

# INSPECTION REPORT

**Cranmer Middle School**  
Mitcham

LEA area: Merton

Unique Reference Number: 102653

Headteacher: Ms Valerie Kenny

---

Reporting inspector: Mr David Welsh  
10992

Dates of inspection: 29 November – 3 December 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 706639

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

© Crown Copyright 2000

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated. Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school.

Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the appropriate authority must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. Every registered parent of a registered pupil at the school should receive a free copy of the summary of the report within ten working days of receipt of the summary by the appropriate authority. A charge not exceeding the cost of supply may be made by the appropriate authority for any other copies of the report and/or its summary provided to any person who asks for one.

The appropriate authority should make a copy of the report and the summary available for inspection by members of the public at such times and at such a place as may be reasonable

Any enquiries about this legislation should be addressed to the OFSTED Compliance Helpline

Tel: 0171 421 6567

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Middle deemed Primary

Type of control: Community

Age range of pupils: 8 – 12 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Cranmer Road  
Mitcham  
Surrey  
CR4 4XU

Telephone number: 020 86482621

Fax number: 020 86408172

Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Stuart Bell

Date of previous inspection: 26 – 30 June 1995

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

<b>Team members</b>	<b>Subject responsibilities</b>	<b>Aspect responsibilities</b>
David Welsh, RgI	Information and communications technology Physical education	Attainment and progress  Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Quality of education - teaching Leadership and management Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the community
John Edmond, Lay Inspector		Curriculum and assessment Pupils with special educational needs
Mary Hutton	Design and technology Modern foreign languages - French	
Peter Kerr	Art Music Mathematics	Staffing, accommodation and resources
David Langton	Science English History	Efficiency of the school
Abul Maula	Geography  Religious education English as an additional language	Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development Equal opportunities

The inspection contractor was:

Cambridge Education Associates Ltd  
51 St Andrew's Road  
Cambridge  
CB4 1EQ

01223 578500

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints which are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Registrar  
The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

# REPORT CONTENTS

Paragraph[0]

## MAIN FINDINGS

- What the school does well
- Where the school has weaknesses
- How the school has improved since the last inspection
- Standards in subjects
- Quality of teaching
- Other aspects of the school
- The parents' views of the school

## KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

## INTRODUCTION

- Characteristics of the school 1 - 6
- Key indicators

## PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

### Educational standards achieved by pupils at the school

- Attainment and progress 7 - 18
- Attitudes, behaviour and personal development 19 - 22
- Attendance 23 - 24

### Quality of education provided

- Teaching 25 - 29
- The curriculum and assessment 30 - 38
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development 39 - 44
- Support, guidance and pupils' welfare 45 - 49
- Partnership with parents and the community 50 - 56

### The management and efficiency of the school

- Leadership and management 57 - 63
- Staffing, accommodation and learning resources 64 - 67
- The efficiency of the school 68 - 73

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

**English, mathematics and science** 74 - 98

**Other subjects or courses** 99 - 142

## **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

**Summary of inspection evidence** 143 - 144

**Data and indicators** 145 - 146

## MAIN FINDINGS

### What the school does well

- The headteacher provides outstanding leadership.
- The school promotes and achieves very good attitudes, behaviour, relationships and personal development of the pupils.
- The school effectively promotes the pupils' moral, social and cultural development.
- Standards in English, mathematics and science have steadily improved over the past four years.
- Teaching is good.
- The school provides a very stimulating and attractive learning environment.
- The school takes very good care of its pupils.
- Relationships between the school, parents and its local community are very good.
- The school manages its finances very well.
- The school gives good value for money.

### Where the school has weaknesses

- I. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is unsatisfactory (*identified in school development plan*).
- II. The assessment and recording of pupils' progress in religious education, French, art, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education is unsatisfactory (*identified in school development plan*).

**Cranmer Middle School is a good school with many strengths and few weaknesses. The governors' action plan will set out how the weaknesses identified during the inspection are to be tackled. The plan will be sent to all parents or guardians of pupils at the school.**

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

Since the last inspection the school has continued to improve in many aspects of its work. There were six key issues resulting from the previous inspection and overall, the school has made very good progress in addressing these issues, meeting its targets and raising standards.

- Standards in mathematics have been raised considerably with pupils' attainment well above average in relation to schools with a similar intake of pupils.
- Standards in information and communication technology are now average and there has been improvement in the progress pupils make in physical education.
- The work of the senior management team has been clarified and it effectively monitors and evaluates the school's work.
- Results of tests are analysed in great detail to identify groups who may be underachieving and action taken where it is found to be necessary, for example, to raise boys' attainment in English.
- The needs of the high-attaining pupils have been met by teaching English and mathematics in sets.
- Record keeping in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology has been addressed and opportunities for assessment are being included in the teachers' planning.
- The school has continued to develop the positive ethos in the school through the development of the teaching and learning policy and behaviour code, which are rigorously implemented and effectively monitored.
- The school has set itself appropriate targets to improve standards in English, mathematics and science and achieved them.

- Standards have been maintained in all other areas of the curriculum and in many there has been some improvement.

With outstanding leadership from the headteacher, the very good support from staff, the improved effectiveness of the governing body and much better teaching, the potential for continuing to improve is very good.

#### Standards in subjects

This 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		Key
			<i>well above average</i>	A
			<i>above average</i>	B
English	D	C	<i>average</i>	C
Mathematics	C	A	<i>below average</i>	D
Science	B	A	<i>well below average</i>	E

- In the 1999 Standard Assessment English test, the school's results were not quite so good as in previous years. Most pupils attained the expected standard and the school achieved its target but the above table reflects that a larger number of pupils than usual achieved well below the standard expected. The main reason for this was the number of pupils with special educational needs in Year 6, 34 per cent, a number above the average for this school.
- In the 1999 Standard Assessment mathematics test, the school's results were average. The number of pupils who attained above the expected level nearly doubled from the previous year.
- In the 1999 Standard Assessment science test, the school's results were above average.
- Since 1996 the school's overall performance in the English, mathematics and science tests has steadily improved.

Inspection findings are that:

- At the end of Key Stage 2 and in Year 7 standards in speaking and listening are above average. In reading they are below the national average. Spelling and handwriting are satisfactory with work neatly presented. Standards in writing are above average at Key Stage 2 and average in Year 7.
- In mathematics, standards are broadly average at Key Stage 2 although pupils from ethnic minorities with English as an additional language achieve lower results than other pupils in the same year group. In Year 7, the pupils' attainment overall is below average.
- In science, standards are average overall. Pupils make good progress in many areas of the subject but their progress in experimental and investigative skills is not as good as in their knowledge and understanding.
- Standards in information and communication technology and religious education are average.
- Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress in art, design and technology, geography, history and physical education, though not in swimming as they do not have enough opportunities to swim. Pupils make good progress in music. In French they make good progress in Year 6 and satisfactory progress in Year 7.
- Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress in the sessions where they receive specific support, but on other occasions the progress they make is variable.



## Quality of teaching

Teaching in	7 – 11 years	11 – 12 years
English	Good	Good
Mathematics	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Science	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Information and communication technology	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Religious education	Good	Good
Other subjects	Good	Good

- Almost all the teaching is at least satisfactory and most of it is good. This is a considerable improvement on the findings in the previous inspection when 25 per cent of the teaching was unsatisfactory.
- Teaching ranges from unsatisfactory to very good. Fourteen per cent of lessons are very good, 43 per cent good, 38 per cent satisfactory and 4 per cent unsatisfactory.
- During the inspection very good teaching was seen in all year groups and in English, mathematics, French, art, design and technology and music.

*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	Very good in classes and around the school.
Attendance	Satisfactory.
Ethos*	Very good.
Leadership and management	The headteacher provides outstanding leadership. She is very well supported by the acting deputy headteacher and staff. The governing body fulfils its responsibilities and is becoming more effectively involved in school activities.
Curriculum	The timetable ensures all pupils have sufficient time for English, mathematics and science but on some days the pupils spend too much time on the same subject. The school has plans to change this.
Pupils with special educational needs	Provision is unsatisfactory.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Moral, social and cultural development is very good. Spiritual development is effectively promoted in assemblies but not in lessons.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Staff work well as a team. Good resources are used to support teaching and learning in most subjects and the accommodation is good overall.
Value for money	Good.

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

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

### **What most parents like about the school**

- III. The school achieves high standards of behaviour.
- IV. The children like school.
- V. Parents find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with the children.
- VI. Parents are encouraged to play an active part in the life of the school.
- VII. The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their lessons.
- VIII. The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect upon their children.
- IX. Parents are satisfied with the amount of homework.
- X. The school gives parents a clear understanding of what is taught.
- XI. Parents are well informed about their children's progress.

### **What some parents are not happy about**

- XII. There were no issues which a significant number

Inspectors' judgements support parents' views.

- The school does achieve high standards of behaviour and the pupils like school.
- Pupils feel safe and many take advantage of the good programme of extra-curricular activities.
- The school is welcoming and parents find it easy to approach staff with questions or problems.
- The ethos of the school is very good and the school's values and attitudes do have a positive effect on the children.
- The school has formulated a policy for homework which is strictly adhered to and plays an important part in the attainment of high standards.
- Parents are well informed of the learning that is taking place; for example, through the homework diaries, and they have regular opportunities to learn about the progress their children are making.

## KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

The governing body, headteacher and staff should:

Ensure that pupils with special educational needs are effectively supported by:

- sufficient qualified teachers and learning support assistants,
- a programme of learning to meet individual needs through explicit short term targets and ongoing assessment,
- appropriate resources.

*(Paragraph 33,65,70)*

Devise and implement a manageable system of assessing and recording pupils' progress in religious education, French, art, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education by:

- exchanging views on current practice,
- involving the pupils in the assessment and recording process,
- using the information to inform short-term planning,
- evaluating the effect of the procedures on pupils' progress.

*(Paragraph 37)*

The school has identified both key issues in its development plan.

In addition to the key issues above the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan.

XIII.Improve teachers' skills so that all teaching is at least satisfactory *(Paragraphs 27,28,29)*

XIV.Provide appropriate support for pupils who learn English as an additional language *(Paragraph 34,65)*

XV.Ensure appropriately balanced time-tables for all pupils *(Paragraph 30)*

XVI.Plan to provide pupils with opportunities for spiritual development in all areas of the curriculum *(Paragraph 40)*

XVII.Improve the pupils' strategies for reading, especially the lower-attainers, by targeting the pupils upon entry into the school *(Paragraph 78)*

XVIII.Improve the pupils' knowledge of basic addition facts and multiplication tables to enable them to solve practical problems quickly *(Paragraphs 86, 87, 89)*

XIX.Provide pupils with more opportunities to develop their investigative skills *(Paragraph 94)*

XX.Provide pupils with more opportunities to consolidate on the skills learnt in information and communication technology by using computers more frequently in all areas of the curriculum. *(Paragraph 103)*

XXI.Ensure the very good use of sketchbooks in art is consistent through the school *(Paragraph 114)*

XXII.Make better provision in swimming to enable all pupils to attain the standards set out in the National Curriculum Programmes of Study *(Paragraph 142)*

XXIII.Involve governors in monitoring initiatives in the school development plan by visiting the school to see for themselves how they are working. *(Paragraph 62)*

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Characteristics of the school**

1. Cranmer Middle School is located in Phipps Bridge Ward, Mitcham, in the London Borough of Merton. The school was built in 1919 as a grammar school for girls. In 1969 the school changed its character to that of a middle school for pupils aged 9 to 13 years and in 1989 it changed its character once again to cater for pupils aged 8 to 12 years. There are plans for the school to change again in 2001 when the school will cater for pupils aged 5 to 11, with additional facilities for pupils of nursery age and pupils with moderate learning difficulties. The school has seventeen classrooms and specialist facilities for art, French, design and technology, food technology, information and communications technology and music. There is a large library and hall which is used for assemblies and physical education. The canteen is housed separately. The grounds include a large playing field, tennis and netball courts and a hard playground. The school grounds also include a refurbished formal school pond, a 'wild' area with pond, a mathematics trail and a newly designed garden for the millennium.
2. The school currently has 501 pupils on roll between the ages of eight and twelve compared with the average for schools with pupils aged eight to twelve of 382. This is a significant increase on the number on roll at the previous inspection when there were 445 pupils on roll. The school has become increasingly popular with parents and in September 1999 the school increased its capacity by admitting pupils into five forms instead of the usual four classes. The school was still oversubscribed. There is no significant difference between the number of boys and the number of girls in total but in Year 4 the boys outnumber the girls by 3 to 2, there being 91 boys to 60 girls. Most pupils live in the surrounding area and transfer from at least eleven different schools with the majority coming from three neighbouring first schools. The school admits pupils from the whole range of abilities, including a significant minority of higher-attainers, but overall the pupils' attainments on entry to the school are broadly below average. The pupils come from a wide diversity of homes but, overall, the socio-economic circumstances of the pupils are below average with many coming from deprived wards in Merton Phipps Bridge in the Wandle Valley Single Regeneration Budget area. The school experiences a significant loss of higher-attaining pupils at the end of Year 6 when the pupils are aged eleven. It admits a similar number of average and lower-attaining pupils at the beginning of Year 7 to replace those who left in Year 6.
3. There are 140 pupils on the register of pupils with special educational needs, a proportion above the national average. Eight pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Need, a proportion close to the national average. The proportion of pupils who come from homes where English is not the first language is high at sixteen per cent. One hundred and thirty four pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, a proportion that is above the national average.
4. The school has a mission statement, 'that every child learns in a stimulating and caring environment which promotes self-esteem, spiritual, and moral development and enables children to reach their full academic, social and physical potential regardless of race, culture, gender or disability'. The school has six aims that correspond with the mission statement and five values which are published around the school: care, courtesy, consideration, self-respect and hard work.
5. The School Development Plan 1999-2000 includes targets in literacy, English as an additional language, science, assessment, recording and reporting, teaching and learning, pupils with special educational needs, reading, target setting, raising boys' standards of achievement, personal, social and health education, information and communications technology and behaviour management.
6. Since the last inspection there has been a significant number of changes to the staff, including the senior management team of whom there are now only two as a result of promotions and illness. Within the past two years eleven new teachers have been appointed and this has resulted in the need to reconsider the appointments of subject co-ordinators.
- 6.

