

INSPECTION REPORT

TOWERS JUNIOR SCHOOL

Hornchurch, Essex

LEA area: Havering

Unique reference number: 102313

Headteacher: Mrs Marilyn Whiskerd

Reporting inspector: Mrs Valerie Singleton
23044

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

Inspection number: 186172

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Windsor Road Hornchurch Essex
Postcode:	RM11 1PD
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Alan Castell
Date of previous inspection:	November 1995

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23044	Valerie Singleton	Registered inspector	English Design and technology Art	The school's results and achievements How well the pupils are taught
9465	Elizabeth Cooke	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well the school cares for its pupils How well the school works in partnership with parents
21796	James Walsh	Team inspector	Science Music Physical education Religious education Special educational needs	How well the school is led and managed
13060	Peter Browning	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Geography History Equal opportunities	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	4 - 8
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	9 - 11
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	11 - 12
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	13 - 14
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	14 - 16
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	16
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	16 - 18
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	18 - 19
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	20 - 23
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	24 - 36

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Towers Junior School is situated in Hornchurch, Essex. It is an average sized school, having 245 pupils on roll. Most pupils transfer from the adjacent infant school. The school has two classes for each year group. There is a similar number of boys to girls apart from in Year 4 where there are nearly twice as many boys as girls. Only five per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is well below the national average of 18 per cent. Four pupils have English as an additional language, none of whom are at the early stages of speaking English. Nearly all pupils are white and British. Seventeen per cent of pupils have special educational needs, and four pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Need, both of which are lower than the national average. Attainment on entry to school at Year 3 is above the national average level, when comparing results in the national tests and tasks for seven year olds. Pupils' socio-economic background is good.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Towers junior is an improving school after a period of under-achievement. The new headteacher has successfully addressed many issues and implemented positive changes, with the good support of the deputy head. Teaching is basically sound with many positive features. There is a developing sense of a shared commitment by governors and staff to raising standards. At present, pupils are achieving well in national terms in English, at the expected level in mathematics, although not enough reach the higher levels, and standards in science are not high enough. However, the school is now well placed to ensure that all pupils reach their full potential academically. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Good leadership resulting in an improvement in standards in the national tests for eleven year olds and many positive initiatives being introduced in all areas of school life.
- Pupils achieve good standards in English, history, and art and design.
- The very good provision for moral development and good provision for social development promotes good behaviour, attitudes and relationships, all of which support learning.
- The good links with parents result in their positive involvement in the school and good support for their children's learning.
- The safe and caring environment ensures pupils like school and they attend regularly and promptly.

What could be improved

- Standards in science and information and communication technology.
- The progress and levels of attainment of higher attaining pupils, especially in mathematics.
- Medium and short-term planning by teachers, and the medium-term assessment procedures in order to support and inform future planning.
- The monitoring of teachers' plans, pupils' work and agreed changes by the subject co-ordinators.
- The provision for cultural development.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the last inspection in November 1995, there has been a change in leadership after a period of under-achievement by the school. Standards in science were judged to be above the national average in the previous report, but at present they are below. However, standards in geography, history, and art and design have improved.

The Key Issues from the previous report identified the need to improve:

- The provision of differentiated tasks. This is not yet in place.
- Exploratory and independent learning. Some is now evident, but this work is not fully embedded throughout the school
- Assessment, recording and reporting. This was addressed but the systems were judged

unmanageable. New systems for assessing pupils' progress in English and mathematics are now being developed, but they are not yet fully in place.

- The role of subject co-ordinators. This has recently been tackled and it is planned to further develop their role in monitoring planning, work and teaching.

The new headteacher has ensured the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy strategies, although it is too soon to judge how well the numeracy strategy has impacted on standards. Good procedures have been introduced to improve pupils' writing. The role of the governing body has been reviewed and there are now clear responsibilities for monitoring standards attained. Good structures are now in place for monitoring pupils' performance in annual tests in order to track the on-going progress of individual pupils and that of specific groups. Overall, the school has made satisfactory improvement since the last inspection and is well placed to make further improvements.

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	A	C	B	D
mathematics	B	D	C	E
science	A	D	D	E

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

After a dip in standards in 1999, the downward trend has been successfully reversed in English and mathematics. However, standards are not high enough when comparing the results of pupils in similar schools (based on the percentage of pupils who qualify for free school meals). Inspection evidence confirms that, by the time pupils are eleven, standards are above the national average in English, in line for mathematics and below that expected at present in science. Not enough higher attaining pupils are reaching their potential in mathematics and science. An analysis of tests indicated weaknesses in girls' mathematics and the school has successfully addressed this. It also identified a weakness in writing and there is now a special focus on developing pupils' skills in this area. Pupils achieve well in reading, which is well supported by the home-school reading agreement. There are still not enough opportunities for problem-solving and developing mental skills in mathematics, nor independent investigation and recording of results in science. Standards in history, and art and design are above those expected nationally. In all other subjects pupils achieve satisfactorily apart from in information and communication technology, where standards are below the nationally expected level, although good progress is being made now pupils have access to the new computer suite. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress, particularly with literacy skills. The progress of pupils with English as an additional language matches that of their peers. The school's targets for the 2000 national tests were met in mathematics, but the more demanding targets in English were not reached.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Most pupils are attentive, keen to listen to their teachers, eager to learn and show concentration.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Standards of behaviour are good overall, especially amongst the oldest pupils. Pupils receive good support to develop self-discipline.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils interact with their peers and teachers confidently, they are listened to and respected. Relationships are good throughout.
Attendance	Good attendance and punctuality.

Pupils are keen to take responsibility and to be independent. They have many opportunities to develop into mature individuals.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	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.

Nearly all teaching observed was satisfactory or better, with 29 per cent being good, 11 per cent very good and two per cent excellent. Only two unsatisfactory lessons were seen. These were due to weak planning and the provision of an inappropriate activity. As a result pupils did not make progress. Teaching is consistently good or better in Year 6. The skills of literacy and numeracy are taught satisfactorily across the school and pupils' basic skills are regularly reinforced. Throughout the school, there is a good focus on teaching pupils how to construct different types of writing. Teachers have good subject knowledge of history, physical education, and art and design and there was some good teaching of information and communication technology observed; the weaknesses in teaching this subject in the recent past are being successfully overcome. Most teachers use questioning well to establish pupils' level of understanding at the beginning of lessons and to promote learning. Pupils are managed well, creating a positive ethos. All responses from pupils are treated with respect by teachers, raising self-esteem and encouraging pupils to be interested and motivated. Learning support assistants offer very effective help to pupils with special educational needs during lessons. The planning of lessons is poor overall, although it is generally better for literacy and numeracy lessons. This results in work being aimed at the pupils of average ability. The needs of the higher attaining pupils are not addressed and this adversely affects their learning, particularly in subjects such as mathematics and science. Some lessons lack pace and rigour.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a satisfactory range of learning opportunities, but there are weaknesses in that minimal planning limits opportunities for the more able pupils to fully reach their potential. The timing of the school day means some lesson time is not used efficiently. The full requirements of information and communication technology are not met and pupils have limited access to the Internet.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good procedures are now in place to offer support to these pupils and they are making satisfactory progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	None of these pupils are at the early stages of acquiring English and they make similar progress to their peers.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Provision for moral development is very good and for social development it is good. More needs to be done to promote pupils' own culture and their understanding of the rich multi-cultural society in which they live.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare. At present, assessment of pupils' academic progress is unsatisfactory, but appropriate procedures have been set up and recently introduced.

The good links between school and home and the good involvement of parents in school life have a positive impact on the quality of education provided.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides good leadership, with a clear focus on raising standards. She has introduced many positive initiatives to address identified weaknesses. She is well supported by the deputy headteacher, who provides a very good role model in the classroom, and by the experienced senior teacher.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are very supportive and offer good help to the school. They are satisfactorily developing their role and becoming more involved in strategic management.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher and deputy head have made a detailed analysis of strengths and weaknesses in all aspects of school life, but not all staff and governors are involved in the process yet. Good procedures are now in place to monitor pupils' progress year on year.
The strategic use of resources	Financial planning is good. All funds and resources are used satisfactorily.

The accommodation is satisfactory overall, with positive features such as the spacious grounds and specialist rooms. The class bases are small and very cramped for whole class teaching, and the shared areas are difficult to supervise safely when pupils work outside the bases. There are sufficient qualified teachers and support staff. Resources are satisfactory. There are too many outdated books in the non-

fiction library, insufficient musical instruments and limited resources for geography. The school applies the principles of seeking best value when purchasing resources or services. The headteacher is introducing systems to measure how well financial decisions impact on standards.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • The headteacher and staff are very approachable. • The school has high expectations and the children progress well. • Their children are helped to become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More homework, especially for the older children. • Information about their children's progress. • The range of extra-curricular activities.

A significant minority also expressed their concern over standards in mathematics and science. The team agrees with parents' positive views of the school, but does not agree with the parents' view that the school has set sufficiently high expectations for the higher attaining pupils. The team does not agree with the negative statements, apart from the fact that standards in mathematics and science are not high enough at Level 5, but feels all the other aspects are satisfactory.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Pupils enter the school with standards in reading, writing and mathematics that are generally above that of most pupils of that age, when compared to the national average results in the national tests and tasks for seven year olds.
2. In the 2000 tests for eleven year olds, 80 per cent of pupils attained Level 4 or above in English, with 39 per cent attaining at the higher Level 5. The average points scored by pupils were above the national average. In mathematics, 82 per cent of pupils attained Level 4 or above, with 13 per cent reaching Level 5. The average points scored are similar to the national average. In science, 87 per cent of pupils attained Level 4 or above, with 18 per cent attaining Level 5. The average points scored are below the national average. When compared to schools with a similar intake, results are below the national average for English and well below for mathematics and science. Comparisons at Level 5 are in line with the national average for English, and well below for mathematics and science. Boys do better in mathematics than girls and they do better in English than boys nationally. Teachers assessed that 92 per cent of pupils would attain Level 4 or higher in mathematics and 95 per cent in science, which is somewhat higher than the actual results. This indicates assessment procedures are not very accurate for these subjects.
3. Taking all core subjects together, the performance of pupils at eleven over the five years from 1996 to 2000, was just above the national average, although standards dipped in all three subjects in 1999. The trend in the school's results is broadly in line with the national trend. The new headteacher has recently introduced the close analysis of results in annual tests, and started tracking the progress of pupils year on year. A detailed analysis of pupils' writing has led to a specific programme being introduced to address the weaknesses identified. This, together with the Additional Literacy Support programme and the well supported home-reading programme, are having a positive impact in English. Year 5 and 6 pupils are set by ability for mathematics, but the work is not yet sufficiently well matched to the different ability groups to fully impact on the results, particularly for the higher attainers. The weakness in girls' mathematics has been addressed satisfactorily and no difference is now evident. Overall, pupils achieve satisfactorily for their ability throughout the school, with good progress seen in Year 6. However, the higher attaining pupils do not achieve well enough for their ability in mathematics and science. Inspection evidence confirms that, by the time pupils leave the school at eleven, their attainment is above national expectations in English, in line for mathematics and below national expectations in science.
4. The school targets set for pupils attaining Level 4 or above in the English and mathematics national tests in 2000 were 87 per cent for English which was not met and 78 per cent for mathematics, which was exceeded. In 2001, the targets set by the local authority are 88 per cent for English and 82 for mathematics, which the school should achieve.
5. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress, as they now receive good support in lessons from well trained learning support assistants. Individual Education Plans are agreed, but targets are not yet used to inform teachers' planning. Most pupils who have English as an additional language are at the higher stages of fluency and have full access to the curriculum. Their progress is satisfactory in lessons.
6. By the time they are eleven, the overall standards of speaking and listening are good. Pupils are articulate and express their ideas in a mature manner. They are very responsive in the lessons that are stimulating and interesting. Standards in decoding text and reading for meaning are good. Pupils discuss their preferences and give a good account of the story. Pupils of all abilities read regularly and choose challenging texts. They know how fiction books are arranged in a library, and how to locate information from a book and other sources. Pupils learn a range of

