Klee as well as on Islamic art and designs from Australian Aborigine culture. Pupils visit a synagogue, mosque and church as part of their study of religious education. Extra-curricular clubs, such as French and Spanish, provide very good opportunities for pupils to extend and enrich their experience. Educational visits include Eastbury Manor and a Year 6 residential visit to Trewern in Wales.

(iii) **Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**

45. The welfare and guidance of pupils was highlighted as a strength of the school in both of the last inspection reports and it continues to be so. Care has been taken in the amalgamation of the schools to retain an atmosphere of security and warmth, usually associated with a much smaller school, where all pupils are known well by all staff as individuals and relationships are strong. In achieving this, work has been done on building respect between teachers and pupils and in teamwork.

46. Academic progress is monitored through good assessments in core areas. Targets are set for development by staff, pupils and parents and pupils are keen to achieve them. Personal records are up to date and the procedures for promoting and monitoring attendance are very good.

47. Pupils with special educational needs are exceptionally well supported. Children who may have social or emotional problems are supported sensitively. Good use is made of SEN outside agencies both in the Base and in the school.

48. The school's approach to discipline is excellent and results in very good behaviour. Class rules and rules for the whole school are known by all pupils and are consistently applied. The rewards of stickers, stars and house points are valued highly and are very effective in promoting good work and attitudes. Penalty points and a step system record poor behaviour and those who regularly show poor behaviour have tailored programmes which set out to address their specific needs. Pupils interviewed said that they were always treated fairly and that the rare instances of poor behaviour or bullying were dealt with quickly and effectively.

49. Child protection procedures are known to all staff and full records are kept of any concerns.

50. The school makes good use of external SEN agencies. The base teacher works in effective partnership with staff from the Speech and Language Therapy Service and this underpins the very good base provision. Pupils who have social, emotional or behavioural difficulties receive sensitive and well planned support. The high expectation of courteous and co-operative behaviour in the school provides a positive environment for these pupils.

51. There are good systems in place for lunchtimes. Pupils are well supervised and the provision is enhanced by good quality, appropriate playground equipment and the effective use of the outside space.

52. All incidents involving First Aid are recorded. There is a well appointed medical room and staff are appropriately qualified in this area.

53. Since the amalgamation a Health and Safety audit has been carried out by staff and Governors and has been acted upon. The school has yet to amalgamate the two policies, one for each of the original schools, into one Health and Safety policy document.

(iii) **Partnership with parents and the community**

54. The documentation provided for parents by the school is of a very high standard. A very informative prospectus is supplemented by regular, interesting newsletters. Parents are informed about their child's progress at parents' meetings which are well attended and through the annual report which is detailed and meets requirements. Parents are involved in target setting with their children. A recent meeting about homework and targets was attended by over 200 parents and a

further 100 who were unable to attend requested copies of handouts.

55. Most parents support their children at home with reading, spelling and homework, which has been introduced recently, and this is having a positive effect on standards, particularly in reading. Parents of children with SEN in the school and in the Base are positively encouraged to work in partnership with the school. Parents are very supportive of the children who are included in any special literacy programmes.

56. A small number of parents help in school, however, a great number support the school's main fundraising event, an annual sponsored bounce which last year raised over £5,500. A working party of parents was set up at the time of initial discussions about uniform, this group has continued to canvass the opinions of parents, on various topics, in the playground. Parents are keen to support the school and are very appreciative of the work it does.

57. The school has links with the community which provide good support for the curriculum and for pupils' personal development. For example, Year 4 pupils have benefited from a recent visit to the local synagogue. The school regularly participates in local dance, drama and music festivals.

58. Members of community services such as the Police Involvement Team or Fire Brigade visit the school and older children are involved in the Junior Citizens scheme. During the inspection letters were received by the school from local pensioners thanking pupils for their Harvest gifts. All these links have a positive impact on the ethos of the school community and the personal and academic progress of pupils.

59. The Key Stage 1 and 2 SENCOs and the teacher in charge of the base all positively encourage parents of children with SEN to work in partnership with teachers and contribute to their child's learning programmes. They inform parents promptly when there are any problems. Many parents attend the regular reviews of progress.

(iii) **THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL**

(iii) **Leadership and management**

60. The headteacher provides very strong leadership. She is enthusiastic, committed and is actively engaged in the life of the school. She delegates effectively, allowing a certain amount of autonomy while keeping a firm hand on the management of the school. She is seen as open and inclusive by staff. The management structure has been developed to give specific responsibility to all staff on +2 or above, thus involving the majority of staff in some aspect of the management of the school and contributing significantly to their professional development.

61. The headteacher has identified the quality of teaching as the key area for focus and has a rigorous programme of monitoring, through regular classroom observations, with oral and written feedback, which is very detailed and focused and identifies areas for development. She has a clear focus on sustaining the improvements the school has made. The high quality of teaching seen during the inspection is evidence that the strategy is working.

62. The two deputy headteachers also have a clear understanding of their role and provide an effective link between the staff and the senior managers. They take part in the year group planning meetings, take in planning half termly and monitor the quality of pupils' work and reports to parents.

63. All staff with a management role have a clear understanding of their responsibilities. The curriculum co-ordinators are effective and support their colleagues well. The year group leaders are a strong and effective tier of management. They manage, plan and monitor across the year group and provide a key person as a focus in every year. They have an overview of their year group and respond to any issues from individual teachers. They also monitor the quality of pupils' work and sometimes observe in classrooms.

