

INSPECTION REPORT

PARK LANE JUNIOR AND INFANT SCHOOL

Wembley

LEA area: Brent

Unique reference number: 101509

Headteacher: Mr M Francis

Reporting inspector: Mrs P Silcock
21261

Dates of inspection: 29th January – 1st February 2001

Inspection number: 185396

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Park Lane Wembley Middlesex
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	David Knight
Date of previous inspection:	15 th March 1999

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

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19426	Chris Farris	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes and behaviour Care and welfare of pupils Partnership with parents
5565	Bimla Thakur	Team member	Mathematics Design and technology History Foundation Stage	Leadership and management
27426	Terry Aldridge	Team member	Science Information technology Geography Religious education Special educational needs	Curriculum

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Park Lane Primary School is situated in a residential area, off Wembley High Road. It caters for children aged between 4 and 11 years. Children start school in the Reception class after their fourth birthday. Less than half the intake has Nursery or playschool experience. On entry, most pupils are assessed as being well below expected levels of attainment for their age in language and literacy, mathematics and personal and social development. The school has a rich diversity of cultures, faiths and languages with Somali, Gujarati, Arabic and Tamil as its four major languages in addition to English. In total, 26 languages are spoken. Approximately 95 per cent of pupils are of minority ethnic origin, which is a much higher proportion than in most schools of its kind. Many (around 29 per cent) have Refugee status. A small number (around 4 per cent) are from the Traveller community. Many (around 61 per cent) are learning English as an additional language and a number of these (43 per cent) are at an early stage in acquiring English. These figures are very high compared to other schools of this type. Approximately half of all pupils are eligible for free school meals - also a comparatively high proportion. Approximately 21.5 per cent of pupils have special educational needs, broadly in line with the national average. Children with Statements of special educational need comprise about 1.4 per cent of the school, also a broadly average proportion. A significant number of pupils are transient, joining or leaving the school other than at the usual time.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Park Lane is an effective, vibrant school community, which celebrates diversity. It cares for all its pupils. Parents are welcomed as pivotal to their children's school success. Standards rise steadily, especially in the core subjects of English and mathematics, benefiting all subjects. Teaching is good or better in a half of the lessons seen and is, generally, at least satisfactory. The school's leadership and management are very good. The headteacher's vision of facilitating all pupils' achievement, related to principles of equality of opportunity, inspires staff and governors. It demands from them a commitment to rigorously assessing how to attain realistic goals, yet reach high standards. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Children make a good start in the Reception class in all areas of learning.
- Standards in English and mathematics continue to rise. Teachers' sound knowledge of how to teach core skills plays an important part in the school's success.
- A scrupulous analysis of assessment and test information allows realistic learning targets to be set for each pupil, positively affecting standards.
- Pupils learning English as an additional language make very good progress, because of their consistent, high-quality teaching support.
- Provision for pupils' personal development is very good. Pupils' positive relationships with each other and with adults makes for a pleasurable and relaxed learning environment.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
- Leadership and management of the school by the headteacher and key staff are very good. The headteacher's clear direction lifts all aspects of the school's work.
- Governors are active in shaping the school's goals, being committed to school improvement.
- Partnership with parents is very good. The school values parental contributions highly.
- Equality of opportunity pervades the whole of school life and is essential to its positive ethos.

What could be improved

- Provision for information and communication technology.
- Standards in English and science at the higher levels of attainment at both key stages.
- Teaching and learning in non-core subjects.
- Provision for outdoor play for children under five.
- Attendance.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the March 1999 HMI inspection the school has built on successes noted in the Report. Good improvements have been achieved. Standards of attainment have risen, including at Key Stage 2 and

especially in the core subjects of English and mathematics. Teaching has improved considerably and is now usually satisfactory with half judged better than this. Behaviour management policies are applied consistently across the school, resulting in improvements in pupils' behaviour and attitudes towards lessons. Good gains also show in the way pupils' progress is regularly monitored and assessed. Individual learning targets set for pupils address known weaknesses, particularly related to basic skills. Provision for pupils learning English as an additional language is very good. The specialist support teacher's expertise, together with the school's commitment to these pupils means that their progress through the school is carefully assessed and monitored. Special Educational Needs' provision has improved, but the school rightly sees this as an area for further improvement. Good progress is seen in curriculum co-ordinators' better grasp of their roles and responsibilities. Again, the school acknowledges room for further improvements. The headteacher's caretaker role regarding some subjects adds to his management load and limits developments in those subjects. A tighter co-ordination of science and information and communication technology still leaves room for more improvements with both subjects – further priorities identified by the school. Developments in information and communication technology place the school in a good position to move forward. The management of the school is now secure. The headteacher's firm direction is built on his informed insights into the school's strengths and weaknesses. Parents, now, have a very positive view of the school and participate more fully in its affairs.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with			
	All schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	E	E	E	C
Mathematics	D	D	C	A
Science	E	D	E	C

Key	
Well above average	A
Above average	B
Average	C
Below average	D
Well below average	E

The table shows dramatic differences in comparisons of statutory test results achieved by pupils in 2000 when these are compared, firstly, to the results achieved by pupils in all schools and then to those achieved by peers' in similar schools. However, results using national comparisons hide a more complex picture. Whereas pupils did better in all three subjects than their counterparts in all schools solely in terms of the expected Level 4, in mathematics they attained broadly in line with peers at the higher Level 5. This skewed scores when these were aggregated across levels of attainment to give the average points score (resulting in the 'C' in the table). In English and science, results at the higher Level 5 were well below national averages, so affecting overall points adversely. In addition, a substantial proportion of pupils attained well below expected levels in English because of their still developing knowledge and understanding of the English language, with a further adverse effect on total scores. Over the last four years, the school's average points score for all three subjects has risen at a faster rate than the national average. Inspection findings support statutory test results in relation to pupils' levels of attainment at the expected Level 4 in all three subjects. They also show higher attaining pupils with better than average results in mathematics. In English and science, pupils are less secure at the higher levels. The oldest pupils have greatest difficulty in writing in both subjects. At times, scientific terms are not well understood. Further, in extended writing, influences of languages other than English (or dialect forms of speech) impair the way sentences are structured. Whilst perfectly clear in meaning, these do not always conform to Standard English. The school sets realistic targets in English and mathematics in relation to statutory test results. Children in the Foundation Stage make very good progress and are set to achieve the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning by the time they transfer to Key Stage 1. Pupils across the school have a good grasp of basic literacy and numeracy skills. They have good speaking and listening skills. By eleven, they join in debates on complex issues, sensitively adapting to others' views. Pupils have a sound grasp of mathematical processes and a good number facility. On evidence available, pupils reach standards in line with what are expected for their age in most non-core subjects (such as history and music). In design and technology, however, the process of first designing and then making a product is not well established and this affected achievements in the

lessons seen. Pupils develop good computer skills in relation to word processing and accessing information through the Internet and CD ROMS by eleven. Insufficient use of machines during lessons, though, means that pupils have too few opportunities to apply skills learned in other strands of the curriculum.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils from the Reception year upwards are well motivated and enjoy learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Generally good throughout the school. Pupils are courteous and polite. At times, a small minority seeks to distract others, spoiling the pace of lessons.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils' positive relationships with peers and with adults makes for a relaxed, pleasant atmosphere in classrooms.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory.

Pupils enjoy coming to school. From the youngest, they grow in independence and willingly undertake classroom and school duties, which help the day-to-day routines of school life. They work very well together on co-operative tasks. Attendance is well below the national average. Figures are affected by uncertainties, such as those linked to high numbers of transient and Refugee pupils.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Across the school, 95 per cent of teaching is at least satisfactory with just five per cent unsatisfactory. Half is of good or better standard, with a small number of lessons (around six per cent) judged very good. Strengths are seen in the Foundation Stage, in Key Stage 1 and in the support teaching for English as additional language learners. English teaching is always at least satisfactory and often better, especially in Key Stage 1. Mathematics teaching is most often good. Teachers know how to teach basic literacy and numeracy skills, exploiting national frameworks in their lesson planning and delivery. Where teaching is good or better, teachers have high expectations of pupils. They make sure that pupils fully grasp what they have to do and build well on previous learning. At times, teachers' good planning is not followed through securely as some uncertainty of subject knowledge shows itself. Thus, pupils' progress in a physical education dance lesson was slowed as the lesson lost momentum. Pupils have too few opportunities in lessons to apply skills learned on the computer to different subjects. In a minority of lessons where teaching was unsatisfactory, teachers' planning was insufficiently detailed and explained, so pupils were uncertain about tasks set. This was seen for example in science and design and technology in Key Stage 2. The different learning needs of pupils learning English as an additional language are met very effectively. Consequently, pupils make very good progress in learning necessary skills, benefiting their progress across the curriculum. Planning for pupils with special educational needs is also generally effective and pupils make satisfactory progress, overall.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad and relevant to the needs of all pupils.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory overall. Individual education plans are suitably in place although targets set in these do not always figure explicitly in curricular planning.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Very good. Planning is well matched to pupils' different learning needs, especially where teaching support is available during lessons. Pupils' learning is monitored systematically to ensure that provision is well pitched.
Provision for pupils' personal, including	Very good, overall. Pupils have good opportunities to develop initiative. Strengths are evident in relation to pupils' moral, social and cultural

spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	development. The school draws well on the diversity of experiences within its community in planning curricular provision.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very well. The school shows good levels of care for all its pupils. It sets great store by its warm and welcoming environment.

The Foundation curriculum takes good account of curricular guidance for all areas of learning. However, lack of an accessible outdoor play space means that children cannot explore outside the school as an important part of their learning. In Key Stages 1 and 2, all subjects of the curriculum are planned for, although planning for information and communication technology is not, yet, fully realised. The good emphasis on basic English and mathematics skills is a successful strategy for raising standards. In addition, priority is now given to helping pupils apply their literacy skills to extended writing tasks. Lessons in non-core subjects (such as art and design and history) are of limited duration. The school is convinced that its priorities are right and a steady rise in standards in statutory tests bears this out. Moreover, the school is now in a better position than it was to develop subjects not formerly priorities.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher provides firm leadership with clearly stated goals. Senior managers support him well, bringing good levels of expertise to their work.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	To very good effect. The governing body plays an effective part in school governance and is influential in its strategic management.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. Regular monitoring activities, including a recent self-evaluation, provide the school with an in-depth knowledge of its strengths and weaknesses.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Funding is properly used for its designated purposes.

Sufficient, qualified staff meet the needs of the age-range taught. Well-trained support staff is of good quality. Satisfactory accommodation allows the effective delivery of the curriculum, although children under five do not have a suitable outdoor play space. Learning resources are sufficient for curricular delivery. However, computer provision is only just adequate. The school rightly sees the refurbishing and restocking of its library as a priority. The school applies principles of best value to the buying and deployment of resources.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A good quality education accompanies a positive work ethic. Children make good progress. Children enjoy coming to school. The school is extremely welcoming. Parents are well informed about all aspects of school life. Teachers are readily accessible. The headteacher provides a strong lead and really wants to hear parents' views. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Homework provision. Provision for extra-curricular activities.

Inspection findings support the positive views expressed by most parents. In addition, inspectors judge that the new homework policy provides a suitably structured programme with homework given regularly. It is usually well-matched to learning in classrooms. Extra-curricular provision is also judged to be satisfactory. However, it is largely for Key Stage 2 pupils with little for pupils at Key Stage 1. This is not unusual, but could justify further consideration.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The full range of attainments for four-year-olds is presented in the results of Baseline assessments for children starting school last September. Most children were found to be well below expected levels of attainment for their age in the three areas of learning assessed. These were: communication, language and literacy, mathematics and personal and social development. Children make very good progress in their learning in all areas of the Foundation Stage. Areas additional to those assessed are: knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development. Children learning English as an additional language make particularly impressive gains in relevant language and literacy skills with a consequent impact on all other types of learning. Inspection evidence shows that most children are well in line to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the time they transfer to Key Stage 1. A significant number of children are set to do better than this, especially with regard to their achievements in speaking and listening, reading, writing, mathematics and personal and social development. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and attain in line with their prior attainment.
2. In the 2000 statutory assessment test results at Key Stage 1, the attainment of seven-year-olds in reading was below average compared to pupils nationally. It was well below this average in writing. Pupils' mathematical attainment rose well above the national average. Compared to results for peers in similar schools, pupils reached well above the average in reading and above this average in writing. In mathematics, pupils' results were very high compared to those of peers, placing the school in the top five percentile band for schools of its kind. Teacher assessments show that pupils' attainment in speaking and listening was very low at expected levels, compared to the national average. In science, teacher assessments also placed pupils well below the national average at expected levels across the science curriculum. Over time, standards have risen in reading, writing and mathematics, although there was a 'dip' in results in writing between 1999 and 2000. Evidence shows that almost two thirds of those who took statutory tests last year are still in the early stages of developing their English language skills. Moreover, a substantial proportion of these bilingual pupils¹ did not start in the Reception Year, but joined the school at a later stage, prior to taking statutory tests. Since skills in writing are, most usually, the last to match with speaking and reading skills, the 'dip' in results is not surprising.
3. Inspection evidence generally upholds the picture presented by test results, with some exceptions. Notably, pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 succeed broadly in line with expectations in speaking and listening. They make good gains in developing important skills as they move through the key stage and learn to express their views in a variety of settings and for different curricular purposes. Pupils also acquire sound reading skills. Overall, reading attainment is within expected levels by the end of the key stage. Higher attaining pupils do better. Across all levels of attainment, they read for meaning, using their growing repertoire of letter sounds and concepts, gained from reading, to decode unknown words sensibly. In writing, higher attaining pupils and those of average attainment reach standards broadly in line with expectations by seven years of age. Aspects of written work by higher attaining pupils, again, reveal the higher capabilities in their awareness, for example, of how to enliven their stories through choice of words. Spelling and simple punctuation are generally accurate. Handwriting is mostly neat. Pupils' mathematical attainment is in line with national expectations, overall. A majority make good progress. By seven, pupils have a sound knowledge of place value to 100 and of different number sequences. They learn to use quick methods of adding numbers such as 9 and 19 by applying their knowledge of counting in tens or doubling numbers quickly in their head. Yet, in science these older pupils are judged, overall, to be below expected levels of attainment. For a significant proportion of pupils, learning is limited by their still developing grasp of the English language and of the specialised language of science, hampering their recording of work. It does not limit what pupils can say about their investigations of the changes they see as chocolate

¹ It is recognised that pupils learning English as an additional language may be proficient in more than one language, including having competent literacy skills in languages other than English. For ease of purpose, these additional language learners will, at times, be referred to throughout the Report as 'bilingual' or 'developing bilingual' pupils.