## Key indicators

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	61	58	119

<b>6. National Curriculum Test Results</b>		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	38	44	52
	Girls	46	42	51
	Total	84	86	103
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	71(74)	72(70)	87(84)
	National	70 (65)	69(59)	78(69)

<b>6. Teacher Assessments</b>		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	38	42	50
	Girls	46	44	53
	Total	84	86	103
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	71(76)	72(72)	87(88)
	National	68(65)	69(65)	75(72)

2

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

### 6. Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year:			%
	Authorised	School	6.7
	Absence	National comparative data	5.8
	Unauthorised	School	0.7
	Absence	National comparative data	0.5

6.

### 6. Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:		Number
	Fixed period	17
	Permanent	1

### 6. Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is:		%
	Very good or better	14
	Satisfactory or better	96
	Less than satisfactory	4

## 6. PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

### 6. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

#### 6. Attainment and progress

1. The school admits pupils from across the whole ability range but when they enter the school at the age of eight, their overall attainment is below average. At the end of Year 6, a significant number of high-attaining pupils leave the school and they are replaced by pupils of average to below-average attainment and this has an effect on the overall standards in Year 7.
2. By the end of Year 7, when the pupils are aged twelve, inspection findings confirm that standards of attainment in English and science are in line with standards expected of pupils aged twelve though the overall standards are not as high as in Year 6. In mathematics, standards are below those expected of pupils aged twelve. At the end of Key Stage 2, when the pupils are aged eleven, standards of attainment in English, mathematics and science are in line with the national average. By the end of Key Stage 2 and in Year 7 standards in information and communication technology are now in line with the national average. This is a significant improvement on the findings in the last inspection. Standards in religious education at Key Stage 2 and in Year 7 are in line with those expected in the Agreed Syllabus. Throughout the school pupils make satisfactory progress in art, design and technology, geography, history and physical education. In French, they make good progress in Year 6 and satisfactory progress in Year 7. They make good progress in music throughout the school. Overall, this is a significant improvement on the findings reported in the last inspection.
3. Since the last inspection, the school's overall performance in the National Curriculum assessment tests has improved year on year. From 1996 to 1998 the performance of pupils in English, mathematics and science was above the national average for pupils aged eleven. When compared with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds the school's performance is well above the national average for similar schools. The performance of boys was not as good as that of girls in English but there was no significant difference in mathematics and science. The school is aware of this difference in English and has put in place measures to improve the boys' performance. In 1999, the results showed that the gap between boys and girls has narrowed.
4. In the 1999 National Curriculum assessment tests in Year 6, the pupils' attainment in English was below the national average, although the number of pupils attaining at least Level 4, the level expected of pupils aged eleven, and the number of pupils attaining Level 5, a level above that expected of pupils aged eleven, was in line with the national average. These results are not quite so high as in 1998. The main reason is the very high number of pupils who attained below Level 3, 12 per cent, which is nearly twice the national average. This is accounted for by the extra large group of pupils with special educational needs in Year 6, 34 per cent. However, the school achieved its set target of 71 per cent of pupils achieving the required standard. When compared with schools with a similar intake, the school's performance is average. The pupils' attainment in mathematics is in line with the national average and when compared with similar schools it is well above the average. The number of pupils attaining at least Level 4 is in line with the national average and the number of pupils attaining Level 5 and Level 6 is above the national average. The proportion of pupils reaching Level 5 nearly doubled from 1998 to 1999, indicating the school is making better provision for the higher-attaining pupils. The school achieved its target of 72 per cent of pupils attaining Level 4 and above. The pupils' attainment in science is above the national average and it is well above the average when compared with schools of a similar kind. The number of pupils attaining at least Level 4 is above the national average and the number of pupils attaining Level 5 is well above the national average, a significant improvement upon the findings reported in the last inspection. The school achieved its target of 87 per cent of pupils attaining Level 4 and above.
5. In English, the school has made many improvements since the last inspection. Standards have been raised overall for the majority of pupils but the lower-attaining pupils receive insufficient appropriate

support. At Key Stage 2, progress for most pupils in relation to prior attainment is good and in Year 7 it is satisfactory. The progress of pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language is unsatisfactory. Standards of attainment in speaking and listening are above average at the end of Key Stage 2 and at the end of Year 7. Pupils are attentive listeners and speak articulately. Standards in reading are below the national average at the end of Key Stage 2 and in Year 7, but pupils' ability to retrieve books from the library is a strength. At the end of Key Stage 2 standards in writing are above the national average and pupils make good progress. In Year 7 they are sound overall. Pupils produce a wide range of writing for different purposes and for a range of audiences. Spelling and handwriting are satisfactory with work neatly presented.

6. In mathematics, standards at Key Stage 2 have improved significantly since the last inspection. The arrangement of setting in all year groups has been a contributory factor. However, pupils from ethnic minorities with English as an additional language achieve lower results than other pupils in the same year group. In some lessons, they do not make as much progress as they might because there is not enough appropriate help. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils reach the average level in number and algebra, shape and measure and data-handling and, since the last inspection, they have improved their ability to apply their mathematical knowledge and skills to practical situations. Pupils make good progress in relation to their prior attainment and the pupils in the sets with the highest attainers in Years 5 and 6 make very good progress. Higher-attaining pupils are very confident with number, shape and measure but a significant minority of pupils have yet to learn basic addition facts and multiplication tables well enough to enable them to solve practical problems quickly. In Year 7, the pupils' attainment overall is below expectations for their age. Some pupils have good number skills and use these effectively to solve problems and interpret data from graphs, but there is a significant number of pupils who achieve well below this level.
7. In science, standards at the end of Key Stage 2 and in Year 7 are in line with the national average and pupils make satisfactory progress in relation to their prior attainment. They make good progress in many areas of the subject but their progress in experimental and investigative skills is not as good as in their knowledge and understanding. The pupils' understanding of forces, electricity and magnetism is good. They handle equipment and materials sensibly and pay due regard to safety.
8. In information and communication technology, attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 and in Year 7 is in line with that expected from pupils of a similar age. This is a significant improvement on the findings of the last inspection when attainment was judged to be below the average. Pupils, including those who speak English as an additional language and those who have special educational needs, make satisfactory progress over Key Stage 2 and in Year 7. This is the result of pupils working in pairs and helping one another. A minority of pupils make good progress in relation to their prior attainment and these are the pupils who have regular access to computers and practise their skills, for example at home. Pupils talk knowledgeably about their work, records of which are kept on file. Overall, pupils have insufficient opportunities to practise their skills in other subjects.
9. In religious education, pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 and in Year 7 is in line with the expectations of the Agreed Syllabus. Pupils throughout the school make good progress in relation to their prior attainment, particularly in their knowledge and understanding of major religious festivals. They describe the differences and similarities between festivals such as Diwali, Hanukkah and Christmas which they identify as festivals of light. High-attainers relate their learning to their personal experience. Pupils with special educational needs and pupils who learn English as an additional language make satisfactory progress. With specific support they make good progress. Pupils in Year 7 have a good awareness of religious and cultural intolerance.
10. In the other National Curriculum subjects, nearly all the pupils at Key Stage 2 and in Year 7 make at least satisfactory progress. In art, pupils apply their skills across the curriculum; for example, when illustrating their work on solids, liquids and gases and, in Year 7, pupils show a good understanding of perspective. Pupils develop their understanding of portraiture and there is a steady progression of pupils' skills and techniques in clay modelling. Pupils satisfactorily develop skills of observational drawing but

they do not gain sufficient understanding of how to vary pressure to create light and dark tones. In design and technology, there is progress in pupils' knowledge and understanding of fabrics, threads and stitches and in their model-making skills. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 develop skills in evaluating and improving their work. In geography, pupils throughout the school develop the skill of comparing their local area with a place in India called 'Chambakolli'. Progress slows for lower-attainers when they do not receive individual support. In history, pupils in Year 6 used their skills in historical enquiry to discover differences between the shopping habits of the Ancient Greeks and the people of today. Pupils in Year 7 made good progress in sequencing the events leading up to the murder of Thomas Becket when learning about the power struggle between medieval monarchs and the Church. In physical education, standards have improved overall since the last inspection. Pupils who attend extra-curricular activities in games make good progress and generally, pupils make better progress in games than in gymnastics and dance as a result of teachers' confidence and expertise. In gymnastics, the highest-attainers are often not sufficiently challenged to perform the gymnastic elements at a high level. In dance, the high-attainers begin to exaggerate their movements to depict meaning but the average and low-attainers do not accurately mirror movements or exaggerate their movements. In swimming, progress over the key stage is unsatisfactory as pupils have insufficient opportunities to attain the levels expected of pupils at the end of Key Stage 2. The pupils make good progress during lessons when they are in three ability groups and satisfactory progress in lessons when they are in two ability groups. In music the pupils make good progress. They steadily improve in the quality of singing, playing, listening and performing and in their understanding of elements such as tempo, pitch and dynamics. In French, pupils' speaking and listening skills are good in Year 6 and satisfactory in Year 7. Their pronunciation is good. Pupils make good progress in their written work in Year 6 and satisfactory progress in Year 7.

11. Pupils with special educational needs are not making satisfactory progress in developing their reading and writing skills. Although pupils are divided into sets in Years 6 and 7 for English and in all year groups for mathematics, work is often not sufficiently matched to pupils' abilities within the sets. The work for pupils who are supported in various groups is not sufficiently focused on their individual needs. In most other subjects, for example, science and information and communication technology, the pupils are supported by their higher-attaining peers as they work in pairs and small groups.

12. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress in the sessions where they receive specific support but on other occasions the progress they make is variable. Pupils, particularly those at Stage 2 of learning English as an additional language, generally attain at a level below that of their peers. They relate well to the specialist teacher who is committed and resourceful. Additional language support facilitates their access to the curriculum. They benefit from the range of strategies used in school; for example phonics. However, many of these pupils need additional support on a daily basis but do not receive it. Lack of English often holds them back. They have difficulty in expressing themselves clearly, and often read without understanding.

18. **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

13. The attitudes, behaviour and personal development of the pupils are very good. This is an improvement on the findings reported in the last inspection. The school has a very good behaviour policy and the consistent implementation by staff ensures that the school is an orderly community, despite the number of pupils with specific behaviour concerns. Seventeen pupils have been suspended for fixed periods and one pupil has been permanently excluded. Most pupils behave very well, are confident and cope effectively with everyday life in the school. Behaviour improves as pupils move through the school to Year 6. The general overall standards of behaviour are sustained in Year 7 despite several new pupils being admitted to the school.

14. Pupils listen and respond to teachers' questioning very well. They understand the need to behave well at all times. They form good relationships with teachers and with one another, particularly in paired or small group work. The degree of racial harmony is very good. Pupils share equipment sensibly, look after their own things and take pride in the presentation of their work. They persevere with tasks when they are appropriately challenging; for example, when learning to swim and working on computers. Pupils exhibit a more enthusiastic response and fewer examples of inattention in the lessons in which



they are set targets for work to be completed and in which they understand exactly what they are expected to learn. Pupils who have a tendency to misbehave do so in lessons where the teacher takes too long to explain specific learning.

15. The pupils have good manners and are courteous to adults and considerate of one another. When moving from class to class for a change of lesson or to the hall for assemblies and physical education, the pupils move around the school in an orderly manner and also when they walk outside of school, for example to the swimming pool. A few pupils are less orderly when going out at break or lunch-times but the vast majority are very considerate. They hold doors open for adults and their friends. Pupils learn to observe other pupils at work; for example in physical education, and to listen to others' contributions in lessons such as mathematics. They make constructive comments about these in an attempt to help their peers improve their performance and understanding. This contributes positively to the progress pupils make in lessons.
16. Pupils are given opportunities to take responsibility in and around the school; for example 'School Banking' and 'Eco-Committee'. Monitors are appointed and pupils regularly ask if there are tasks that need to be completed. Pupils like school. They have positive attitudes both in school and to their homework. They are becoming independent learners.