64. Development planning identifies relevant priorities and targets and all staff are involved in this process.

65. The governing body is very supportive of the school. The chairman provides a strong backup for the headteacher. Governors take their role very seriously and attendance at meetings is good. They see their role as essentially pastoral and practical and rely on the school to keep them informed about the curriculum. This is done through input from staff at governing body meetings. They have a very good understanding of finance and premises issues but their first hand knowledge and understanding of the curriculum is limited. A programme of visits would enable them to become more familiar with how the curriculum works in practice and to monitor the impact of their spending decisions on the curriculum. There is a new named governor with responsibility for SEN and his role needs to be further developed.

66. The Key Stage 1 and 2 Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators (SENCOs), who are also the deputy heads, and the teacher in charge of the SEN Base provide very strong leadership and management. All aspects of provision are well co-ordinated and monitored. They are highly accountable for all pupils on the SEN register and ensure that pupils are positively integrated. Non-teaching staff are efficiently and effectively deployed to work with pupils with SEN. This very good provision is laid out in the school's practical SEN policy.

67. The school has clear aims, values and policies which are reflected in all its work. There is a very consistent approach from all involved in the work of the school. The school's focus on providing good support for the personal development of pupils as an essential basis for raising standards provides a very strong underpinning to the life of the school.

68. The ethos of the school is positive, shared, and consistent. Relationships at all levels are very good. The headteacher and senior management team (SMT) have been very successful in managing the amalgamation of the two schools. The very good strategies which were implemented by the headteacher to facilitate this have proved very effective. Displaying work in corridors outside classrooms for other year groups helps to give pupils an awareness of the breadth of the school. The display of photos of all the children in the school helps to reinforce the sense of belonging to the school community. The nursery children are each taken to meet the office staff when they start school. Parents at the parents' meeting commented that since the amalgamation there is more consistency across the school and that the school has the 'same ethos and atmosphere throughout.'

69. Statutory requirements are met with the exception of a Health and Safety Policy which relates to the newly amalgamated school on one site.

(iii) **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

70. There is a very good match of the number and qualifications of teachers to the demands of the curriculum. About one quarter of the teachers in the school are newly qualified but overall the experience profile of the staff is satisfactory. All subject areas are effectively co-ordinated and core subjects have both an infant and a junior co-ordinator. All support staff are suitably qualified. They are able to support the teaching of the school curriculum very well. The school provides clear job descriptions for all staff and deploys them effectively. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection.

71. The arrangements for the induction of newly qualified teachers and the appraisal and professional development of teachers are very good. All support staff receive appropriate training. This has a positive effect on standards achieved in the school.

72. Accommodation is good. The classrooms are pleasant and provide an environment which encourages and supports learning. There is ample storage space and most areas of the curriculum have adequate resource rooms. The corridors are used effectively without being cluttered. The school's environment is enhanced by good displays of children's work in and around the classrooms.

73. The school grounds are adequate and are maintained well. The dining hall is unpleasant. It is an old building with poor lighting, heating and ventilation. It is too small to cater for the number of children in a school of this size. Although the school makes the best use possible of the building, it is unsuitable for the purpose. Its replacement should be considered a priority.

74. Resources are good in most areas of the curriculum. Since the last inspection the shortcomings identified in the area of design and technology have been put right and outdated fiction books have been replaced with appropriate texts. The school makes good use of its resources and its environment.

75. The SENCOs and the teacher in charge of the Base provide positive guidance for teachers. The large team of classroom assistants and special support assistants are exceptionally well trained and are a very valuable and well utilised resource in the school.

76. The school makes very good use of smaller rooms in the school. Pupils who receive additional programmes are taught in attractive and well resourced areas.

77. Teachers make a particular effort to adapt the curriculum and prepare resources for pupils with SEN to ensure that they can participate fully in the classrooms.

(iii) **The efficiency of the school**

78. Financial arrangements are sound. Educational developments and learning resources are supported by careful financial planning. The School Development Plan includes relevant priorities for action and allocates appropriate funds to them. Money devolved to the school for pupils with special educational needs is very well used. The governors are fully involved in the financial arrangements and monitor the budget rigorously. However, they need to acquaint themselves more fully with the impact of spending decisions on the curriculum.

79. Following the amalgamation, the school has worked hard to develop consistent approaches to teaching and classroom management across the school as a whole. The previous inspections of both the infant and junior schools identified the deployment of support staff as inefficient. This issue has been satisfactorily addressed. Teachers and support staff are deployed effectively and work closely together. Pupils in need of support are identified and targeted precisely. Where pupils with special educational needs are withdrawn from classes, the highly structured teaching enables them to make very good progress.

80. Accommodation, with the exception of the dining hall, is of good quality and well maintained. However, use of the library is restricted by its use as an additional teaching space. Teaching is supported by good quality learning resources which are well organised and deployed.

81. The school gives appropriate financial priority to securing high quality provision for pupils with SEN. Money devolved to the school for pupils with statements is very well and accountably used.

82. Financial control and administration are efficient. The school functions smoothly on a day-to-day basis. Routine procedures are in place and administrative tasks are completed efficiently by the two secretaries who share responsibilities. Recent audit reports of both schools identified the need to improve some procedures to enhance the efficiency of the systems internal controls. These have now been put in place. There is as yet no whole school health and safety policy and this needs to be addressed.

83. The school has many strong features. There is a positive ethos. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Teaching is effective and consistent throughout the school. Pupils make good progress in the early years and satisfactory progress in both key stages and are on course to reach the expected standards. The quality of education provided by the school is good and consequently the school provides good value for money.

(iii) **PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

(iii) **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE**

84. The attainment of children on entry to the school is below average. Children in the nursery and reception classes are making good progress in all areas of learning and are on course to meet the expected standard by the age of five. They make particularly good progress with the systematic development of personal, social, speaking, listening and literacy skills.