skills to support their writing and they draft and edit their work in order to make improvements. Work is neatly presented and higher ability pupils use a range of punctuation, develop lively and thoughtful ideas and use some adventurous and effective vocabulary. Writing skills are developed well through history, but not through other subjects. There are few examples of writing for a specific audience or where work is presented in different and imaginative ways and this is unsatisfactory.

7. In mathematics, pupils develop a secure knowledge of place value and, by the age of eleven, can apply this successfully to understand the place value of decimals. Pupils measure turns in angles with accuracy. They know about the properties of two and three-dimensional shapes, how to measure in standard units and they use data-handling to draw block graphs and pie charts. Pupils' skills in mental mathematics are not promoted well enough. There are some examples of numeracy skills being used to support learning in other subjects such as graphs to record scientific findings, and time lines in history. The use of investigations and problem solving and the relevance of mathematics in everyday situations is not well developed. As a result, pupils' progress is limited.
8. Inspection findings of the current Year 6 pupils confirm that attainment in science is below the national average level by the end of the key stage. Higher attaining pupils do not attain well in comparison to similar schools. Pupils of average and lower ability make satisfactory progress over time, but higher attaining pupils do not achieve as well as they are able. By the age of 11, pupils are beginning to develop a knowledge of important scientific facts. They study different types of forces and carry out investigations on friction. They test different weights in air and water. Pupils effectively compare materials and investigate the amount of water each absorbs. They know how seeds grow and how they are dispersed. Written work is carefully presented but most is copied from worksheets and teacher models from the board. Not enough experimental and investigative science is covered, which limits the progress particularly of the higher ability pupils.
9. In information and communication technology, standards are below national expectations. This is because of the inadequate range of hardware and software available. Access to the newly converted computer suite and recent developments in the subject are already raising standards. Year 6 pupils are learning how to use a control technology program. They have used a program to design pictures and repeating patterns and experienced inputting and interrogating data. A few pupils with computers at home know how to send an e-mail. Pupils have limited knowledge of computer use and have little experience of using CD-Roms, adventure games or combining a range of information from different sources.
10. Standards are above those expected nationally in history, and in art and design. Standards in geography have improved and are in line with those expected nationally, as are standards in design and technology, music, physical education and religious education.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. The school has broadly maintained standards previously reported in this aspect of school life. Behaviour, attitudes and personal development of pupils are all good overall. Attendance rates are better than national averages at 95 per cent. There are very few unauthorised absences and no exclusions.
12. The pupils' good attitudes to school have a positive effect on the quality of education provided and the progress they make. Most are attentive, keen to listen to their teachers, eager to learn and show concentration. For example, in a Year 6 art lesson when pupils were investigating perspective, pupils worked hard with good concentration. Those pupils who found the task difficult persisted and were supported by their peers. In a Year 5 information and communication technology lesson on spreadsheets, pupils worked well together in pairs to complete their tasks. In a few lessons pupils start to fidget and chat; this is linked to less successful teaching when the lesson pace slows and if learning intentions are unclear. Parents are pleased with pupils' achievement in this area and report that their children like school.

13. Standards of behaviour are good overall. Parents acknowledged this in their responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire and at their meeting with inspectors. The eldest pupils often show very good behaviour; this is due to teachers' high expectations and effective teaching. The school provides a supportive and harmonious atmosphere for its pupils. At break times pupils play well together and are kind to each other. There is sufficient space in the playground, which is enhanced by painted games and murals. Simple play equipment is provided at lunchtimes to focus play. There was no bullying or poor behaviour seen during the inspection. Parents say bullying does occur from time to time, but it is dealt with effectively and promptly in accordance with the anti-bullying policy. The school is well cared for and there is little litter and no graffiti on the site. Pupils are encouraged to take care of their school by projects such as the school site improvement plan and work in geography on the environment. Management of pupils by all adults in school is consistently positive and successful; this has a beneficial effect on learning because pupils are secure and content. Pupils interact with their peers and teachers confidently, they expect to be heard and respected. Relationships are good throughout, all adults in school know their pupils well. The school's comprehensive behaviour management policies are consistently applied. Pupils with special behavioural difficulties are now well supported by having appropriate targets agreed and recorded on their individual education plans.
14. Pupils show respect for the school's resources, artefacts and work on display. They also show respect for each other's property. They are keen to take responsibility and to be independent. Examples of this are pupils' thoughtful contributions to the site development plans, their enthusiasm for running errands for staff and the strong culture of helping others less fortunate than themselves by organising their own fundraising events. All pupils in the school understand the school's expectations of them in behaviour and attitudes. Pupils are confident, express themselves clearly and are heard with respect by their classmates. This was observed in assemblies where pupils shared news on their fundraising project and performed scenes to illustrate teaching on anger. Many opportunities are provided for pupils to learn and grow into mature individuals including school journeys, taking part in decision-making, performing in school productions and through the effective personal, health and social education programme. The school's behaviour policy gives children responsibility for their own behaviour and encourages them to develop self-discipline effectively. Parents recognise the school's good achievements in this aspect of its work.
15. Attendance rates at the school are good in national terms, pupils attend regularly and promptly. There is a brisk start to the day and registers are taken efficiently at the start of sessions. Most pupils attend regularly and on time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. Teaching is satisfactory overall, although there is consistently good teaching in Year 6. Teachers have good subject knowledge of history, physical education and art and design and there was some good teaching of information and communication technology observed. Only two unsatisfactory lessons were seen during the inspection. These were due to weak planning and an inappropriate activity, so pupils did not move on in their learning.
17. The national literacy and numeracy strategies have been implemented and most lessons follow the recommended structure, although some teachers are still unsure about the numeracy programme. Basic skills are satisfactorily reinforced with regular practice of tables, spelling lists, handwriting sessions and teacher-led reading groups. Literacy skills are taught well in Years 4 and 6 during lessons. For example, when studying the book "Midget", effective questioning helped Year 6 pupils understand how to use the skills of deduction and inference. In a Year 4 lesson, a well-selected poem helped pupils explore patterns within rhymes and also how to read on in order to help predict the meaning of new vocabulary. Throughout the school, there is a good focus on teaching pupils how to write in a particular style, such as a newspaper report in Year 3 and explanation text in Year 5. This is having a positive impact on standards achieved. Although pupils have the opportunity to conduct personal research in history, literacy skills are not well supported through other subjects. Recorded work in science, for instance, is often the same for

all pupils. Numeracy skills are taught well in Years 5 and 6. Numeracy is satisfactorily used to support learning in subjects such as geography through map work and drawing to scale, in recording scientific findings in graph form and through data-handling in information and communication technology.

18. The planning of lessons is generally poor, although it is better for literacy and numeracy lessons. Few lessons are planned in sufficient detail to identify how the learning intention is to be introduced, understood and practised by the pupils. The best plans for literacy identify different activities that carefully match the needs of pupils of different abilities within the class. However, few plans in other subjects identify activities in this way, but are a single line statement based on the ideas contained in the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's scheme being followed. This results in work being aimed at the pupils of average ability. Pupils with special educational needs usually receive good support from learning support assistants so they are able to participate in the activity set. The needs of the higher attaining pupils are not addressed and this adversely affects their learning, particularly in subjects such as mathematics and science. Teachers offer some exciting and challenging activities such as pupils having the opportunity to interview the local Member of Parliament, or using clay to create a pottery container of their choice. There are many good examples where the learning intentions are shared with the pupils, so they understand the purpose of the lesson. Also, work is appropriately linked to what has been taught before, in the short term. Some learning intentions are too broad for the teacher to be able to know clearly at the end of the lesson whether they have been achieved.
19. Most teachers use questioning well to establish pupils' level of understanding at the beginning of lessons and to promote learning. This was seen to good effect in Year 3 science and resulted in a good response from the pupils. Some teachers match their questions well to challenge pupils at different levels of ability, particularly in Year 6, which results in all being involved and making progress. Teachers teach throughout the lessons and generally their interactions with pupils support and promote learning. Pupils are given some opportunities to use their own ideas having been taught a skill or technique; for example in Year 3 art when pupils created their own repetitive patterns using printed shapes having learnt about reversals and rotation. Although there is evidence that problem solving and independent experiments have been introduced in mathematics and science, this aspect of learning is not yet fully developed.
20. Pupils are managed well and a positive ethos for learning is created. Pupils who are sometimes challenging or disruptive are handled sensitively and effectively and they do not often interrupt the learning of others. All responses from pupils are treated with respect by teachers, raising self-esteem and encouraging pupils to be interested and motivated. There are clear routines and little wasted time between changeover periods. Some lessons lack pace and rigour and this results in pupils becoming bored and disinterested and therefore not making progress. In the best lessons, pupils are given clear timings for the task and regular reminders are made. This keeps pupils well on task and working really hard, as in a Year 6 religious education lesson when they completed several activities at a brisk pace.
21. Resources are used to good effect in lessons such as history and religious education. For example, Year 5 pupils examined a range of artefacts in order to discover more about life in Ancient Greece and Year 3 pupils understood more about the Sikh religion by having access to a good range of relevant resources. Learning support assistants offer very effective help to pupils with special educational needs during lessons. They work with the pupils or group throughout, even during whole-class sessions, ensuring pupils understand, asking relevant questions and giving appropriate guidelines when pupils complete independent tasks.
22. On-going assessment is used well by some teachers to gauge when pupils have not understood a concept and then they make the appropriate intervention to clarify issues. In a Year 6 lesson, for instance, when pupils were set the task of writing a poem using contradictory ideas, the teacher quickly noticed that several pupils were finding it difficult to make a start. So she used an example from one pupil to illustrate an effective strategy. As a result, all the pupils successfully completed the task. Many lessons end with a whole-class session where learning is shared and teachers can assess whether the learning outcome has been achieved by those who answer. It

is not used as an opportunity for formally assessing the learning of a specific group of pupils, nor to inform future planning. There are some good examples where the marking policy is being implemented and teachers make helpful comments on how pupils could improve their work or identify whether the learning intention has been achieved. This is not yet consistent throughout the school.