- melts over heat. Practically, pupils build well on earlier learning. For example, they are beginning to distinguish which of the materials they study occur naturally from those which do not.
4. In the 2000 statutory tests in Key Stage 2 in English and science, the attainment of eleven-year-olds was well below average compared to that of pupils in all schools. In mathematics, attainment was broadly in line with the national average. Compared with the results of pupils in similar schools, pupils succeeded broadly in line with the average of these pupils in English and science and well above the average in mathematics. Overall results, using national comparisons, hide a more complex picture. Whereas pupils did significantly better in all three subjects than their counterparts in all schools when comparisons relate solely to the expected Level 4, in mathematics they attained broadly in line with these peers at the higher Level 5. This skewed the average points score upwards to give a 'broadly average' result. In English and science, results at the higher Level 5 were well below national averages, so affecting overall points scores adversely. In English, too, a significant proportion of pupils achieved at Level 3 and below, reflecting the still developing English language capabilities of a significant proportion of pupils in the year group. Over time, trends in all three subjects have risen, most noticeably (and securely) in mathematics. When test scores are aggregated across all subjects, trends over time are above the national trend.
 5. Inspection findings echo the test results detected at the expected Level 4. Thus, pupils attain broadly in line with expected levels in all three subjects of English, mathematics and science. However, whereas higher attaining pupils do better in mathematics, results in English and science beyond Level 4 are more limited. By eleven, pupils very confidently express opinions on any subject open to discussion - in lessons and other settings (for example, in assembly). They do not, however, find it easy to listen to their peers or to adults, mainly because they have such a lot to say! Once quiet, pupils do listen carefully, taking good account of other views in their responses. Pupils of higher and average attainment develop effective reading skills, making very good use of the context of what they read to discuss the textual meaning of difficult items of vocabulary in both fiction and information books. Overall, reading attainment is in line with expectations as is writing attainment. Higher attaining pupils' imaginative writing is lively. It shows a good grasp of story conventions in the way characters are introduced and described. At times, non-standard English features affect the overall standard of work across all levels of attainment, even though what is written may be perfectly clear. For example, pupils' written sentence structures are influenced by knowledge and understanding of a language other than English. To illustrate: the plural 's' may at times be omitted. Other, dialect, influences appear in some pupils' work, as when 'reach' is written instead of 'reached'. By eleven, pupils are acquiring sound mathematical skills, especially in relation to manipulating numbers. They use their knowledge of multiplication and division well to solve day-to-day problems involving fractions. Pupils' science vocabulary is uncertain on occasions and there is little evidence of extended recording of investigative work. However, pupils demonstrate a thorough understanding of work covered when talking about what they have done - such as that relating to how animals adapt successfully to their environments. Suitable opportunities for acquiring investigative and experimental skills inform their knowledge and understanding of scientific principles gained through practical activities. Pupils enjoy these opportunities, benefiting from the purposeful talk such activities provide.
 6. The present cohort of Year 6 pupils has changed substantially over time. It has a complex range of needs identified for support teaching purposes. A high proportion of pupils in the class (representing 58 per cent) arrived in school after the Reception Year, with just over a quarter starting school during Key Stage 2. Approximately 55 per cent are assessed as being at the beginning (or relatively early) stages of learning English. Almost a fifth of the year group have Refugee status, with additional needs to those dependent on the acquisition of English language skills. Approximately 29 per cent of pupils are on the Code of Practice register for special educational needs, most having individual education plans and a small minority with Statements of special need. This profile is found to a greater or lesser degree in classes throughout the school. The school sets realistic targets in English and mathematics, although results of optional tests taken in Year 4, on which judgements about targets are based, do not accurately reflect the make-up of pupils taking statutory tests at the end of Key Stage 2. Because the school has already exceeded targets set for the current academic year, these were reviewed last November in light of the latest statutory test results. The school's success in meeting its targets is owed mainly, although not solely, to its rigorous analysis of all test information and the way this and other assessment information is used to set targets for all pupils. Chiefly, the school aims to raise standards at higher levels across the subjects tested in both key stages. In view of the strategies for improving pupils' learning outcomes and the school's

determination that all pupils will reach their potential, it is judged that the school is well placed to build on its past success.

7. Pupils with special educational needs in Key Stages 1 and 2 make satisfactory progress and attain in line with their prior attainment. Pupils learning English as an additional language make very good progress and frequently attain at least in line with their peers, notwithstanding problems with writing outlined above. Where attainment is below what might be expected, it is usually because pupils are at the beginning or very early stages of acquiring English language skills. At times, too, some of these pupils are identified as having learning needs in addition to those associated with language learning.
8. Pupils have good opportunities to apply their basic literacy and numeracy skills to other subjects, especially in relation to reading a wide variety of texts. Mathematical skills are also usefully integrated with other subjects such as science, through measuring, and history, through constructing a time line. In the main, pupils do not have enough time to apply information and communication technology skills to other subjects, although computers are frequently switched on in lessons ready for use.
9. By eleven, pupils reach expected standards according to the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. They can talk with assurance about similarities and differences between the major faiths. They appreciate the importance of prayer to people of faith. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement on standards at the end of Key Stage 1. Standards in information and communication technology in relation to word processing skills and accessing information on a computer (for example, from the Internet and CD ROMS) are in line with those expected for seven and eleven year olds. There was insufficient evidence to form a judgement about standards in relation to other curricular strands. In history and in singing in music, standards are in line with those expected for seven and eleven year olds. At times, pupils achieve a very pleasing sound when singing well-known songs. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 also reach standards expected for their age in art, geography and dance in physical education. There was insufficient evidence to judge pupils' standards in design and technology at the end of each key stage. However, the process of designing a product before making it is not securely established. This affects pupils' exercising of the skills involved and their achievement in the lessons seen. There was insufficient evidence to make judgements on standards in art and geography at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils in Year 6 reach standards below expected levels in swimming. By the end of the period in which swimming is taught, however, most pupils will have gained a certificate for swimming 25 metres and so reached expected standards. Other aspects of the physical education curriculum were not seen at the end of the key stage because of time-tabling arrangements. Only the dance strand was seen in Key Stage 1, so a judgement on standards overall is not given.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Since the 1999 inspection by HMI, there has been a further notable improvement in pupils' attitudes to learning, to their behaviour both in and out of classrooms and in matters relating to their personal development. Overall, pupils' good attitudes, behaviour and very good relationships contribute to their effective learning of subjects across the curriculum and to a rise in standards, especially in English and mathematics. This includes pupils for whom English is an additional language and those with special educational needs, including those with Statements of special need.
11. Children under five in the Reception class settle quickly and happily into school routines and build good relationships with adults and with each other. They play co-operatively, learn to share and take turns without squabbling and are keen to learn. They rapidly grow in independence and move purposefully about the classroom to find things they need. Children are attentive to adults' wishes and generally follow instructions well. Many are able to work on their own for appreciable periods of time while the teacher deals with another group. Even the youngest knows that things have to be tidied away at the end of lessons and they happily manage this chore together. In a weekly celebration assembly for the whole school, the youngest children are quiet and attentive for long periods, often enthralled at the achievements of the older pupils.
12. Key Stages 1 and 2 pupils have good attitudes to learning. Most are well motivated and want to learn. They generally listen attentively, both to the teacher and to their peers. They enjoy answering

questions and being involved. Most remember to put up their hands before answering. Attitudes were judged less than satisfactory in only a small percentage of lessons. In these, a minority sought to distract others and were generally inattentive, which meant that a significant amount of time was spent by teachers responding to inappropriate behaviour. Where pupils did not respond well to teachers' reminders to listen, a quiet learning environment disintegrated and the lesson lost focus as the teacher chose to talk over a distracting 'hubbub'. More generally, pupils settle down quickly to work and show good levels of concentration, even when not directly supervised. They are particularly well motivated by practical activities (such as a swimming lesson in Year 6) and they enjoy a new challenge. They readily join in discussions and show increasing willingness to air their views. When required, pupils work well together in class, co-operating in pairs and groups to good effect. Relatively few opportunities were seen within lessons for pupils to carry out independent research. However, Year 6 pupils have shown admirable initiative by, for example, setting up independent study groups (for boys and girls) at lunchtime and after school.

13. Pupils' behaviour, both in and out of classrooms, is generally good and pupils move round the school in an orderly way. They have a suitable respect for property and treat books and equipment with due care. Frequently, pupils are a pleasure to be with. They are thoughtful and polite, wishing one a cheery 'good morning' and showing interest in everything going on. They have a well-refined sense of right and wrong and know the school rules. Behaviour on the playground, also, is for the most part good. Occasionally, it is robust. However, the area is sufficiently large for those who want to play quietly to be able to escape from football games. No oppressive behaviour or bullying was seen during the inspection and parents and pupils do not find it a particular problem. The three fixed-period exclusions and one permanent exclusion during the past year all involved one pupil.
14. Relationships at all levels are very good and pupils feel special. They know their best efforts will be noticed and praised. There is good mutual support between pupils who are quick to comfort a classmate in distress. New pupils are soon made to feel welcome. Existing class-members enjoy acting as a 'buddy' to new arrivals who are, therefore, not left alone, unsure about what to do or where to go. Pupils listen to their peers considerately, celebrating successes with them, often punctuating an occasion with spontaneous applause. This was observed on a number of occasions, even among the younger pupils. All ages mix well at playtimes and lunchtime. Pupils tolerate the foibles of others.
15. Pupils respond very well to the school's provision for their personal development, including chances to take on responsibilities. For younger children, these include tidying up and taking the class register to the school office. As pupils move upwards through the school, duties increase appropriately so that Year 6 pupils have a range of responsibilities. These include duties as monitors in the library and on the staircases and looking after the school office at lunchtime. Such duties are undertaken willingly and responsibly and help in the smooth running of the school. The School Council is a very good forum for hearing pupils' honest views. Issues are discussed sensibly and with relative maturity. Pupils have shown initiative in organising charitable collections for disaster and Refugee funds. During the inspection, the Year 6 boys' study group organized a collection for the earthquake in Gujerat. Pupils have canvassed the local council to gain funding for improvements to the school and a Year 6 group of girls has raised funds for equipment for their pop group by organising a concert and raffles. The lunchtime and after-school study groups set up by the pupils reveal a growing sense of their accepting responsibility for their own learning. These activities are plainly beneficial, helping pupils develop confidence and self-esteem.
16. Attendance during the last reporting year is similar to levels reported in 1999. At 91.2 per cent, it is well below the national average and is thus deemed unsatisfactory. Unauthorised absence is above the national average and is likewise unsatisfactory. However, figures are affected significantly by factors outside the school's control, such as uncertainties associated with a high proportion of transient and Refugee pupils. They do not adequately reflect the school's efforts to promote good attendance. Registration is properly carried out and registers correctly maintained. Punctuality at the start of a day is generally satisfactory and most lessons start on time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. There has been a good level of improvement in teaching since the 1999 HMI inspection. Across the school, 95 per cent of teaching is at least satisfactory with just five per cent judged unsatisfactory.

Moreover, half of all teaching is of good or better standard, including a small number of lessons (representing 6 per cent) judged very good. Particular strengths are to be seen in the Foundation Stage, in Key Stage 1 and in the quality of support teaching for English as additional language learners across the school.

18. In the Foundation Stage, teaching for children under five is never less than satisfactory. It is of good or better quality in just over three-quarters of lessons, with very good teaching seen in 13 per cent of all lessons. In Key Stage 1, teaching is also never less than satisfactory, with 73 per cent of all lessons judged good or better. Of these, 17 per cent are judged to be very good. In Key Stage 2, the picture is more varied, but continues to show a markedly improving trend. Here, 92 per cent of all teaching is satisfactory with a third judged good and a further small proportion (2 per cent) very good. Overall, a small number of lessons (representing 8 per cent) were seen where teaching in the later key stage was found unsatisfactory.
19. The teacher's planning in the Foundation Stage is comprehensive and suitably matched to children's different learning needs in all areas. A close partnership between the teacher and learning support assistant in all matters relating to lesson planning, organisation and delivery is very beneficial to children. It ensures that they receive a good measure of adult support, both when working in small groups and when engaged in self-chosen activity. Activities are well organised and there is a good balance between child-initiated and adult-led work. The teacher and support assistant make good judgements about when to intervene in children's tasks. They are skilled at promoting children's learning through questioning in ways that show their interest in what children say. Good judgements about children's learning are made from such interactions and information is well used to plan future learning.
20. The national literacy and numeracy strategies are securely in place in Key Stages 1 and 2, with appropriate emphasis given to the teaching of basic skills. Teachers frequently demonstrate good understanding of how to make potentially difficult vocabulary and related concepts accessible to pupils. So, in a discussion in a Year 6 literacy lesson about information texts, pupils' learning was aided by a vivid picture of a cyclone projected on a screen, which intrigued pupils and prompted responses about words used to describe the phenomenon in different parts of the world. A relatively early-stage learner of English later revealed good consolidation of learning as a result of this discussion, although he did not fully grasp how the word 'cyclone' was pronounced, and so had difficulty spelling it for his written work.
21. The school continues to build on its success, making improving the quality of teaching high priority. In subjects across the curriculum, teachers have a solid understanding of teaching and learning processes. Throughout the school, they frequently make effective use of "What I am Looking For" ('WILF') and "This is Because" ('TIB') to embody lesson content for pupils in ways readily accessible. In the best lessons, the statements accompanying 'WILF' and 'TIB' outlining teaching and learning objectives are pinned to a board where everyone can see them. They form a reference point for pupils' concentration on the work in hand. Teachers' planning takes suitable account of different pupils' needs. This shows well in the way most lessons are delivered. For example, teachers' questioning skills in whole class sessions at the beginning and end of lessons are often very effective. Using their good knowledge of pupils, they match questions well to different attainment levels as well as to levels of competency in English language skills. Similarly, tasks organised for group work during lessons are generally matched carefully to pupils' learning needs. So, in a Year 1 extended writing lesson, pupils were prompted to think hard when discussing characters in well known stories while preparing their own story writing. All set about the task, later, in good spirits and with high motivation. Available support staff are well deployed to focus support on particular pupils, helping them join in all aspects of planned work. Year 6 pupils with special educational needs were accordingly able to contribute to group and whole class discussions about famous people and their faiths, during a religious education lesson. They benefited from the skilful deployment of the learning support assistant for special needs.
22. Where teaching is of good or better quality, teachers plan lessons in detail. When introducing a lesson, they pay close attention to pupils' understanding of the tasks they are about to undertake. Through well paced questioning, pupils have good opportunities to relate new learning to what they already know. Discussions at the end of lessons are linked to this earlier talk, giving a teacher a good insight into what pupils have learned. In these lessons, teachers keep a firm grip on discipline

and make sure that pupils follow instructions about paying attention and focusing on set goals. For example, in a very good Year 2 literacy lesson, a teacher's stimulating display of key parts of text in a story about Bahloo' the bear focused pupils' minds on key aspects of the bear's character, building on prior learning. Although the teacher had to persist to gain attention, all pupils did settle to listen and watch. They managed subsequent tasks very well, even when working independently. Pupils' detailed responses to the teacher's questions at the end of the session provided good evidence of progress. At times, teachers' good planning is hampered by uncertain delivery, owed to their lack of confident subject knowledge. For example, in an interesting physical education lesson using dance in the upper Key Stage 2, a teacher lost momentum in developing pupils' awareness of how they might stretch their bodies in space and so experiment with body shapes. Pupils repeated earlier work. Although they refined this, to an extent the chance was lost for them to extend their abilities in ways which had been planned. Teachers generally have a clear picture of how they are meeting the needs of individuals (such as those on the Code of Practice register of special need). For example, they can explain how pupils' individual education plans are incorporated into curricular programmes, although how such plans are to be realised is not always made explicit in lesson planning.