## 22. Attendance

17. Pupils' attendance is satisfactory. In 1998/99 it was 92.6 per cent. In 1997/98 it was 92.7 per cent, which is below the national average of 93.8 per cent. Most authorised absence arises from sickness. Unauthorised absence at 0.5 per cent was exactly on the national average in 1997/98 and rose very slightly to 0.7 per cent in 1998/99. The satisfactory attendance has a positive effect on most pupils' attainment and progress. The legal requirements for recording and reporting attendance are met. Pupils are punctual at the start of the day and when returning from breaks.
18. Attendance levels have declined slightly since 1995, the year in which the last inspection took place. The school has set a target of 96 per cent attendance for the current year, of which both pupils and parents are well aware.

24.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

### 24. Teaching

1. Teaching has improved considerably since the last inspection when about one quarter of the lessons observed were reported as unsatisfactory. In the current inspection only 4 per cent of lessons observed were unsatisfactory. Overall, teaching is good. There is no significant difference in the quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 and in Year 7. Teaching ranges from unsatisfactory to very good. Fourteen per cent of lessons are very good, 43 per cent of lessons good and 38 per cent of lessons satisfactory. Teaching and learning has been a focus of development for the past two years and the production of a school policy coupled with a rigorous programme of monitoring has led to significant improvements.
2. The teaching of literacy is good throughout the school although there is insufficient support for pupils with special educational needs. Teachers are confident with the subject content, and following recent in-service training, are very effective questioners. The teaching of numeracy is satisfactory in Key Stage 2 and in Year 7. The main strengths of the teaching are the teachers' good relationships with the pupils, their classroom organisation and management and very thorough planning. The main weakness is the lack of clarity in the questions to pupils. In science, teaching is satisfactory overall and good in nearly half of the lessons seen. The planning, use of resources to support the lessons and pupil management are good. Teaching in information and communication technology is satisfactory at both key stages with teachers increasingly confident in their own expertise. In religious education the teaching is good overall. The multi-faith situation within the class is used effectively to explore common celebrations

across faith groups. The teaching of French in Years 6 and 7 and music in Year 7 is very good. In music in Year 6 it is good enabling the pupils to make good progress. In art, design and technology, history, physical education, teaching is satisfactory overall, though in physical education teachers' expertise varies considerably and this has a significant effect on the progress that pupils make. No lessons in geography were observed but the teaching is judged to be satisfactory given the progress the pupils make in relation to their prior attainment. Examples of very good teaching were seen in English, French, mathematics, art, design and technology and music. There were examples of very good teaching in all year groups.

3. There are some notable strengths in teaching and it is the main reason for improvements in standards in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology and in maintaining or improving standards in other subjects. Where teaching is very good, the pupils make considerable progress in that lesson. A number of very good features were seen. In English, different tasks are planned effectively for different ability groups within the class or set. The task is clearly explained, to write a set of instructions on "how to make a sandwich", with appropriate revision of work previously covered. The teacher has high expectations of good behaviour and insists on silence so that pupils can hear what is being said. Subject expertise is good; for example, in the grammar element of the sentence, the imperative is emphasised. During the lesson, a very good mixture of teaching strategies is used; for example, whole class exposition, paired work and group work where appropriate. In mathematics, the introductory numeracy session moves at a fast pace and the teacher uses fans with numerals on in mental arithmetic to see if the pupils can calculate correctly. Questions are used effectively to assess pupils' knowledge and understanding and to extend their learning; for example, "what do we call numbers below zero?" Vocabulary is introduced and revised such as 'consecutive' and 'sequence'. Pupils are encouraged to share their strategies for calculating  $5628 + 475$  by showing their working out to the rest of the class on the board. Homework is used effectively to reinforce learning in the lesson. In information and communication technology, pupils are asked to give directions to one of their number who carries them out on the big screen to remind all pupils how to enter their program in order to carry out their task of opening a frame and combining a picture with text. Time targets are used well such as, "you have five minutes to carry on writing after you have opened your letter". In art, sketchbooks are used very well and pupils are enthused by the teacher to improve the proportion of facial features. The teacher effectively uses pupils' work to demonstrate points to focus on and praise is used very well to reinforce the teacher's high expectations and to raise pupils' self-esteem. In design and technology, the teacher makes very good interventions to help pupils consider what improvements or modifications are needed to their designs of shelters. In music, the teacher's expertise is apparent in the high expectations of work and behaviour. Appropriate vocabulary such as 'chord' is used and techniques are taught; for example, with the beater. High-attaining pupils are encouraged to help those peers who have less knowledge. The lesson moves at a fast pace keeping all pupils on task.
4. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, for example in a few mathematics lessons, questions to the pupils are unclear and the pupils are not sure what is being asked. The introduction takes too long, for example 25 minutes, and the pupils are restless and do not concentrate well. Subject expertise is exposed when the question displayed is incorrectly presented and pupils are not physically challenged in their physical education lessons. Problems are presented to the pupils in the introduction to all the class and another example is tackled before the previous one is completed leaving pupils puzzled. Different tasks are prepared for pupils of different abilities but these are not well matched and some groups find the task too easy while others find the task too difficult. This leads to unsatisfactory progress by the pupils. Teachers talk for too long, for example in history and physical education, and the pupils have insufficient time for their task or activity.
5. Not all teachers are aware of the individual needs of the pupils in their sets who are on the special educational needs register according to the Code of Practice. Some pupils are taught by several teachers and assistants for additional lessons. All the teachers have different teaching programmes. They do not constantly refer to the pupils' own individual education plans to make sure they are meeting their targets. This is a significant factor in the unsatisfactory progress these pupils make in developing their reading and writing skills. Teaching of pupils with English as an additional language is good in the support groups but it is less effective when the pupils are in their classes with no extra support. The teacher of pupils who have English as an additional language sets targets for the pupils she withdraws in

groups but many of the same pupils are on the school's special needs register and follow other support programmes as well. There is insufficient liaison between teachers to ensure the needs of the pupils are met.

## 29. **The curriculum and assessment**

6. The school has maintained the broad and balanced curriculum reported in the previous inspection and continues to meet statutory requirements. However, not all timetables are well balanced as some pupils spend too much time on the same subject on certain days. The school has plans to change this from January. The school day has been lengthened since the previous inspection and is in line with recommended hours. The time for music at the end of Key Stage 2 is now much lower than average. Due to pupils having a knowledgeable specialist music teacher the programmes of study can just be fitted in. Specialist teaching continues for French and music except for one music class which is taught by the class teacher. Religious education, art and design and technology have lower than average allocations of time. English, through the implementation of the literacy hour and extra English sessions, is given above average time and emphasis throughout the school. The National Numeracy Strategy has been effectively introduced to all classes. There are comprehensive policies and schemes of work for all National Curriculum subjects and religious education in order to support teachers' planning. Staff have regular weekly planning meetings to ensure the curriculum across the year group is consistent.
7. The new information and communication technology room is being used well. The music curriculum is enhanced by recorder lessons, orchestra and choir practice run by the specialist teacher. Visiting instrumentalists give good instruction for a fee from a choice of keyboard, piano, violin, guitar, flute, clarinet and drums. Discretionary time is used for extra English lessons and personal, health and social education. The school has an appropriate sex education policy and drugs education programme. The school has a well-organised homework policy which is consistently applied by all staff. The homework is thoroughly marked and effectively used as part of lessons. Parents recognise this as a good feature of the school. Pupils record their homework in a notebook which parents are able to monitor. Homework includes revision of previous learning and this helps pupils when they take National Curriculum tests, particularly in science.
8. The school aims to provide equal access to all pupils irrespective of their gender, ethnicity and background and it does this successfully. The previous report stated that the more able pupils were not being sufficiently challenged. The school has taken action to raise the standards of these pupils by setting for mathematics throughout the school and for English in Years 6 and 7. This is an improvement although on occasions there is a lack of appropriately matched work within the sets. Pupils with special educational needs are placed on the appropriate stage of the Code of Practice to ensure they receive support from outside agencies for any physical disabilities or for behaviour management support. Provision for pupils with English as an additional language is good in quality when they are individually supported but this does not occur often enough. Pupils do not always receive sufficient support in their lessons.
9. There are not effective strategies in place for the management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs. The overall organisation is unnecessarily fragmented. There is no monitoring of the extra groups to ensure the programmes are helping the pupils to progress satisfactorily. The individual education plans have not been sufficiently monitored to ensure they are all consistent in stating short-term specific targets. The organisation of pupils being withdrawn from subjects other than English is unsatisfactory. There is no effective liaison and monitoring of all the special educational needs pupils who have English as an additional language and the programme of support for these pupils is not sufficiently well co-ordinated. The school has recognised this in its development plan and a new co-ordinator is to be appointed from January 2000.
10. The overall quality of available provision for pupils who learn English as an additional language is good but the level of provision is insufficient in terms of the nature and extent of the school's needs. Support is mainly in-class and curriculum related. There is some 'partnership teaching' in that the support teacher for pupils with English as an additional language works in close collaboration with class

teachers. A minority of pupils, most of whom are at Stage 2 of learning English, have difficulty in expressing themselves clearly, especially in written English. They often read without understanding. These pupils attain at a level below that expected nationally because those who are being targeted at the moment do not receive sufficient support. Pupils' positive attitudes to school often enable them to make progress which is more evident in the areas of receptive language skills. There is little evidence of pupils' first language being practised. The school's linguistic diversity is sometimes celebrated: for example, in assembly.

11. There are more planned opportunities than previously for cross-curricular issues. For example, the making of torches during design and technology lessons and the observational drawing and clay work in the art sessions link successfully with science and history themes. The school continues to provide the pupils with educational visits and a wide range of extra-curricular activities which includes French, sport, art and information and communication technology. They make a very significant contribution to pupils' social and cultural development. Visitors to the school also make an impact on pupils' progress, for example, the successful 'Firm Friends' reading and mentoring project.
12. Since the previous inspection there has been an increase in school testing and the data is used for analysing the strengths and weaknesses in the curriculum and to set school targets. Pupils' progress is tracked as they move through the school. On entry they are given reading, spelling and non-verbal tests. As well as the statutory test in Year 6, pupils are tested in English and mathematics at the end of Years 4 and 5 using the voluntary government attainment tests. Targets for individual pupils have been set in Year 6 for the past three years, in Year 5 for two years, and they have now been introduced in Years 4 and 7. The school is beginning to set individual targets for pupils to help improve their attainment. The staff of pupils from Years 4 to 6 have individual tutorials to write their target cards which they keep in class. Targets are regularly monitored, marked off when achieved and new ones are set.
13. There is an improvement in assessment and record keeping for English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology since the previous inspection. However, for religious education and other subjects there are no consistent whole-school assessment procedures and this is a weakness which has been recognised. Teachers use ongoing evaluations to inform their planning. They set learning objectives for every lesson which they share with the pupils and they assess whether the pupils have met those objectives at the end of the lesson and adjust their planning accordingly. Staff continue to mark work regularly and accurately and write comments to help pupils improve. Parents receive the statutory annual end-of-year report and a useful written interim report for discussion at the first interview of the school year.
14. The school has a commitment to raising standards for pupils with special educational needs but their progress is not being satisfactorily monitored in order to do so. There is an effective system in place for monitoring and evaluating the pupils who learn English as an additional language. Individual targets are set and the specialist teacher keeps effective records and these are shared with the class teacher each term. In addition, a systematic analysis has been made of the National Curriculum assessment test results on the basis of pupils' ethnicity and this is used to provide specific support to individual pupils.

38. **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

15. The school makes very good provision overall for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Overall, this is an improvement on the findings reported in the last inspection.
16. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Pupils' spirituality is developed mainly through religious education, assemblies and collective worship. Topics such as 'The Good Samaritan' and 'Anne Frank's Diary' provide opportunities for pupils to reflect on different values and beliefs as well as for reflection. They learn about ancient gods and goddesses through some history topics. They are encouraged to respond to religious teachings in the light of their personal experiences. Provision for daily collective worship, which fully meets statutory requirements, makes a valuable contribution to pupils' spirituality. Planned curriculum opportunities are, however, limited, as are links with multi-faith

communities, to ensure that the wider spiritual issues are fully addressed. This reflects limited improvement in this dimension of pupils' experience since the last inspection.

17. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good and a strength of the school. The school has a strong moral code which sets boundaries for acceptable behaviour. Its strong framework of values enables pupils to distinguish between right and wrong. Classroom activities and assembly themes often raise moral issues, and adults always set good examples. The school's expectations of behaviour are high. The majority of pupils respond positively to this and show respect for each other and property. The school functions as an orderly community. Most parents are happy with the values and principles that the school promotes.
18. Provision for pupils' social development is very good, highlighting another strength of the school. The school fosters very good relationships. The way pupils from diverse social backgrounds play and work together sets an excellent example. A comprehensive range of curricular and other activities, including visits and links, contribute to the development of pupils' social skills. Opportunities such as the 'Buddy Reading Scheme', 'School Banking' and 'Eco-Committee' enable pupils to take initiatives and responsibility as monitors and helpers. Visitors such as those associated with the 'Firm Friends' initiative and the Christian Mission have an impact on pupils' personal and social skills. They enable pupils to become good citizens, contributing to the profile of the school in the community.
19. Provision for pupils' cultural development is also very good. Pupils have opportunities to develop an understanding and appreciation of the British cultural heritage through art, music and literature. They also learn about festivals and, to some extent, different customs and traditions through subjects such as history and religious education. Considerable improvement has been made in addressing the issue of cultural diversity since the last inspection. The school's cultural and linguistic diversity is celebrated in lessons and assemblies.
20. Religious education, assemblies and the daily act of collective worship are major contributory factors in the promotion of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

44. **Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**

21. The school has continued to develop the good practice noted in the last inspection report. Overall the school is very effective in its support and guidance to pupils and in providing for their welfare. This makes a very positive contribution to educational standards and helps pupils to feel happy and secure. Parents appreciate the school's welcoming and friendly atmosphere. All class teachers and heads of year know their pupils well and pupils confidently turn to them for help.
22. There is a good system for introducing new parents and pupils to the school and the head of Year 4 maintains continuity of liaison with the main feeder primary schools. The school keeps a detailed track of pupils' progress and pupils are well supported in their learning and personal development. Individual education plans are written for all the pupils on the school's register of special educational needs but they are not sufficiently focused to ensure steady progress. There is insufficient quality and quantity of support staff to ensure appropriate support is given. However, outside agencies are used well to support the work with pupils.
23. There is a personal, social, and health education programme, which includes active work in the prevention of drug abuse. This is an area of development in the school's development plan. Pupils benefit considerably from a range of musical, sporting and academic extra-curricular activities, and many take them up enthusiastically, as evidenced by the lively performance of the recorder band at assembly. Pupils are also keen to take up the opportunities offered by the 'Eco-Committee'. All these activities contribute substantially to pupils' personal development and awareness of the world around them. The policy for sex education meets statutory requirements. Pupils are encouraged to give of themselves in several ways: by collecting for charity, giving a Christmas tea to elderly neighbours, and older pupils helping younger ones with their reading.
24. Procedure teacher and staff have high expectations of good behaviour and promote an orderly and cheerful atmosphere throughout the school. They have encouraged a spirit of volunteering and helpfulness, which is clearly evident in pupils' approach to their fellows, staff and visitors. Pupils are well supervised in class and around the school. Parents feel strongly that the school is successful in promoting racial harmony, a view confirmed during the inspection. Bullying is rare and both pupils and parents are happy that inappropriate behaviour is dealt with rapidly and effectively. Pupils have produced their own anti-bullying pamphlet. Arrangements for child protection conform to legislation and are good.
25. The school has excellent procedures for monitoring attendance and in ensuring a high level of pupil punctuality. Although the school has not succeeded in reducing unauthorised absence below the national average, there is probably little more that it could do. The school works very effectively with the education welfare service. The school complies with legal requirements for health and safety procedures. Provision for medical care and first-aid are good. Sick pupils are appropriately looked after. The school liaises very effectively with outside agencies in supporting pupils with special educational needs or health worries. There are no major outstanding health and safety concerns. Solutions to minor problems have been agreed with the headteacher.

49. **Partnership with parents and the community**

26. The school has continued to build on the firm foundation reported in the previous inspection.
27. Information to parents about the school is of a very high standard. The prospectus is very informative and interesting to read, well written and reader friendly. Both it and the governors' annual report to parents meet statutory requirements. Letters about specific school events and requirements keep parents up to date as necessary. A readable newsletter is published regularly and a range of useful booklets, such as the *Cranmer Words and Tables* books, allow parents to see some of what their children are learning. Parents can contact the school informally at any time and make appointments to see their child's class teacher. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are properly involved with the

review of their children's progress.

28. Parents consider that the annual report on pupils could be more detailed. The format meets statutory requirements, but does not really allow enough room for all subjects to be reported in sufficient detail, though the pupil profile section is of a good size and teachers use it well. However, the school has developed a very good, interim summary report, which complements the annual report and which parents find informative. It clearly evaluates overall attitudes, reports progress in literacy and numeracy and sets out an action plan in which three targets are set out as agreed between the pupil and the teacher and encourages parents to comment. There are two parents' meetings per year to discuss pupils' reports, and other specific opportunities to visit the school, such as an induction evening for new parents and a literacy hour information session, which drew a large crowd of over 200 parents.
29. The involvement of parents in their children's learning is very good. The prospectus sets out clearly the school's approach to homework and parents receive homework timetables. They are kept informed of their children's homework and day-to-day progress through the Home/School Book and are encouraged to use it to maintain a dialogue with the school. Teachers check assiduously to ensure that parents sign it. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are appropriately informed by the school when the pupils are put on the register and are involved in reviews. Parents and grandparents feel welcome in school and the school encourages them to play an active part in its academic and social life, and many respond. Parents respond well to invitations to a range of music and drama productions and other activities. The Cranmer School Association arranges a number of fund-raising events and through its work generates a useful income for the benefit of the children. Parents were involved with the school in producing an imaginative cookery book and more recently with constructing the attractive Millennium Garden and planting daffodils.
30. The enrichment of the curriculum through links with the community is very good. During inspection week Year 7 pupils spent a wet afternoon helping plant the Merton Millennium Wood and in learning about the local ecology. The school is deemed an Eco School and has received extra funding to develop pupils' understanding of the ecological aspects of life. Visitors, including drama groups, the police and 'Firm Friends' make a very useful contribution to pupils' attainment and to their understanding of the world. The school provides a range of educational and cultural outings, both locally and further afield, including museum and theatre visits and for Year 6 pupils a residential trip to the Isle of Wight. Trainee teachers are welcomed. Pupils have the chance of developing a sense of community by contributing to charity and hosting a Christmas tea party for elderly locals.
31. The school's links with industry and commerce continue to develop well. The support to the school by the local Education Business Partnership is good, with contributions from commercial organisations for such events as the Maths Fun Day and building the Millennium Garden. The school has also received help from banks in promoting pupils' understanding of banking. Visits to business premises are available to older pupils as tasters for work.
32. Links with the other schools in the locality and specialist agencies are close and effective. First school pupils benefit from an early induction visit and from good pastoral contacts.

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

56. **Leadership and management**

33. Overall, the leadership and management of the school is very good. This is an improvement on the findings of the last inspection.
34. The headteacher provides outstanding educational leadership. She has very high expectations of pupils both in work and in behaviour. Her presence and influence are to be seen throughout the school. She

leads by setting a fine example for others to follow. She and the acting deputy headteacher are good role models in promoting the values of the school, 'care, courtesy, consideration, self-respect and hard work'. Pupils and staff respond positively. Parents are full of admiration. The school has a mission statement which is reflected in its six aims. It is largely successful in helping, "every child to learn in a stimulating and caring environment which promotes self-esteem". It "promotes the pupils' moral, social and physical potential regardless of race, culture, gender or disability" well and provides relevant role models for all pupils. It is not quite so successful in "promoting the pupils' spiritual development" except in assemblies.

35. The headteacher is very well supported by the acting deputy headteacher, who is also the curriculum and assessment co-ordinator, the year group leaders and the subject co-ordinators. Staff are offered appropriate support in the teaching of subjects by the co-ordinators and the year group leaders ensure that pupils across the year group are offered similar experiences. Year group leaders and subject co-ordinators are involved in monitoring procedures but they have not yet had many opportunities to see other teachers at work. The provision for pupils with special educational needs was recognised as unsatisfactory in the school development plan and a new co-ordinator is to be appointed from January 2000.
36. Since the last inspection when six key issues were identified, there have been significant improvements in the standards the pupils attain in English, mathematics and science with the school achieving the realistic targets that it set itself. Improvements in information and communication technology and physical education have occurred so that nearly all pupils make satisfactory progress over Key Stage 2 and in Year 7. The senior management team is efficient in its business and now has appropriate procedures for monitoring and evaluating the school's work. Data is effectively analysed to identify groups who may be underachieving and the school has successfully adopted setting arrangements in order to meet the needs of all pupils in Years 6 and 7 in English and in all years in mathematics. Procedures for assessment and recording have improved in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology though there is still progress to be made in all other subjects. Teaching and learning has been the main focus over the past two years with the development of a whole-school policy linked to a rigorous monitoring programme. This has resulted in a considerable improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection (when nearly 25 per cent of teaching was unsatisfactory) and this has contributed to the continuing development in the school's ethos which is now very good. Behaviour has continued to improve as a result of the school's implementation of its behaviour policy. The school is very well managed and the organisation runs most efficiently. With outstanding leadership from the headteacher, the very good support from staff, the improved effectiveness of the governing body and much better teaching, the potential for continuing to improve is very good.
37. The governing body has suffered from a steady turnover of members since the last inspection and on occasions has found it difficult to recruit new members. This has now been addressed and the governing body is up to strength. It is ably led by the chair of governors who gives valuable support to the headteacher. The governing body is aware of its responsibilities and has organised three appropriate committees to assist in carrying out its business. It is effectively involved in strategic planning, not least in considering the change of character of the school for September 2001. It holds the school to account for its educational standards and in evaluating initiatives in the school development plan by receiving reports from the headteacher and staff. With the help of representatives of the local education authority it has been involved in a successful annual exercise to review its performance and to set its own targets.
38. School development planning is based upon the school's mission statement and aims and is comprehensive in identifying targets still to be achieved from the previous year as well as identifying new priorities for the coming year. It is a very useful tool in ensuring the school continues to identify areas for improvement and to bring about necessary change. All staff have opportunities to be involved in identifying areas for improvement. The senior management team is closely involved in monitoring and evaluating the initiatives and provides the governing body with relevant information. The governing body has become increasingly involved in the procedures though there is still a need for governor representatives to be more closely involved in monitoring and evaluating initiatives within the school.



39. The school meets statutory requirements in all aspects.

63. **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

40. There have been many improvements since the last inspection. The current senior management team, although small, now has a clearly defined purpose and is very effective. A co-ordinator for information and communication technology has been appointed, and in-service training for mathematics and information and communication technology is now adequate. The range of fiction in the library has been increased to a satisfactory level, and mathematics resources now meet the needs of all the pupils. The litter problem has been resolved and the dining area now provides an acceptable environment for lunch-times.

41. Overall, there are sufficient teachers and classroom assistants to meet the pupils' needs except for those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. The teachers are all appropriately trained for the primary age-range. There are some difficulties with provision for Year 7, especially in specialist subjects like science that have to be taught by the class teacher, but these are managed well through advice and support from the relevant subject co-ordinators. There are good procedures in place for the induction of newly qualified teachers and the school is providing facilities for two teachers-in-training this year. In-service training for teachers is closely linked to the school development plan so that new initiatives like the literacy and numeracy hours can be introduced effectively. The support for pupils for whom English is an additional language is of good quality, but not all pupils who need this support receive enough of it. The staff supporting pupils with special educational needs are competent, but the level is insufficient for current needs as there are many pupils with very low attainment who are not receiving appropriate support. There is insufficient qualified staff for the management and the specific teaching of the large number of pupils on the register of special educational needs. As a result a significant number of pupils underachieve and do not make satisfactory progress in relation to prior attainment.

42. The accommodation is spacious overall and is well maintained to provide a stimulating learning environment. The library is an outstanding feature. It is spacious and inviting, and helps to prepare the pupils for using such facilities in the next stage of their education. The specialist rooms make a good contribution to learning. The science laboratory, information and communication technology suite, design and technology workshop and music and French rooms are all well used to vary and enrich the pupils' daily learning experiences. The classrooms vary in size. Some are very small for the number of pupils and have minimal storage and display space while others are quite generously proportioned. However, all the teachers make the best of their rooms with a range of displays, some of which are of excellent quality. The corridors and other shared areas are also enhanced by attractive displays that reflect what the pupils are learning, stimulate further effort and set high standards for presentation. The facilities for indoor physical education are good, with a spacious hall equipped with a good range of gymnastic equipment. Facilities for outdoor games are adequate.

43. There is a good quantity of quality resources for all subjects except art, design and technology, geography and French, where provision is adequate. The library houses a good range of fiction and reference books and the school has a good supply of big-books and class readers to support the literacy hour. The resources for mathematics have been updated to meet the needs of the numeracy strategy and are now good. In science, information and communication technology and religious education, the resources provided help to ensure good provision across the core subjects. Resources to help pupils with special educational needs develop appropriate reading and writing skills are insufficient and not enough use is made of information and communication technology. In most of the lessons that were observed, the teachers have plenty of appropriate resources to hand and use them effectively to support learning and this is an improvement upon the findings reported in the last inspection.