23. Pupils are occasionally encouraged to take work home in order to complete it, such as art, or to conduct some research. Reading, learning spelling lists and tables are routine homework tasks and teachers regularly check these have been completed.

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

24. The curriculum throughout the school is broad and varied and meets statutory requirements for all National Curriculum subjects and religious education. There is good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. The organisation of the school day leads to an imbalance. For example, there is 45 minutes per day allocated to pupils practising spellings, reading and completing repetitive handwriting tasks which, in the majority of teachers' cases, is not planned. This results in less time being available for subjects such as Year 3 science and creates a narrowing of the curriculum, because there is less time to cover the foundation subjects, religious education and the development of literacy and numeracy skills within other subjects. There are few opportunities, as yet, for independent learning.
25. Although the school provides for all areas of learning there are significant areas of weakness, for example, in medium and short-term planning and procedures for medium term and day to day assessment. This is having a detrimental effect on the school's stated intention to raise standards across the age range, especially for the higher attaining pupils in mathematics and science. There is no way of checking that pupils are developing skills, knowledge and understanding in a progressive way. It also leaves less secure teachers without the necessary support. There is a lack of focus on differentiated tasks and no planned opportunities for assessment; co-ordinators do not have sufficient information for properly monitoring that the planned curriculum is taught. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented, although it is still too early to judge the effect of the Numeracy Strategy on pupils' attainment. Some teachers, however, are still unclear as to the structure of the daily numeracy lesson, which slows learning. Other subjects are now planned according to national guidelines, but these have not yet been discussed in depth nor evaluated, as decisions have only recently been implemented. To ensure appropriate coverage of history and geography these subjects are paired so that pupils study one or other during the course of a term. The same applies to art and design, design and technology. There are few formal links with the local Infants' school and little discussion about the curriculum takes place. However, the school is working to improve this and some recent meetings have taken place about information and communication technology, and mathematics.

26. The school successfully provides all pupils with equal access to the curriculum, but not equal opportunities for making good progress due to the lack of opportunities provided for the higher attaining pupils. Wherever possible, all activities are open to both sexes, for example, girls and boys have opportunities to play football. There have been differences, in the recent past, in attainment between girls and boys but this issue is being addressed successfully by the school and the gap has closed.
27. The school gives a high priority to pupils with special educational needs and the school is staffed appropriately to support these pupils. The curricular provision for these pupils is satisfactory overall. They are well supported by the co-ordinator, but there needs to be more liaison at the planning of work stage to ensure that the progress these pupils make is maximised. For example, the co-ordinator is not involved in the detailed planning for mathematics across the age groups although she teaches lower ability mathematics groups most days of the week. There is no policy for the development of work with the higher attaining pupils, although these pupils are identified to participate in the local area's 'Very Able Pupils' programme.
28. Residential visits are planned for the pupils in Year 4 and 6, providing enrichment to the curriculum and supporting pupils' good personal development very effectively. A priority is given to encouraging pupils' personal and team achievements in competitive sport and they show enthusiasm for this. There are opportunities for pupils to learn a wide range of instruments, although the school has to pass on the charges for these to parents. Pupils go swimming every week in Year 5. The curriculum is enriched by special focus weeks, such as the Healthy Living Week and a Book Week, where visitors were used to good effect. Links with the community result in positive experiences for pupils, such as workshops by local artists to enhance the playground and the Christmas Carol Service being performed in the local church. There are satisfactory links with the schools to which pupils transfer at eleven and close contact being developed with one local secondary school for curriculum development.
29. Curriculum planning has deteriorated since the previous inspection, but this has been recognised by the school and identified for action on the present school improvement plan.
30. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. The school works hard to ensure that pupils develop a belief in themselves, gain confidence in relationships they make and acquire positive attitudes towards their work. Sometimes, however, teachers miss opportunities to focus on a deeper spiritual understanding. An example of good practice seen during the inspection was a Year 5 art and design lesson, where the teacher was showing, and the pupils were observing, the pottery of different ages before making their own. Collective worship fulfils the statutory requirements and assemblies are conducted in a way to enhance pupils' spiritual development. A particularly good example was the way in which the headteacher brought into the content of the assembly the views of the pupils. They offer considered responses and listen to the views of others in such a way that contributes significantly to their own thinking. This also makes a good contribution to pupils' moral development.
31. Provision for moral development is very good. The positive relationships between all members of the school community enable pupils to grow into mature individuals. Pupils are taught effectively to listen to, and value ideas, thoughts and feelings of others. Teachers help pupils effectively to develop a clear understanding of the principles which distinguish right from wrong. The school behaviour policy supports this. Some classes have positive class rules which help to emphasise the good behaviour within the school community. There are good mechanisms, operating within the school, for behaviour management. Teachers set high standards of personal behaviour and pupils are greatly influenced by the examples set. A good example of this was the way in which a Year 3 class clapped spontaneously after a particularly good effort from an individual pupil in geography.
32. Provision for pupils' social development is good. Relationships between staff and pupils and among pupils themselves are very good. The pupils are open and friendly with adults and play together happily in the playground. They readily help each other in lessons. In the best lessons there are opportunities for pupils to work together in groups or pairs and they do this successfully.

This was observed, in particular, in information and communication technology and in a Year 6 geography lesson. There are examples within the school of teachers creating situations where pupils can show initiative. For example, they collect stamps for a Blue Peter charitable appeal, and they planned for the improvement of their school environment. The use of circle time allows opportunities for pupils to listen to the views of others and to make their own contributions. Some visitors make an invaluable contribution to pupils' social development, such as when the local Member of Parliament came to talk with pupils in Year 5 about his work and that of Parliament. It is planned to introduce a school council in order to further pupils' sense of responsibility and personal skills. Some extra-curricular activities enable pupils to gain an effective understanding of concepts such as sportsmanship and help them to establish an understanding of competition.

33. The school makes unsatisfactory provision for pupils' cultural development overall. There is little evidence of planned visits to places of cultural interest. The art curriculum is enabling pupils to learn about and appreciate the work of a number of western artists and the history curriculum provides opportunities for studying the cultures of other civilisations. However, pupils' multicultural awareness is, overall, not developed well enough. Pupils have few opportunities to understand and appreciate the positive contributions made by other cultural groups to our rich and diverse society.
34. Since the previous inspection, the school has maintained standards in spiritual, and social development. Moral development has improved, but weaknesses remain within the cultural development of pupils.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

35. The school makes effective provision to ensure the health, safety and general well being of all pupils and has successfully maintained the standards previously reported. This is a strength of the school. Parents are pleased with the care and support their children receive. The school has very effective child protection procedures in place and the headteacher is the named person responsible for these matters. She places a high priority on ensuring pupils are safe and checks the background of everyone who comes into school regularly. All staff have a good awareness of child protection procedures and understand the requirement to report any concern to the headteacher immediately. There are effective reporting procedures to ensure that urgent information can be disseminated quickly to staff who need to know. The school has good working relationships with the education welfare officer and Social Services to support children in need. In addition the deputy headteacher has received training in child protection matters and can also deal with problems if necessary.
36. The school is clean and safe, the governing body carefully oversees health and safety matters. Fire safety equipment and checks are up to date and fire exits are clearly marked and accessible. The governors pay due regard to the security of the school site and there is a resident caretaker shared with the adjacent infants' school.
37. The school provides satisfactory personal support to pupils generally and has effective systems in place to identify those with special needs and those with particular problems such as a difficulty in behaving well consistently. All adults in school know the pupils well. Individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are now checked each term and new, attainable targets set. These are not used well enough by the teachers when they are planning activities in lessons, but are used well by the learning support assistants when they work with small groups of pupils. The school has planned and developed a personal portfolio scheme for each pupil, but these are not yet being used consistently and effectively. Class discussion times and assemblies are used well to teach pupils about personal matters. For example, during the inspection week the theme in assemblies was anger, and a range of strategies to help pupils understand and manage their feelings were taught well.
38. Procedures for promoting good behaviour and a harmonious atmosphere are very effective. They are underpinned by comprehensive school policies which are regularly reviewed and characterised by a positive approach. The school is an orderly, welcoming place. Parents are pleased with the

standards of behaviour achieved. Pupils' learning benefits from this very effective provision because they feel secure in school and little time is lost in lessons due to behavioural problems.

39. Procedures for promoting good attendance and punctuality are effective and result in attendance rates for authorised and unauthorised absences which are better than national averages. Monitoring of attendance and punctuality is good, with analysis of registers simplified by the computerised register reading system. Pupils identified as showing irregular or late attendance are quickly identified and the school contacts parents promptly to resolve the problem. Persistent difficulties are referred to the education welfare officer by the headteacher who works closely with the school and families. Registers are properly kept and are taken efficiently at the start of sessions.
40. Arrangements for assessing and monitoring pupils' academic performance are unsatisfactory. This was identified as a weakness during the previous inspection and new procedures were introduced. These proved unmanageable and so the school is making new arrangements. The school sets external optional tests in English and mathematics towards the end of Years 3, 4 and 5, but the results of these are recorded inconsistently between classes. There is some assessment of pupils' achievements in science, but it is not linked to National Curriculum levels. There are no procedures for recording attainment, linked to National Curriculum attainment targets, in information and communication technology nor the foundation subjects. Some monitoring procedures have been introduced recently for art and design, and design and technology. The overall weaknesses make it difficult for curriculum co-ordinators to track attainment and progress in their subjects across the school and so make adjustments to the work set for pupils during the year that would raise standards further.
41. However, the management team has a clear action plan, and has spent much time, in using information and communication technology to develop a good pupil attainment tracking system in English and mathematics. This will provide accurate data, not only for measuring progress, but also for more precise target setting. The school has begun meeting with the adjacent Infant school to establish a secure benchmark of pupils' attainment when they enter the school in Year 3, in order to set more challenging targets for their progress. Teaching staff have modified the curriculum for writing as a result of an effective analysis of pupils' writing through the school. This is good practice.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

42. The previous report judged provision in this area to be good, and the school has successfully maintained this. Parents and carers are generally pleased with the work of the school. They are especially pleased with the welcome they receive when they approach the school, that their children enjoy school and that their children get on well academically and personally. A significant minority expressed concern about standards in mathematics and science, however. The team agrees with all these views. Parents are less happy about the provision for homework, the information about how their children are progressing and about the extra-curricular activities provided. The team judges all these aspects to be satisfactory overall, but agree the reports on children's progress need to be improved. Although they meet statutory requirements, they are of inconsistent quality and are often not specific enough to enable parents to know what their children need to do to improve. The school has identified this as an area to address this year.
43. The school provides a wealth of other information about its work which is clearly presented and informative. Parents have sufficient opportunities formally and informally to discuss their children's progress with teachers. Those whose children have special educational needs are invited in each term to review the individual education plans. Information provided by the school to parents is satisfactory overall.
44. Parents feel comfortable in school and say that the office staff and headteacher in particular are welcoming and helpful. Parents are included in decision making, for example, in planning the site development, choosing school uniform, developing the personal, health and social education curriculum, previewing the sex education resources and providing enthusiastic parent governors.