85. Children under five listen attentively to their teachers and each other. They join in enthusiastically with oral activities. Even the youngest children have the confidence to speak up clearly and audibly. Nursery children enjoy being read to and looking at books. Reception pupils handle books carefully. Most understand the difference between the words and the pictures and understand that words convey meaning. They talk with interest about the pictures. Many children are beginning to recognise the sounds of letters and some familiar words. Some are beginning to read simple books which they take home to practice.

86. Children under five have regular access to a range of mark-making materials such as pencils, chalks and paints. They develop finger control through activities such as threading beads or manipulating dough. They are learning the difference between drawing and writing and are beginning to develop early writing skills. Reception children confidently attempt to write their names and some letters. Children in the nursery are able to match similar objects such as pairs of socks. Most reception children can count to and recognise number symbols to five. They know a range of number songs and rhymes.

87. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of the world is in line with the expectations for their age. Pupils' creative development is good. They have regular opportunities to express themselves through observational drawing, painting, printing and collage. They are able to explore colour by mixing a restricted range into new colours. They respond well to music and sing a range of action songs with enjoyment and enthusiasm.

88. Physical development is good. The nursery garden is well used and provides a range of activities and opportunities for the children to climb run and jump. Suitable outdoor play is also provided for reception children whose physical skills are also developed during physical education lessons.

89. The personal and social development of children under five is very good. The induction of children into the nursery is gradual. Small group work is effectively used to familiarise the children with the nursery environment, routines and resources. Very good use of timid animal puppets persuades even the shyest children to join in. Nursery children are encouraged to become confident and independent from the outset. They are given suitable opportunities to take responsibility, such as handing out the biscuits at snack times, selecting activities and tidying up.

90. Children under five are developing information technology skills very effectively.

91. The behaviour of children under five is very good. The atmosphere in all classrooms is calm and purposeful. Reception children play alongside each other well, sharing equipment and taking turns. They engage in activities with interest and sustain concentration well, persevering to complete an activity such as a jig-saw. They follow and act on simple instructions.

92. The teaching of children under five is good. Teachers manage the children well. Praise is well used to reinforce good behaviour and encourage their confidence in their learning. Teachers and support staff work effectively as a team and are clear about their respective roles. The generous allocation of staffing in the nursery enables high levels of interaction with the children as they play. Questioning is used well to develop the children's understanding and language and there are high expectations of speaking and listening. Early reading and writing skills are taught systematically.

93. The curriculum for children under five is well mapped out. Sessions are carefully planned with a

good balance between direct teaching and independent activities. Staff have clear objectives for learning and activities are carefully chosen. Very good use is made of assessment to identify individual children's learning needs.

94. Nursery and reception classrooms are routinely very well organised. They provide stimulating environments with resources easily accessible to the children. The children's learning is well supported by interactive displays.

(iii) **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

(iii) **English**

95. Performance in the national tests for seven and eleven year olds in 1999 shows a significant improvement on the previous year's results. Since the last inspection of the infant school in 1994, the rate of improvement in Key Stage 1 has been faster than that nationally. The wide difference in the results for reading and writing of eleven year olds in 1998 has been significantly narrowed.

96. At the end of Key Stage 1 attainment in English is in line with the national average. This is supported by the most recent national test results. In the most recent end of key stage tests at Key Stage 1 in 1999 results for reading were in line with national averages and in line with averages for similar schools. In writing, results were above the national average for all schools and for similar schools.

97. At the end of Key Stage 2 the proportion of pupils achieving Level 4 was just below the national average. In terms of average points score (which takes account of the performance of all children), attainment in English was below the national average and below the average for similar schools. Although the 1999 test results point towards a slightly lower performance by boys in comparison to girls in reading at Key Stage 1 and in English at Key Stage 2, inspection evidence showed no significant difference in attainment and progress between boys and girls. Inspection findings confirm that a good proportion of pupils are on course to meet the national standards at the end of both key stages by July 2000. Many pupils are already working at the required levels.

98. Current progress in English and literacy is at least satisfactory and often good across the school. This has not been the case for all children in the past and there is still ground to be made up for the older children. Pupils with special educational needs and those in Year 6 make particularly good progress. In writing the attainment of the oldest pupils has risen substantially. The good quality of teaching is effectively supporting their progress.

99. The school's literacy strategy is effective. There is clear evidence of progression in writing both within years and from year to year. The school is particularly effective in enabling lower attaining pupils to catch up. However, the literacy strategy is not yet sufficiently co-ordinated across all aspects of the curriculum. Opportunities for developing reading and writing in subjects other than English are not yet fully exploited. The range of writing in subjects other than English is limited.

100. Attainment in speaking and listening is good. Teachers throughout the school place a high emphasis on the development of speaking and listening skills. Pupils of all ages listen attentively and with interest to their teachers and each other. Most are keen to respond to questions. Even the very youngest children speak up clearly and confidently. Older pupils are able to give full responses using increasingly rich vocabularies and full sentences.

101. Children of all ages enjoy reading. They read regularly, both at home and school, with books which are appropriately matched to their abilities. Through their English lessons they are introduced to a range of high quality texts. Many opportunities are provided for reading in groups, with a partner or individually, and pupils support each other well. Pupils are learning to retrieve information from text well.

102. Most infant children are able to recognise familiar words in simple texts. Some pupils read with

very good expression and fluency. Older junior pupils are able to tackle challenging texts such as 'The Lady of Shalott' with enthusiasm and demonstrate good comprehension. Many are able to express their opinions using a range of vocabulary and drawing on evidence from the texts they are reading to support their answers.