23. In the few instances where teaching was unsatisfactory, a lack of clear planning was sometimes compounded by teachers not properly explaining work to be done during the introductory session. Pupils remained unclear about what they were to do and what was expected of them. Inappropriate noise levels stayed unchecked, militating against a calm working atmosphere. In a lower Key Stage 2 science lesson, for example, pupils showed how well they could read a thermometer for temperatures above and below freezing point following the initial, teacher-led, discussion. They could not, however, get on with the task set because they were still uncertain about its purpose and how it was to be done. Time was lost as pupils chattered amongst themselves while the teacher circulated, explaining the work to groups as she moved around the room.
24. The linguistic and cultural diversity of staff members is an asset to the school and is highly valued. It is firm ground on which to build important areas of knowledge about pupils' established linguistic skills and what their needs are for learning English. Staff members use their language skills to good effect where these match pupils' own first languages. Teachers consider bilingual pupils' learning needs carefully in lesson planning and are helped considerably by the expertise of the specialist support teacher. The teacher is deployed well to maximise her skills in accordance with pupils' identified needs, working with beginner and early stage learners throughout lessons wherever practicable. This policy has a beneficial effect on pupils' learning immediately in lessons and over time. For example, two Year 4 pupils who had moved from the beginners' group to join more advanced bilingual peers (where both the support and class teacher judged they could now be placed beneficially) spent a remarkably short period of time in the initial grouping. The parity of esteem shared between the support teacher and her class teacher colleagues in their classroom partnerships is self-evident. It encompasses all aspects of lesson planning and delivery. It also means that class teachers are properly informed about learning gains by pupils and the nature of difficulties met. Where learning support is not available, pupils' needs are not always met to best advantage, since class teachers have still to cope with competing demands. For example, beginner-bilingual pupils made insufficient progress in a Year 2 mathematics lesson, because adult help in completing a task was lacking, even though the task set was matched well to pupils' understanding. The support teacher withdraws pupils who are new to the school from classrooms for regular periods of English language support. These carefully structured sessions are well aimed at making sure that pupils rapidly establish speaking and listening skills in English, so that they can participate more fully in classroom and school life.
25. The deployment of teaching support for pupils with identified needs is complex and involves a wide range of support staff in addition to that outlined above (paragraph 24). Within the confines of a limited resource, support is carefully geared to learning needs and to the best use that can be made of the expertise and available time of support staff. So, most commonly, support is given in classrooms, but it is also given individually or in small groups to pupils withdrawn from lessons for special purposes. For example, the recently reinstated support for Traveller pupils is suitably targeted at individuals: pupils are withdrawn from lessons to work with the learning support assistant. A specialist learning support assistant also works in a part-time capacity with Refugee pupils, mostly within classrooms. A learning support assistant for pupils with special educational needs appropriately works with pupils on targets set in their individual education plans, either within the

classroom or outside. Specialist teachers also visits the school to work with pupils who have Statements of special educational needs, similarly taking good account of their set targets in the context of classroom tasks. Demands made on support and teaching staff are heavy in relation to time spent making sure that teaching and learning objectives are clear and that relevant information is passed on and suitably recorded. Nevertheless, time for such matters is scrupulously put aside as an important feature of the work of support staff and class teacher colleagues. An ongoing assessment of pupils' learning resulting from such discussions informs planning well. On occasion, pressure of time on support staff means that pupils are not supported throughout a lesson, which detrimentally affects learning outcomes. For instance, the support assistant for Refugee pupils checked that her Year 3 focus-pupils in a literacy lesson grasped the whole-class discussion about giving and following instructions and the way in which instructions are formulated in English. When the assistant left, however, pupils struggled with instructions they had to follow in a task, even though they could read the simple sentences competently enough. It was clear that, by talking through what the words meant in the context given, pupils could manage to complete their task successfully.

26. The school has worked hard to improve staff-members' behaviour management strategies with a consequent benefit to the learning climate in classrooms. Where teaching is satisfactory or better, teachers make consistent demands of pupils, even where these demands require much persistence and can slow down the pace of lessons. This effect was seen, for example, in a Year 6 music lesson when discernible progress was made despite pupils' challenging behaviour. The class teacher succeeded in capturing pupils' attention by firmly insisting that they practice their singing skills. Pupils finally accepted that their diversionary tactics were counter-productive and settled to what they, then, appeared to enjoy! At times, teachers add to the general noise of the classroom because they tend to raise their voices to an unnecessarily strident pitch and pupils respond by talking more loudly. The persistent 'shush shushing' by teachers has little effect.
27. Teachers generally prepare lessons well and mostly have a good regard for making appropriate resources readily accessible. Computers, though, are underused. The teaching of music benefits from visiting specialists teaching singing across the school and instrumental skills to pupils who opt for related sessions. Teachers make good regular assessments of pupils' learning within lessons and use their information to consolidate teaching points or as a way of planning follow-up work. End of lesson question and answer sessions checking pupils' learning are especially valuable. However, the marking of pupils' work is inconsistent. Often, pupils have little understanding of what they need to do to improve. Occasionally, marking is exemplary. In Year 2, comments on all pupils' mathematics and English work referred helpfully to content. Success was congratulated and ways to improve suggested.
28. Homework is well planned throughout the school in line with the school's policy. It is suitably varied in its range. Appropriate emphasis is placed on pupils' literacy skills through the tasks set, especially for younger pupils and those in the early stages of learning English.

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

29. There has been a steady improvement in curricular provision since the HMI Report in 1999. The school provides a broad and relevant curriculum for all its pupils. For children under five, provision takes good account of the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning set out in curricular guidance for the foundation stage. In addition, aspects of national strategies for literacy and numeracy are incorporated into planning for communication, language and literacy and mathematical development, taking account of children's learning needs. In Key Stages 1 and 2, provision includes all the subjects of the National Curriculum, personal, social and health education and religious education in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus.
30. Planning in Key Stages 1 and 2 meets statutory requirements, but is not, yet, fully implemented in information and communication technology. Satisfactory strides have been made in developing the subject since HMI reported in 1999 but the school is aware of the need for further effort. The subject is marked as a priority for continuing development. As a means of addressing weaknesses in science indicated by statutory test results at the higher levels in Year 6, additional time is currently allocated to the subject for these oldest pupils. Good provision is made in planning for basic skills teaching as outlined in the national strategies for literacy and numeracy, with consequent spin-offs

for standards across the key stages, notably in English and mathematics. However, this provision produces an imbalance in the amount of time left for some non-core subjects. For example, geography, history, art and design, and design and technology have limited teaching time devoted to them with a consequent effect on standards. The school is aware of this imbalance, but is also intent on maintaining a high priority for important literacy and numeracy skills, especially in view of the complex make-up of its school population and past results in statutory tests. It rightly judges itself as now in a better position than before to develop those non-core subjects not formerly given priority. In part, time given to promoting pupils' skills in extended writing is starting to address issues of curricular imbalance in some subjects, since teaching is aimed at helping pupils apply their writing skills to a range of purposes. The school places special stress on physical education and on creativity through music, in the time allocated to these subjects. A personal and social education policy, also being developed, will be introduced shortly. It is founded in good practice seen in classrooms, for example, during regular 'circle time' sessions. Health education is planned effectively via the science curriculum. The school nurse and dentist are suitably involved. Homework organized in line with school policy is given throughout the school.

31. Policies and schemes of work for all subjects are now in place. Suitably-reviewed documents have been revised to take account of government guidance in Curriculum 2000 where this was found helpful. Currently, many schemes of work are in draft form pending a further review in the summer term 2001 in light of their implementation. A curriculum overview for each subject gives clear guidance to staff on how subject elements are to be delivered over the school year. It effectively ensures that teachers take good stock of the need to build on pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding over time. To reinforce this, teachers plan together within key stages, with the teacher for the Foundation Stage working with Key Stage 1 colleagues. So a useful overview of provision across the age-range of 4 to 7 results. Such joint planning allows important goals (and the means of achieving them) to be shared by all. It also allows subject co-ordinators usefully to monitor teachers' planning at first hand and give advice on lesson content.
32. The school curriculum successfully promotes pupils' intellectual, physical and personal development in ways benefiting all pupils. Equality of opportunity is a strength. For example, stories and poems chosen in literacy lessons often reflect pupils' own knowledge of different cultures, while themes in history and geography lessons give scope for exploring different cultural perspectives and pupils' own personal experiences. So, in a history lesson about Mary Seacole in the Crimean war, Year 2 pupils talked with insight about how racist attitudes can affect a person's life. At times, however, the organisation of support for pupils with identified needs means that they are regularly withdrawn from lessons. It is not always then clear how teachers check that these pupils understand lesson content on their return to the classroom.
33. In the 1999 HMI Report, special educational needs was picked out as an area for improvement. Whilst progress has been made, the school recognises that further progress is needed. So, this area remains a priority in school improvement planning. To date, procedures for identifying pupils' different learning have been clarified and staff are well informed about them. Teachers are also engaged in drawing up pupils' individual education plans to match needs identified (including those for pupils with Statements of special need). Practice in incorporating pupils' individual education plans into curricular planning is inconsistent, however. It is not always sufficiently clear how these are being met in the course of lessons. In some instances, practice is good, as in the Foundation stage where careful planning takes good account of pupils' targets as set out in their individual education plans. Support for Key Stage 1 and 2 pupils with special educational needs is of good quality, allowing pupils, including those with Statements of special need, to join in lessons fully alongside peers. The visiting support teachers for pupils with Statements of special need keep closely to objectives set out in individual plans, in consultation with class teachers. The co-ordinator for special educational needs has a sound overview of provision. But the role adds considerably to the administrative burden he already has, as headteacher. The school fulfils the requirements of the Code of Practice for special educational needs.
34. Provision for extra-curricular activities is largely confined to pupils in Key Stage 2. Overall, it is satisfactory, with some strengths. For example, organised activities include clubs for football, dance and choir. But pupils are also able to pursue their own interests within self-governing groups (like study groups in Year 6) and they clearly benefit from such opportunities. The school also makes good use of visits across the age range, including visits to theatres and concerts and an extended

study visit in Year 5.

35. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good, overall, and a strength of the school.
36. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. Pupils gain insights into others' values and beliefs and learn to respect them. The school is released from its statutory obligation to provide an act of collective worship that is predominantly Christian. Rather, daily collective worship focuses faith as a medium for prayer and quiet reflection, as represented by the different faiths in the school community. This daily period contributes strongly to pupils' spiritual wellbeing. Religious education lessons are further ways in which pupils are encouraged to learn about different beliefs. Along with regular lessons in personal and social education, they build a platform from which pupils can launch their spiritual awareness and self-knowledge. Opportunities in other curricular areas promoting pupils' knowledge and understanding of spiritual matters are not, currently, exploited - for example, in studies of literature, music and science.
37. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. Pupils are taught to distinguish right from wrong consistently. A strength of the school is the School Council forum for pupils' decision-making about matters frequently overlapping with moral issues. The 'praise' and 'bully' boxes are well used. Over the past year or so, there has been a marked swing towards pupils praising others and a trend away from contributions to the bully box. Pupils have good levels of awareness of praiseworthy behaviour (seen in their 'box' contributions). Inspection findings agree with the views expressed by most parents that the school is effective in helping pupils develop moral awareness.
38. Provision for pupils' social development is very good. Pupils are actively encouraged to show initiative and are taught how to act responsibly as members of a community. Adults are good role models in demonstrating co-operative practices. Pupils take responsibility for fund-raising activities undertaken by the school. At times, they spontaneously initiate ideas in response to topical news items, as when the Year 6 boys' study group started to collect for earthquake victims in India. Pupils have good opportunities to extend their learning about social obligations beyond the school. For example, they mix with pupils from other schools during sporting fixtures as well as during dance and drama activities. Year 6 pupils engage in a citizenship project during their final term. A popular and successful residential visit for Year 5 pupils aims to develop pupils' social awareness as integral to the whole learning process.
39. There is very good provision for pupils' cultural development. The school uses its richly diverse language, cultural and faith environment within its own walls and in the community beyond its gates to very good effect. Pupils' own expertise, together with that of staff members', helps them explore cultural similarities and differences. Visits are undertaken to museums and other places of interest such as London Zoo. Pupils also gain from the school's involvement with arts projects such as a local Four Schools' dance and music festival and with a local community theatre group. Visitors further enhance pupils' cultural horizons when, for example, professional musicians perform. During a week set aside for literacy activities, writers and storytellers came to tell stories and talk about the craft of writing. An 'International Evening' involving parents was very successful. Subjects across the curriculum encompass pupils' own experiences well and extend these purposefully for classroom learning purposes.
40. The school forges constructive links with its local high schools and colleges and provides opportunities for student placements. Productive links with other local schools are maintained through such forums as curricular co-ordination meetings, held regularly.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

41. The school demonstrates a good level of care for all its pupils. Appropriate procedures ensure pupils' safety and well being from the Reception class to Year 6. Strengths are evident in the analysis and use of assessment data to support pupils' academic performance. Overall, this represents a marked improvement since the HMI inspection in 1999, especially in the assessment of pupils' progress.
42. The school is a warm, friendly place where all pupils are happy and secure and able to learn without fear. Staff members give a high level of affectionate support. Relaxed relationships evident between

pupils and adults means that pupils feel able to take any worries or problems they have to sympathetic adults. The school's caring ethos enables pupils to have a real voice in matters important to them. A feature of the school is the way in which new arrivals are quickly absorbed into school life. They very soon learn familiar routines and join in alongside peers (in classrooms and outside), even where English is still at a rudimentary stage of development. The 'buddy' system is significant in making new pupils feel welcomed. Great care is taken by staff in choosing 'buddies', with factors such as matching to a first language given high priority, where practicable. Parents spoke warmly of the school's work in the meeting prior to the inspection. Pupils speak with pleasure about how they are taken seriously by staff. They are not only consulted, but practical steps are normally taken to implement suggestions and help is given (especially by the headteacher) so that they can realise their ideas. For example, Year 6 girls have formed a pop group and several dance groups have been formed by girls across Key Stage 2.