Parents come into school to help in class, accompany children to swimming lessons, provide administrative support and run after school activities. They accompany Year 4 and 6 pupils on school journeys and organise events and fundraising through the Parents' Association. School performances and events are well attended.

45. Parents help their children at home with homework, hearing reading and supporting their learning effectively. They bring their children to school regularly, on time, and ready to learn.
46. These good links between school and home and the good involvement of parents in school life have a positive impact on the quality of education provided.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

47. The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher has worked very hard to maintain and improve the quality of leadership and management despite significant changes in the past two years. She is very well supported by the new deputy head who is a very good role model for the teachers, and the experience of the senior teacher who, together with the headteacher, make up the senior management team. The headteacher shows positive vision with high expectations which give clear direction to the work of the school. In the short time she has been involved in the school, she has made considerable changes particularly in the curriculum, assessment and the role of the co-ordinators. She recognised the need for improvement in many areas of the school's work. Policies have been reviewed and national test results are now being used to track pupils' progress. However, these developments are in an early stage and have not had a full impact on pupils' standards in core subjects, nor have all the recent changes had a full effect on teaching and learning. The school is now in a good position to continue its improvements because of the good leadership provided by the headteacher and the good support of the governing body. The deputy is well placed to take on a more managerial role now. The school's capacity for improvement is good.
48. The strengths and weaknesses of the school have been clearly identified and a clear school development plan has been drawn up which prioritises the most important areas. It is a useful document prepared by the headteacher and staff and covers a three year span. It is rather ambitious and does not give staff time to develop ownership of all the important changes in the school. However, all co-ordinators were involved in developing an action plan for their subject and they are working hard to implement agreed changes. The targets set within the plan are regularly monitored by the senior management team and the governing body. The school development plan is well linked to the school budget.
49. The school has a positive ethos and a strong commitment to create a supportive and secure environment for all pupils. Relationships are good and this results in a welcoming atmosphere with a high degree of trust amongst staff and pupils. Adults and pupils respect each other and they are polite to one another.
50. The school has an equal opportunities policy that is reflected in most areas of the school with the exception of the higher attaining pupils. Less attention is given to these pupils and the teachers' planning in lessons does not cater for their academic needs. The school is aware of this. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and this has been maintained since the last inspection. Arrangements for identifying and assessing special education needs are in place, but the current Salford Test used is not very informative for a thorough analysis of reading difficulties. The management of individual education plans is being reviewed in order to include class teachers' input rather than being written by the special educational needs co-ordinator. There is good liaison between the school and outside agencies, which contributes to sound progress of pupils with special educational needs. The requirements of the Code of Practice are fully met.
51. The school is beginning to monitor and evaluate its performance well although many procedures are too new for their impact to be fully seen. The headteacher, deputy head, literacy and numeracy co-ordinators have started to monitor the quality of teaching, but this is in an early

stage of development. Subject co-ordinators with additional support have drawn up action plans for their subjects, but these have not all been fully implemented. The work of curriculum management, in respect of the monitoring of teaching, planning and standards, is delegated to all subject leaders. The weaknesses in teachers' planning, lack of assessment expertise and training in management skills means not all co-ordinators are able to effectively lead the development of their subjects, resulting in limited impact on pupils' learning.

52. The governing body makes a valuable contribution to the life of the school. It has a system of committees and governors are kept appropriately informed by the headteacher. They are aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and the direction the school is taking. They give good support and use their personal skills to good effect. They are not fully involved in monitoring the work of the school, but visit the school when time permits. Recently, curriculum link governors have been appointed to liaise with subject co-ordinators in order that a clear picture of the subject will be shared and evaluated. The governing body is newly formed for the Junior School and all of the statutory obligations are not yet fully in place.
53. Financial management and financial planning by the headteacher and governors is good. They have a good overview of the school's finances and are well informed. However, the deputy head and senior teacher are not involved in financial planning and this needs to be addressed as they are part of the senior management team and may have a valuable contribution to make to decisions. Financial records are kept efficiently by the administrative staff and their good work helps to ensure that the day-to-day running of the school is good. There is an effective finance committee of governors who meet regularly with the headteacher and carefully consider the budget each financial year. The budget reflects the priorities of the school development plan. Priorities are mainly decided by the headteacher. When decided the budget is set and then submitted to the full governing body for approval. The finance committee keep a firm overview of the budget and closely question spending decisions.
54. The school ensures that all grants available are received and spent as specified. Funds for special educational needs and classroom support staff are used well. The support for these pupils is good and they make sound progress. An additional grant, "Seeds Challenge Fund" is allocated to information and communication technology as the school lists the subject as a top priority.
55. The school applies the principle of best value. Spending decisions are carefully considered and based on a sound analysis of school needs. The headteacher is introducing systems to measure how well financial decisions impact on standards. The minor points for action in the last audit report have been addressed and the school gives satisfactory value for money.
56. The school has sufficient qualified teachers to teach all the required subjects, and support staff who offer effective help in classes, the office and at midday. Learning support staff are used well to support mathematics, to work with pupils who have special educational needs and to teach Additional Literacy Support groups. The caretaker and his staff keep the building and grounds clean and well maintained. Good procedures are in place to support all staff who are new to the school, with identified mentors and appropriate training available. The professional development of teachers is at present linked closely to the needs of the school as identified on the improvement plan.
57. The accommodation is satisfactory overall. There is plenty of space, but the actual classrooms are very cramped and limiting, especially for the older pupils. It is difficult to make efficient use of all the available space, as it is not easy to ensure the safe supervision of pupils if they work outside the class bases. This limits the amount of practical work that pupils can be given. The school benefits from some specialist rooms, however, which offer good facilities for subjects such as design and technology, art and design. The hall is spacious, as are the grounds. Areas inside have been adapted to create two libraries and outside, a woodland area and pond offer good opportunities to extend learning in geography and science. The many, good quality displays around the school enhance the environment and value pupils' work.

58. Resources have been improved since the previous inspection and they are now generally satisfactory for most subjects. The school has acquired some very attractive and useful resources for history and religious education. There are plenty of books to support literacy lessons and home reading, but there are many books in the non-fiction library that are out-of-date and this area needs a rigorous overhaul. The number and quality of musical instruments is unsatisfactory, but money to address this has been allocated and new stock is being ordered. Geography resources are limited. Classroom computers and software need updating.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

59. In order to further improve standards, the governors and headteacher should:

- i. Improve pupils' attainment in all strands of the information and communication technology curriculum, as identified on the school development plan;

(see paragraphs 9, 68, 84, 101-105)

- ii. Improve pupils' attainment in science by:

- Reviewing the time allocations to ensure this subject has adequate coverage, particularly in Years 3 and 4;
- Developing a clear picture of pupils' experience in this subject in Key Stage 1 so the curriculum is planned to build on the skills, knowledge and understanding they have already acquired;
- Introducing procedures for monitoring and tracking pupils' progress in both the medium and long-term;
- Providing more opportunities for pupils to conduct scientific investigations and experiments; and
- Ensuring that pupils progressively develop the skills to record their own learning independently in the appropriate style.

(see paragraphs 8, 24, 40, 51, 76-84)

- iii. Improve the progress and attainment of the higher attaining pupils in mathematics, by planning work that is carefully matched to their prior attainment and that is sufficiently challenging to move them on in their learning.

(see paragraphs 7, 18, 26, 70-75)

- iv. Improve the curriculum by:

- Reviewing the use of the 45 minutes time that is allocated each day at present for tasks generally related to literacy;
- Implementing planning procedures for literacy, numeracy and foundation subjects that are used consistently throughout the school;
- Ensuring work for pupils in the same year group is based on the same learning intentions;
- Matching activities to the needs of pupils of different abilities, so that higher ability pupils are suitably challenged and account is taken, where appropriate, of the targets on individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs;
- Including sufficient detail in planning so subject co-ordinators can effectively monitor curriculum delivery and pupils' progress, and good practice can be shared;
- Identifying assessment opportunities, either in the short-term for a group of pupils, of in the medium-term for the whole class, so future planning and teaching can be informed by the results; and
- Providing more opportunities to promote the pupils' multi-cultural development.

(see paragraphs 17, 22, 24-27, 33, 40, 67, 69, 74)

- v. Further develop the role of subject co-ordinators by:

- Ensuring they have appropriate managerial training;
- Providing opportunities for them to develop a good understanding of how to match a piece of work to the appropriate National Curriculum level, so they can identify strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning.

(see paragraphs 51, 83, 97, 100)

60. In addition, the governors should further develop their monitoring role, ensure all statutory requirements are met and become sufficiently informed to be involved in the strategic management of the school.

(see paragraph 52)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	45
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	29

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	11	29	54	4	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	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	245
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	13

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	43

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	4

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	14

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.9
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
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 2

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2000	36	25	61

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	30	29	33
	Girls	19	21	20
	Total	49	50	53
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80 (80)	82 (64)	87 (75)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	27	34	34
	Girls	22	22	24
	Total	49	56	58
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	80 (86)	92 (78)	95 (86)
	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	0
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	0
Indian	2
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	231
Any other minority ethnic group	4

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	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.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y3 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.5
Average class size	31

Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	84

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	99/ 00
	£
Total income	492983
Total expenditure	487612
Expenditure per pupil	2024
Balance brought forward from previous year	8911
Balance carried forward to next year	14282

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	245
Number of questionnaires returned	86

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	52	42	6	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	36	51	6	2	5
Behaviour in the school is good.	23	64	10	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	12	48	26	9	5
The teaching is good.	34	49	7	2	8
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	18	55	20	6	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	67	31	1	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	42	51	4	1	2
The school works closely with parents.	34	43	19	2	2
The school is well led and managed.	33	46	10	0	11
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	40	56	0	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	20	34	33	10	3

Other issues raised by parents

A significant minority were concerned about standards in mathematics and science.