103. Infant children have the confidence to write independently, attempting to spell unknown words by themselves. They are learning how to form letters correctly and many are able to write extended pieces of good quality. Punctuation and spelling are less well developed.

104. Children are taught to write in a range of forms. Many write in a lively style, using a range of literary techniques such as simile or metaphor to engage the reader's interest. Most, although not all, have developed a legible joined style of writing. Work is generally presented well in most classes.

105. Pupils of all ages enjoy their English lessons and participate fully and enthusiastically in them. Pupils attempt written tasks conscientiously. They support each other well during lessons and when reading together in pairs.

106. The quality of teaching is at least satisfactory in Key Stage 1. It is often good and sometimes very good in Key Stage 2. The components of the literacy strategy are delivered in a coherent and effective way. The previous inspection of the infant school identified some weaknesses in the teaching of children with special needs. The teaching of these children is now very good throughout the school. The needs of pupils in the additional English classes are positively and rigorously addressed. Very precise targets are set for the children. The sessions are meticulously planned and resourced with progress regularly monitored. Teaching in Year 6 is also very good. Pupils are always well managed and high standards of concentration, participation and behaviour are maintained.

107. Marking is good. There are examples of excellent constructive and diagnostic marking in Year 6 which gives pupils clear indications of how to improve their work.

108. The curriculum for English is well mapped out and supported by good quality reading resources. Planning is well supported by the year group leaders and co-ordinators. Classrooms throughout the school are well organised. The arrangements for monitoring attainment and progress in the subject are good.

109. The previous inspection of the infant school identified the need to teach handwriting more systematically and to provide greater support to enable children to become competent spellers. Satisfactory progress has been made on both of these issues. Handwriting is now taught systematically and regularly in Key Stage 1. Spelling is also taught regularly using appropriate strategies such as *look, cover, write, check*, which are explained to parents. However, more needs to be done to ensure the transfer of the skills learnt in formal spelling lessons to children's own free writing.

110. In Key Stage 1 children need to have their key spelling errors identified and then have a strategy for learning the correct form. As children get older they need to be taught how to identify spelling and punctuation errors and continue to develop the strategies for learning from, and correcting, their own mistakes.

(iii) **Mathematics**

111. Since the last inspection attainment in mathematics has risen considerably. At that time, standards for both infants and juniors were judged to be satisfactory, but now attainment is much higher. For example, the percentage of pupils reaching Level 4 or above in 1996 was 37% and is now 72%. The national figures have risen from 54% to 69%. National test results, in both key stages, have improved steadily for the past three years, with significant improvements last year. In the 1999 national tests, seven year olds attained above the national average and well above the average for similar schools. The results for eleven year olds were in line with national averages for

the proportion of pupils reaching the national expectation for all and similar schools. Attainment was in line with the national average points score for all schools but just below the national average for similar schools.

112. The findings of this inspection show that these improvements are being consolidated. Almost all pupils in Year 2 count reliably. High and average attaining pupils know number bonds well and use them competently in addition and subtraction. Lower attaining pupils work more slowly but, given time, usually produce correct answers. All pupils understand the appropriate subject vocabulary and use mathematical symbols correctly. High and average attaining pupils in Year 6 show sound knowledge of number facts and multiplication tables. They are able to carry out calculations using decimals competently. Lower attaining pupils do not yet know their number facts well enough but cope appropriately with the calculations they are given. Most pupils lay out their work clearly and can explain their thinking when attempting to solve problems.

113. Pupils' progress in mathematics is now at least satisfactory and often good. However, plans are not yet in place to develop numeracy appropriately in other areas of the school curriculum. Lower attaining pupils make good progress and very few fail to reach an acceptable standard by the age of eleven. Pupils make good progress over time in developing number knowledge and mathematical vocabulary. Solid progress is made in lessons, most of which include well planned practice sessions which build carefully upon earlier learning. Pupils who find the work difficult are supported very effectively. The work for the lower attaining teaching groups is adapted carefully enabling pupils to make progress in smaller, manageable steps. Their work is linked closely to that of higher attaining groups, however. This means that, over time, they do not fall too far behind.

114. Pupils' attitudes to mathematics are very good. They generally take care with their written work. Most are eager to answer questions and volunteer to demonstrate and explain calculations at the front of the class. They co-operate well with teachers and other pupils. For example, they listen attentively when classmates are giving explanations, even when these are slow or hesitant. They also work sensibly and productively when working with a partner. Levels of concentration when doing independent work are good, especially in the junior classrooms.

115. The teaching of mathematics is consistently good, especially in Key Stage 2. Teachers generally know the subject well and have high expectations. For example, in almost every class, pupils are required to use the correct mathematical vocabulary and explain their answers in full sentences. Teachers of lower attaining groups are very effective in adapting work so that pupils can, eventually, master difficult concepts. Lessons are well planned and consistent teaching strategies are used, throughout all year groups. Consistent approaches to oral work, pupil demonstrations and the use of overhead projectors help pupils to develop confidence in familiar routines and make secure progress. Class management, especially of behaviour and oral work, is very good. Although teaching is generally good, some lessons in Key Stage 1 lack sufficient pace. In these lessons teachers should have higher expectations of pupils' abilities to concentrate and think through problems. In some lessons in Key Stage 2, where pupils are experiencing difficulty, teachers rely too heavily on oral explanations and could make better use of the board to show what they mean.