67. **The efficiency of the school**

44. Standards of financial management are very good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The school is very efficiently run and makes good use of its resources and available finances. Educational developments are supported through careful financial planning. The Joint Annual Review (JAR) is an effective document for taking the school forward and for helping to formulate the school development plan, which is closely linked to the budget and reviewed regularly by the finance committee. Despite future uncertainties the school is planning ahead positively, and though funding is low reserves are managed prudently to ensure a healthy surplus at the end of each financial year. The latest audit report, in July 1999, found that financial control was good, and the few recommendations arising from the report have all been met. Further improvements since the previous inspection include the extension of the school hours to 23 hours, 45 minutes each week; the further involvement of governors; the provision of computers in the information and communication technology suite, and laptops for classroom use, and the excellent use now made of the school's exceptional library.
45. The funds for pupils with special educational needs, and for staff development, are used appropriately. However, although the school supplements funding for special needs, provision is still insufficient, and the monitoring of the use of those funds is underdeveloped. The inspection found that provision for pupils with special educational needs was a weakness. Pupils for whom English is a second language are well supported by a newly appointed part-time teacher for EAL, and two support staff, who are paid directly by the school. This is an example of the school making good use of its available funds, as is the decision to employ private contractors to maintain the grounds. Staff training priorities are carefully considered, and appropriate courses attended, for example in target setting, literacy and numeracy. Teaching and support staff and lunch-time assistants are well deployed. The newly appointed, trained, literacy support staff work well alongside teachers and contribute effectively to raising the pupils' level of achievement, but support staff could be used more effectively at the start of the literacy hour. Subject co-ordinators manage their own budgets effectively, but not all are enabled to monitor the work going on in classrooms.
46. The school is committed to the support of pupils with special educational needs. Expenditure is high but the deployment of the funding is not being effectively organised. Learning support assistants provide valuable help for those pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs. The accommodation for pupils with special educational needs withdrawn from class is welcoming with attractive displays. Resources for pupils with special educational needs are insufficient in variety and quantity and not enough use is made of information and communication technology.
47. The school's spacious accommodation is very well used. Appropriate timetabling ensures that all pupils use the many specialist teaching rooms to advantage, including the library, for which every class has a regular weekly visit, and which during the inspection week was well occupied at all times of the day. Within the grounds provision has been made for a wild area, a refurbished pond, a millennium garden and a maths trail, all of which are used effectively to enhance learning. Very good use is made of learning resources, with the high quality of displays of fabrics, pupils' work and historical artefacts contributing very positively to the overall ethos of the school. The wide corridors are well used for displays and for the distribution of shared books and resources appropriate for the different year groups, whose classrooms are effectively placed close to one another.
48. Day-to-day financial procedures are very good, and managed effectively by the school's newly appointed finance officer and other administrative staff, enabling the headteacher to give greater attention to her pupils and staff. There are good systems in place for the organisation of petty cash and for the placing of orders, and the checking and payment of invoices. A close overview is kept of the financial situation and governors receive up-to-date financial information regularly.
49. The previous inspection reported that the school gave value for money. This has been improved. Taking into account the socio-economic circumstances, the below average attainment on entry, the progress made by the pupils, and their very good attitudes and conduct, together with the sound attainment levels achieved, with below average funding per pupil, the school now provides good value for money.

73. **PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

73. **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

73. **English**

50. Since the previous inspection the school has made many improvements in English and has raised standards overall for the majority of pupils, though the needs of the weakest pupils have not been sufficiently met. The literacy hour has been introduced successfully in all classes, including Year 7, and a well-balanced timetable ensures additional provision for individual reading, extended writing, and library skills, which is helping to raise standards further. The four classes in Years 6 and 7 are divided into four sets for the literacy hour, though the two lower groups are of parallel ability. This is helping to raise standards for higher-attaining pupils, but the provision for the less and least able is insufficient. Regular, progressive homework supports the subject effectively. Monitoring of all aspects of the subject is particularly strong. The previous inspection reported that literacy standards were sound, reading was variable, there was insufficient provision for non-fluent readers, the library was used too little and procedures for assessment and recording were inconsistent and lacking in detail. The school has successfully addressed all of these issues.
51. In the 1998 end of Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests the percentage of pupils attaining Level 4 and above was above the national average, in comparison with all schools, and the percentage attaining the higher Level 5 was well above the national average. Teacher assessments support these findings. In the 1999 tests, the percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 and above was slightly lower than the previous year. This was in line with the national average and above the average for Merton schools. The school achieved its set target of 71 per cent of pupils achieving Level 4 or above. However, the school's level of attainment overall is below the national average due to the high percentage of pupils, 12 per cent, double the national average, achieving at below Level 3. Thirty-four per cent of pupils who sat the national tests in 1999 were on the school's register of pupils with special educational needs. In comparison with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, the pupils' performance is above average in the number of pupils at Level 4 and above, and places the school in the top twenty-five per cent of local schools. Over the period 1996-1998, the performance of both boys and girls has improved consistently, and at a greater rate than that found nationally. Taking the years 1996-1998 together, the overall performance of the pupils was just above the national average, with girls above by 0.11 levels, and boys below, by a similar amount. The school has identified this weakness among the boys and has successfully raised their levels of attainment this year, though they are still outperformed by the girls.
52. Inspection findings confirm that standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 are average and when pupils leave the school at the end of Year 7 standards are similar overall, though not at quite the same level, due to pupil changes at the end of Key Stage 2. Progress over time is generally good across Key Stage 2. It is satisfactory in Year 7. It was good in two-thirds of lessons observed, although the progress of pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language is hampered by insufficient provision and is unsatisfactory.
53. Standards of attainment in speaking and listening are above average at the end of Key Stage 2 and at the end of Year 7. Pupils throughout the school are attentive listeners, in lessons and assemblies, and are articulate speakers, able to form and justify an argument, and explain in detail to visitors what it is that they particularly like about the books they are reading. They are able to develop these skills in role-play in lessons such as history, for example, and in general question and answer sessions in class. Teachers have recently had in-service training on the use of open-ended questions, and use this skill to good effect. Pupils develop their skills further through opportunities provided for working together in pairs and small groups, and by making presentations to a wider audience. During the inspection week two lunch-time drama clubs were held, and other pupils were rehearsing for their Christmas production. Theatre visits are arranged and visiting groups organise drama workshops within school. This provision contributes further to the pupils' levels of attainment.
54. Standards in reading are below the national average at the end of Key Stage 2 and in Year 7, though

most pupils make satisfactory progress. In the 1999 standardised tests 70 per cent of pupils achieved Level 4 or above; 15 per cent achieved below Level 3. During the inspection three pupils were heard to read from each class, and inspection findings confirm that reading is satisfactory for the majority of pupils, but not for the least able. The school attaches great importance to the teaching of reading. Time is provided daily for individual or class reading, in addition to the literacy hour, and weekly, in a regular visit to the school library, where retrieval skills are taught, in accordance with the school's scheme of work. Pupils' library skills are above average. The "Firm Friends" project provides for black boys to identify with adults of similar ethnicity to hear reading. Year 7 pupils are trained to act as "Buddies" in partnership reading with pupils from Year 4. This works very effectively and to mutual advantage. Reading is set regularly for homework and records are kept of the frequency of hearing by parents, to whom guidance is given, but with whom there is insufficient dialogue on how to help pupils with their reading problems. The reading of boys has recently been targeted, and improved. An above average proportion of pupils join the school with well below average reading skills and lacking appropriate reading strategies. Provision for these pupils is insufficient, though the newly introduced initiative of supporting classes with literacy support assistants is beginning to have a positive impact and is helping to raise standards.

55. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards in writing are above the national average at Level 4 and the higher Level 5. Boys and girls are achieving above the national average, and pupils make good progress. Standards of writing in Year 7 are sound overall. Pupils produce a wide range of writing for different purposes and for a range of audiences, including fiction, poetry, diary, biographical and instructional writing. Examples of good empathy writing were seen in Year 5 where pupils wrote about life as a Victorian chimney-sweep, and in Year 4 classes were observed understanding the use of imperatives when writing instructions on how to make a sandwich, and discovering how careful they had to be in selecting accurate vocabulary. The writing of poetry across the school is good. Older pupils use similes, personification, and alliteration in their writing, for example "the silence surged softly". Good examples were seen of shape poems, "battle" poems, and pupils in Year 7 select specific words and phrases from the text to justify an argument when making comparisons between two poems. Grammatical terms are introduced progressively, following the literacy strategy, and are clearly displayed in most classrooms, where literacy areas have been created. Pupils' work is prominent in classroom displays, and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. Year 6 pupils are able to switch their writing from the first to the third person; imperatives are well understood by Year 4, Year 5 use adverbs and causal clauses when writing about how authors capture our attention. Punctuation across the school is generally satisfactory.
56. Standards of spelling and handwriting are satisfactory. Specific vocabulary is targeted in many lesson plans, not just for the literacy hour. This is good practice. Regular lists of words to learn are set, at three different levels, appropriate for pupils of all abilities, and pupils are tested on these following homework. Pupils observed word-processing on laptops know to use "Spellchecker" and Year 4 pupils learned to correct "pik and dille" to "pick and dial", very quickly. The school provides all pupils with an excellent booklet "Cranmer Words", which lists basic vocabulary required for all subjects, as well as many general words. Handwriting is taught in all classes, and is generally legible, cursive, neatly written in ink. Most pupils take a pride in their presentation and some high quality writing was observed. The best practice seen was where pupils automatically set out headings and dates for their work, using rulers to neatly underline.
57. In both key stages pupils' attitudes to their learning are usually good, sometimes very good, and never less than satisfactory. They listen and respond to teachers' questioning very well, and they understand the need to behave well at all times. They form good relationships with teachers and with one another, particularly in paired or small group work. Most, though not all, pupils stay on task during the independent work sessions within the literacy hour, and know that they should not bother the teacher working with another group. The pupils' good attitudes have a positive impact on the quality of their learning.
58. The teaching of English, and the delivery of the literacy hour, is good in both key stages. It is sometimes very good, and during the inspection no unsatisfactory teaching was seen. Good teaching was seen in three-quarters of the lessons observed. Teachers are confident with the subject content, and following

recent in-service training, are very effective questioners, presenting pupils with open-ended questions, which help develop their listening and speaking skills. Lessons are well planned and generally move at a good pace, maintaining pupils' interest. There is due attention paid in the planning to providing tasks appropriate to all ability levels, but sometimes the same task is set to more than one group, or to all pupils. This is not helpful to the lower-attaining pupils, and hinders their progress. Higher-attaining pupils are not always sufficiently stretched. Teachers generally work well with classroom assistants, and use them effectively to support small groups, but more efficient use of their time could be made at the start of the literacy hour, and through working even more closely with the pupils who have special needs. The best teachers have high expectations of conduct and attainment, and good class management skills. They are aware of the need to assess pupils, and they push them along, reminding them that they have only a few minutes to complete a task. All provide a good plenary session at the end of the literacy hour, and pupils leave lessons in no doubt about what they have learned. The literacy hour is helping to raise standards. The quality of marking is satisfactory and very good provision is made for homework, which further enhances the pupils' learning.

59. Learning resources for the subject are good. The school has plentiful stocks of good quality fiction and non-fiction books, within the library, in class libraries and appropriately distributed round the school within the different year groups. There are sufficient dual-language books, and books to promote boys' interests, as well as sets of readers for classwork and group reading within the literacy hour. Books about other cultures and religions and books for career information are readily accessible in the library. Although some of the classrooms are small for the number of pupils the accommodation is more than adequate for the delivery of the subject. The school library is quite superb. It is very spacious, very well equipped, attractive and welcoming, and recently re-furnished and redecorated. It is the focal point of the school, and staff and pupils are rightly proud of such a facility. Excellent use is made of it, and it contributes much to the levels of attainment across the whole curriculum. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Computers, and sets of laptops, are used to develop pupils' word-processing and spelling skills well in some classes.
60. The present co-ordinator has worked hard to implement the literacy hour, and will be handing over to a new subject manager shortly. Procedures for assessment have improved since the last inspection. Pupils are tested regularly. Good use is made of assessment information to develop the curriculum. There are many good initiatives in place for developing the subject and raising standards further, once the needs of the lower-attaining pupils has been addressed. The school's capacity for further improvement is very good.

84. **Mathematics**

61. The previous inspection report required the school to raise standards in mathematics as a key issue, and this has been achieved. Standards at Key Stage 2 have improved significantly from below average compared to all schools in 1996 to above average in 1997 and 1998. Despite a further small improvement in the school's test results for 1999, they are in line with the national average rather than above it this year because national results improved slightly more than the school's. The 1999 test results are also well above those achieved by pupils in other schools in similar circumstances, as they were in 1998. The proportion of pupils reaching at least Level 4, the expected level for eleven-year-olds, improved only slightly from 1998 to 1999, but nearly twice as many pupils reached Level 5. This is a good improvement, and indicates that the school is making better provision for the higher-attaining pupils than it was at the time of the last inspection, when this aspect of its work was criticised. The arrangement of setting in all year groups has contributed significantly to the standards attained by pupils of all abilities. There is no significant difference in test results between boys and girls over the past four years. However, pupils from ethnic minorities with English as an additional language achieve lower results than other pupils in the same year group.
62. The inspection evidence broadly confirms the national test results and other data held by the school. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils reach Level 4 in number and algebra, shape and measure and data-handling. They add and subtract numbers using hundreds, tens and units correctly and they understand fractions, decimals and percentages to an appropriate level. They know and use the metric units of

measure, have an understanding of basic geometry and interpret information that is displayed in the form of graphs. Since the last inspection they have improved their ability to apply their mathematical knowledge and skills to practical situations. Higher-attaining pupils are very confident with number, shape and measure. They calculate percentages of any number or measurement and use the geometry facts they already know in solving new problems, such as working out the interior angle of a hexagon knowing that the three angles of a triangle always add up to 180 degrees. However, the lower-attainers, including the pupils with special educational needs, have yet to learn basic addition facts and multiplication tables sufficiently well to enable them to solve practical problems quickly.