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

ENGLISH

61. In the 2000 national tests for eleven year olds, the school's results were above the national average in English both at Level 4 and the higher Level 5. Standards dipped in 1999, but have risen again to the good level observed during the previous inspection. When compared to similar schools, however, results are below the national average. No major differences are evident between the results of boys and girls. Pupils with specific weaknesses are well supported by receiving Additional Literacy Support. Extra support in the form of after-school classes is being planned for older pupils who are not yet on target to achieve the expected Level 4 in the 2001 tests.
62. During the inspection, work seen during lessons and in books indicate that the oldest pupils have good speaking and listening skills, they are reaching a good level in reading and writing skills are improving with the majority producing work at the expected standard. Pupils make satisfactory progress across the school, and the good teaching they receive in Year 6 results in pupils achieving well in all aspects of the subject. By the time they are eleven, pupils listen carefully to instructions and to each other's ideas. They express themselves in an articulate and mature manner and when working with a partner, they talk things through to reach an agreement. They read a wide range of books and express their preferences of authors and styles. They are able to read challenging text, fluently and with good expression, although they do not always understand the meaning of all the difficult words they can read. They know how to find information from a range of different sources and most know how books are arranged in a library. Handwriting is neat and legible with pupils using a pen competently. They write in complex sentences using well-chosen vocabulary, appropriate punctuation and paragraphs. Pupils are reaching the expected standards for their ability. Pupils who have special educational needs receive appropriate support and the recent initiatives mean they are now making satisfactory progress. The few pupils who have English as an additional language are at the higher levels of fluency and their progress matches that of their peers.
63. Speaking and listening skills are well promoted in all lessons, with regular questioning and discussion taking place. The very positive response from teachers to pupils' suggestions and ideas raises self-esteem and encourages all to share their thoughts with confidence. In Year 4, a few boys are over-eager to give answers and interrupt others who are being questioned by calling out. Most pupils take turns and wait to be asked, however. Year 5 pupils prepared and asked some very appropriate questions when the local Member of Parliament came to speak about his work. In a physical education lesson, pupils were encouraged to discuss and evaluate each other's performances. Year 6 pupils thoughtfully develop their ideas about the text being studied and clearly describe their opinions. Speaking and listening skills are well supported by the regular opportunities pupils have to take part in assemblies and school productions. At present, there are no planned debates or drama activities.
64. Reading is well supported by the home-school reading programme with most pupils reading every night to their parents. The accompanying booklet of advice to parents ensures that pupils receive appropriate support and have maximum benefit from this valuable input. At school, pupils learn a range of skills to help them tackle unknown text, from phonic blends and finding patterns within words in Year 3 to understanding significant themes and characters, as well as using inference and deduction in Year 6. The youngest pupils confidently use a dictionary and a thesaurus, with some already beginning to skim the page effectively to locate the given word. Pupils are taught how to use an index and contents page and to gather important and relevant information from a non-fiction book. They read increasingly challenging passages and their understanding is checked by comprehension exercises, such as an account about Guy Fawkes in Year 5 and a passage from Charles Dickens in Year 6. Although pupils have opportunities for reading in

school, such as when small groups work with a teacher, there are few formal related tasks for those who are reading independently; for instance, identifying unknown vocabulary then finding the meaning, or completing a character sketch. Teachers have few means, therefore, to check how well the pupils have understood the book and whether they are reading with concentration and effort. The fiction library is arranged so that books with a similar theme are grouped and labelled. In this way, pupils can see there are different styles of writing and are encouraged to try something new.

65. The school is promoting writing skills following a detailed audit of the end-of-year writing tests by an expert. As a result, each term there is a focus on a specific style of text for each year group. These are planned to be revisited as pupils move through the school, so skills can be revised and extended. There is a well-planned programme being introduced throughout the school. Through discussing a real piece of writing that represents the style being studied, teachers help pupils identify the specific features of the text and pupils practise writing in the same way. At the end of the programme, pupils present a piece of independent writing, which is then carefully checked to a set of given criteria. The results are to be used when the class next revisits that particular type of text. At present, it has not been in place long enough to check whether the assessments are being used to inform teaching, but work in books indicate some good progress has been made since the implementation of the programme.
66. Alongside this work, pupils develop an understanding of punctuation and grammatical features. They explore interesting verbs and the use of similes, and then use these to enhance their own writing. This is seen to good effect in Year 4 where the higher attaining pupils are already producing work that is well above national expectations for their age. Throughout the school, there is good use of the drafting and editing process so pupils can improve their own work. Some pupils benefit from having access to dictionaries so they can check the accuracy of spellings, but not all pupils have this kind of support, and younger pupils who do not have a wide writing vocabulary yet, do not have their own word-books, for instance. There are few examples where work is presented in different and imaginative ways, although there was a good instance in Year 4 where pupils had taken a series of photographs to make their own comic strips. The recent introduction of individual targets is helping pupils to check their work carefully for errors. The better targets are challenging and carefully matched to the age and ability of the pupil.
67. Teaching ranged from unsatisfactory to very good, and was satisfactory overall. The very good teaching was in Year 6. The unsatisfactory lessons were due to weak planning and an inappropriate activity. Teachers are following the recommended structure of the literacy strategies, but timings are not followed rigorously and so some elements are overlong and others are insufficiently addressed. Planning is generally unsatisfactory as, in most classes, it does not clearly identify how each element of the lesson is going to be delivered, activities are not matched to pupils' differing abilities and there are inconsistencies across year groups. The choice of texts is generally very appropriate, stimulating pupils' interest and extending their understanding of a particular style of writing. Very effective use of questioning develops pupils' higher reading skills in Year 6 and extends their understanding of explanation text in Year 5. Year 4 teachers provide opportunities for pupils to develop word-processing skills when completing written tasks. There are some good examples where learning intentions are clearly identified and shared with pupils. These are not always sufficiently sharp to support teachers in assessing how well pupils have progressed, however, and pupils are not always asked to share what they have learnt at the end of lessons. Teachers teach all the time and their interactions with pupils support and promote learning. There are some good examples where clear timings are set and pupils are encouraged to work hard. Learning support assistants offer very positive support to pupils with special educational needs. They work with individuals or a group all the time, even during whole-class sessions. Pupils are managed well, creating a positive classroom ethos. Helpful marking in some classes informs pupils whether they have achieved the desired learning outcomes. Regular reading and spelling homework helps reinforce pupils' basic skills.
68. Literacy skills are being developed satisfactorily throughout English lessons, but they are not being fully used to support learning in other subjects. There are some good examples of research and note-taking in history. Speaking and listening skills are generally developed well in all

lessons. With minimal access to computers until recently, pupils have had insufficient opportunity to develop their word-processing skills.

69. The co-ordinator has worked hard to implement all the agreed changes during the past year and he offers good support in promoting standards in the subject. Now procedures have been trialled and agreed, a draft policy has been prepared which should provide a clear outline of how the subject is delivered throughout the school. At present, there are inconsistencies and pupils in a year group are not always receiving similar experiences. The co-ordinator has monitored the teaching of the agreed writing programme and completed helpful reviews as a result. Good systems are in place to track the progress of pupils year on year. However, the annual reading test used does not diagnose any strengths or weaknesses in pupils' skills and there are no medium-term assessment procedures to support this aspect of monitoring. Until there is a regular agreed format that provides sufficient information, it is not possible for planning to be monitored either. There are plenty of new and relevant resources for supporting whole class text work and reading. The non-fiction library, however, has many outdated books and needs a rigorous overhaul.

MATHEMATICS

70. At the time of the last inspection standards overall were judged to be sound with some pupils working at levels which were too low for their age. This position has not altered. Pupils enter the school with good levels of attainment in mathematics, but not all pupils reach their full potential by the age of eleven. Results in 2000 were higher than in 1999 with the number of pupils reaching the national standards slightly above the national average. The number of pupils reaching Level 5 was below the national average for all schools. When compared to schools of a similar type, results were well below the national average in both the number of pupils reaching the national standard and the number of pupils reaching Level 5. The school is aware of these results and there is a determination for improvement.
71. Inspection evidence confirms that current attainment is broadly in line with national expectation with regard to pupils working at Level 4. However, the number of pupils currently working consistently at Level 5 is below national expectations. Girls had a particular weakness in mathematics, but this issue has been successfully addressed. Close scrutiny of work and lesson observations indicate that the difference between results for girls and boys in mathematics has become negligible. Pupils are set in ability groups for the subject in Years 5 and 6, but there is a lack of impact on standards to date, particularly of the higher attaining pupils, because, in many cases, the work is not sufficiently matched to the different abilities. However, higher attaining pupils have the opportunity to enter a Mathematics Challenge competition. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress, as their individual education plans now contain numeracy targets where appropriate, and they receive additional support in Years 3 and 4. Those with English as an additional language make similar progress to their peers.
72. The National Numeracy Strategy is implemented through the school, but some teachers are still unclear about the structure of the dedicated numeracy lesson. For example, the mental, oral sessions are frequently very short and do not encourage swift responses from pupils in developing their number bonds, tables and recall of number facts. As they move through the school pupils develop a secure knowledge of place value and apply this knowledge successfully when using different methods to calculate sums. For older pupils this is extended to an understanding of the place value of decimals. Pupils move clockwise or anti-clockwise to given points of the compass correctly and measure their turns in angles with increasing confidence and accuracy. Year 3 pupils knew about faces, vertices, properties of a cube, prism and right angles. A scrutiny of pupils' work shows that they are given a satisfactory range of mathematical experiences. These include learning about the properties of two and three-dimensional shapes, measuring in standard units and data-handling to draw block graphs and pie charts. There are examples of mathematics being used in other subjects and aspects of school life. For example, graphs are drawn to record scientific findings, and pulse rates are measured, and time lines are used in history. Information and communication technology is used to plan costings for a school tuck shop. However, the use of investigations in mathematics and the relevance of mathematics in everyday situations is

not well developed.