116. The mathematics curriculum is well planned and is supported by detailed lesson by lesson guidance. It is implemented consistently across the teaching staff and is closely monitored by the headteacher and other senior staff. The school, therefore, has an effective strategy for improving numeracy and is already seeing the benefits in the form of higher attainment. Plans are not yet in place, however, for developing numeracy in other areas of the school curriculum.

(iii) **Science**

117. Attainment in National Tests at age seven is in line with national averages. National test results show that the standards in science are improving at a good rate at Key Stage 2. In the 1999 Key Stage 2 tests, 92% of children gained level 4 or above which was well above the national average of 78% and above the average for similar schools. The average points score in these tests was also well above the average for all and similar schools. This shows a considerable improvement

compared with the standards achieved at the time of the last inspection of the junior school.

118. By the time they are seven children are able to recognise and name common materials such as plastic, wood, glass and metal. Some can classify materials into natural and man-made. By the time they are eleven most children are able to carry out simple investigations safely. They can tabulate results and write satisfactory conclusions. Some can write well using complete sentences and draw sensible conclusions from their results and observations. Most have a good understanding of the aspects of science being taught. Most describe their observations using appropriate scientific vocabulary, such as rough, smooth, sharp and hard when describing rocks. They are less confident with words such as transparent, magnetic, insulator, or conductor when discussing metals, plastics and glass.

119. Progress is satisfactory in Key Stage 1. Progress in Key Stage 2 is good. This is brought about by the high proportion of good or very good teaching in the upper school.

120. Children's attitudes to science lessons are very good in the juniors and good in the infants. They are motivated by the content of lessons, listen to the teacher and each other and work collaboratively and safely in practical lessons. They behave very well.

121. Teaching is good overall. It is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 with Year 2 classes being taught well. It is normally at least good in Key Stage 2 where some very good teaching was observed in Years 4, 5 and 6. Where teaching is good teachers' expectations are appropriately high, their subject knowledge is good and lessons build on children's previous learning. Very good teaching is marked out by the teachers' ability to encourage all children to participate and respond. Where teaching is less good the weaknesses are a lack of clear expectations that all children should respond and a lack of good explanations when children's responses indicate poor or vague knowledge and understanding

122. Science is very well led and the available resources are used efficiently.

(iii) **OTHER SUBJECTS**

(iii) **Art**

123. Progress in art is satisfactory in Key Stages 1 and 2. Children are introduced to a good range of media in their early years. This good beginning makes immediate progress possible in Year 1. In Key Stage 1, children are making steady progress through well planned activities which include opportunities to mix colour, draw from observation and the use of 3D materials. The activities ensure the development of skill, for example in rolling and modelling clay in low relief.

124. In Key Stage 2, overall progress is steady. Children are exposed to a very wide range of activities in varied media. Widespread observational drawing is producing some striking results. Three-dimensional work is sometimes less satisfactory. Unclear objectives and a lack of systematic teaching in some cases restrict progress in the understanding of balanced form.

125. Children respond to the work in art very well. They are motivated by the use of the media provided and take the work seriously. They enjoy art and are willing to express themselves.

126. Teaching in art is satisfactory overall. Teachers are willing to work hard to enable children to progress. They are very encouraging to all pupils, which produces a distinct pride in the work produced and clear enjoyment.

127. Teacher knowledge is variable. Work in three dimensions would, in particular, benefit from clearer objectives based on concepts of form, balance and surface texture. The elements of 3D are currently, incidental to the practical matter of making a structure with spontaneity rather than judgement or design.

128. A school portfolio has been imaginatively assembled to illustrate what children are capable of achieving. Plans are under development which show a good degree of understanding. These plans have the potential to accelerate the progress of children and build on widespread good will toward art teaching.

129. The subject is well supported and managed. For example, good examples are provided of the work of a wide variety of artists. These are then used effectively in teaching. Display is a strong feature of the school. The large number of display boards around the school are managed very well to ensure that all classes contribute to the visual environment of the school. High quality guidelines are provided for all teachers to set clear standards for display. This important feature of the artistic life of the school makes a strong contribution to the sense of worth which is attached to art in the school and should form a basis for improving the overall quality of the work.

Design and Technology

130. Pupils make satisfactory progress in design and technology in both Key Stages 1 and 2. They are challenged to design and make products of increasing complexity in a wide range of materials. Pupils are developing their understanding of what constitutes quality. The standard of the things they make improves as they progress through the school.

131. In Key Stage 1, children begin well by exploring movement, such as the rocking motion in a see-saw. They make effective use of simple materials and a wide variety of construction kits to make their first working models. By the end of the key stage, they have worked to good standards with mechanisms, structures and food.

132. In Key Stage 2, children continue their success. By the age of 11, pupils have been systematically engaged in activities of increasing complexity including textiles, food and modelling materials. They apply technical knowledge such as understanding of electrical circuits to increasingly demanding problems. For example, Year 4 pupils are making sensible design decisions about the materials and features which make a good torch successful.

133. Children throughout the school respond well to design and technology. They enjoy the work and show a mature and calm attitude to the use of equipment and materials. Teaching in design and technology does not fall below satisfactory and is often good. Teachers have made great efforts, in the new school, to ensure that children make progress. They work systematically towards ensuring that children carefully build their knowledge, skills and confidence. They make sure they have a good knowledge of what they teach. Methodical long-term plans are written well to balance the required themes. In whole class teaching, teachers use a good range of technical vocabulary and insist on good standards. However, they do not always ensure that design decisions are understood before they move whole class lessons to the next stage. The best examples of whole class discussion show children able to grasp ideas and follow arguments from good quality notes on either the board or OHP. Such good practice is not used by all teachers to the same standard.

134. The subject is managed effectively. New plans are disseminated clearly, with an emphasis on a logical sequence of activity and good teaching. Resources are good and are used efficiently.