43. Child protection is well-managed. The headteacher has designated responsibility and has undergone relevant training. Staff members are suitably briefed on child protection procedures and are kept informed of concerns.
44. The school's management of its health and safety policy is good, overall, but there are a few omissions. The school knows about these. For example, testing of portable electrical appliances is well overdue and the school is aware that such testing needs to be carried out as a matter of urgency.
45. Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are good. The school works hard at this matter, discovering reasons for absence, where these are not known, through a range of strategies, including letters. Translations into other languages are done where English is not a first language or information is given visually where this is more appropriate.
46. Behaviour management is good. A system of rewards and sanctions very familiar to pupils stimulates them to behave well. Staff members have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and provide good role models. Parents applaud the consistency of approaches to discipline across the school. The school has good procedures for minimising bullying. Midday supervisory staff provide support in the dining hall and on the playground during lunchtime, positively affecting behaviour and safety. However, pupils sometimes feel that midday supervisory staff do not always take seriously reported incidents involving aggression, although they know they can (and should) talk to other school staff about these.
47. Rigorous assessment procedures monitor pupils' academic performance and progress. Assessment and test information is extensively analysed, giving the school a good picture of the performance of individual pupils and pupil groups. Such procedures are in place throughout the school, from the Reception year. In Reception, pupils' attainment is assessed soon after entry, using the local authority Baseline assessment tests as a means of gathering the initial information. In addition to statutory tests for seven and eleven-year-olds at the end of each key stage, the school uses optional tests from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority for Years 3, 4 and 5 to garner information about progress over time. All information helps to set realistic school targets in English and mathematics but (just as importantly) it informs individual targets for each pupil from Year Reception to Year 6 in line with identified weaknesses. Personal targets give powerful impetus to pupils to overcome known weaknesses. They are reviewed regularly to see if adjustments need to be made. Such target-setting and review are always done in consultation with pupils, adding to pupils' commitment to the targets set.
48. Bilingual pupils are carefully assessed on entry to school for their competency level in English language skills, so that support teaching time can be deployed pertinently. All English as additional language learners are regularly monitored with adjustments made to the teaching programme in light of progress. Pupils with special educational needs have individual education plans suitably in place. Those for pupils with Statements of special need relate directly to their identified needs as a good basis for teachers' planning. Those for other pupils on the Code of Practice register for special needs, however, are sometimes written in broad terms, so learning goals are not easy to translate into step-by-step teaching and learning objectives. All pupils with identified learning needs receive at least good quality support in classrooms and outside classrooms. This includes support for Traveller pupils, delivered outside the classroom to meet goals set by class teachers in line with assessment information.

49. The school's support for pupils' personal development is good. Teachers know their pupils well and any concern about an individual is quickly recognised and followed up. There is a good programme of personal, social and health education, which helps increase pupils' self-knowledge and social awareness and this, together with encouragement and support from all staff, builds independence and self-confidence in pupils. Such achievements are recognised by parents as strong features of the school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

50. The school has a very good relationship with parents, working closely with them. Parents have a high regard for the headteacher's leadership and capacity to improve the school. This regard affects the school's popularity in the wider community. As a result, the school roll is rising and the school is at present over-subscribed. The 1999 HMI Report did not comment on this aspect of the school, but good improvements have been made since the Ofsted inspection preceding this.
51. The views of parents expressed at the pre-inspection meeting, in questionnaire responses and during interviews in the inspection week, show very high levels of support for the school. Parents see it as a provider of quality education with a positive work ethic. They know their children like school, are well looked after and make good progress. All find the school extremely welcoming. Inspection findings confirm these positive views. On a less positive note, one in six of the responses to the questionnaires expressed concern at the amount of homework given and one in seven felt that extra-curricular activities are insufficient. Inspection findings show the new homework policy is a structured programme potentially extending pupils' abilities and learning habits. This meets the approval of most parents. Extra-curricular provision is also judged to be satisfactory and similar to that found in many schools. However, the provision is largely for Key Stage 2 pupils with little for pupils at Key Stage 1 – which is not unusual, but could justify further consideration.
52. The school publishes a good level of information about children's progress and the life of the school. There is a regular newsletter from the headteacher, including details of themes of work and the curriculum for each class over each term. The prospectus and governors' annual report both contain a wealth of relevant information, but omit a small number of statutorily required details. The headteacher is aware of these. Parents find the twice-yearly written reports on their children very helpful. They receive an abridged report in the Spring term and a full annual report in the summer. This covers all aspects of the curriculum with details about pupils' attainment and the progress they make included, in line with requirements. However, last Summer, reports for one year group contained insufficient information about such matters and did not meet statutory requirements. The school knows that diligence is needed in this regard and the particular circumstances giving rise to the problem have been overcome.
53. New parents are given useful information on how they can support their child's learning at home. Consultation evenings each term allow teachers to discuss children's individual learning targets with parents and review progress relative to these. Parents highly value such opportunities and the fact that they are consulted in setting revised targets. No clear structure is evident, however, in the way parents of children identified as having special educational needs are involved in the process of writing the individual education plans (the basis for learning targets) for their children. Open afternoons, when parents see what work is done in classrooms are another useful way of helping parents find out how their children learn in school. Parents state they enjoyed the practical workshops on the national literacy and numeracy strategies, where pupils helped demonstrate how English and mathematics are now taught. Parents appreciate teachers' daily availability, in that they can find out how their children are getting on and talk through concerns they may have as these arise. They realise that communication between school and home is a two-way process, both for passing on information about children's successes as well as for talking through problems. Parents like the way children's success is celebrated in assembly with a certificate awarded for personal achievement. The school takes every care to make all information available to all parents, working hard to overcome problems that may exist because it cannot engage properly with some home languages.
54. Parents make a good contribution to children's learning and to school life. The headteacher firmly believes that parents are significant to the education of children and actively seeks ways of involving them, at all levels. A few parents help in the school and on study visits to places of interest, giving

valuable support that would otherwise be unavailable. Most parents help their children with reading and other homework tasks. Reading diaries are fairly well used. Currently, there is no formal parent teacher association, but a parent council is being formed along the lines of the successful School Council for pupils. Regular courses in adult and family literacy are held on the school premises in conjunction with a local college of adult education as a means of furthering parents' grasp of practical ways for supporting their children's learning. The courses are well attended by parents for whom English is not a first language.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

55. The leadership and management of the school are very good. The headteacher gives firm educational direction and leadership to the school's work. He inspires a real sense of shared responsibility and purpose amongst all staff. His clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses is well-based in a regular monitoring of all aspects of the school's work and life and in a thorough school self-evaluation recently undertaken. Under his leadership, the school has made further strides in addressing key issues identified by HMI in 1999. This has resulted in good improvements since the original, earlier school inspection. The deputy headteacher (also the Key Stage 2 co-ordinator) and the co-ordinator for Key Stage 1 give good support to the headteacher as senior managers. The senior management team is committed to raising standards as a matter of urgent importance. All staff members and governors share this commitment.
56. In their determination to raise standards, senior managers are united in their efforts to improve systems of monitoring classroom teaching and learning practices and systems for evaluating learning outcomes. Related procedures are rigorous and systematic, giving good quality information on which to base further improvements. For example, the school identifies the need to raise standards at higher levels of attainment in English and science. The role of curriculum co-ordinator has expanded considerably over recent times, particularly for the core subjects of English and mathematics where co-ordinators monitor how the subjects are taught. Such monitoring is not, yet, firmly established in other subjects, but there are plans to delegate more monitoring responsibilities to curriculum leaders and, through suitable training, to help them take these responsibilities. Co-ordinators generally have a good grasp of their roles and keep up-to-date with developments in their fields of expertise as far as practicable. Their good overview of what is taught is derived from regularly monitoring teachers' planning, sampling pupils' work and through talking to pupils. Key stage planning meetings are pivotal to the school's efforts to raise teaching standards. Key stage co-ordinators play a crucial part here as senior managers. Currently, there are no co-ordinators for religious education, music and geography, limiting developments in these subjects and placing a heavy burden on the headteacher, who acts in a 'caretaker' capacity for each subject.
57. The school's commitment to equal opportunities is reflected in all aspects of its life. An action plan plainly sets out how targeted groups of pupils are to be supported. For example, priority is given to inducting new pupils into school and to areas of under-achievement critical for minority ethnic pupils. The high profile accorded to equal opportunities informs the appointment of staff from a variety of cultural and linguistic backgrounds - including to positions of responsibility. This high profile signals the multicultural nature of the school and its parent society, as well as the wider society.
58. Provision for special educational needs is satisfactory, overall. The headteacher continues to act as co-ordinator, a role which adds considerably to his management responsibilities. At times, it is evident that this dual responsibility affects how some work relating to special needs is carried out. For example, parents are not fully involved in writing their children's individual education plans, although they are informed about these and review them during termly parent/teacher consultation meetings appropriately. Governors recognise the difficulties associated with such additional responsibilities, and plans are in place to make a suitable appointment as soon as practicable.
59. There is a detailed high-quality policy for performance management. Governors have received training and are involved in the headteacher's performance management review. The school's own very good appraisal system is well established and links effectively to the new system. The school is committed to the professional development of all staff for which good opportunities are provided.
60. The governing body plays an effective part in school governance and has an influential role in strategic management. It fulfils its statutory responsibilities. Governors have a good understanding

of the school's strengths and weaknesses and from time to time hold the school to account. For example, they have focused hard on pupils' performance, the quality of education in the school and the way the funds are spent. Governors are highly supportive of the headteacher, with whom they have very good relationships. Most governors are actively involved in school life. They make planned visits to monitor aspects of the school's work according to an agreed agenda. This gives them a good insight into the school's strengths and weaknesses.

61. With the support of the governing body, the headteacher has initiated a course of action that systematically addresses key priorities. The school has, therefore, clear priorities. The school development plan has become a useful management tool. It indicates intended actions, responsible personnel, time scale, resources and costs in a comprehensible way. Systems of monitoring progress towards set objectives are also clearly worked out. Through the school self-evaluation process, the headteacher and governors have prudently extended school improvement planning to include longer-term priorities than those established until July 2001.
62. Financial management is good. Although figures at the time of the last Ofsted inspection showed a healthy surplus, these were later revised more accurately to show a significant deficit. While the amount received per pupil remained high, it was necessary to take firm control over the budget by selectively reducing staff numbers. By March 2000, the school had virtually eliminated its deficit, and a small budget surplus is expected at the end of the current financial year. At the same time, the school has managed to retain its programme of structural improvement. For example, window renovations and stair treads have been attended to and basement toilets are about to be refurbished. Such refurbishment has had a considerable impact on staff and pupil morale.
63. The headteacher works closely with his finance committee in managing the school budget. The finance committee is professional in its approach and energetic in seeking to maximise funding sources. The committee meets twice termly to monitor school expenditure rigorously. School numbers have fallen over the last few years causing financial and personnel difficulties. Now, pupil numbers have stabilised. The school has a waiting list and can start to move ahead confidently. It can look even further ahead in its planning and extend the current yearly development plan accordingly.
64. Day-to-day financial management is satisfactory. The headteacher cares for the school stock cupboard and buys routine stock - an expensive use of his time. The school gains value for money in its purchasing. Grants received by the school are properly monitored and used for their intended purposes. The 2000 school audit made a small number of minor recommendations, all dealt with.
65. The school makes satisfactory use of new technology and is in the early stage of developing such use. Its supply of computers is barely adequate, with a high ratio of pupils per computer. However, CD-ROM and Internet facilities are well used and the school has good examples of work by pupils of all ages on its own web-site.
66. There are sufficient suitably qualified and experienced teachers for age groups in the school. Most have substantial teaching experience and have earned additional responsibilities over and above their classroom duties. Teachers' have adequate job descriptions, but these have not been reviewed for some time. Newly qualified teachers get appropriate support from a 'mentor' colleague and have sufficient non-contact time for further training. Teachers and other staff new to the school are properly briefed and supported. Well-trained support staff work in close co-operation with class teaching colleagues. Administrative and premises-staff work hard to ensure that the school functions smoothly, day-to-day.
67. The accommodation is satisfactory, overall, with some good features. Light, airy classrooms are generally large enough, although some are untidy and cluttered, reducing the available teaching space and leading to organisational problems during lessons. The internal decoration of the building is of average standard, but the building is well cared for by the caretaker and cleaning staff. Classrooms and corridors generally feature attractive displays of pupils' work. Good features include music and television rooms where 'extra' activities can be located and a room set aside for quiet reflection and prayer. Poor features are the damp and smelly basement toilets, which are now being refurbished. Externally, the building is neglected. Paintwork is in a poor state. A big playground is suited to football whilst leaving plenty of space for less energetic activities. Although it is marked out

for break-time games, the space is somewhat bare and uninspiring as a play area. There is no suitable space for outdoor play easily reached by children under five. This detrimentally affects the organisation of curricular provision, limiting opportunities to extend curricula outdoors as an important adjunct to children's learning. The school has the advantage of being next to a park, an advantage exploited in good weather. For example, good use is made of the park for science investigations.

68. Learning resources are sufficient to allow the curriculum to be delivered appropriately. However, computer numbers are only just adequate. Inspection findings support the school's view that refurbishing and restocking the library are priorities. The storage of many resources is disorganised. Other than for the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, there appear to be no records kept of available resources, although these are audited by co-ordinators prior to ordering fresh stock.
69. In view of continuing improvements in standards and the quality of education, the increasing involvement of parents and the very evident commitment to equality of opportunity for all members of the school community, the school gives good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The headteacher, staff and governors should ensure that:

- Teaching and learning improve by:
 - Giving pupils better access to computers in information and communication technology during lessons and applying computer skills to subjects across the curriculum; and
 - Continuing to address underachievement in English and science at the higher levels of attainment in both key stages.

(3, 5, 8, 27, 30, 68, 95, 111, 112, 113, 118, 136, 142, 143, 144, 147)

- Standards in the non-core subjects are raised by:
 - Appointing co-ordinators for each subject where these are lacking; and
 - Extending the monitoring of teaching and learning practices so that all subject leaders gain a better understanding of these.

(9, 22, 30, 56, 126, 131, 141, 152, 158, 164)

- Provision for outdoor play for children under five allows all aspects of the Foundation Stage curriculum to be properly planned for and delivered.

(67, 88)

- Further steps are taken to improve attendance.

(16, 45)

In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weakness should be considered for inclusion in an action plan. This is indicated in: 33, 48, 53, 58.

- Ensure that plans for appointing a co-ordinator for special educational needs are pursued so as to:
 - lessen the headteacher's management responsibilities; and
 - further improve the procedures now established.

It is acknowledged that the school already identifies these issues in its development planning or through its self-review process.

THE PROVISION FOR AND STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS WITH ENGLISH AS AN ADDITIONAL LANGUAGE

70. Provision for pupils learning English as an additional language is very good. Pupils reach standards at least in line with their monolingual peers and do better in many ways by the time they are eleven. This is also true for some pupils who are late entrants to school. Good attention is given to the learning difficulties pupils experience additional to those attributed to language-learning needs. For example, some pupils are suitably placed on the Code of Practice register for special educational needs. The school is seeking to strengthen its hold on how best to assess such needs in the case of bilingual learners, since this is a complex matter. Procedures for assessing pupils' competences in English on entry to school make good use of first language assessments where feasible. Comprehensive records are kept of all assessments and of information pertinent to each pupil (for example, first language/s, time of entry to school, previous schooling). The local authority audits procedures to check that assessments are realistic and predicted by the language assessment tool used and to ascertain that additional teaching resources are properly deployed. Good levels of expertise, knowledge and understanding of support linked to pupils' needs is found at all levels of senior management and in the work of the specialist support teacher. There are close liaisons between senior managers and the teacher. The headteacher closely monitors this aspect of school work, which is centrally related to goals of equality of opportunity. Clear lines of management and oversight of provision beneficially affect class teachers' understanding of how best to help pupils at different stages of English language acquisition. Further, staff members' own varied linguistic and cultural backgrounds are invaluable in their developing relevant skills in planning for bilingual pupils. The school works hard to make sure that parents are fully informed and consulted in all matters relating to their children's schooling, in line with its policy towards parents generally.