73. Pupils' attitudes to mathematics are good. They show enthusiasm for the subject and respond positively to the challenge of good questioning. They concentrate well and listen attentively to instruction. The times when concentration is less good when activities are not challenging enough. Pupils are good at working in small groups and support each other well. Behaviour in lessons is good.
74. The quality of teaching ranges from very good to satisfactory with 33 per cent being good or better and 66 per cent being satisfactory. Teachers' subject knowledge, the teaching of skills and the management of pupils are overall satisfactory. In the best lessons teachers have high, but realistic, expectations of pupils' effort and attainment and they work with good pace ensuring that pupils concentrate hard. Skilled questioning enhances the pupils' learning by enabling to target and assess pupils' knowledge and ensure that key learning objectives are understood. This level of appropriate expectation, pace and challenging questioning was lacking in many lessons. Too much time is spent giving rambling explanations, which are not sharply focused, and the tasks do not challenge pupils. Equipment could be handed out more quickly and work started more promptly. Information technology equipment in and around classrooms is not used to consolidate and extend learning mainly because it is outdated and unattractive to the pupils. Planning is based on the framework for the National Numeracy Strategy but in almost all cases it lacked the necessary detail. As a result there is sometimes repetition of work that pupils can already do, which restricts the amount of progress that can be made. For example, pupils in Year 3 spent some time on the five times table which they already know. There is no annotated portfolio of work in mathematics to support teachers in a shared understanding of what is required for pupils to move from one level of the National Curriculum to another. As a result, teachers' expectations are not always appropriate and some work lacks challenge.
75. The newly appointed co-ordinator is keen to develop the subject and raise standards overall. He will be assisted in this work by the assessment co-ordinator. A newly published scheme has recently been implemented in the school and this has built-in assessments towards the end of sections of work which the teachers are beginning to use. A pupils' tracking system is being implemented which will provide all teachers with useful data on individual pupils' learning in the drive to raise standards particularly of the higher attaining pupils. Lessons have been monitored by the co-ordinator, the results of which have helped ensure teaching of the numeracy strategy is satisfactory or better. Resource levels are satisfactory but there is a shortage of mathematical books in the school non-fiction library.

SCIENCE

76. The standards attained in the 2000 tests for eleven year olds were below when compared to the national average and well below when compared to similar schools. This is because the proportion of pupils achieving the higher standards was well below the national average. Test results over the past four years indicate that standards have dipped since the last inspection. The dip is due to inconsistency in the teaching of science, insufficient time allocated to science, lack of rigorous scientific enquiry throughout the key stage, no realistic targets to improve standards of higher attaining pupils and too many gaps in pupils' knowledge and understanding.
77. Inspection findings of the current Year 6 pupils suggest that attainment is below the national average by the end of the key stage. Higher ability pupils achieve well below their ability as few are working within the higher levels. Evidence from the scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that pupils of average and lower ability make satisfactory progress over time. Higher attaining pupils do not make sufficient progress. However, in lessons observed pupils' achievement is satisfactory for the majority of pupils and standards attained are average.
78. In Key Stage 2, younger pupils in Year 3 investigate how water is transported through a celery stalk. They carefully identify the parts of a plant and learn about the functions of the stem and roots. Pupils in Year 4 learn how muscles make bones move. By making a cardboard model to represent bones and muscles they effectively demonstrate how the principle works. In Year 5,

pupils investigate the functions of the heart. They learn how blood is pumped around the body and, by using a three-dimensional cylindrical shape to represent the blood vessels, understand how valves control the flow of blood in the heart. By the age of eleven, pupils are beginning to show a better knowledge of important scientific facts. They study different types of forces and carry out investigations on surface friction. For example, pupils tested a range of model cars on ramps to see which car travelled the furthest on different surfaces. Pupils accurately measure forces using a Newton meter as they test different weights in air and water. They describe gravity as a force and by using illustrations show the upthrust of a force. Pupils effectively compare materials and investigate the amount of water each has absorbed. They know how seeds grow and how they are dispersed. They successfully investigate the conditions required for cress seeds to germinate. For example, pupils in Year 6 carried out a fair test placing seeds in different growth situations. Pupils then wrote their predictions giving sensible reasons why some seeds would grow better than others. Pupils record their findings using tables and charts rather than graphs. Written work is carefully presented with legible handwriting and neat, well-labelled diagrams. However, most written work, including scientific enquiry, is copied from worksheets and teacher-models from the board. Pupils' written record of knowledge and facts do not always give an accurate picture of attainment because they are over-influenced by teacher-led recording. Pupils do not have sufficient opportunities throughout the key stage to express concepts in writing in their own words. As a result the oldest pupils' writing style and vocabulary in their recorded science are identical in spite of the range of ability within the classes.

79. Pupils' achievements and their rate of progress are closely related to the quality of teaching in the school. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs and those minority of pupils with English as an additional language, learn at a satisfactory rate and make satisfactory progress over time. Higher attaining pupils make unsatisfactory progress as their needs are not appropriately met.
80. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory and this judgement is similar to the previous inspection. Most teachers have satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the subject, but there is still some insecurity in the approach to teaching science. As a result, opportunities are not taken to fully develop investigations and insufficient challenge is offered to higher attaining pupils. Work is planned to meet learning objectives which are always shared with pupils and reinforced during and at the end of most lessons. However, teachers' planning throughout the key stage is poor as it lacks structure and rigour. Whilst teachers working together with parallel classes plan their lessons together, there is no analysis undertaken of the teaching or of the reasons why higher attaining pupils are not on course to exceed the expected attainment level. Planning does not cater for the specific needs of all pupils and work does not always match the pupils' attainment levels. The effect of this is that the majority of pupils make satisfactory rather than good progress in their learning.
81. In all lessons teachers expect high levels of behaviour and the pupils respond appropriately; they maintain interest and good concentration. Questioning is generally used well although at times it is more directed rather than open-ended. When questioning is effective, pupils make better contributions and are more stimulated. Teachers use the school resources well to make the lessons more interesting and relevant. Learning support assistants give good attention to pupils with special educational needs. This enables pupils to be more confident and to make sound progress in relation to their special needs. As part of on-going assessment, marking rarely informs pupils about how they could improve their work. Assessment opportunities are not highlighted in the teachers' planning nor used to guide teachers' planning or teaching.
82. The curriculum in science is satisfactory. The school has adopted the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's scheme of work. The recent change to this scheme should ensure better coverage and that skills and knowledge are carefully and systematically built up. There are no formal systems of assessment for science yet. Therefore pupils' attainments are not assessed on a half-termly basis and consequently curriculum planning and teaching is not influenced by pupils' previous attainment.
83. The management of the subject is not fully established as the co-ordinator is comparatively new

to the responsibility. The monitoring of teaching, planning and pupil reviews is not in place. There is no school portfolio of pupils' levelled work to offer some guidance in assessing pupils' attainment. However, the co-ordinator has a good knowledge of what needs to be done to further improve achievement across the school. There are plans to provide non-contact time for the co-ordinator in the future to begin monitoring science, but there has been little progress to date in raising the expectations in all classes.

84. Resources are limited and this needs to be addressed. The school makes use of its pond during the summer term. Display work is satisfactory and links well with the current topics in the curriculum. Information and communication technology is not used effectively in science. The subject does not promote pupils' literacy skills as most pupils' work is copied and lacks imaginative flair. Numeracy skills are consolidated through charts, diagrams with a limited number of graphs. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' social development.

ART AND DESIGN

85. Standards in art and design are good and, by the time pupils are eleven, they are higher than the nationally expected level. This is an improvement since the last inspection when standards were judged to be in line. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make good progress and achieve well in this subject.
86. Pupils experience a range of activities, building up their skills, knowledge and understanding of different strands within the subject. Year 3 draw family scenes from a set of postcards to study posture, expression and background. Their work is accurate and carefully executed. Good use is made of sketchbooks in Year 4 where pupils record ideas and practise shading techniques when drawing detailed views from the classroom and a basket of nuts and bolts. As part of their work in history, Year 5 record Greek pots from direct observation, with a delicate approach. They use clay to create a variety of attractive and boldly designed pottery containers. They also use a digital camera for self-portraits as a basis to creating a Tudor picture, paying careful attention to the detailed patterns on the clothing. Pupils in Year 6 study postcards of Canaletto prints to identify the vanishing point and how perspective is used to create depth in a landscape. They study how Turner uses different tones in the foreground, middle ground and background then experiment in their own pictures by trying different combinations. Charcoal is used effectively to create a Victorian street scene. In several year groups, pupils use the Dazzle program on computers to create a range of well-executed pictures and patterns.
87. Pupils respond well to art and design work. They are fascinated by how the clay can be manipulated and Year 5 were enthralled by the range of pottery containers they were shown. Pupils wait patiently whilst instructions are being given or whilst resources are distributed to groups. They work with care and very good concentration. They generally share resources well. Art supports spiritual, social and cultural development well.
88. Of the four lessons observed, two were good and one was very good, making teaching in this subject good overall. Teachers have secure subject knowledge. Although planning seen initially was poor, with often just a line stating what activity was to be covered, the plans improved during the inspection and offered better support for teachers. Some good resources were used as starting points. The well-chosen pottery containers stimulated Year 5 pupils in the task and they produced bold and attractive pots as a result. A clear demonstration and instructions ensured Year 3 pupils were confident about what they were going to do to create complex patterns with printing. All resources were prepared and ready in Year 6 so no time was wasted and pupils experienced several short well-focused activities to help them understand perspective. When making imaginary creatures and people from wire and pipe insulation, Year 5 pupils were well prepared, having made designs and planned the dimensions and structures in advance. Teachers assess quickly if difficulties are being encountered and offer appropriate advice in order for pupils to overcome these successfully. As a result of the good teaching, pupils work with interest and enthusiasm and achieve high standards. Their work is valued by being attractively displayed around the school.