(iii) Geography

135. Pupils are making sound, and frequently good, progress, developing their knowledge and understanding appropriately in both key stages. Year 1 pupils are able to make links between human needs and lifestyles and the characteristics of different environments, making simple comparisons. Year 6 pupils know where the world's rainforests are and can locate them on a map. They are able to describe and label the layers of the rainforest accurately, using correct vocabulary, and identify the different types of life each layer supports. They are able to explain the importance of the rainforests in the ecological balance of the earth. Pupils work enthusiastically and use maps and atlases with

confidence. Pupils with SEN were effectively supported and made good progress.

136. Teaching in the lessons seen was satisfactory or better with good and very good teaching in both key stages. Teachers have sufficient knowledge of the subject. Lessons are well planned and objectives are shared with pupils. Questions in both key stages are challenging and well focused to encourage pupils to extend their answers and to provide reasons for them. Teachers employ a range of strategies including class discussion and pair and group work to ensure the participation of all pupils. Good strategies, such as using bullet points for summarising, were effectively taught to Year 6 pupils.

137. Pupils' attitudes in the lessons seen were positive. Most pupils are interested in geography and a particularly high level of interest and motivation was evident in Years 5 and 6.

138. The previous inspections were critical of standards, curriculum plans and learning resources for geography. The evidence from this inspection, however, suggests that the school has made good progress towards bringing about the necessary improvements. More time has been made available for geography teaching. The quality and range of learning resources has been much improved. The curriculum is also enhanced, in almost every year group, by a good range of fieldwork activities and visits to places of interest. Curriculum plans now provide a better basis for continuity and progression in pupils' learning. Arrangements are not yet in place to assess pupils' progress in geography, however. Plans for Key Stage 2 need to be slimmed down to allow pupils time to study key topics in more detail.

(iii) **History**

139. Pupils are making satisfactory progress using historical sources. For example, a Year 3 class drew simple conclusions about the past by handling a selection of domestic appliances from different periods. Pupils in Year 5 made observations of key the features in a portrait of Elizabeth I. A class in Year 6 made deductions about life in Britain during the Blitz after hearing a tape recording of an air raid. In all the lessons seen pupils made satisfactory progress and gained specific items of new information about the topics concerned. The inspection took place early in the new school year. There was little evidence, therefore, of extended writing, detailed knowledge or wider, general understanding about different periods in the past.

140. Pupils' attitudes in history lessons are good. They study source material with great interest and are keen to ask additional questions of their own. They co-operate well, for example in paired discussions and when handling artefacts. The teaching is satisfactory. Teachers manage their classes well and make good use of learning resources to capture the interest and enthusiasm of the pupils. Discussion and oral work is handled well. Teachers' history subject knowledge is weaker, and lesson plans focus too closely on the activities pupils will do rather than what they are expected to learn as a result. This means that teachers are not always able to challenge pupils sufficiently or teach historical skills systematically. For example, in most lessons, pupils interpret evidence without being able to explore other sources of information, such as books. As a result, too many observations are, in fact, guesswork rather than careful enquiries about the past.

141. The last inspection found that the infant school did not plan to teach the full requirements of the history curriculum. Resources for history were sparse and there was too little historical enquiry or interpretation in the junior school. The evidence of this inspection is that considerable improvements have been made. There are now sufficient history books, supplemented by a good range of artefacts and videos. New curriculum plans have been written covering all key of the subject. Enough time is given to the yearly history topics to enable each to be covered in depth. There are no arrangements yet in place, however, to assess pupils' attainment and progress in history. Curriculum plans need to support class teachers better by stating more clearly the type and standard of work pupils should produce, in each topic, as a result of their studies.

(iii) **Information Technology**

142. Attainment in information technology (IT) is broadly in line with national expectations for the under fives and by the end of Key Stage 1, but is lower than national expectations for those pupils near the end of Key Stage 2. Children in nursery and reception classes are confident with the technology and are learning basic key skills in the operation of the mouse, keyboard and on-screen software tools. Children in Key Stage 1 are using correct subject specific vocabulary and able to articulate concepts such as the presentation and sorting of data in different ways, and the subsequent effects on interpretation of results. Younger children in Key Stage 2 are confident in using cut and paste techniques in drafting text and can engage in articulate debate on typographical and layout issues. Older children are less confident and have more limited expertise in basic software techniques and use of software tools.

143. Progress throughout lessons for the under fives, during Key Stage 1, and for most of Key Stage 2 is satisfactory or better, and in some instances good. This is a reflection of a new and comprehensive scheme of work introduced throughout the school in September, and some good focussed teaching with clear learning objectives and outcomes. IT is time-tabled for all classes and is taught to the whole class during Key Stages 1 and 2 every week. Some opportunities are found during registration and other times for pupils to practise new skills and techniques but these are limited by the nature of other whole class activities. Pupils are regularly given the chance to explain aspects of IT to the rest of the class and to demonstrate what they understand and know. There is clear evidence of the difference in children's experience of IT currently, and that which was available before the introduction of the new scheme and regular weekly whole class teaching time for IT. This explains to some extent the weaknesses exhibited by the older children compared to the progress now being made across the school.

144. Pupils' attitude towards computers across the school is very good, and they work well together in pairs or groups, helping each other.

145. Good use is made of prompt sheets and display material and all the equipment is well cared for and organised to facilitate learning. Training opportunities have been provided for staff to help them with the new learning objectives.