THE PROVISION FOR AND STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS FROM TRAVELLER BACKGROUNDS

71. Provision for the small number of pupils from Traveller backgrounds is good. Pupils get the same attention as pupils from other groups in all the school's work, in line with its general attitude towards equality of opportunity. Pupils reach standards at least in line with their prior attainment and at times do better. They progress as they move through the school and build successfully on developing skills, knowledge and understanding in all subjects. Particular emphasis is placed on pupils' literacy skills as a key to successful learning. Teachers take appropriate account of pupils' identified needs for planning purposes. Extra support in lessons as well as outside the classroom allows focused teaching from a learning support assistant for special needs, in line with assessments made in relation to such needs. Support is well aimed at achieving targets set in individual education plans. Recently re-instated additional support for some pupils from the local authority service for Ethnic Minority and Traveller Achievement Project is limited, but it is deployed in line with these pupils' known learning needs well. This good quality support is monitored by the headteacher to ensure that time is used efficiently. This strategy is rightly seen as important in the early stages of work. The visiting learning support assistant liaises closely with class teachers. She has a good understanding of the needs relating to pupils from the Traveller community and is skilled at forming good relationships quickly. The school works in close partnership with parents. The headteacher pursued the reinstatement of support when pupils returned to school during the Autumn term from a period of travelling. He was responding, in part, to a parent's request that extra help again be given.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	66
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	37

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	6	44	45	5	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	209
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	105

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	45

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	128

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	28
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	44

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.8
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	13	17	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	10	10
	Girls	14	14	14
	Total	24	24	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (68)	80 (68)	89 (75)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	9	9
	Girls	13	15	14
	Total	21	24	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	70 (68)	80 (75)	77 (72)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boy	Girl	Total
	2000	16	12	28

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	13	14
	Girls	9	10	11
	Total	18	23	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	64 (61)	82 (71)	89 (81)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	13	14
	Girls	9	10	11
	Total	18	23	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	64 (71)	82 (74)	89 (76)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	47
Black – African heritage	48
Black – other	4
Indian	26
Pakistani	15
Bangladeshi	2
Chinese	0
White	41
Any other minority ethnic group	25

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Average class size	29.9

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	86

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	584875
Total expenditure	545755
Expenditure per pupil	2612
Balance brought forward from previous year	-41060
Balance carried forward to next year	-1940

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

213

Number of questionnaires returned

132

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	78	20	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	54	42	2	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	53	39	3	1	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	49	33	15	2	1
The teaching is good.	65	32	1	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	48	41	6	2	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	64	32	1	1	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	77	17	2	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	61	32	4	1	3
The school is well led and managed.	64	29	2	0	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	55	39	1	1	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	46	25	11	2	13

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

Personal, social and emotional development

72. Most children enter the Reception class with poor personal and social skills. Teaching meant to remedy these deficiencies is most frequently good, building on the skills, knowledge and understanding children do have. Co-operation between teacher and learning support assistant usefully models appropriate learning. Children are at least primed to achieve early learning goals by the time they leave Reception. Some are set to do better. Children enjoy and respond well to activities on offer, showing positive attitudes. They confidently choose and organise their own activities, usually staying on task. They can dress and undress for physical activities, needing little help from adults.
73. Children play co-operatively in groups. They take turns in their class shop and in the role-play area. Their behaviour is good and they can tell right from wrong. They frequently use terms such as 'sorry', 'please' and 'thank you' while freely choosing activities. They know what is and is not expected from them. They listen attentively to their teachers during whole-class sessions.
74. Children mix and play well together and form good relationship with adults, experiencing good opportunities to learn about different faiths and about their own culture. For example, they learn how Christian, Hindu, Muslim or Jewish people pray. They consider carefully how to help other people and their own family members. They talk freely in large groups about their home and community lives. They take an interested part in whole-school assemblies, extending their awareness of the school and wider community. There is a good supply of multicultural resources, such as black dolls and dressing up clothes, in role-play areas. Children celebrate important events such as birthdays and festivals, responding to these in their own ways.

Communication, language and literacy

75. Children's attainment in this area is good. They make very good progress in relation to their prior attainment. Teaching is very good at times and is never less than good. Detailed planning is well aimed at key skills both within this area and for cross-curricular purposes.
76. Most children speak with confidence and assurance to each other and to adults. Teachers enable children to engage in talk across a range of contexts, encouraging them to speak clearly in complete sentences. Children are developing specialised subject vocabularies during focused activities in other areas of learning. Their listening skills are well attended to by direct teaching, occupying whole-class activities. They are encouraged to ask each other questions and listen carefully to the responses made. Children discuss their weekend experiences and listen attentively to what others have to say and when reading from what they have written in their books.
77. There is a well-organised book area. Children enjoy listening to stories read to them from 'big books'. They have good regular opportunities to browse, with follow-up or preceding class discussions. For example, about ten children chose to look at books about different faiths after talking about these in a class group. They concentrated for a long time and talked knowledgeably to adults about what they saw in pictures. Several could read common words in the texts and made sensible guesses at other words. They are helped to re-tell stories they have read, using the right sequence of events. Most know that print carries meaning and is read from left to right. The teaching of initial letters and word sounds is suitably matched to different levels of need. At the time of the inspection, many children knew the letters of the alphabet and their sounds.
78. Children realise that writing can be used for many purposes. There are good opportunities for them to write independently in small groups. Most can write their names and read labels displayed around the room. Higher attaining children copy words from the board and write short sentences with some help. They form letters and words accurately. They are encouraged to spell correctly and some are starting to use capital letters and full stops in their writing. Most use pencils skilfully to form

recognisable letters and words. Children are well in line to attain the early learning goals by the end of their Reception year. Higher attaining pupils and some of average ability are set to do better than this.

Mathematical development

79. This area is well taught via a range of activities across a number of areas. Planning takes good account of how to build on developing skills and concepts. Children's high involvement and interest in activities is owed to good teaching. Their teacher asks challenging questions which make them think hard before replying. Most are in line to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the Reception year and some will do better than this.
80. All children can count reliably to ten and many can count beyond 20. They count forwards and backwards to twenty in different contexts and can say which number comes before and after a given number. They use mathematical language in play - in the grocery shop, for example. They take turns with roles such as shopkeeper and security guard. Children compile simple shopping lists from labels on packets and bottles. The 'shopkeeper' swipes credit cards and uses the till to store money and give change.
81. Children can identify number labels one to five on different food items and buy what they choose with one and two pence coins. They use number lines, number mats and day-to-day situations to count. They name different number of dots on dominoes and dice of different sizes. In practical activities, children use the vocabulary for adding and subtracting correctly and also grasp words such as 'more' or 'less'. They compare objects according to mathematical features and learn to use words such as 'tall' and 'short' or 'heavy' and 'light' appropriately.
82. Children learn the specific language of position, such as 'over', 'under', 'through' or 'between', and they use it well during their indoor physical activities while moving, climbing and balancing on apparatus. They draw repeated patterns, using two shapes, colours or objects. They use objects such as beads and shapes to recreate patterns and sequences. Children learn to name and describe common two-dimensional shapes such as squares, circles and diamonds.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

83. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is generally good. Most are in line to reach the early learning goals by the start of Year 1. The quality of teaching is good. Planning covers all curricular aspects usefully and teaching takes very good account of children's existing knowledge as a basis for further learning.
84. Children separate past from present in ways comprehensible to them. For example, they find out how clothes were washed 'long ago' and compare what they discover with washing methods now. Teachers make such explorations meaningful by demonstrating how their grandparents washed and ironed, using borrowed artefacts such as an old iron, a washing bowl and a scrubbing board. In turn, children are allowed to try out the same methods and to talk about how washing and ironing are done in their homes. They compare what they were like as babies with how they are now and enjoy sharing personal experiences. Photographs and portraits of them in baby clothes and in clothes for four-year-olds give concrete support to their growing understanding of what it means to get older. They acquire a good insight into their own culture in the context of others through talk aimed at exploiting similarities and differences in experience. Activities such as cooking and festival celebration (of the Chinese New Year for example) add a significant practical dimension to pupils' growing knowledge.
85. Good opportunities to investigate natural and made objects and discuss their properties are arranged. Children investigate the properties of different materials, such as metal, plastic, sponge, bark and paper with all their senses. They then talk about their findings.
86. Although there was no evidence of children selecting their own resources and tools to construct and build or to design models, planning reveals suitable opportunities for them to build and construct, using a range of materials and tools. Children use scissors properly. They cut, fold, stick and join materials for their pictures and models, using recycled materials to good effect. There are two

classroom computers. Teachers' planning and children's records show that children have opportunities to use these regularly and are developing satisfactory skills, given their age.

Physical development

87. Children's physical development is sound. Teaching is good. Planning takes appropriate account of the full curriculum, in so far as is possible within constraints imposed by the building. Such constraints hamper children's progress in relation to ready access to large apparatus and in the use of wheeled toys. Currently, there is no outdoor play provision, because a suitable space all can reach is not available. Whilst children develop climbing and balancing skills on equipment in a spacious hall, opportunities for such physical activity are limited, because the hall is also used by other classes. At times when the children wish to choose to play in a larger space, they cannot. The school admits this weakness of provision as a priority for school development planning.
88. Children use their physical skills confidently with an increasing dexterity in their control of a range of tools, small equipment and larger apparatus. They make good use of available hall space and have good levels of awareness of others while using equipment. They move safely and with good co-ordination. They are attentive and respond well to a teacher's instructions. Teachers stimulate children's physical responses with a good use of language, deploying positional words such as 'travel around', 'under', 'over', 'through' and 'between'. Such learning is reinforced in class by children reading and writing the words they have picked up from their teachers.
89. Children learn to use a range of tools correctly with growing ease of control. They cut, stick and join things together. They handle construction toys and malleable materials such as play dough imaginatively.

Creative development

90. Children start from a very low level of skills when they enter Reception, then make very good progress. Most are in line to reach the early learning goals by the time they enter Key Stage 1. Teaching is satisfactory. Whilst planning covers all aspects of the curriculum and provides good opportunities for developing related skills, teaching is over-directive at times, giving children few chances to experiment and develop their own ideas.
91. Children explore colour, texture, shape and form, through activities such as drawing, painting and pattern making. They make mosaics, using materials such as buttons, gummed shapes, pasta and coloured rice as collage material. They have planned opportunities to listen to, respond to and explore sounds made by a wide range of musical instruments. Teachers help them become familiar with musical sounds through repetition, which they respond to rhythmically. Children sing favourite songs and enjoy listening to music.
92. Imaginative play is well provided for. Teachers set up good role-play areas such as a 'food shop'. These areas allow children to rehearse and consolidate newly learned vocabularies as well as new mathematical ideas. They use their imagination well in their role-play, as when they prepare a table of food for a family. However, teacher-led activities are heavily directed and give few opportunities for children to initiate and expand on self-generated ideas (while using collage material within a flower printed with numbers one to five, for example). Freely chosen painting and model making activities do allow them some occasions where they can express their own ideas and feelings.

ENGLISH

93. In the 2000 end of Key Stage 1 tests, seven-year-olds achieved below the national average in reading and well below this average in writing. Compared to peers' results in similar schools, they were well above average in reading and above this average in writing. At the end of Key Stage 2, results for eleven-year-olds were well below the average of pupils in all schools and broadly in line with the average reached by pupils in similar schools. Trends over time are rising at both key stages, although a 'dip' in results for writing happened last year at the end of Key Stage 1. Overall results show a continuing lift in standards since the 1999 HMI Report, demonstrating that the school is meeting goals both set in this report and by its own development planning. More specifically, the school aims to further improve standards at higher levels in statutory tests at the end of each key

stage. It sets itself realistic targets, already exceeding those for this academic year in English at Key Stage 2. These have been revised in light of the recent test results. The school works systematically to address known weaknesses. Additional time is given to writing, for instance, as a means of helping pupils apply literacy skills to extended writing tasks. This extra time has a positive impact on standards. Pupils learn for example how to improve their writing through drafting.

94. Test results at both key stages hide a more complex picture. They show, for example, that seven and eleven-year-olds attained at least in line with the levels expected for their age. For both age groups, it is underachievement at higher levels that brings down overall scores, particularly regarding writing standards. Inspection evidence supports actual test results at expected levels of attainment at each key stage. It shows how attainment at the higher levels for seven and eleven-year-olds is especially limited in relation to pupils' writing. However, what must be kept in mind is the difficulty of making comparisons between cohorts tested each year because of significant alterations in the school's intake and population over time (see paragraph 6). Pupils with special educational needs, including those with Statements of special need, make satisfactory progress and attain in line with their prior attainment. Pupils with English as an additional language make very good progress and frequently attain at least in line with their peers. No significant difference was noted in the attainment of girls and boys.
95. Pupils have good speaking and listening skills by eleven, although pupils across the school find it hard to settle quietly to listen either to adults or peers. Mainly, this is because they are brim-full of ideas and anxious to be heard, although at times they do not think 'chatter' is inappropriate behaviour. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils can take other view-points into account sensitively when discussing quite complex issues in areas across the curriculum.
96. Pupils develop a good basic knowledge and understanding through their literacy lessons. By seven, they read for meaning, using good strategies for interpreting unknown words in a range of texts, across levels of attainment. They know letter sounds and pay attention to picture clues. Higher attaining pupils talk meaningfully about the events in a book, expressing ideas clearly and making sensible predictions about what might happen next. By eleven, pupils tackle quite demanding texts with aplomb. Pupils of higher and average attainment can reasonably summarise 'the story so far' and discuss word meanings with insight, making informed guesses about these from their knowledge of a book's content. Pupils acquire useful spelling skills, applying their knowledge of letter sounds and dictionary skills to written texts across the curriculum, as they move through the school. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils frequently use simple punctuation correctly. They are learning a mostly consistent handwriting style. All understand story-structures. Higher attaining pupils are starting to extend their ideas through a considered use of words which enliven their writing. By eleven, higher attaining pupils and those of average attainment have a good sense of what is demanded by writing for different audiences. They can express ideas quite formally in a letter to a local council official, for example, and start stories in an interesting way to 'grab' attention. They know how to expand story ideas to maintain interest. These pupils can, at times, write neatly with well-formed letters and a joined script, although they do not do so consistently, as many are experimenting with more personal handwriting styles. They use punctuation, including speech marks, appropriately. Lower attaining, older pupils struggle with what is demanded by writing tasks, being most comfortable with themes which are important and familiar to them. They find it hard to write for formal purposes such as letter writing.
97. Pupils learning English as an additional language make very good progress in acquiring literacy skills. They frequently attain at least in line with peers in terms of their understanding of tasks set, even where they cannot, yet, express ideas in their writing. For example, in an extended Year 1 writing session, a pupil at the early stages of English acquisition showed a very good grasp of how to set about his version of a familiar story. He explained his story was about "a teeny weeny bear" and asked simple questions about relevant spellings. He distinguished sounds he heard accurately, naming each of the letters and their correct letter sound ('t, n and y') in order. These were carefully put together into a 'sentence' of emergent writing which he proudly read back to his class, aware of his good achievement. Where bilingual learners do not attain in line with their peers it is frequently because they are relatively new arrivals and skills in English are still developing. For example, an early stage learner at the end of Key Stage 2 displayed his good grasp of literacy discussions on information texts. He was helped by a vivid image of a cyclone projected on to a screen and by the teacher's careful questioning and repetition of key vocabulary to reinforce important teaching points.