89. The co-ordinator is personally skilled in the subject and offers helpful advice to his colleagues. He has successfully addressed several targets on the school's action plan for art and updated the policy to match Curriculum 2000. A list of objectives for each year group is now in place and a clear plan of which units from the Qualification and Curriculum Authority's scheme are to be followed. It is not clear which skills and techniques are to be developed, or where the work of other artists is to be studied and used. Most classes alternate art and design with design and technology because of the constraints of the timetable. The school has recently introduced individual pupil portfolios which will record all the work covered during the year. Also, an assessment task will be completed by pupils each term. The three different tasks each term will be repeated year on year, so there will be a clear on-going record of progress for each pupil. It is too soon to judge how well this will inform teaching. The co-ordinator has not had the opportunity to monitor teaching yet and planning is insufficiently detailed to be a tool for monitoring the curriculum delivery. He is beginning to be able to monitor pupils' work more effectively through the portfolios. There is a good range of resources which are well organised. The last inspection identified that there were limited resources for appreciating the work of artists. This has been rectified, although there are few that promote the work of artists from different cultures. The very small class bases make it difficult to organise the resources and for pupils to have sufficient space in which to work. There is the bonus of a separate art, design and technology room, however, that facilitates pottery and work with structures.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

90. Only one lesson was observed in design and technology, due to timetable arrangements. Judgements are made, therefore, from a scrutiny of pupils' work, teachers' planning, photographic evidence and discussions with the co-ordinator and pupils. Standards of making are generally above the nationally expected standard, but little work in the design and evaluation aspects of the subject was evident, making standards satisfactory overall. The school has maintained the standards seen in the previous inspection. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language achieve as well as their peers.
91. Pupils have a good range of experiences, and acquire techniques and skills in using different materials such as wood, textiles and clay. Year 3 made photograph frames from paper and card, with good finish, and they produced a range of percussion instruments following a homework task, which varied in quality according to the amount of support they received. Pupils in Year 4 carefully constructed clay houses from bricks in the style of the Ancient Egyptians and used rolled paper strips to create well-made chairs and seats. They also designed, made and tested land yachts using balsa frame, wheels and a sail. In Year 5, further good links with history are evident when they made good quality Tudor houses using a frame structure. Year 6 designed and made individual sewn collages, using neat, well-executed stitches, joined to make a patchwork panel. They recorded the process and their response to the task. Pupils talk about their work with pride and obviously enjoy the subject.
92. Only one lesson was observed, which was satisfactory. The good standards of work seen indicates teachers have secure knowledge of the subject. In the lesson seen, pupils were given clear instructions about the task and they had the opportunity to make a moving model using a bell crank lever from one that had been prepared by the teacher. This ensured most had sufficient understanding to successfully design and make their own versions. The pupils demonstrated various ideas, using labelled sketches. They worked carefully with the tools, considering their designs as they progressed and paying attention to the quality of finish. They tidied away sensibly at the end of the lesson. Most models were not completed so there is no evidence whether pupils can distinguish what works well and what in their product could be improved.
93. The co-ordinator has addressed the targets on the school's action plan for design and technology and updated the policy to match Curriculum 2000. A plan of which units from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's scheme are to be followed has been agreed and identifies one main item for each term. There are good links planned with various subjects such as making storybooks for English, torches for science and fairground controllable models using information and communication technology, but these are not yet in place. Planning is poor, with often just a

line stating what activity is to be covered. This means the co-ordinator is unable to monitor the curriculum delivery, although he is compiling a portfolio of photographic evidence which records the finished products. There is no monitoring of the design and evaluation processes yet. At the end of each unit, teachers complete a simple skills checklist, and the aim is to use these to inform future teaching and planning. They have not been in place long enough to judge if this is having a positive outcome. The policy states that pupils are developing self-assessment skills but there was no evidence of this. The school has a designated technology room with plenty of tools and a reasonable range of useful materials.

GEOGRAPHY

94. Standards of attainment in geography are in line with national expectations. This is an improvement since the last inspection when attainment was below national norms. Progress across the four years is satisfactory. Planning is lacking in detail, but the Qualification and Curriculum Authority's material, which the school has adopted, provides a valuable framework although this has not yet been linked to National Curriculum programmes of study in teachers' planning. In addition, there are very limited assessment procedures so records cannot be used to inform planning and raise standards.
95. In Year 3 pupils have been studying climate and the British Isles. In one lesson pupils were keen to describe the differences between their local environment in Hornchurch and a village. They have a good grasp of how the land around Hornchurch is used, the industries there and the services for people. Progress was limited by pupils being given an unchallenging recording task. In Year 4, map work skills are extended and pupils learn about co-ordinates, which enhances pupils' thinking as well as their mathematical skills. They learn about Brazil and the Amazon rainforest. They make comparisons between the environment around Brazil's capital and the main features of the Amazon basin. The work presented in folders was, on many occasions, incomplete and not differentiated. There were missed opportunities to develop the work of the higher attaining pupils. In Year 6 pupils were studying a number of local environmental issues. Their work was produced and entered into well presented folders. The work scrutiny reveals that there are no examples of completed studies, for example, with contents pages, indexes and samples of end of topic tests. In addition, there is no awareness in the pupils of a purpose for the folders of work, for example, for a reader. The best examples of high quality presentation of work, appropriate to the age of pupils, are seen in Year 6.
96. Teaching in geography ranges from satisfactory to very good. In the best lessons teachers are clear about an achievable learning intention, deliver the work at pace, have high expectations of the pupils and have good subject knowledge themselves. In a Year 6 lesson, the teacher used information and communication technology to download illustrations and maps from the Internet. These were copied for the pupils to analyse in their study of the development of wind power and in considering the most suitable locations for wind farms. Pupils' investigational skills in this lesson were good. The teaching was structured with a balance of whole class discussion and guided group work. Too often, however, the teaching does not challenge the pupils, because the planning is unclear and the teacher has not considered the knowledge, skills and understanding that are to be developed in the lesson.
97. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and is keen to develop the subject. There has been a recent update in the scheme of work using the nationally recognised guidelines, but there has not been enough time for this to influence teachers' detailed medium or short-term planning. In time this could provide for geographical skills to be developed in a more progressive way. There are no assessment and recording procedures in place which are linked to National Curriculum attainment levels. The range of resources is limited. There are shortages in the variety of maps and globes, but there are good materials available in the school non-fiction library for pupils to develop their investigational skills.

HISTORY

98. It was only possible to see a small number of lessons in history because of the school's

arrangements to teach the subject in rotation with geography. The examination of a good range of work, the teachers' planning and the lessons seen show that the standards of attainment are above those expected nationally. This is an improvement since the last inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making sound progress with their skills because the topics are made interesting and there are good opportunities for them to explore artefacts from the past. For example, during a lesson about the Ancient Greeks pupils were able to explore a wide range of pottery and sculpted artefacts. Studies of the Tudors, Ancient Egyptians, Romans and Ancient Greeks show that pupils are learning to use their knowledge to make comparisons between life at different times. They are also using different sources to learn about the past. The teaching provides useful links with English, design and technology and geography. For example, map work and classifying of primary and secondary sources of information is made more meaningful when studying the history of the Ancient Greeks. Pupils' work is well presented and shows that there are some good opportunities for pupils to use their writing and research skills.

99. Teachers have good subject knowledge. In the lessons seen, the teaching was effective and good use was made of a range of resources. There was a balance between whole class instruction and small group work. Pupils work hard and they co-operate well in group work. There are good displays in classrooms and in other areas of the school and these provide opportunities for pupils to find out more, examine artefacts and study relevant information. As a result of the positive promotion of the subject, pupils' attitudes to the subject are good. This was clear during a discussion with Year 6 pupils. They explained enthusiastically about the topics they had covered. They can explain the reasons why many changes have occurred since Victorian times and the effects these have. They know why people live longer nowadays.
100. Curriculum planning for the subject is unsatisfactory. Medium-term planning is lacking in detail of the skills, knowledge and understanding to be taught. Short-term planning lacks detail and, frequently, the learning objectives stated are too broad to be of use. This makes assessment of learning in individual lessons very difficult and, as a result, planning for subsequent activities is not well informed. This hampers the progress of the pupils, particularly the higher attaining pupils, for whom learning is not extended as much as it might. There are no formal assessment procedures in place for the subject. The co-ordinator is very enthusiastic for the development of the subject but, as yet, has not had opportunities to develop the subject nor her role in monitoring standards. The range of resources, including books in the school library, for all topics is very good and these provide good support for the teaching of the subject. The organisation of a Victorian Day early in the autumn term enhanced learning considerably.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

101. The school has correctly identified the development of information and communication technology (ICT) as a major priority in its current school improvement plan. Pupils' work and observations of pupils on task show that attainment is below national expectations and that it is apparent that there is underachievement in the subject. This is because the opportunities for pupils to display and extend their knowledge are constrained by the limitations of the hardware and software available. However, the newly converted computer suite, together with further developments in the quality of hardware, means that progress of pupils through the school has been enhanced considerably and recent developments in their work are already raising standards.
102. Direct teaching, a scrutiny of work in ICT and in other subjects, displays in the school and discussions with pupils show that their progress is below that which is expected nationally. However, good use is now being made of the computer suite by all age groups. Pupils are developing their skills and enhancing subject knowledge. For example, in a Year 3 class, pupils have used their ICT skills to make maps of the British Isles and are using a programmable robot. Year 4 pupils are learning to input data in order to create a spreadsheet and showed good knowledge of vocabulary such as 'horizontal and vertical axes', 'bar chart', 'pie chart', 'data'. They have also made comic strips using photographs taken with the school's digital camera. In Year 5, pupils are learning to use ICT in order to work out how to use a spreadsheet to operate a school tuck shop, and work out product costings and produce graphs of the results. Year 6

pupils are learning how to control an external device. They use the 'Dazzle' program to design attractive pictures and repeating patterns, and evaluate them. They have experienced inputting and interrogating data. A few pupils with computers at home know how to send an e-mail. Generally, pupils have limited knowledge of computer use and little experience of using CD-Roms, adventure games or combining a range of information from different sources.

103. Older pupils who particularly enjoy the subject meet at a lunchtime club to further their information and communication technology skills. This is an good example of pupils being able to extend their learning well. Some pupils with special educational needs benefit from having access to a laptop to support them with written work.
104. The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to excellent with examples of good teaching. Teachers are becoming more familiar with the equipment and, as their subject knowledge increases, so does the quality of their teaching. In an excellent lesson the teacher displayed very good subject knowledge, had a clear focus for the activity and gave a very well structured presentation to the pupils on learning to control a traffic light. Questioning of pupils shows that they are clear about the intention and have clearly understood their task. The well paced plenary developed the pupils' learning further and gave them direction for the next session. Their learning was significantly enhanced in this lesson. Most teachers are making use of the hardware to support learning in other areas of the curriculum, particularly mathematics. However, lesson plans lack clear learning objectives and there are no planned opportunities for assessment. Pupils enjoy using the computers. Their attitudes to working individually and in groups are very good and they treat resources with care. They listen attentively to instructions, concentrate well and co-operate sensibly. Current plans are in place to train all staff over the next year.
105. There is a lot of unused computer equipment around the school mainly placed outside teaching areas. None of this was seen in use during the inspection, as the hardware is unreliable and in need of updating. As a result, pupils are not able to reinforce learnt skills following lessons in the computer suite. The software to support learning for all pupils is inadequate. The school recognises that it has a long way to go and has a good development plan to support improvement. The management of ICT has developed considerably since the co-ordinator was appointed a term ago. She has been instrumental in the improvements and has written a detailed scheme of work. It is too early to judge the impact of these measures on continuity and progression of pupils' learning through the school, but the school is well placed to make the necessary improvements.