63. In Year 7, the pupils' attainment overall is below expectations for their age. Some pupils have good number skills and use these effectively to solve problems and interpret data from graphs, but there is a significant number of pupils who achieve well below this level. For example, they are unsure of place value and decimals and they still use their fingers for counting on rather than remembering addition and multiplication facts. Some of these pupils have joined the school in Year 7, while other pupils who achieved above average results in Year 6 have left. As a result, the overall attainment of the year group is comparatively lower than it is in Year 6.
64. Pupils make good progress overall in relation to their prior attainment at Key Stage 2. They make satisfactory progress in Year 7. Progress in lessons does not quite match progress over time as a result of teachers implementing the National Numeracy Strategy with varying levels of confidence. Progress is good in about four out of ten lessons. Pupils make very good progress in a small minority of lessons and, in about one in ten lessons, progress is unsatisfactory. The very good progress is achieved by very clear direct teaching of place value and the effect of multiplying by ten, one hundred or one thousand in a Year 6 lesson. The lesson moves at a brisk pace and the teacher keeps the pupils focused on the main teaching point. The pupils also learn to look for patterns when solving problems and the homework provides opportunities for the higher-attainers to develop their skills further. There is very good progress in the highest attaining sets in Years 5 and 6. In Year 5, higher-attaining pupils learn to split numbers up in different ways in order to add or subtract them more easily through very effective direct teaching. In Year 6 they quickly learn different ways of finding the difference between two numbers when one is positive and the other negative, and to use the correct vocabulary. Some of the lower-attaining pupils also make good progress throughout Key Stage 2. In Year 4, the lowest-attaining pupils make good progress in learning their ten times table and in telling the time using a.m. and p.m. in a well-organised lesson in which the teacher makes very good use of a range of resources to keep the pupils interested. In Year 5, average and below-average pupils make good progress in learning to convert metres to centimetres and pounds to pennies, and in solving practical problems using this knowledge. The teachers make good use of a range of apparatus to help them do this.
65. In some lessons, a minority of pupils make slow progress, even when other pupils make good or very good progress, because they still use their fingers to count on or work out their times-tables when other pupils recall these facts quickly. In the lessons observed there was no appreciable difference in the rate of progress for boys and girls. On occasions, however, some pupils whose first language is not English do not make as good progress as they might with their mathematics because there is not enough appropriate help for them in the lesson. Progress is unsatisfactory in a minority of lessons in which the teachers do not give the pupils accurate and clear guidance on a clear learning target.
66. Pupils across the school respond positively to mathematics. They enjoy the challenge of the mental sessions in the numeracy lessons, striving hard to get correct answers and to suggest good strategies for solving problems. They enjoy success, and this helps their learning. For example, Year 4 pupils try really hard to outdo one another for speed in answering questions at the end of the lessons so as to be the class champion for the day. Pupils generally listen attentively to lessons and get on well with their own work when necessary. In some classes there are a number of pupils with concentration and behavioural difficulties who tend to distract others unless closely watched. However, teachers are usually successful in ensuring that these pupils have minimal impact on the progress made by others through setting high expectations for behaviour and consistently applying the agreed codes of conduct. The pupils get on well together and co-operate successfully when working in pairs or groups. They use shared equipment sensibly, look after their own things and take pride in the presentation of their work. There is a more enthusiastic response and fewer examples of inattention in the lessons in which the pupils understand

exactly what they are expected to learn, and in lessons that move along at a brisk pace with plenty of opportunities for the pupils to be involved. In lessons in which the teacher labours points unnecessarily and asks too many confusing questions, those pupils with a tendency to disrupt others begin to do so. The pupils have good manners and are courteous to adults and considerate of one another. They have positive attitudes to their homework and when asked to discuss their attitudes, their comments show that they are capable of studying and learning independently.

67. The standard of teaching is satisfactory overall. In more than four out of ten lessons observed, the teaching is good or better, with very good teaching in one out of ten lessons. There is also unsatisfactory teaching in one out of ten lessons. The main strengths of the teaching are the teachers' good relationships with the pupils, their classroom organisation and management and very thorough planning. They set high expectations for behaviour, effort and presentation and make good use of homework to consolidate the pupils' learning. In the very good lessons, the teachers make it very clear to the pupils exactly what is to be learned. They use the whiteboard, number cards and other apparatus very effectively to teach concepts such as place value and counting on, and to check the pupils' understanding. They keep the pupils involved in active learning for most of the lesson, achieving a good balance between talking to the whole class and supporting individuals or groups as they work. The lessons then finish with a good brief recap on what has been learned with pointers to the next lesson and homework that offers challenge to pupils at all levels of attainment. In some lessons that get off to a promising start with a brisk, clear introduction, the pace of the lessons slows when the teacher keeps the whole class together for too long. Insufficient time is then left for the pupils to consolidate their learning by working out problems for themselves and for reflecting on what has been learned. The planning for most lessons includes appropriate activities for pupils who have below average attainment and in many lessons, extension activities are planned for those with higher attainment. However, the match between the tasks and the pupils' attainment is not always right for each group, and in some lessons, pupils who already understand the lesson and have good skills are not given enough challenge. Equally, pupils who have poor number skills are not always well provided for. For example, older pupils, who still use their fingers when working out relatively simple sums are not given specific targets to learn the facts that will help them to speed up and hopefully catch up. Many teachers use a good range of resources effectively in their direct class teaching. For example, they use metre rulers as aids for counting on and back in tens or twenties, time lines to teach a.m. and p.m. and digit cards to teach place value. In some lessons, for example a Year 4 lesson on telling the time, the pupils are also given practical aids, to help them as they work. However, in other lessons, the teachers do not provide sufficient concrete practical activities for those pupils who are finding new concepts difficult to grasp. All teachers plan their lessons according to the school's scheme of work. They share their learning targets with the pupils and keep good records of the pupils' progress. The best planning includes comments on how individuals and groups of pupils have responded to lessons, and subsequent lessons have been amended accordingly. In weaker lessons, despite the careful planning, the teachers are not at all clear about exactly what it is they are teaching, and this is reflected in the quality of the questioning and the response and progress of the pupils. In unsatisfactory lessons, the teachers' questions and illustrations serve to confuse rather than enlighten the pupils. A common cause of confusion and slow pace is the amount of time the teacher spends trying to explain terms instead of teaching concepts, indicating some problems with their understanding of the National Numeracy Strategy.
68. The school has only recently introduced the National Numeracy Strategy. Prior to this, the teaching was based on an effective scheme of work provided by the co-ordinator, which was a good improvement since the previous inspection. Currently, lessons are planned from a published scheme that follows the Numeracy Strategy guidelines but the worksheets are not always well understood by the pupils. Lesson plans are not always as clear as they should be, and do not succeed in providing a sufficiently supportive framework for those teachers who lack confidence in the subject. The co-ordinator is aware of the need to develop a comprehensive scheme for numeracy and to provide further training for teachers. She is sensibly considering the possibility of amending the school's own scheme, which has contributed to the successful raising of standards, alongside other options. The subject benefits from good leadership and management. The co-ordinator has a good grasp of what is happening across the school, and provides good support for teachers. Good records are kept of the pupils' achievements, and these are used to set appropriate targets for the school and for different year groups. Resources are of good quality, and apart from a few minor shortages, such as clocks with working gears to show how the hands move relative to one another, there are sufficient to support learning in all lessons.

92. **Science**

69. Inspection findings confirm that the school has maintained the above average attainment in the pupils' knowledge and understanding at Key Stage 2 reported at the time of the last inspection. Attainment in investigative skills, and attainment overall at Key Stage 2, are average. Attainment in Year 7 is in line with expectations as it was then. A number of higher-attaining pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6, reducing the overall level of attainment in Year 7.
70. The results of the 1999 national tests showed a slight improvement over the 1998 results, with 87 per cent of both boys and girls achieving or exceeding Level 4, compared with 78 per cent nationally. Nearly half of these achieved Level 5, which is well above the national figure and represents a very good improvement. The test results are well above the results for similar schools. In 1996, girls were ahead of boys in the tests, but the gap has narrowed each year and now there is no difference in attainment between them. The school has maintained above average attainment compared to national trends over the past four years. The inspection evidence confirms that the pupils' knowledge and understanding is above average in each area of the subject. However, their investigative skills are not so well developed and are broadly in line with national expectations.
71. Pupils, including those who have special educational needs and those who learn English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress overall in lessons and over time. They make good progress in many areas, achieving above average knowledge and understanding in some of the lessons in each year group. In Year 4, the pupils make good progress in their understanding of how to separate a mixture of solids when they are challenged to think of their own ways of doing this in the laboratory. In Year 5, they make good progress in the classroom in their ability to read a thermometer accurately, which is an important investigative skill. In Year 6, pupils use musical instruments that they have made at home to make good progress in learning about the different ways that sound can be produced and amplified. In Year 7, pupils make good progress in understanding how to carry out a fair test. However, their understanding was below average before, and remains within the average range because of their lack of experience. The pupils' understanding of forces, such as friction, gravity, electricity and magnetism is good because of the good progress they make over time in this area of the subject. Year 7 pupils, for example, explain the movements of the planets relative to the sun. Progress is also good over time in the understanding of materials. Pupils learn how to classify substances as solids, liquids and gases, and some of the important properties of each state. There is evidence of good progress in Year 4 in this area when some pupils explain quite clearly the difference between a reversible and an irreversible change in a material. Overall, the pupils' progress in experimental and investigative skills is not as good as in their knowledge and understanding. This explains why attainment in lessons is judged lower than the results in the national tests would indicate because the tests do not measure investigative skills.
72. The pupils respond very positively to all the opportunities that they are given to learn through practical work. They enjoy using the laboratory, and behave well when they are there. They listen carefully to instructions and handle equipment and materials sensibly, paying attention to safety rules. When given tasks to do that require collaboration, they rise to the challenge and co-operate very effectively in pairs or groups. They demonstrate initiative when asked to think of their own methods of investigation, but opportunities for this are limited. The pupils are conscientious about their homework, and make good use of the library for research.
73. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and good in nearly half of the lessons seen. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. The main strengths of the teaching are good planning, good use of resources to support the lessons and good pupil management. By setting clear expectations for behaviour and consistently applying the code of conduct, the teachers minimise delays and disruptions and keep lessons moving productively. The lessons are most effective when the planning clearly points the way towards new skills, such as reading a thermometer accurately. This is an improvement upon the findings reported in the previous inspection when the recording and presenting of measurements was identified as an area for development. The teachers have satisfactory knowledge and understanding overall, but there are gaps, especially in the teaching of the older pupils, where insufficient attention is sometimes



paid to developing the pupils' experimental skills. For example, opportunities are missed for pupils to turn their own questions into forms that can be investigated, select equipment to carry out experiments, make predictions and accurate measurements and repeat experiments to check results. The teachers keep good records of the pupils' progress in knowledge and understanding, and amend their lesson plans in the light of assessments if necessary. They set homework regularly, some of which gives higher-attaining pupils the opportunity to extend their investigations and research. In some lessons, the attention paid to the vocabulary that the pupils have to use detracts from the progress made because the pupils are inhibited from forming their own questions. When the teachers encourage the pupils to find their own ways of solving problems, such as separating mixtures of solids, they are able to provide the correct language as the pupils need it, and this facilitates more rapid skills development.

74. The recently appointed subject co-ordinator provides good leadership and management. A new scheme of work is being introduced that pays due attention to investigative and experimental skills, addressing an important priority for the school. In order to identify good practice to use as models, and areas for improvement, the co-ordinator plans to monitor pupils' skills across the school. In-service training for teachers on how best to teach these skills is also an important part of the subject development plan. There is a good ethos for learning, with attractive displays that encourage the pupils' interest, and lessons are well supported by a good range of good quality materials. Effective use is made of the laboratory, but the time-tabling of the subject is not completely satisfactory as one class has two double science lessons in one day. Given the good quality of teaching in many lessons and the clear development planning, the capacity for improvement is good.