Subsequently, the pupil's writing fell well below expected standards, but his ability to put key ideas and explain these adequately was better than might be expected. Sometimes, the influence on learners of their speaking a language other than English, or the influence of dialect forms of speech, shows itself in pupils' written work. Whilst the meaning of what is written stays perfectly clear and writing may, in fact, be very lively and interesting, sentence structures do not conform to Standard English (for example, the letter 's' may be missed from a plural or 'reach' may be written for 'reached').

98. Pupils enjoy their English lessons. Although they may take time to settle, they respond particularly well to brisk introductory sessions and clear expositions of a lesson's content. They like to participate actively. For example, Year 5 pupils enjoyed discussing myths and legends in a relevant subject vocabulary ("magical", "folklore", "plot"). They regularly help each other and can co-operate well on joint tasks. Year 2 higher attaining pupils were able to talk about and sequence pictures in a story, questioning group members before trying out suggestions sensibly. Their behaviour revealed a very good recognition of how stories generally, and this story in particular, are structured. They made good progress with the task. Pupils enjoy using word processing skills and can often be seen word processing during break times. During lessons, however few opportunities for using word-processing skills were observed.
99. Teaching is at least sound and frequently better. Teachers make good use of the national strategy for literacy in their planning. They know how to teach related skills. In the best lessons, they are well prepared and carefully link what is being taught to prior learning. For example, in a Year 2 lesson pupils were helped to recall previous learning in some detail. With attention focussed on a displayed text, they were prepared for subsequent work. At times, lessons are insufficiently organised and pupils' attention wanders. This was seen in the lower Key Stage 2 when a teacher decided to spotlight one sentence in a text with the overhead projector, even though this equipment wasn't ready. The teaching point was eventually well made. But time spent in setting up equipment slowed the lesson pace unnecessarily.
100. The full range of literacy activities as set out in the national strategy is covered. The school also thinks it important for pupils to take their interest in literary matters well beyond daily lessons, so it organises a number of stimulating extra-curricular activities. During a 'book week', professional storytellers and writers told stories and talked about their crafts. Year 6 pupils attended a performance by a black poet at a local college. This experience lifted pupils' own work and interest in poetry, provoking enthusiastic responses not formerly seen with boys. Pupils have good opportunities to watch theatrical events and participate in workshops through the activities of a local community theatre group as well as to undertake drama work in connection with their classroom studies (for example, history themes). Older pupils join in drama activities with pupils in other schools to prepare for public performances.
101. The co-ordinator has very good in-depth expertise and is committed to raising standards. She is clearly passionate about her subject. Her interest in exploring how pupils' linguistic experience and dialects affect their English is geared to working out how these factors might be harnessed to improve standards. She is also concerned to ensure that lessons make best use of pupils' own interests and knowledge. She monitors classroom teaching and learning practices extensively and consequently has a good overview of strengths and weaknesses throughout the school. Her own classroom practice serves as a good exemplar. As a member of the senior management team, she is in a key position to make sure that important goals are met. Resources for literacy lessons are of good quality and well used. The school makes sure that these are sufficient to cover all aspects of the curriculum.

MATHEMATICS

102. In the 2000 statutory tests, eleven-year-olds' success was broadly in line with the national average. Pupils achieved well above the average when measured against pupils in similar schools. No significant differences were found between the performance of girls and boys. These test results are better than previous years in the proportion of pupils reaching the expected Level 4 and the higher Level 5. They also show a continuing rise in standards since the 1999 HMI inspection. Targets set by the school were met and exceeded for 2000 and have been revised upward this year in light of the recent test results. The rising trend in the school's mathematics' results over time is above the

national trend. Inspection findings confirm last year's test results for these oldest pupils, showing pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 as broadly in line with expected levels. Higher attaining pupils exceed expectations.

103. In the national tests for seven-year-olds in 2000, results were well above the national average and very high when compared with similar schools. This places the school in the top five percentile band for similar schools. No significant difference was found between the performance of girls and boys. There is a marked rise in the proportion of pupils reaching Level 2 or above in the latest tests. Moreover, pupils' attainment in the higher range of Level 2 and Level 3 has improved significantly over the past two years. Inspection evidence places pupils' attainment by age seven in line with nationally expected levels overall. Higher attaining pupils, again, exceed expectations. By seven, pupils grasp place value to 100 and different number sequences. They employ quick methods for adding numbers such as 9 and 19 or 11 and 21 by counting in tens or doubling numbers swiftly in their heads. A few examples of problem solving activities in sampled work showed very well pupils' skills at applying mathematics to real life situations. They develop secure measuring skills and can measure accurately with non-standard units of measurement, such as strings, objects and interlocking blocks and standard units such as centimetre rulers. They know some properties of two and three-dimensional shapes and can name and describe these. Over time, pupils recognise line-symmetry in regular and irregular shapes.
104. By the age of eleven, pupils have a well-developed knowledge of place value in large numbers and have become aware of number patterns through using their tables and multiplication grids. Year 6 pupils rapidly store multiplication and division facts to use in solving day-to-day problems involving fractions. Their understanding of equivalent fractions through using decimals and linking with percentages is growing. Pupils are encouraged to estimate before making written calculations. They have a good feel for an approximate answer before checking with paper and pencil methods. They are covering much ground in rounding numbers up or down to the nearest 100, 1000 and 10,000. Pupils are learning the language of 'average' and 'proportion' for use in problem-solving activities. They extract and interpret data from a wide range of diagrams and charts.
105. A majority of pupils make good progress while moving through the school. Those speaking English as an additional language make very good progress relative to their prior attainment, especially when high quality specialist support is available. Pupils with special educational needs progress satisfactorily relative to their prior attainment. A successfully implemented national numeracy strategy is lifting teaching quality, with consequent good effects on learning and standards achieved across the school.
106. Standards in numeracy are generally good. Teachers are secure in how to teach basic skills. They teach pupils to learn how to think through mathematical problems during discussions at the beginnings and ends of numeracy lessons. These parts of sessions frequently throw up good assessment information for future planning. Pupils have too few opportunities, however, to record mathematical findings through written work following their investigations of problems. The mathematics curriculum is generally broad and planning takes good account of all relevant aspects of the National Curriculum. The application of mathematics to real life problem solving is developing well in Year 6, although it is under-represented in other classes. There are some good examples of mathematics being integrated with other subjects, such as science, through measuring, and with history through using a time-line.
107. Pupils' have positive attitudes to mathematics. They attend well to tasks and enjoy exploring patterns and relationships between numbers and shapes. They also enjoy mental and oral work, which engages their awareness of place value and number position. They are keen to show what they know and understand and give good explanations of strategies they can use to find answers to problems during discussions.
108. Teaching is mostly good and is never less than satisfactory. There is a high proportion of direct teaching and teachers are skilled at clear explanation and demonstration. They encourage pupils to copy their own good use of mathematical vocabulary. Generally, they make good use of time and pace lessons well. On occasion, however, too little time is left for pupils' own investigations or for an end-of-lesson discussion to talk through what has been learned. Teachers give due emphasis to mental and oral work at the outset of lessons, helping pupils increase their calculation speed

effectively.

109. The co-ordinator provides very good leadership in monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning in classrooms to reveal the subject's strengths and weaknesses. She has well-structured plans for future developments. She leads in analysing mathematics test results, monitoring pupil performance and in setting school and pupils' individual targets. As a result, there has been a steady rise in standards over the past three years. In her capacity as deputy head, she is in a good position to ensure that planned goals are met. A whole-school policy on mathematics usefully guides practice in school.
110. The school has satisfactory mathematics' resources easily accessed by staff and pupils alike. Teachers make good use of white boards, number lines and number squares. Mathematics' displays are attractive, extending pupils' mathematical vocabulary and helping to enhance the school as a learning environment. Some good work from a computer program in Year 4 on symmetry and data handling was seen. However, the use of information and communication technology to support and extend pupils' mathematics generally is under-developed. Regular homework is set across the school, consolidating and extending pupils' mathematical knowledge and understanding.

SCIENCE

111. Teacher assessments of seven-year-olds in 2000 show that pupils attained standards well below the average of peers nationally at the expected Level 2 and higher Level 3. Compared to teacher-assessed results in similar schools, pupils attained broadly in line with the average at both these levels. The 2000 end-of-Key Stage 2 statutory test results show standards of eleven-year-olds to be well below the national average, overall. They are broadly in line with the average achieved by pupils in similar schools. There was no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls. National comparisons hide the fact that pupils succeeded much better than their peers in all schools at the expected Level 4. It is their poor performance at the higher Level 5 which keeps down overall scores. Over time, attainment has risen dramatically towards national averages, although it has dipped in some years. The rise in trends over time is above the rise in national trends. Results represent a continuing improvement since the 1999 HMI inspection. Currently, extra time given to Year 6 science as a means of raising standards puts in sight the school's goal of gaining better results at the higher levels. The school also sets its sights on raising standards in Key Stage 1 with regard to the higher levels for seven-year-olds.
112. Inspection findings confirm that the attainment of pupils in the current Year 2 is below expected levels. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is broadly in line with national expectations at Level 4. Limited attainment at Level 5, however, affects standards, overall. Thus, inspection findings confirm the results of last year's statutory tests at the end of Key Stage 2 with attainment judged to be below what can be expected. In both key stages, pupils are affected by their grasp of scientific language and by their capacity to record their findings. There is, for example, little evidence of extended recording in the work of the oldest pupils. A significant number of pupils at the end of each key stage are still developing an understanding of English and associated literacy skills, or have other identified learning needs (see paragraph 6). For bilingual learners, misconceptions about how to use those items of vocabulary which have specific scientific meanings are evident. When pupils talk about what they observe or have done in lessons, they show a sound grasp of lesson content and concepts taught. For example, in Year 2 pupils can explain what changes are happening to chocolate as they watch it melt over heat. They understand the cause of these changes. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 can talk knowledgeably about themes they have studied, as when they describe work done in relation to the growth of plants and the conditions needed for healthy growth.
113. Recorded work at the beginning of Key Stage 1 is mostly pictorial and not always clearly presented. As pupils progress through the key stage, improvement in the quality of work and the quantity of written recording is fairly easy to detect. Their school experiences are suitable for fostering their scientific understanding and a good emphasis is placed on practical work. Year 1 pupils sort and identify properties of different materials through looking at and talking about those materials familiar to them. Year 2 pupils extend their scientific knowledge by learning that some materials occur naturally and others do not. Through first hand investigation, they discover that materials often change when heated (as when they melt chocolate to make a cake) and others do not. They are

beginning to make sensible predictions and to record their observations using pictures and simple charts. Higher attaining pupils write simple sentences to accompany their findings.

114. In Key Stage 2, pupils often have good opportunities to develop investigative and experimental skills and so increase their scientific knowledge through practical activities. They learn to predict outcomes, plan and test out ideas and understand what constitutes a fair test. Generally, however, the quality of pupils' recording and presenting of results is below what might be expected at this age. As a means of supporting recording activities, writing 'frames' are often provided. Whilst these give a good framework of support for lower attaining pupils and those at an early stage of acquiring relevant skills in English, they restrict those with more facility in writing and who are able to record results in tables and charts for themselves. Generally, pupils with special educational needs, including those with Statements of special need, make similar progress to their peers. They attain in line with their prior attainment. Pupils learning English as an additional language make good progress and achieve well, frequently attaining at least in line with their peers.
115. Pupils' attitudes to science are mostly at least satisfactory. In the better lessons, pupils speak very positively about what they do. They listen attentively and show an eagerness to learn and undertake activities. Most work sensibly both individually and when co-operating on group tasks. At Key Stage 2, they enjoy taking responsibility for their own learning when opportunities are given. Pupils handle equipment carefully, understand the need for safety and show respect for each other's views when discussing, planning and carrying out investigations.
116. Because of time-tabling, only three lessons were seen. Of these, the quality of teaching was satisfactory in two, with unsatisfactory teaching seen in a lesson in the lower Key Stage 2. Teachers' planning imposes a good structure on lessons and is effectively aimed at helping pupils develop relevant scientific skills and knowledge. Teachers' sound subject knowledge is communicated well to pupils. Teachers generally make the purpose of a lesson clear, often drawing successfully on pupils' prior learning through brisk question and answer sessions. Year 5 pupils could explain clearly how and why a thermometer is used. Where teaching was judged unsatisfactory, too much time was spent on introducing topics, leaving pupils still uncertain about tasks set with a consequent loss of pace. In the main, teachers use questioning well to assess pupils' learning outcomes, although the chance to probe further and extend pupils' understanding might be missed. A strength in science teaching is the way teachers frequently resort to practical investigations, although these are usually teacher led. In most lessons, pupils undertake the same activities with the result that higher attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged. Marking is satisfactory, overall, but there are few examples in Key Stage 2 where teachers use marking to set targets for further development. There is a wide range of resources. These are sufficient for curricular purposes and are used effectively, although they are not efficiently organised and stored.
117. Science has been suitably identified as an area for development in the school action plan. All curricular requirements over a two-year cycle are met and good account is taken of the latest guidance for Curriculum 2000. The co-ordinator has sound subject knowledge and gives effective support to colleagues. However, although she monitors planning and samples pupils' work regularly, she is not involved in monitoring classroom teaching and learning practices and so has no real overview of these as a means of raising standards. The school evaluates all assessment and test information to good effect. All pupils in Key Stage 2 have targets for lifting their scientific understanding. Plans are in place to extend this good practice to Key Stage 1. The subject contributes satisfactorily to literacy in written activities with relevant use of scientific language in the work of higher attaining pupils, although there are insufficient opportunities for these pupils to write at any length. Pupils apply their mathematical skills to science through the use of measurements and data-recording. However, information and communication technology is not currently used to support other subject, so pupils do not, for example, use programs relating to recording and handling data, control technology or monitoring using sensors. Accommodation is satisfactory but is not always used to best effect. For example, pupils often sit at tables when carrying out investigations, which mars interaction and inhibits group learning. There are some stimulating science displays around the school, further enhancing the subject and extending pupils' learning.
118. The school has made sound progress since the 1999 HMI report in addressing issues related to the introduction of a scheme of work, evaluation of test results and the introduction of individual targets for pupils in Key Stage.