MUSIC

106. Pupils attain standards that are average for their ages by the end of Key Stage 2. They learn to sing, perform, compose, listen to and appraise music satisfactorily. The standards that pupils achieve are similar to those reported in the previous inspection.
107. Only two music lessons were observed but there was sufficient evidence from pupil interviews, long-term planning, and a meeting with the headteacher to show that the school provides appropriate musical experiences. In assemblies pupils sing harmoniously and to a satisfactory standard, but singing would have been stronger if all pupils had visual access to the words of the hymn. Musical tapes are played during assemblies but this is not always referred to and often a teaching opportunity is missed. Pupils have had the opportunity to maintain rounds in two parts and to sing as soloists during concerts.
108. Pupils in Year 4 experience composing with the use of unpitched percussion instruments. They are beginning to distinguish pitch, tempo and timbre as they create their own sounds to the words of a poem. Pupils distinguish the differing sounds of instruments within their own compositions. In Year 5, pupils compose and perform a rhythmic piece of music representing the journey of a train. They used correct musical notation and symbols to communicate and interpret their ideas. They did this well and then they introduced dynamics to improve the gradations of volume in their compositions. By the end of the key stage, pupils sing in unison and keep the rhythm well, which was evident from the video of the school's Christmas production. There is evidence from speaking to pupils in Years 5 and 6 that they are familiar with simple conventional notation

representing rhythms and use these to inform their playing. However, there is little evidence that pupils are increasing their knowledge of different styles of music and composers as they move through the school.

109. Only two lessons were seen but pupils' learning indicates that the teaching of music is satisfactory. Of the two lessons seen one was good, the other satisfactory. Particular strengths were seen in the good lesson as this was taught by the co-ordinator. Subject knowledge and understanding were good and this had a good impact on the pupils' learning. Pupils were able to compose and perform to a better level. In the satisfactory lesson the teachers' subject knowledge was insufficient to challenge and extend pupils' musical and creative abilities. Hence learning was satisfactory. Questioning is used well to make pupils think for themselves and during lessons pupils are asked how they could improve their composition and performance. The quality of learning is satisfactory and pupils make the best use of the opportunities provided. Pupils' attitudes to music are overall satisfactory. The majority enjoy singing and work enthusiastically with instruments. They enjoy experimenting with the range of percussion instruments provided. Both lessons were adopted from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's scheme of work. This scheme provides teachers with a structured programme and opportunity to teach the elements of music including listening, performing and composing.
110. The school also provides additional music lessons for pupils from visiting music teachers. These pupils are learning to play strings and woodwind instruments to a high standard. However, these lessons are paid for and so only a small proportion of pupils have access to this tuition. There are few opportunities for pupils to hear music from other cultures and there are insufficient tapes to support the cultural development of the pupils.
111. The quality and range of resources for music is unsatisfactory. Lessons are held in a demountable classroom which is unsatisfactory accommodation as it is rather cramped and acoustics are poor for composition and performance. Funding has been allocated to improve the range and quality of the percussion instruments, however. There are no extra-curricular musical activities or school choir at present, although this takes place in the summer term when pupils enjoy taking part in a music festival. The school provides regular musical performances at the end of the term. The pupils benefited a visit by 'Music Millennium' last term when they were introduced to a range of modern instruments and there are termly concerts given by ensemble groups, all of which enhance the curriculum.
112. The school now follows a structured scheme of work. Short-term planning is satisfactory, but there is no system of assessment or recording pupils' progress in music. Monitoring of teaching and planning is not firmly established. Currently the headteacher is responsible for managing the subject and has targeted many of the identified shortcomings as areas of development. These are prioritised within the school development plan. The subject contributes well to pupils' social development.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

113. Standards physical education are in line with national expectations. The picture was the same at the previous inspection. There are no significant differences in the standards between boys and girls. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory and sometimes good progress. During the inspection week, pupils participated in dance and games skills. Other areas of activity, athletics, gymnastics, outdoor and adventurous activities and swimming were not seen, but are included in the long-term planning.
114. By the time that they are 11 years old, pupils are well able to apply their skills in dance and when using basketballs for small team games. Achievement in dance is mainly as expected for the majority of pupils, but a minority of pupils achieve above average for their ages. For example, pupils in Year 6 effectively created a range of movements with deep moods and feelings building up to a dance routine. It was particularly noticeable that pupils used every part of their body in their movements to show expression, poise and balance to a high level. In the other Year 6 dance lesson pupils working in pairs put together a varied range of travelling movements and then performed a synchronised sequence of movements with a partner to music. Pupils in Year 4

show good hand and eye co-ordination during a series of throwing and catching activities. For example, pupils were very agile when dodging opponents as the ball was passed in a team game. Skills in basketball are being developed with pupils learning to control the ball while travelling in a planned direction. Year 5 pupils attend swimming and most of them achieve at least 25 metres. Pupils in Year 6 have the opportunity to take part in a variety of outdoor and adventurous activities when they participate in a residential visit.

115. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. However, in two lessons in Years 6 and 4 the quality of teaching was very good and good. Most teachers have secure knowledge of the subject. Lessons start promptly as pupils are quick to change into correct attire. However, some teachers had unsuitable footwear for lessons, which does not set a good role model for the pupils. Lessons vary in structure and some did not include appropriate warm-up and cooling down activities. The lack of these activities in lessons does not provide pupils with an understanding of the effect of strenuous exercise on their bodies. Short-term planning in lessons is poor and does not include a structured sequence of learning, particularly in the acquisition of skills and the development of ideas. The pace of most lessons is brisk and work given to pupils is physically challenging. Resources are used well and handled sensibly by all the pupils. Attention was given to safe practice in all lessons seen.
116. Teachers give clear explanations and in some cases demonstrate the movements. They build on pupils' previous knowledge and give sufficient time for pupils to perform and evaluate. Insufficient time is given for pupils to plan before they perform. Evaluations are included in most lessons, giving pupils the chance to watch peer demonstrations closely and, with the teachers' support, analyse them. For example, Year 6 pupils were able to consider their own movements and then demonstrated noticeable improvements in their dance sequences. In all lessons observed pupils were well behaved and their good behaviour contributed to their learning. In the best lessons, teachers are secure in their knowledge, enthusiastic, show good relationships with the pupils and there are high expectations of pupils' efforts and skills. Where teaching is less effective, the lesson has a minimal warm-up or cooling down session, less evaluations to benefit pupils' learning and over-direction by the teacher. As a result of good management and some good features seen in the teaching, pupils' attitudes to physical education are good. They concentrate well and listen attentively. Pupils enjoy their lessons and give of their best to improve their standards.
117. The school has adopted the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's scheme of work for physical education and this provides a broad range of worthwhile opportunities which meets pupils' interests, aptitudes and needs of all groups. The curriculum is well supported by extra-curricular activities for boys and girls. These activities include football, netball, tennis and Kwik cricket. Staff and parents assist in all these activities.
118. Leadership is satisfactory. The co-ordinator gives positive support to other colleagues and improves their confidence and knowledge of teaching the subject. However, there is no monitoring or evaluation of the quality of teaching and its effect on pupils' learning. There is no formal assessment, although in some lessons teachers provide opportunities for pupils to assess and refine their own work. The subject makes a significant contribution to pupils' moral and social development as they learn to play fairly and be a member of the team.
119. Resources are good. There is a large sized hall, playground and field for pupils to practise their skills in a good range of sports. The school is justifiably proud of its past and present sporting achievements. There are good results by both girls and boys. The school enters a team in the local Primary Schools Mini-Soccer League for boys and girls. Pupils compete in the Borough Athletics with the girls coming second and the boys third from twenty-four schools. The school is strong in cricket tradition having won the London Schools Kwik Cricket Trophy over several years. Past pupils have been well represented in several Essex school sides for cricket.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

120. Standards in religious education broadly meet the national expectations and those of the locally

Agreed Syllabus at the end of Key Stage 2. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

121. By the time the pupils are aged 11 years, they develop a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of some features of Christianity, Judaism and Sikhism. They achieve this information through studying topics such as festivals and celebration, rites of passage, communities and sacred books. Places of worship are studied but not visited.
122. In Key Stage 2, the youngest pupils are taught the importance of the "Five K's" as part of their study of Sikhism. They identify and handle the artefacts with care and sensitivity. Through some aspects of Judaism, pupils in Year 4 study the story of Moses. They recognise the importance of the Passover meal and the journey of the Israelites from Egypt after the ten plagues. Pupils in Year 5 are writing a biography of Jesus from his birth to his ministry. They effectively learn that the stories come from the Bible, a sacred book of Christianity. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils continue their knowledge and understanding of the Christian faith. For example, pupils in Year 6 begin to understand how Jesus' teaching on love relates to God and their neighbour. They listen carefully and reflect on the reference from the Gospel of St John "that friends sometimes give up their life for a friend." Pupils explore some of the parables told by Jesus and then write their own version relating this to their own lives.
123. There was insufficient evidence for a judgement to be made about the overall quality of teaching in the school. However the teaching and learning in the two lessons observed was satisfactory or good. Teachers have secure knowledge of the subject and resources are used well to enhance pupils' learning. Questioning is effective and this enables the teacher to assess pupils' knowledge and understanding of past and present work. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and circulate well during lessons to check they all understand what they are doing. Pupils respond positively. They are attentive listeners, are interested in and respectful of each other's views and feelings. They present their work well and are neat and tidy. Lesson planning is poor and requires more detail. It does not ensure that pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding are built upon progressively from one lesson to the next. Work set does not match all ability levels and higher attaining pupils are not challenged sufficiently enough. Time is satisfactorily used and pupils usually can complete their activities. In one lesson seen in Year 6, good additional support was provided by the learning support assistant. A scrutiny of pupils' books revealed that much of the written work in Year 6 is identical and copied. Narrative writing is not well developed and lacks flair and creativity. Hence there is little contribution to pupils' literacy skills.
124. Long-term curriculum planning clearly identifies which aspects will be taught to which year group and is related to the locally Agreed Syllabus. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and experienced as the subject leader for religious education. To date, she has not monitored classroom teaching, teachers' planning or reviewed pupils' books.
125. Resources are accessible and of adequate quality. They are used well in lessons and for displays to support and develop pupils' learning. There are no visits made to faith centres or places of worship. However, good use is made of visits to the local church both for lessons and the celebration of festivals. Information and communication technology is not used yet to support pupils' learning. The subject makes a good contribution to the moral, social and cultural development of the pupils, but not as well as it should to pupils' spiritual development.