## 98. OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

### 98. Information and communication technology

75. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 and in Year 7 is in line with that expected from pupils of a similar age. Pupils, including those who speak English as an additional language and those who have special educational needs, make satisfactory progress over Key Stage 2 and in Year 7. In most lessons pupils work in pairs and the lower-attainers are supported well by the average and higher-attainers. The pupils who are able to consolidate their skills through additional practice at home make good progress as they retain and build upon the knowledge and skills learnt in the class. This is a significant improvement on the findings of the last inspection when attainment was judged to be below the average.
76. Pupils in Year 4 know how to turn on computers and access the word-processing program. They find the letters they have previously written. They are able to change the font and have adequate mouse skills. Pupils can access the toolbar for appropriate use and they can clear the screen of all files. They build on their skills as they proceed through the school. They learn about databases and they understand the benefits of using information and communication technology capability to speed up the process of finding data. Pupils learn how to access information through the use of CD-ROM; for example, in science when they learn through which solid objects light can pass. By Year 7, the pupils log-on to the computer by using their username and password and they can close it down safely. They use written instructions to complete their task of compiling a booklet about their school and use the scanner to input a plan of the school. They also learn how to animate a picture they have drawn. Pupils keep records of their work on file, and when accessing these they talk knowledgeably about them.
77. Pupils' attitudes are good. They enter the information and communication technology suite in an orderly manner and they quickly settle to their task. They are enthusiastic about information and communication technology. They concentrate well when listening to the teacher and they are keen to answer questions. The pupils work well in pairs, sharing tasks wherever that is possible, for example, in deciding the answers to the questions in the science program. They work with considerable excitement and persevere with tasks that capture their imagination such as completing an animated picture. They are beginning to complete self-assessments of their work.
78. Teaching is satisfactory at both key stages. On a few occasions it is good. This is a significant improvement on the findings of the last inspection when it was reported that teaching was unsatisfactory. Particular strengths include a good introduction to make clear the objective for the lesson. Teachers use questions effectively to obtain instructions on how to enter a program. The teacher effectively demonstrates how to do this by executing the pupils' instructions on the big screen in front of the class. Teachers assess pupils' ability at the beginning of a lesson by asking questions concerning previous work and this also reminds pupils of what they have learnt before. Pupils are set time targets to complete their work and this ensures the pace of the lesson is good. Praise is used well to reinforce learning and good behaviour; for example, 'I'm really proud of you today'. Good levels of support are given to the pupils whilst they concentrate on their tasks and this is interspersed with whole-class instruction where a number of pupils encounter a problem. Information displayed on the walls is used to help pupils and good revision at the end of the lesson ensures pupils are reminded of the objectives of the lesson and of the benefits of information and communication technology; for example, when using databases. Teachers use the plenary session to allow pupils the opportunity to report to others how they managed a task such as using the scanner. Teachers encourage the pupils to carry out an assessment of their own progress at the end of the lesson. Minor weaknesses in teaching include limited expertise, for example, being unable to load a specific program, and not ensuring all machines are turned off at the beginning of the plenary so that pupils do not cause any interruption by continuing with their work.
79. Curriculum leadership is good. There have been significant improvements since the last inspection. Teachers are given appropriate support and guidance through the scheme of work, instruction sheets for pupils to use and regular advice. Teachers are more confident in their own expertise and there has been a considerable injection of resources which are now sufficient and of good quality overall; for example, computers for the ICT suite and the laptops for use in classrooms. Plans are in hand for laptops to be

used by all teachers and classes. This is a good strategy as they are currently underused and many pupils have insufficient opportunities to consolidate their skills in information and communication technology across all areas of the curriculum. The subject co-ordinator has no technical assistance to help maintain the machines in good working order and this is an aspect of work for which she is not trained nor has the time.

103. **Religious education**

80. Pupils' attainment in religious education at the end of Key Stages 2 and in Year 7 at Key Stage 3 is in line with the expectations of the Agreed Syllabus, showing occasional good features.
81. The majority of Key Stage 2 pupils demonstrate a growing knowledge and understanding of major festivals relating to Christianity and other world faiths. They show an awareness of some of the similarities and differences between festivals; for example, they can identify Christmas, Diwali and Hanukkah as festivals of light. High-attainers can relate their learning in religious education to their personal experience. Many pupils have started using appropriate vocabulary when contributing to classroom discussion. In Year 7, pupils' awareness of religious and cultural intolerance, reflected in events such as the holocaust and ethnic cleansing, is well developed. They can discuss fairly confidently issues relating to cultural diversity, using appropriate terminology such as worship, and showing tolerance of one another's views. Pupils' written work in religious education throughout the school has improved in quality, though not in quantity, since the last inspection.
82. Pupils throughout the school make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of major religious festivals both in lessons and over time. Year 4 pupils develop an understanding of Judaism by enacting the story of Hanukkah. Year 5 pupils are engaged in understanding the meaning and significance of the celebration of the Advent. They learn about some common aspects of major faiths such as 'prayer'. Year 6 pupils study the key values that lie at the heart of Christianity. This involves a study of the Ten Commandments. Year 7 pupils engage in meaningful discussions, reflecting on religious intolerance. Pupils' factual knowledge of major faiths is relatively limited and they make relatively slower progress in developing a deeper religious understanding. Most pupils consolidate and extend their religious vocabulary through discussion and writing but some are involved in unproductive copying from the board. Pupils with special educational needs and those who learn English as an additional language make satisfactory progress. They make good progress with specific support.
83. Pupils throughout the school respond well to religious education activities in lessons and assemblies. The majority are well motivated and enthusiastic about contributing to discussion. They are co-operative, collaborative and well behaved. Pupils from different backgrounds are tolerant of one another's views, work together well, learning from one another and reflecting good relationships.
84. Teaching is mainly good. Teachers' effective questioning reflects their secure subject knowledge, while ensuring pupil participation in the activity. The planning is broadly consistent with the Agreed Syllabus units of study, though day-to-day planning does not ensure sufficient differentiation of tasks, an issue raised by the last inspection report. In the most effective teaching observed, the multi-faith situation within the class was fully explored, and learning points such as common celebrations across faith groups were highlighted through effective intervention and the plenary. In the least effective teaching, pupils were engaged in unproductive copying and the task remained incomplete. Lessons are generally well resourced. Most of the teaching observed was oral based with focus on festivals, leaving room for the religious content of lessons to be emphasised through enhanced direct teaching.
85. The programme of religious education is non-denominational. It is consistent with the Agreed Syllabus and well resourced including artefacts. The subject makes a valuable contribution to pupils' oral skills and their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There is no systematic approach to assessment.

86. The progress of pupils is in line with that expected of pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 and those in Key Stage 3. This also applies to pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. The progress has been maintained since the previous inspection.
87. In Year 7 pupils produce some effective patterns inspired by medieval times which show great individuality and attention to detail. They extend their knowledge by studying art from different cultures. They create their own Islamic art based on geometric pattern and paint patterns inspired by Maori art. Pupils' large, bold, still life paintings demonstrate a dramatic use of colour. Year 6 pupils are studying Ancient Greek history. This knowledge combined with their progress in art skills enables them to produce careful, detailed drawings of Greek vases. The pupils' Greek mythical creatures are particularly effective when displayed in a three-dimensional way. Pupils satisfactorily develop skills of observational drawing when they sketch Victorian artefacts. However, without the use of drawing pencils pupils do not gain sufficient understanding of how to vary pressure to create light and dark tones. The Year 7 drawings of castles show a good understanding of perspective. Pupils develop their understanding of portraiture as they capture the variety of flesh tones by copying one half of a picture of a face. There is a steady progression of pupils' skills and techniques in clay modelling. Year 7 pupils make successful links with their history topic by carefully designing and making clay busts of famous historical characters. Progress with press printing shows pupils' ability to print with three colours accurately. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their understanding of different styles and traditions in art. This is evident in their work on William Morris when they paint detailed patterns in his style and copy 'The Fall of Icarus' by Pieter Brueghel. Pupils mix delicate shades to work in the style of Monet and Renoir and blend a variety of yellows inspired by Van Gogh's work. Pupils use careful illustrations to support other curriculum work. They blend coloured pencils to good effect, for example, when illustrating their science booklets on solids, liquids and gases and their work on forces. Year 4 produce creative three-dimensional paper sculptures using different types of triangles learned in mathematics.
88. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. They enjoy art and make an effort to produce their best work. They persevere in their clay work even when experiencing difficulties. Pupils behave very well in lessons and they relate well to each other and their teachers. They work in an orderly way, respecting each other's efforts.
89. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory throughout the school. All teachers consistently plan learning objectives to share with the pupils, they are well organised and have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. In the very good lesson observed the teacher has secure subject knowledge and is able to give direct teaching of art skills and use correct technical vocabulary. In the good lessons teachers give pupils clear instructions and make good use of the available time to ensure the pupils make good progress. Teachers use all available space to create a very attractive environment. The standard of the display of pupils' work in all the communal areas, specialist teaching areas and the majority of the classrooms is excellent.
90. The curriculum is broad and balanced with an appropriate emphasis on the different aspects of art in turn. Pupils have sketch books but their use is not monitored. In the best sketch books progress is clearly seen, work is dated and has a title. The teachers mark the work and make very helpful comments, not on the page to spoil the pupils' work, but respectfully on the following page. This very good use of sketchbooks is not consistent through the school. There is a comprehensive scheme of work to support teachers' planning but there is no co-ordinator to lead the subject until January 2000 when a new co-ordinator has been appointed. Her tasks will include monitoring pupils' progress and developing appropriate assessment procedures.

91. Pupils' progress, including pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language, is satisfactory for both key stages. This has been maintained since the previous inspection.

92. When designing and making pupils gather information independently and use it to generate a number of ideas. This is evident in the millennium tapestry work. Every Year 7 class researched within a given period and put in chronological order the events they wanted to portray. There is progress in pupils' knowledge and understanding of fabrics, threads and stitches to carry out their own design. Their skills in making models develop satisfactorily. Year 4 use their knowledge of electrical circuits to make torches. When Year 5 pupils make models of moving toys they know and name the function of the camshaft and cam wheel. They explain the lever turns the camshaft which in turn moves the toy figure they choose to depict up and down. Year 6 develop skills in evaluating and improving their work. They gain an understanding of strong structures and reliable joints when making their own shelter designs. They evaluate their work as it develops, aware of the purpose it is intended to serve, and modify their designs accordingly.
93. Pupils are very enthusiastic about their work and take good care of the resources. They sustain concentration well; pupils in Year 6 for instance were totally engrossed for the whole session. Pupils co-operate sensibly with each other and readily share ideas, skills and materials.
94. Overall the quality of teaching is satisfactory. Lessons are clearly focused on developing pupils' ability to design, make and evaluate. Those teachers with secure subject knowledge know how to strike a good balance between offering pupils advice and allowing them to learn through experimenting without letting them fail.
95. The new co-ordinator this term provides clear leadership. She has been influential in establishing the recently published national guidelines to support teachers' planning, whilst maintaining the good features of the school's previous scheme of work. The assessments to accompany the units of work have not yet been introduced but there is a target on the co-ordinator's action plan to do so. Accommodation is very good. A recently completed extension to the specialist room has been suitably resourced for the teaching of food technology.

119.

### **Geography**

96. It was not possible to observe any lessons during the inspection as none took place but a substantial amount of other evidence was collected including samples of work, display and discussion with staff and pupils. The majority of pupils in all ability groups throughout the school, including those with special educational needs and those who learn English as an additional language, make sound progress, over time, in developing their geographical knowledge, understanding and skills. Younger pupils learn about weather, plans, maps and places with particular reference to land use and different settlement patterns like village and town in their locality and other countries such as India. Older Key Stage 2 pupils learn about river systems, acquiring relevant vocabulary such as 'source', 'stream' and 'tributary'. Many have opportunities, through topic work, to use maps, atlases and globes, and gain some knowledge about farming and shopping in Ancient Greece, though in the context of history. In Year 7, pupils gain experience in the use of coordinates and the study of different climatic conditions. Many are involved in finding out about housing and shelter in different countries including India. Pupils throughout school also develop the skill of comparing their local area with a place in India through a project called 'Chambakolli'. They consolidate and extend their geographical vocabulary. Progress often slows down for below-average learners when they do not receive individual support.
97. Pupils in both key stages talk about the work they have already covered in geography with enthusiasm. Their interest in places and their features was well demonstrated in a discussion.
98. The geography curriculum is broadly based. It benefits from a detailed scheme of work and is adequately resourced. Its topic approach ensures strong cross-curricular links. The school is gradually moving to the guidelines produced by the Quality and Curriculum Authority. Opportunities for fieldwork are currently limited as are procedures for formal assessment and monitoring of the subject. The co-ordinator is planning to start monitoring teachers' plans and pupils' work from next term.