146. A weakness is the lack of a system of assessment and recording that could be used to inform future planning.

(iii) **Music**

147. Music was judged to be a strength in both the previous inspection reports and this continues to be the case.

148. Attainment in music is in line with, and sometimes above, the national expectation, particularly in relation to pupils' performance as singers, in both key stages. By Year 2 pupils perform very well as singers, conveying the character of the songs and hymns in their very wide repertoire very effectively. Their aural skills are developing well and they can identify and describe changes in dynamics and keep a steady pulse. Older pupils in Key Stage 2 have developed their performance skills to a high standard. They are able to talk about music they have heard and music they have composed themselves, using correct vocabulary. Year 5 pupils can improvise a melody line and compose a drone accompaniment. Year 6 pupils are able to identify movement by step or leap, can explain what the pentatonic scale is and listen critically to their performances, suggesting what needs to be done to improve them. They work well to refine and develop their compositions and performances.

149. The standard of performance achieved by the lower and upper school choirs, which involve around 130 pupils, is very high. They are introduced to a very wide range of music in many different styles. They sing with a good sense of musicality and are very skilled in achieving changes in dynamics. Their ability to sing softly and to achieve a crescendo is particularly well developed. The quality of teaching for these groups is very good and the pupils are making very good progress.

150. Pupils' attitudes to music are extremely positive. They enjoy performing and both girls and boys are very confident to perform in front of their peers.

151. Pupils' progress in music is good overall. In most lessons pupils have good opportunities to build on their previous knowledge and understanding of performing and composing. The majority of teaching is good and this effectively enables pupils across the age and ability range to make good progress in both attainment targets. In particular, the high expectations and the teachers' own love of music are highly motivating. The level of challenge is frequently high and pupils respond well to this. Questions are often very well focused, for example 'What can we do to improve that?' Teachers often demonstrate well, using their voices and instruments effectively. The pace of most lessons is brisk and lively, involving all pupils very successfully from the first moments of the lesson. Very occasionally insufficient knowledge of the subject leads to low expectations and pupils' progress is not as good as it should be. More guidance and support are sometimes needed when teachers are working from the published scheme which the school has adopted.

152. The music co-ordinator carries out her role very effectively, well supported by the subsidiary co-ordinator. She provides very good support and is an excellent role model for her colleagues, working effectively with them to develop their confidence. Resources for music are good quality across the school including for the youngest children.

153. A small number of pupils have instrumental tuition from the Borough's Music Services. Recorder tuition is also taught by an instructor who teaches groups of pupils in Key Stage 2.

154. Music plays an important role in the life of the school and contributes very effectively to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

(iii) **Physical Education**

155. Progress in physical education (PE) is good in both Key Stages 1 and 2. The school has worked hard to ensure that the teachers in the previously separate schools plan the work together. This has successfully enabled children to develop all aspects of PE continuously.

156. In Key Stage 1, children are quickly learning the routines and disciplines of travelling in simple gymnastic routines. In games they are working together well, using space and a good range of apparatus to send and receive balls and bean bags with increasing accuracy. They are beginning to combine actions in Year 1, which are then refined in more demanding activities in Year 2.

157. In Key Stage 2, pupils are making good progress in learning outdoor games such as hockey. In well-organised activities, teachers are encouraging high standards of sending and receiving skills. Children are willing to sustain their efforts until they succeed. Disciplined use of space enables pupils to develop quickly. High quality dance teaching is enabling pupils to sensitively explore moods and feelings by linking partnered sequences with well-chosen music. For example, pupils in Year 6 are uninhibited in their paired work. They are rapidly developing short dance sequences of imaginative movements.

158. Children throughout the school respond very well to PE. They are positive about physical activity and are keen to do well. They listen carefully and are increasingly familiar with the disciplines of PE as they progress through the school.

159. The teaching of PE is good. Teachers ensure that children make good progress through well-planned activities with objectives which are made clear to the children. Teachers express good subject knowledge, which is supported by clear plans and schemes. Good demonstration is a widespread method of ensuring that children understand what is expected. In all lessons, teachers are positive about the children's performance. They manage the children well and use time effectively. The children feel that they are doing well and they try hard to meet the expectations which teachers set out.

160. Physical education is well managed. Good interim arrangements have been made to enable the

two schools to develop continuity in the subject. The already good schemes of work are being adjusted very effectively to enable teachers to understand the requirements and to teach well. Resources are good and are used effectively.

(iii) **Religious Education**

161. There is little recorded work in religious education (RE), however, in the lessons observed pupils' attainment was in line with the expectations of the local Agreed Syllabus in all key stages. Children under five were able to reflect on the idea of sharing after hearing the story of the Rainbow Fish, and were able to relate this to their own experiences. Year 2 pupils made connections between the experience of Jonah in the Bible story and their own experiences and feelings when doing something they know is wrong, using words such as 'obey' and 'forgive' appropriately. All pupils in Key Stage 1 are familiar with some Bible stories and know that some people believe that God is involved in events in Bible stories. In Key Stage 2 Year 3 pupils are able to relate the underlying theme of obedience in the story of Noah to their own experiences of being obedient or disobedient, making relevant links with their own class rules. Year 4 pupils were able to talk about what they had seen on recent visit to a local synagogue, explaining the significance of some features of the building and the artefacts. Year 5 pupils identified key features of a Christian wedding from a photograph. They could suggest some reasons why people get married in church, '-It's a holy place,-' and the significance of colours, and the ring.

162. Attainment is above the local expectation in Year 6. Pupils know and understand some of the main beliefs of Christianity, Islam and Judaism about the creation of the world. They are able to apply religious teachings to their own experiences, for example, in response to the question 'If God created the world how should people treat it?' They can categorise their responses into those relating to the environment and those relating to people.