ART

119. By age seven, pupils reach standards broadly in line with those expected. There was insufficient evidence to make a firm judgement about attainments at the end of Key Stage 2, but samples of work (such as large-scale pencil portraits) suggest that good standards are reached. Pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language make good progress relative to prior attainments. Pupils with identified needs make particularly notable progress when there is additional support in lessons. Curriculum provision has improved since the inspection prior to the HMI Report of 1999. For example, pupils can now learn about the subject through studying the work of famous artists and learning techniques from different cultural traditions. Standards in Key Stage 1 are similar to those previously reported.
120. Curricular planning matches requirements of the revised Curriculum 2000, informed by guidance from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. A planning 'map' reveals how elements of art and design are to be delivered. Producing this map helped teachers familiarise themselves with the content of the latest curricular guidance. Pragmatically, the school plans a review of its curriculum planning in the summer term in light of teachers' experiences of actually planning and delivering lessons. It has set itself the goal of using such a review to revise the scheme of work beyond its current draft form.
121. Year 1 pupils learn how to weave patterns with strips of coloured paper on a card loom. They decide for themselves how their patterns will form and follow their own plans scrupulously. Some acquire a good understanding of 'under and over' sequences. Others learn more slowly, but persist. In their portrait painting, pupils place facial features correctly and paint hair in its proper position, with good awareness of the different hair styles in the class. They mix colours to achieve a fair representation of different skin tones and colours. However, work is not helped by the paint being very thin and by pupils having difficulty handling it in its runny state. Some immaturity is seen in pupils' conceptions of the human figure in small-scale drawings (even taking into account their young age). Year 2 pupils talk knowledgeably about the different patterns and shapes discerned on the outside of the school building when asked to recall a previous week's lesson. Their pencil and charcoal drawings and wax rubbings of textures are mostly carefully executed. Their powers of observation show in the shapes and patterns drawn. They demonstrate a good grasp of the properties of clay, which they had investigated via their science work and which will be helpful in extending their pattern work. In portraits painted to accompany writing entitled "The Quarrel", these older pupils carefully study the colour of skin, positioning of features and - importantly in this context - facial expressions.
122. By the end of a lesson in Year 4, pupils had drawn small reproductions of imaginary creatures in their sketch-books to connect with a literacy theme. Some had transferred these onto squares of polystyrene to make monoprints. They obviously enjoyed their task and took pride in their work, but their results, in relation both to their preliminary drawings and final prints, were below expected levels for this age. Many pupils' prior inexperience in drawing representations of the human form (or fantasy forms based on humans and animals) showed in their handling of tools and their conception of what was involved. Well-drawn examples of non-representational work were present in some classes. Year 5 pupils managed pleasing results when recreating patterns found on Egyptian pottery. Drawings of vases are very detailed; some are coloured attractively in pencil crayons. Other work shows how some have realised the potential qualities charcoal has as an art medium when copying patterns found on bowls.
123. Pupils enjoy their art lessons and work hard to achieve desired effects. When printing, pupils in Year 4 were amazed to see their drawings 'magically' appear. They were delighted to share each other's success, anticipating the next week's session with pleasure. Year 2 pupils were equally fascinated to see how patterns could be almost instantly created on the clay's flat surface and then be removed for another (and another!) go. In their lesson, pupils made good progress because of a teacher's interventions, reminding pupils about following their drawings to recreate patterns in the clay and to make sure that patterns were properly drawn with tools.
124. Teaching is at least satisfactory, as evidenced both in ongoing classroom work and in results from previous work. In one lesson, teaching was very good. The teacher engaged pupils fully in recalling previous learning and kept pupils on task by purposefully monitoring their progress around the classroom. The specialist teacher for bilingual pupils gave good support to those who needed help in

making sense of the task as well as in lesson delivery. Volunteer helpers also worked with small groups, further bolstering a learning ethos. Teachers are secure in their understanding of the art curriculum. They plan activities well, making good links to other subjects where practicable. They demonstrate techniques skilfully and use appropriate subject vocabulary.

125. Resources are sufficient for practical work and are well used. There is a limited number of books (for example, about famous artists), but the school is set to review library provision as a priority. The co-ordinator enjoys the subject and has good expertise, especially in such things as printing and dyeing. She has a good overview of curricular demands. She has not monitored teaching and learning and so has no clear picture of any strengths and weaknesses in classroom practice. She monitors teachers' planning regularly and makes sure that it covers areas set out in a curriculum 'map'. She also samples pupils' work. Some aspects of her role (such as auditing as well as ordering resources) are still to be developed.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

126. Only two lessons were seen during the inspection, both in Key Stage 2. A minimal amount of pupils' work was available for scrutiny in design and technology and this was judged mostly to be below what might be expected, considering pupils' ages. There was insufficient evidence to pass a secure judgement on standards or the progress made by pupils, including those with special educational needs and for whom English is an additional language.
127. Discussions with pupils in the upper Key Stage 2 and with teachers, together with a scrutiny of available work, the curriculum overview and teachers' half-termly plans suggest that design and technology has a low priority. Additionally, time allocated to lessons is sometimes devoted to activities more related to art and design, as boundaries between the two subjects seem blurred. As a result, pupils' progress in developing appropriate skills and understanding in design and technology is limited. In an upper Key Stage 2 lesson, for example, pupils revealed a very basic knowledge of the design and make process and of how to evaluate finished products. The standard of the containers they made was below what might be expected. In part, this was because the materials were unsuitable for the task: pupils used play dough rather than the clay originally planned. In a Year 3 lesson, pupils talked about wire structures they were making based on human figures with a more revealing grasp of what they were doing and how they might overcome problems, as they worked together in small groups. A high attaining pupil showed himself well able to evaluate the work of his group, although he did not detect how it might benefit from further refinement. Other pupils were less certain about evaluation and confined themselves to listing their own activities sequentially. In the end, through discussion, pupils gained a better understanding of important processes and were able to communicate what they knew in an interesting way in written evaluations. Evidence of good progress was seen in Year 2, as reflected in photographs of pupils' work, models they had constructed and puppets recently completed. Generally, evidence reveals that work is often teacher-directed. There is insufficient thought given to enabling pupils to plan and design products by themselves, then refine them through ongoing evaluations.
128. Although it is variable, improvements in the subject's teaching have been made since the first inspection in 1995. A curriculum leader gives a welcome impetus to developments. She has been given a fillip by her good quality In-service training based on the latest curriculum guidance. A curriculum overview shows that National Curriculum requirements are appropriately planned for over time. Currently, the school builds its schemes of work on the latest guidance from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. This policy will be reviewed in the summer term in light of teachers' findings through the year.
129. In one lesson seen, teaching was satisfactory. It was unsatisfactory in the other. A teacher's planning for a series of Year 4 lessons and the resulting models of 'Jack-in-the Box' on display suggest at least satisfactory teaching in another class, as does the evidence of the work completed by pupils in Year 2. Strengths, here, include planning for pupils to use their own ideas, the variety of materials available and the way appropriate skills (such as measuring and cutting) are seen to develop over time. Further, intended learning outcomes were plainly recorded and homework was planned to extend intended work in class. The quality of pupils' learning is directly linked to the quality of teaching. So, in the satisfactory lesson seen pupils enjoyed their work and concentrated well on the task in hand. They made progress as they consolidated their ideas through discussing

what they had done. Where teaching was unsatisfactory, pupils did not realise what was expected of them and were consequently not well motivated to help each other and make sure a task was properly completed. Here, a teacher's insecure subject knowledge hindered pupils' progress.

130. A policy statement to guide teachers' work across the school is still being developed. The co-ordinator is suitably involved in her own key stage planning and so can influence teachers' decision-making directly and give appropriate advice. Her knowledge of planning in Key Stage 1 is gained through monitoring it. The monitoring of classroom teaching and learning practices as a means of moving the subject forward are not, yet, fully established, although the co-ordinator has had some opportunities to do this. The range of school resources is now adequate, although it is acknowledged that further developments are necessary.

GEOGRAPHY

131. From scrutiny of planning and pupils' work, attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is judged to be broadly in line with expectations. Insufficient evidence means that it is not possible to make a judgement on attainment at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress, relative to their prior attainments. Those with English as an additional language make good progress, overall. Good improvements have been made to curriculum provision since the inspection prior to the 1999 Report by HMI. Overall, standards at Key Stage 1 are broadly in line with those found during the earlier inspection.
132. It is not possible to make a judgement on teaching at Key Stage 1. Because of time-tabling arrangements for history and geography, no lessons were seen in Key Stage 1, where history was chosen as a focus during the half term of the inspection. Teaching at Key Stage 2 is varied, but satisfactory, overall, with one good, one satisfactory and one unsatisfactory lesson observed. Where teaching is good, lesson-pace is brisk, teachers involve pupils in discussion and the activity arranged is challenging. For example, a teacher's carefully structured lesson ensured that Year 5 pupils made good progress in considering how the new (local) Wembley stadium will affect local people. They enjoyed the discussion, the tasks set and the high levels of participation which ensued.
133. Most pupils have positive attitudes towards geography lessons. At times, attitudes are good, especially when teachers motivate pupils through capitalising on their personal experiences. Pupils generally settle quickly to activities and show good concentration. At times, though, they take time to settle and do not respond well to a teacher's instructions to listen. This was seen in a lesson in the upper Key Stage 2 where a teacher's uncharacteristic lack of firmness in managing challenging behaviour adversely affected a lesson's pace and little progress in learning occurred.
134. Teachers have at least sound subject knowledge. This is generally passed on effectively to pupils. Teachers consistently use correct geographical terms to extend pupils' understanding. Planning is good, with teaching and learning objectives set out clearly, although these are not always made clear to pupils. In a potentially good lesson in the lower Key Stage 2, impetus was lost when pupils did not fully realise how to categorise cards as part of their learning about a village in India. Teachers' expectations are generally satisfactory, although some high attaining pupils are not always sufficiently challenged. All pupils undertake the same activities. Resources, such as photographs, maps and atlases are used successfully. However, insufficient recording across the key stage stops pupils referring back to and learning from earlier activities.
135. The school has concentrated in recent years on introducing the National Literacy and Numeracy strategies to raise attainment in these areas. This has meant less focus on geography. However, positive developments in the past term have included introducing a draft scheme of work, using the latest guidance from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and revised National Curriculum. The current lack of a permanent co-ordinator is a matter the school is aware it must address to guarantee some needed developments in the subject. The situation is especially critical, because the headteacher has a caretaker role increasing his overall managerial burden. The monitoring of classroom practices is not consistently carried out and assessment and marking do not effectively set targets to enable pupils to improve their work in Key Stage 2. Although literacy supports the development of geography skills through written activities, numeracy is not consistently used. The application of information and communication technology to the subject is unsatisfactory. Currently, there is very little subject-specific software available. Sound use is made of the local area to support

pupils' learning, with visits to local places of interest. Resources are satisfactory and used effectively to support pupils' learning.

HISTORY

136. Standards are in line with national expectations by the time pupils are seven and eleven years of age. This is an improvement since the inspection prior to the HMI Report in 1999. Only three lessons were seen in history, so judgements are based on these observations and on the basis of work in pupils' books, classroom displays, teachers' planning and discussions with pupils and teachers. Key Stage 2 pupils gain a sound sense of chronology as they move through the school. The use of the time-line is helpful with this. They learn that evidence about the past comes from primary and secondary sources, a fact stressed throughout the school.
137. Year 6 pupils see how life has changed in Britain since 1948. They well recognise what it was like to live during and after the War and the effect the war had on the daily lives of ordinary people. By noting similarities and differences between the life today and the period under study, pupils begin to empathise with people from different times. Year 3 pupils study the Tudors and find out about every day life in the town and in the country, in Tudor homes and buildings. They come to understand differences between rich and poor. They gather information through sources such as history books, posters, old and new maps and through computers. They were able to discuss what they had found out from their history books and compared their own lives with that of the Tudors. They could give reasons saying which of the two kinds of life they preferred. Pupils in Year 4 have kept a written account of what they have learned about the Second World War and appreciate how diaries can be useful in learning about past events. Year 5 pupils study what life was like for children in the Victorian period. This has helped them to appreciate their own lives and further develop concepts of change through time.
138. Year 1 pupils, too, learn about peoples' lives in the past and how life was different from the present. They reflect on how technological change has revolutionised homes and life-styles, affecting, especially, how people cook, wash, light and heat their homes. They learn what an artefact is. By the age of seven, pupils have a real sense of the past and can make comparisons with the present. They study important historical figures such as Mary Seacole and important events such as the Great Fire of London. Progress is good, overall, but there is some lack of breadth and depth in the curriculum on offer, especially at Year 2 where a narrow range of work was seen. Progress is very good within lessons for pupils who speak English as an additional language, because of the additional support available from specialist staff. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress.
139. Teaching is satisfactory, with examples of good teaching in Years 1 and Year 2. Pupils respond enthusiastically to teachers' questions and take full part in class discussions. They enjoy lessons and make good progress within them, especially where work is well matched to attainment and is found interesting. In a Year 1 lesson, good planning predicted what pupils would experience and what each group would accomplish; while lower attaining pupils were helped productively by a learning support assistant, higher attainers worked with their teacher on set activities. Artefacts such as an old iron, a carpet beater, wooden pegs, washing tongs and the toasting fork effectively made pupils truly aware of their own historical past, so they could pinpoint differences with the present. Year 2 pupils watched a video to learn about conditions for British soldiers during the Crimean War and how Mary Seacole treated the diseased and wounded. Pupils were helped to gain some insight into the prejudiced attitudes some people at the time had towards Mary Seacole. They began to link certain kinds of personal effects to certain sorts of social causes. They showed a good awareness of important issues raised for all who live in a multicultural society.
140. Leadership of the subject is satisfactory. The subject co-ordinator gives effective support to staff in their planning but has not yet been able to monitor classroom teaching and learning across the school, although she has made a start. Such monitoring is required so that pupils can enjoy a range of historical experiences and steady progress in developing key skills. A brief policy statement usefully guides practice. The policy refers to schemes of work but lacks detail about how programmes of study are to be covered through these schemes at the two key stages. The co-ordinator has started modifying the adopted scheme to suit pupils' needs. Assessment is built into topics through the planned activities, sharpening teachers' understanding of what these pupils can do, rather than what they should be able to do. The co-ordinator attends borough co-ordinators'

meetings regularly to share ideas. She has met with staff from the local authority advisory service to seek guidance. There are plans for her to attend suitable professional courses to help her provide in-service training for colleagues. The subject is adequately resourced. Teachers make good use of visits and extra resources are borrowed from local museums.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

141. Progress since the HMI inspection in 1999 has been satisfactory, with a good level of improvement, overall, since the inspection prior to that. In line with recommendations made in the later inspection, resources have been updated and the school has introduced a draft scheme of work and appointed a co-ordinator enthusiastic about the subject. Whilst progress has been made recently in replacing ageing computers by modern networked machines in each classroom, the full potential of computer-assisted learning has yet to be realised. During the inspection, pupils were seldom seen using computers during class time to assist with other areas of the curriculum. As an urgent aid to the raising of standards, the school has identified its further training needs appropriately. The school development plan gives a clear time-line for these developments, using delegated government funding.
142. By age seven, pupils' knowledge and understanding and use of information and communication technology are below expectations, because, as said, pupils have insufficient opportunity to develop their skills. Most pupils have a sound keyboard knowledge. They know how to exchange and share information. They write simple texts, using the 'shift' and 'delete' keys and 'spacebar'. However, few know how to change font, colour and size of letters or print out work independently. Their knowledge and understanding of the benefits of using the technology inside and outside school is below expectations. Pupils generally lack the necessary computer vocabulary.
143. By the age of eleven, too, pupils' knowledge and skills in the use of information and communication technology is below expectations. However, most have a sound and many a good grasp of how to use word processing skills and the Internet for accessing, gathering and researching information. Their knowledge in the use of the technology for controlling events, sensing physical data, exploring patterns and relationships and making predictions about the consequences of decisions is below expectations. They do not have sufficient chance to develop these skills. However, they confidently access the Internet to find up-to-date information about, for example, the Indian earthquake as a topical event of particular interest. Most pupils write text in a variety of styles and letter-size. They can change letter colour and insert clipart pictures. The Park Lane School newsletter is a good stimulus to hand. Most know that information can be gathered from a variety of sources such as people, books, videos and CD-ROMs, but true 'hands-on' experience with technology during lessons is constrained because of the limited number of computers and, therefore, of focused access. Pupils have few opportunities to develop their own ideas, to make things happen for themselves, monitor outcomes and respond to them. Most are not properly aware of the advantages of technology and how it outperforms so many other information-based systems.
144. Only two lessons were observed during the inspection and this is an insufficient number on which to base judgements about teaching. Planning is satisfactorily based on a draft scheme of work. Most teachers introduce activities through whole class teaching, but this is not always fully satisfactory as not all pupils can see what a teacher is demonstrating. Some teachers make good use of prompt sheets to guide pupils. However, owing to pressures of time on the curriculum as a whole and because the number of computers is only just adequate, teachers find it difficult to deliver the planned curriculum for information and communication technology to all pupils in the time allotted. Not all teachers adopt the same approach to recording pupils' use of computers and developing appropriate skills. When pupils work on machines, they usually each undertake the same task; little account is taken of previous knowledge and attainment. Consequently, activities are not always matched properly to pupils' needs and this ineffective use of the technology once again hampers progress. Computers are well used to assist writing and some support is evident for mathematics and art.
145. When given the opportunity, pupils enjoy using computers and are keen to learn. Before school, during lunchtime and after school, all computers are in use, with pupils accessing the Internet to support their interests and learning. When using computers during class time, most work well individually, in pairs or in small groups. They show respect for the equipment, take turns and support

each other well. They show good concentration and perseverance, have positive attitudes and are well motivated. However, pupils often receive little support through adult intervention and are left to their own devices. Consequently, pupils, including those with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language, generally make unsatisfactory progress.