99. The sound standards of achievement reported in the previous inspection have been maintained in both Key Stage 2, and in Year 7, and are in line with those expected of pupils aged eleven and twelve. Progress related to prior attainment is satisfactory. In lessons there were examples of good progress seen in both key stages, but in one lesson progress was unsatisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is a second language generally make unsatisfactory progress, but good progress is made where there is additional adult support in the classroom and appropriate tasks are set.
100. Year 4 pupils in their study of the Tudors learn about the main personalities and events of the period, and show a good understanding of the events leading up to the sailing of the Spanish Armada and the basic differences in the Protestant and Roman Catholic religions. Year 5 pupils learn that many of our Christmas traditions date from Victorian times, selecting information from secondary sources to answer their own posed questions, and in Year 6 pupils use their skills in historical enquiry to discover differences between the 'agora', the market place of Ancient Greece, and shops and markets of today, and the different foods eaten. Year 7 pupils make good progress in sequencing the events leading up to the murder of Thomas Becket as part of their study of the power struggle between medieval monarchs and the Church.
101. The pupils' response to history is good in both key stages. They show much enthusiasm for the subject and are usually keen to answer questions. They ask good questions, and they are attentive listeners. They work well together in pairs and small groups. This was seen especially in a Year 5 class in an empathic dramatic scene re-enacting life in a Victorian household, and in Year 7 where pupils in one group used laptop computers with great enthusiasm and care, to word-process their accounts of Becket's death. The previous inspection identified an overuse of worksheets. Pupils now use exercise books, which are neatly kept, and generally show a high standard of presentation.
102. In the one lesson seen in Key Stage 3 the teaching was good; in Key Stage 2 teaching was satisfactory overall, with a range from good to unsatisfactory. The one unsatisfactory lesson, resulting in poor progress from the pupils, was due largely to insufficient planning and consideration about learning objectives. Characteristics of good teaching include high expectations of tasks and conduct, good subject knowledge, pushing pupils along, reminding them they have only a few minutes left to complete their work, and good provision for pupils of all abilities, through varied, appropriate tasks. Teachers set homework for history regularly, which enables further opportunities for independent study, and for raising standards.
103. Time allocation for the subject is in whole-term blocks. All years were studying history during the inspection and the subject had a very high profile around the school. Time-lines and high quality displays abounded in all classrooms and in corridors. One particularly effective time-line was seen, of the development of the black people in Britain from AD 50 to the present day, with strong links with pupils' social, moral, and cultural development. Good cross-curricular links were seen; in Year 7, in art, with the making of clay medieval busts of people such as King Harold and Richard the Lionheart; in English in the writing of battle poems, and word-processed accounts of life as a Victorian child chimney-sweep, as well as newspaper reporter accounts of the battle of Hastings, and eye-witness accounts of the battle of Marathon. The necessarily reduced coverage of the subject has been well considered. Historical skills are developed alongside the programmes of study and there are strengths in pupils' knowledge of historical enquiry and in chronology.
104. Resources for the subject are good, well catalogued and distributed, and well used. Visits are arranged for each year group to places such as the Tower of London, Hever Castle, and the London Museum, and groups visit the school to make historical presentations, for example of "Theseus and the Minotaur", which further enhance the quality of the pupils' learning. There is currently an acting co-ordinator for the subject, who is well supported by the acting deputy headteacher, and the school plans to appoint a new co-ordinator next term. Planning in year groups ensures consistency of coverage, but there are inconsistencies in the quality of planning between the different years, and in the delivery of the planning

by individual teachers. Planning does not always provide appropriate tasks for the higher and lower-attaining pupils. Arrangements for the assessment and recording of pupils' work are weak, but the school recognises this and has plans to implement assessment, with levelling of pupils' work samples next term. Insufficient use is made of information and communication technology to support the subject.

128.

### **Modern foreign languages**

#### **- French**

105. French is taught to all Year 6 and 7 pupils. Pupils make good progress in Year 6 and satisfactory progress in Year 7 where there is a small minority of pupils who are learning French for the first time. This is an improvement on the findings reported in the previous inspection. The pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language make satisfactory progress in both key stages. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are good in Year 6 and satisfactory in Year 7. They ask and answer questions, for instance, about each others' ages, where they live and their family. They have a good range of vocabulary covering many subjects including pets, the café, fruits, colours and the time. Their pronunciation is good when they answer the teacher and when they work on oral tasks in pairs. Pupils make good progress in their written work in Years 6 and 7. They write sentences using known vocabulary on a range of topics such as school, shopping, sports activities and directions to locations in a town.
106. Pupils have a very positive attitude to learning. They enjoy the lessons and are happy to practise speaking French. They participate enthusiastically in a variety of number games, rhymes and songs. The presentation of their work is neat and they take care over their homework.
107. The quality of teaching is very good with some excellent features. French is used throughout the lessons and gives the pupils the opportunity to experience the authentic target language as soon as they enter the French specialist room. There are very high expectations of pupils' behaviour and work. Planning is thorough with the learning objectives shared with the pupils. There is a significant number of pupils who enter the school in Year 7 with no knowledge of French and the teacher keeps these pupils and those who are in their second year of French fully extended. Homework is regular and carefully marked.
108. There is a comprehensive scheme of work with identification of assessment opportunities. Assessment is not as thorough as previously due to the shorter length of time given to the subject. Year 7 pupils have the opportunity to attend extra French sessions after school and there is a lunch-time club for Year 4 and 5 pupils. The modern language curriculum makes a significant contribution to pupils' social and cultural development.

132.

### **Music**

109. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make good progress in both key stages. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. Pupils progress steadily in the improvement of the quality of singing, playing, listening and performing in their lessons and in their understanding of elements such as tempo, pitch and dynamics. Year 4 pupils learn how to sing well in preparation for a performance in their class assembly. They progress in their rhythm work, learning note names and values. Year 5 pupils make good progress in their composition work using a wide variety of tuned and untuned percussion instruments. They write down their own graphic scores to show which instruments they use, for instance when composing rain dances. They learn standard notation when playing glockenspiels. By the end of the key stage pupils make good progress in understanding pitch and melody. In Year 7 pupils make good progress in reading music to play keyboards and glockenspiels. The level of difficulty of the music is varied to match the skills of the pupils. Some pupils have extra instrumental lessons and they are able to read more quickly from notation.
110. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. Pupils enjoy listening to music, composing and performing. They concentrate hard, work well together and demonstrate a willingness to practise and improve. They

behave very well in the specialist teacher's lessons. They are good at listening to each other performing and are ready to contribute ideas. They are used to working collaboratively in groups and treat the wide variety of instruments carefully.

111. Teaching is good at Key Stage 2 and very good at Key Stage 3. The specialist teacher is an accomplished musician with a very good knowledge of music and how to teach it. Teachers give pupils the opportunity to work collaboratively in groups and to evaluate their own and each other's work. The extra-curricular recorder, orchestra and choir sessions and the individual instrumental lessons play a significant part in raising the attainment of all the pupils. This is because the teachers in the music lessons draw on the talents of all the pupils to enrich the lessons. The choir is open to all pupils who enjoy singing. As a result more than a hundred pupils from Years 4 to 7, both boys and girls, participate enthusiastically and enjoy making music together.
112. The leadership of the subject is very good. The co-ordinator has written a comprehensive scheme of work to ensure all the elements of the National Curriculum are covered with assessment opportunities. Recordings are kept of pupils' compositions, assessments are made of pupils' group work and a record kept of the worksheet or book pupils play from on the keyboards. Clear whole-school assessment procedures are not yet in place. The allocation of time for Years 4 and 6 music is below average. It takes the skills of the specialist teacher to make the programmes of study fit the available sessions.
113. The school provides the opportunity for pupils to have individual instrumental lessons for a fee, chosen from guitar, violin, keyboard, piano, clarinet, flute and drums. Pupils benefit from performing in school concerts, in school carol services held in the local church and in community events. They sing carols in the town centre and to the elderly. They perform at the opening of a new children's unit at the local hospital and at the community multicultural show. Visitors to the school enhance the curriculum, such as the group which performs music through the ages and another which performs 'baroque to rock'. The music curriculum makes a significant contribution to the pupils' social and cultural development.

137.

### **Physical education**

114. Since the last inspection, overall standards have improved. Lessons of dance, gymnastics and swimming were observed and games were seen in extra-curricular activities. Because of the manner in which the curriculum is arranged it was not possible to see games, athletics or outdoor and adventurous activities in lessons. By the end of Key Stage 2, when the pupils are eleven, and in Year 7 most pupils attain standards expected of pupils of their age though there are variations. As a result of the extra-curricular activities, particularly in games, a significant minority of pupils make good progress. Overall, pupils, including those with special educational needs and for whom English is an additional language, make satisfactory progress over Key Stage 2 and in Year 7 but there are variations. Pupils make better progress in games than in gymnastics and dance as a result of teachers' confidence and expertise. Pupils learn the skills of passing and shooting and use these skills in netball, football, rugby and hockey. They learn to mark and dodge an opponent. In gymnastics, pupils learn to work well together in developing a sequence of movements using a variety of levels, speed of movements and apparatus; for example, mirror movements, balances, stretches and curls. All pupils manage these tasks successfully but the highest-attainers are often not sufficiently challenged to perform the gymnastic elements at a high level. Pupils are confident in putting out the apparatus and putting it away. They check to see that it is safe. In dance, the pupils learn to move in time to the music and to develop performance skills. In Year 5, the high-attainers watch their partners and time their movements to coincide but there is too little emphasis placed on quality of movement. High-attainers begin to exaggerate their movements to depict meaning but the average and low-attainers do not accurately mirror movements or exaggerate their movements. Pupils develop the confidence to perform in front of others and they are developing good assessment skills to help others to improve their performance. Pupils understand how exercise has an effect on the body; for example, they carry out an investigation into the effect exercise has on the pulse rate.
115. Lessons in swimming occur in three half-term units in Year 4. There is no provision for pupils to receive tuition after Year 4 even if they cannot swim 25 metres. In swimming the pupils make good progress during lessons when they are in three ability groups. They make satisfactory progress in



lessons when they are in two ability groups. However, progress over the key stage is unsatisfactory as pupils have insufficient opportunities to attain the levels of pupils expected at the end of Key Stage 2. By the end of Year 6 most pupils can swim 25 metres competently and safely. Many have developed confidence in the water and a small minority can rest, float and adopt support positions. The lowest-attainers gain confidence in the water through a range of activities and, using aids such as armbands, they learn to swim. The average-attainers practise technique and strive to improve the distance they can swim. The highest-attainers practise their strokes such as front and back crawl. They concentrate on improving aspects of the strokes such as their leg action and persevere to extend the distance they can swim.

116. Pupils' attitudes are generally positive, though in some lessons there are a few pupils who do not participate as a result of having forgotten their change of clothes. Pupils enter the hall in an orderly manner and most are well behaved during the lessons. They put out the apparatus sensibly and are careful when they put it away again. They listen quietly to the teacher when instructions are given and most concentrate well on their tasks. They work very well in pairs and small groups, co-operating in developing group performances in dance and gymnastics. Pupils perform confidently in front of others and they offer positive comments about others' work as well as constructive criticism to help improve the performance.
117. The quality of teaching has improved on the findings reported in the previous inspection and is satisfactory overall. It ranges from unsatisfactory to good. The strengths of teaching include clear objectives which are shared with the pupils at the beginning of the lesson, referred to through the lesson to remind pupils of what they are trying to achieve and again at the end of the lesson when pupils consider with the teacher whether the objectives have been achieved. Effective use is made of exemplars, including those by the teacher, to clarify what is expected. In swimming, the lesson is well organised. All pupils are kept active with appropriate instruction before and after activity. Good expertise leads to pupils making good progress in developing stroke techniques and stamina. The beginners' group makes appropriate progress in gaining confidence. In gymnastics, teachers make appropriate use of warm-ups and cool-downs and give appropriate explanations of why these are important. Relationships are good and pupils respond well to the teacher. The quality of movement is stressed and teachers make good use of exemplars to reinforce their high expectations, including their own. Time limits are used to keep the pace of the lesson fast. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, there is insufficient emphasis on quality of movement and there is insufficient time spent on activity; for example, only twelve minutes in a one-hour lesson.
118. Leadership and management in the subject is satisfactory. It has brought about improvements since the last inspection. Pupils have limited access to all aspects of physical education but, in particular, they have insufficient time in swimming to enable them all to attain the minimum of 25 metres. The subject co-ordinator provides support to colleagues through the scheme of work, exemplar lessons and ongoing discussion. Monitoring of the subject is less well developed with few opportunities for the subject co-ordinator to observe teachers in action. An annual audit is completed each year which links into the school development plan. The school is trialling new procedures for assessment and recording. Resources are of good quality overall and sufficient. The accommodation indoors and outdoors is good. It will, however, be increasingly difficult to maintain standards with the reduced amount of time given to physical education.

142. **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

142. **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

119. A team of six inspectors carried out the inspection over a period of four and a half days. A combined total of 24½ inspector days was spent in the school. Before the inspection, the team read a wide range of documentation regarding school policy and practice. This included the previous inspection report from June 1995, including the main findings and key issues and the school's report of the action taken since to address these issues. The registered inspector attended a meeting with parents at which comments and views on the school's performance were invited. The information from this meeting and from 103 questionnaires (23 per cent) returned by parents was analysed.
120. During the inspection, all class teachers were observed teaching and 97 observations were made. Over 109 hours was spent in observing lessons, discussions with pupils and scrutinising work. Additional observations were made of registration periods, acts of collective worship, extra-curricular activities, recreation periods and pupils having their lunch. The pupils were questioned in lessons about their knowledge and understanding of subjects and, in some cases, small groups of pupils were interviewed to gain further evidence. The pupils' past and current work was examined. Over 18 hours of discussion took place with staff, governors and parents. The records kept on the pupils, teachers' planning files, attendance records, letters, minutes of meetings and budget information were also examined.

## 145. DATA AND INDICATORS

### 145. Pupil data

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
Y4 – Y7	501	8	140	134

### 145. Teachers and classes

#### 145. Qualified teachers (Y4 – Y7)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	25.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	19.7

#### 145. Education support staff (Y4 – Y7)

Total number of education support staff:	12
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	133.4

Average class size:	29.5
---------------------	------

### 145. Financial data

Financial year:	1998-99
	£
Total Income	926,476
Total Expenditure	921,453
Expenditure per pupil	1,964
Balance brought forward from previous year	76,702
Balance carried forward to next year	81,725

## 146. PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out: 439

Number of questionnaires returned: 103

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	31	61	4	2	2
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	37	55	4	2	2
The school handles complaints from parents well	18	53	18	7	3
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	26	60	10	4	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	26	54	10	6	4
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	48	46	5	2	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	30	60	8	1	1
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	36	52	7	3	3
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	40	50	8	0	3
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	46	50	1	4	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	43	50	2	5	0

Percentages may not add to 100 as a result of rounding up.