163. Progress in RE is good for children under five and satisfactory or better in Key Stages 1 and 2. The majority of pupils across the school are making appropriate gains in their knowledge and understanding of religion and its importance in peoples' lives. They make particularly good progress in attainment target 2, 'learning from religion', showing a well developed ability to reflect on their own experiences and feelings in response to what they have learned about religion, and to reflect on their own beliefs and values and those of others. This aspect is very well developed in Year 6 where pupils make very good progress in the development of their understanding of the connections between belief and action. It is less developed in Year 4 where the tasks given to pupils following their visit to a synagogue did not challenge them sufficiently and limited their progress.

164. Pupils' attitudes to RE are very positive. Pupils, including the youngest, listen attentively and respectfully to others. They take 'circle time', which provides them with an opportunity to reflect on what they have learnt, very seriously and are clearly confident to share their feelings. Pupils are interested and keen to answer questions, often responding thoughtfully and sometimes asking questions themselves, particularly in Year 6 classes. Year 6 pupils work very well together in groups, keeping on track with their discussions. They explore their own ideas and are confident to share them with the class. They often give good explanations and suggest solutions to problems.

165. The quality of teaching is good for under fives. It is satisfactory or better in Key Stage 1 and ranges from occasionally unsatisfactory to very good in Key Stage 2. Most teachers have adequate knowledge and understanding of RE to teach the agreed syllabus. Lessons for children under five are well planned with clear learning objectives. In Key Stage 1 teachers use Bible stories well to prompt pupils to reflect on own beliefs and values. Teachers often successfully create a contemplative atmosphere which encourages pupils to reflect on their learning. Teachers frequently involve all pupils well and encourage them to speak out, effectively developing their skills in speaking and listening. Questioning is often good in both key stages. Teaching is weakest in Year 4 where tasks did not challenge pupils sufficiently, and follow up to a synagogue visit was not as effective as it should have been. Teachers do not always follow the plan and tasks such as colouring in and labelling are not sufficiently challenging. Occasionally teachers' knowledge is slight and expectations of pupils too low. There is very good teaching in Year 6. The quality of teaching, in

particular teachers' good understanding of the subject, enables pupils to make good progress. Questions are well focused to draw out their knowledge and understanding of environmental issues and religious beliefs and encourage them to make links between what people believe and how they act. Pace is brisk and a range of appropriate strategies, including small and large group work, question and answer, 'brainstorming' in small groups, and a plenary session, are used effectively. Some teachers use the OHP well to record pupils' responses. There are some good extension questions which make pupils think more deeply.

166. The two co-ordinators are working effectively together. Newly developed schemes of work provide a good framework for RE across the school. Further work needs to be done on identifying clear learning outcomes and a broader range of tasks. Some teachers require more detailed guidance in order to teach the suggested lessons more effectively. Resources for RE have improved since the last inspection where they were a weakness in Key Stage 1. Resources are now excellent in both quality and range. RE is making a very effective contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

(iii) SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

167. The inspection was carried out by a team of 9 inspectors over a period of 4 days, using 29 inspector days. A total of 125 lessons or parts of lessons were observed representing 76 hours across all classes.

168. Other inspection activities included examining a sample of pupils' work across the age and ability range, hearing a sample of pupils read, interviewing pupils to ascertain their views about the school, their knowledge and their understanding. Discussions with pupils added to this information. Assemblies were attended and registrations inspected. Pupils were seen arriving and departing from school and observed while having lunch, playing and attending extra-curricular clubs and activities.

169. A wide range of documentation provided by the school was analysed. Resources, attendance registers, pupils' annual reports, records of progress, teachers' planning, schemes of work and school policies were examined in detail.

170. Teaching staff and non-teaching staff were interviewed about their roles and responsibilities. Members of the governing body discussed their role and responsibilities with inspectors.

171. A meeting was held with parents and 115 replies to the questionnaire sent out by the school were analysed.

(iii) DATA AND INDICATORS

(iii) Pupil data

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on schools' register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR – Y6	619	14	137	94
Nursery Class	34	0	1	N/A

(iii) Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	26
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24
Average class size:	29

Education support staff (YR – Y6)

Total number of education support staff	20
Total aggregate hours worked each week	510

Qualified teachers (Nursery class)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	34

Education support staff (Nursery class)

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked each week	108

(iii) Finance data

Financial Year:	1998/9
	£
Total Income	1,201,267.00
Total Expenditure	1,157,203.00
Expenditure per pupil	1,836.83
Balance brought forward from previous year	42,607.00
Balance carried forward to next year	86,671.00

(iii) **PARENTAL SURVEY**

Number of questionnaires sent out: 416

Number of questionnaires returned: 115

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	20.8	57.4	10.4	7.8	1.7
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	42.6	52.2	2.6	1.7	-
The school handles complaints from parents well	17.4	59.1	16.5	2.6	-
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	20.0	59.1	13.9	4.3	-
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	32.2	49.6	7.8	10.4	-
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	33.0	57.4	7.8	1.7	-
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	16.5	45.2	29.6	8.7	-
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	18.3	60.9	15.6	4.3	0.9
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	29.6	59.1	8.7	1.7	-
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	37.4	53.0	8.7	0.9	-
My child(ren) like(s) school	53.0	43.5	0.9	2.6	-

(As not all completed questionnaires provided a response to every question, and as figures are rounded up or down, rows do not always add up exactly to 100%.)

(iii) **Other issues raised by parents**

A small number of parents felt that they did not have enough information about the topics covered in the curriculum. The school has responded to this and now provides detailed information for parents about what is to be taught to each year group.