146. The co-ordinator is keen and enthusiastic, but has only very recently returned to the school after a long absence. She knows well what needs doing to raise standards. She monitors planning, but has, as yet, no time to monitor teaching and learning. She has very few opportunities to give support to colleagues and improve standards by such means. Although she monitors planning, there is currently no monitoring of pupils' progress or assessment procedures in place. A newly introduced curriculum map based on guidance from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority is a sound framework for teachers. It is evident that careful thought is needed in relation to planning pupils' use of computers, given the limited number of machines. Other resources to support information and communication technology, such as tape recorders, CD players and television and video recorders are sufficient and of good quality. These assist effectively with other curriculum areas, but are not linked to pupils' growing knowledge of information technology. Most teachers use computers to produce labels and texts for lessons. This enhances the importance of the subject and quality of displays.

MUSIC

147. Lessons were seen across Key Stage 2 and all pupils were heard singing in assemblies. Because of time-tabling arrangements, no Key Stage 1 music lessons were seen. On available evidence, pupils in both key stages reach standards in line with those expected by the ages of seven and eleven in singing. All pupils make good progress, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. In some lessons, pupils in Key Stage 2 achieve good standards. Curriculum provision generally has improved since the time of the first inspection in 1995. Evidence indicates that standards, too, have risen, overall. Pupils have a suitably broad and balanced music curriculum mapped out over the year, matched to the requirements of the revised Curriculum 2000 and taking good account of recent guidance from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. Good time is given to the subject in order to raise standards as well as to signal its importance for pupils' creative development.
148. Teaching is divided each week between lessons taken by a visiting specialist teacher with class teacher assistance and those lessons taken by a class teacher. This arrangement affects standards beneficially. Class teachers can watch a specialist in action and build on what they have seen to further develop pupils' musical skills and understanding. When class teachers actively aid the visiting teacher by ensuring that pupils pay attention and checking how well the pupils join in with tasks, teaching is palpably more effective. For example, pupils in both lower Key Stage 2 classes stayed consistently on task and sang well to a good standard, because each class teacher watched their responses and intervened promptly as appropriate. Year 3 pupils managed an especially pleasing and tuneful sound. They were also fairly successful at maintaining a steady 'heart beat' pulse on drums and with beaters and body taps against the rhythm of a song. This was quite demanding. In part, their success was owed to the class teacher helping pupils she saw having difficulty keep to a steady pulse. In the upper key stage, older pupils find it hard at times to concentrate on what is taught. This fact can mar the pace of lessons. In a Year 6 lesson, for example, pupils chatted amongst themselves after listening well enough to a taped song they were appraising. Some behaved in a challenging manner. The class teacher was firm and persisted in waiting for quiet. Once engaged, pupils showed their grasp of subject vocabulary ('lyric', 'rhythm', 'pulse') and made sensible comments on the song's origin, relating it with some relevance to their knowledge of Caribbean styles of music. They also later enjoyed practising a song learned with the visiting teacher and improved on their performance by modulating their voices, following their teacher's instruction to think about the meaning of the words as they sang.
149. Pupils across Key Stage 2 have good opportunities to join in choir activities. A growing number (girls and boys) choose to do this, as the choir has gained a reputation locally for its good standard of performance at school concerts and other venues. Pupils learn good skills in pitching notes accurately. They are well supported by the visiting teacher's expertise and example. A group of Year 6 girls has formed a 'pop' group. The girls show unusual insight into the nature of the commitment entailed and are determined to succeed. They compose their own tunes and lyrics,

sing in harmony unaccompanied to a high standard and can take solo parts confidently when performing to the school in assembly. The girls explain that they think of tunes easily in their heads as they 'walk around', working on them further in their own time if everyone agrees that the composer's effort is good enough.

150. Visiting teachers take pupils who wish to learn skills on stringed, keyboard and a variety of brass instruments. This tuition gives these pupils good grounding in skills needed for any further musical education and has a spin-off in lessons, where they can usefully share their knowledge with peers. Provision is made via local authority funding in connection with 'Music for Youth', so it is open to all pupils. Pupils enjoy their lessons and talk enthusiastically about them, as when girls in the pop group discuss how they can apply the skills learned to their compositions. End-of-term concerts provide good opportunities for pupils to demonstrate their musical skills in addition to those provided in assemblies.
151. Currently, the headteacher acts in a co-ordinator capacity. He is committed to music as a valuable means of extending pupils' creativity both within lessons and for extra-curricular purposes. He recognises how important music is to the cultural lives of many communities represented in the school and how it can be harnessed to school learning in a variety of ways. He actively encourages pupils to organise their own learning when they show particular interest. However, his responsibility is heavy in view of his already substantial management responsibilities. The school acknowledges the need to appoint a permanent co-ordinator as a matter of some urgency. The school's commitment to improving provision is well illustrated by the involvement of all teachers in a local authority In-service course during the spring and summer terms (2001) to further develop their musical understanding and confidence in delivering the subject. Sufficient resources are of good quality. The school benefits from having a dedicated music room, although the noise from this is sometimes intrusive when other hall lessons are taking place.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

152. On available evidence, indications are that both standards and provision have improved notably since the inspection prior to that reported on by HMI in 1999. Dance and gymnastic lessons were observed from Year 1 to Year 5 and swimming lessons in Year 6. The gymnastic session for the oldest pupils took place outside the inspection period. Standards in dance and gymnastics were in line with those expected for children's ages. In swimming, pupils reached levels below those normally expected at the end of the key stage at this point in the school year. This was their third visit to a local pool. Approximately 80 per cent of pupils gain a certificate for 25 metres by the end of a term's lessons. In order to improve on this performance and as a means for pupils with little, if any, experience of swimming outside school to win more confidence, weekly sessions are now extended over two terms. Good time is given to establishing pupils' skills and knowledge in each element of the curriculum. So, twice-weekly lessons occur through a half-term period mapped out across the year. Curriculum content has been revised in line with the latest guidance for Curriculum 2000. The school participates in 'Top Sport' as a means of improving pupils' basic games' skills in major games and this is stated to be having a very positive impact on standards. Games' lessons were not seen during the inspection, as these are time-tabled throughout the summer and part of the autumn terms. Pupils state they are proud of their school's sporting achievements.
153. In Year 1, pupils learn to respond to instructions heard on taped movement and dance programmes. They are helped in this by a class teacher stopping the tape to repeat what is said and demonstrate what is meant. This good practice enables pupils to progress in developing sequences of twisting and turning movements, stretching to use space above or crouching low. In fact, pupils make most progress when listening to and watching their teacher. Year 2 pupils show a good ability to make "sharp", "spiky" movements, manoeuvring their body parts into interesting shapes. They can 'freeze' a position on a drum-beat and improve a performance when the teacher's good interventions pushes their thinking forward and extends their ideas. Older pupils have a good capacity to match body movements to different types of music. For example, Year 4 pupils attended well to movements demonstrated by their teacher related to Indian dance. They worked hard to capture the stylised manner of these and succeeded in moving their arms in time to the music with a characteristic grace in many instances. They were helped by their teacher's good knowledge of what was required. Pupils understood the symbolism of hand and finger movements and had improved considerably on the sequence telling an Indian story through dance (when watched, briefly,

later in the week). Year 5 pupils travel round a hall with good body control. They twist and turn as they move and keep time to the brisk music, developing their sequences imaginatively after watching others. Boys' movements are especially interesting. Some show unusual exhilaration in their response to the music's rhythm and pace. Pupils also move gracefully at quite a different pace when they match an appropriate sequences of dance steps to Elizabethan music.

154. Pupils, including those learning English as an additional language and those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. They enjoy their lessons and want to please their teachers. In the lower key stage, however, pupils find it hard to listen to instructions, mainly because they are still developing necessary skills in recognising what counts as appropriate behaviour. They are helped by teachers' demonstrations of what is required and by learning to attend patiently to each other. Older pupils work well together in pairs or small groups. They enjoy watching others and then trying out ideas for themselves. For example, Year 3 pupils co-operated on extending body shapes in a gymnastics lesson, working around balancing different parts of the body. They tried out the different possibilities as these were demonstrated, occasionally building on them fruitfully.
155. Teaching is at least satisfactory and sometimes good. In good lessons, teachers make sure that pupils listen and watch when required to do. They demonstrate movements confidently and watch pupils closely to check how much has been understood. This good practice was seen in Year 4 where pupils coped well with a demanding task when learning about Indian dance. Where they are less effective, teachers falter in deciding how pupils might develop ideas further. So, although Year 5 pupils refined their sequences and produced some lively work, they did not continue to explore body shapes in space and really extend themselves. At times, too, teachers' organisation hinders pace. For example, in the lower Key Stage 2 a teacher put out mats for balancing work instead of letting pupils do this. Teachers plan lessons to achieve intended outcomes and include warming up and cooling down periods, although some warm-up sessions are not sufficiently energetic. They may spend good time establishing the importance of physical activity, as in Year 3 when a teacher's questioning reinforced key lesson points and reminded pupils of how much they already knew about body functions and exercise. Most teachers change appropriately for lessons and all pay attention to matters of safety. At times, however, noise militates against a pupil being heard when in difficulty. In one lesson, shoes ranged against the side of the hall were not tucked away. This was a possible hazard to pupils working close by.
156. Pupils are able to join in sporting activities such as competitive football with other schools. After school clubs allow pupils to practise in teams and to learn new skills (as with a course on squash for pupils in Year 5). These club activities are provided through local authority funding and support the teaching of games' skills well. Boys' interest in dance is being actively promoted through the co-ordinator and headteacher supporting after school clubs for boys. These are focused on enabling boys to develop independent skills in organising such activities for themselves, in the way groups of girls already do. Resources are sufficient for gymnastics, but are not always used to best effect. For example, insufficient mats placed around the room in a lower Key Stage 2 lesson meant that some groups did not progress as they should, because too many pupils worked on one mat. Games' resources are good because of provision made through 'Top Sport' funding and shared between schools in the locality.
157. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and keen. She has attended a substantial amount of In-service training over the past two years and has found this invaluable in keeping her updated with the subject. She is committed to developing the subject and has a good knowledge of where such development is needed. For example, she is aware of some lack of confidence in teaching dance and of inconsistency in teachers' approaches in enabling pupils to set out equipment. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of games' skills have been considerably enhanced through rigorous training associated with participating in 'Top Sport' activities. Currently, the co-ordinator does not have an overview of teaching and learning across the school since this is not monitored. She monitors teachers' planning regularly to check curriculum requirements are met and has input into key stage planning meetings, which gives a useful insight into subject strengths and weaknesses.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

158. Owing to a lack of evidence at the end of Key Stage 1, it is not possible to make a judgement on attainment. Pupils' overall attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 is broadly in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.
159. There is very little evidence of recording in Year 6, but, from talking to pupils and looking at teachers' planning, by the age of eleven most pupils have a solid awareness of different religions. They know that each has different customs, but shares features (each has beliefs), holy books (such as the Bible, Qur'an and Torah) and places of worship (such as churches, mosques and synagogues). Pupils are encouraged to share their experiences of their own faiths, which heightens their awareness and understanding. Most understand that many religious stories convey important messages about good and evil. They can name critical points in the life stories of important religious figures from past and present such as Mother Theresa. They are aware of the role of feelings such as caring, fairness and being thankful. Pupils respond thoughtfully and sensitively to other's views on religious and moral issues and can sympathetically talk about why people believe that certain things are right or wrong.
160. Standards have risen since the first inspection in 1995 when it was judged that pupils lacked a sufficiently deep knowledge of faiths other than their own. A scheme of work has been introduced following the locally agreed syllabus, showing how skills, knowledge and understanding are to be delivered over time, ensuring that the subject is satisfactorily covered. Pupils generally make satisfactory progress, including those with special educational needs. Pupils learning English as an additional language make good progress.
161. Only one lesson was seen at Key Stage 1 and its teaching quality was good. At Key Stage 2, in the two lessons observed, teaching was sound. Teachers have reliable subject knowledge and use their knowledge well. Clear planning gives effective guidance. Teachers share learning objectives with pupils at the start of sessions to cue pupils for what they are to learn. Questioning effectively raises awareness and motivates pupils. A good lesson pace often sustains pupils' interest. A positive feature of lessons is the chance, during discussion, for pupils to present their thoughts and reflect on what is said. Teachers encourage pupils to talk about their own religions so that all benefit from a personal encounter with their faiths, aiding their own personal and social development. Equally, these discussions help those pupils with English as an additional language to practise their discussion skills in ways meaningful to them. Teachers give good praise and manage activities skilfully. A weakness is that insufficient stress is placed on recording, especially in Year 6, which would allow pupils to consolidate their thoughts and learning through applying literacy skills.
162. Most pupils have a positive attitude to lessons and settle quickly to tasks. They enjoy sharing their thoughts about their own faiths. Most listen well and show very good respect for what others have to say. They learn from each other.
163. At present, there is no co-ordinator, although the headteacher has taken on a caretaker role. Planning follows the locally agreed syllabus and adequate coverage ensures that skills and knowledge are developed well over time. However, there is, currently, no monitoring of teaching and learning to disseminate good practice and ensure that the requirements of the agreed syllabus are met. Satisfactory resources and religious artefacts to aid the teaching of religious education are well used. The subject is helpful to the teaching of literacy as well as being the main curricular channel for pupils' spiritual development.