

INSPECTION REPORT

Bentinck Primary School
Nottingham

LEA area : Nottingham

Unique Reference Number : 122407

Headteacher : Mr J G Illingworth

Reporting inspector : Mr R McGovern
10541

Dates of inspection : 18 – 21 October 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707682

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

© Crown Copyright 1997

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

Under the Education (Schools) Act 1992 and the Education Act 1993, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school :	Primary
Type of control :	LEA
Age range of pupils :	3 - 11
Gender of pupils :	Mixed
School address :	Alfreton Road Nottingham NG7 4AA
Telephone number :	0115 915 1567
Fax number :	0115 915 1568
Appropriate authority :	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors :	Mrs M Allen
Date of previous inspection :	19 – 21 March 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr R McGovern RgI	English, including English as an additional language Art History Geography	Teaching; Leadership and management; Attainment and progress; Equal opportunities; Special educational needs.
Mr T Hall, Lay Inspector		Attendance; Support, guidance and pupils' welfare. Partnership with parents and the community Staffing, accommodation and learning resources.
Mrs B Russell	Mathematics Music Physical Education Religious Education	Spiritual, moral social and cultural development Attitudes, behaviour and personal development.
Ms S West	Science Design Technology Information Technology (ICT) Children under five	The curriculum and assessment; The efficiency of the school.

The inspection contractor was:

Sandfield Educational Consultants

*16 Wychwood Drive
Trowell Park
Trowell
Nottingham
NG9 3RB*

0115 9170823

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

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

REPORT CONTENTS

Paragraph

MAIN FINDINGS



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

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION



INTRODUCTION



- Characteristics of the school
- Key indicators

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Educational standards achieved by pupils at the school



- Attainment and progress
- Attitudes, behaviour and personal development
- Attendance

Quality of education provided



- Teaching
- The curriculum and assessment
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
- Support, guidance and pupils' welfare
- Partnership with parents and the community

The management and efficiency of the school



- Leadership and management
- Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
- The efficiency of the school

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

Areas of learning for children under five



English, mathematics and science



Other subjects or courses



PART C: INSPECTION DATA

Summary of inspection evidence



Data and indicators



MAIN FINDINGS

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- Overall, the pupils make satisfactory progress in English, mathematics and science. The progress of pupils in Key Stage 1 and in Years 5 and 6 is good.
- Overall, the teaching is good, with over half of the lessons being good or very good.
- The headteacher, with the support of the governors and staff, is building on an ethos that strongly supports achievement and learning.
- The assessment of the pupils' progress is thorough and effective. Test results are analysed and targets are set for individuals and groups of pupils.
- The school makes good provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The work of the home-school liaison teacher ensures that the very positive ethos of the school is extended to the parents and the community.
- The school ensures that pupils settle quickly into the classes they join.
- The support staff, nursery nurses and bilingual instructor work very effectively with individuals and groups of pupils.
- The pupils are polite and helpful; the teachers and other adults provide very good role models. The difficult behaviour of a small number of pupils is dealt with very effectively.

WHERE THE SCHOOL HAS WEAKNESSES

- I. The deployment of teachers employed under the ethnic minority achievement grant does not ensure effective support for those pupils who are learning English as an additional language.
- II. There is room for further improvement in the standard of the pupils' spelling, handwriting and in the presentation of their work.
- III. There is room for improvement and greater challenge in the work in the foundation subjects.

The weaknesses are outweighed by what the school does well, but they will form the basis of the governors' action plan which will be sent to all parents and carers of pupils at the school.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE THE LAST INSPECTION

The school was judged to be a very good school at the last inspection. Many of the very good features reported in the last inspection have been maintained but standards at age 11 dipped last year. This is largely due to the many changes in staff. The recently appointed headteacher has refined the methods of monitoring the pupils' progress and this is leading to a clear view of the pupils' abilities. Inspection evidence, and the results of teachers' assessments, indicate an improvement in standards at ages 7 and 11 this year. These improvements, combined with the headteacher's clear vision for all of the pupils at the school, both academically and socially, puts the school in a very favourable position to achieve its aims.

STANDARDS IN SUBJECTS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds in 1998 based on the National Curriculum tests:

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools	Key
English	E	B	
Mathematics	C	A	
Science	E	B	

These results relate to pupils who took the tests in 1998. Standards declined in 1999 but inspection findings point to an improvement in attainment at the end of both key stages. Although standards are low when compared with the national figures, they represent sound and often good progress by those pupils who have completed all or most of their schooling at Bentinck. The school has a large proportion of pupils who leave or join the school at different points in their schooling and around one third of the pupils are learning English as an additional language. When compared with similar schools the attainment levels are above average.

QUALITY OF TEACHING

Teaching in:	Under 5	5 - 7 years	7 - 11 years
English	Good	Good	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good	Good
Science	Good	Good	Good
Information technology		Good	Good
Religious education		Good	Good
Other subjects	Good	Good	Good

The quality of the teaching is good. In fifty per cent of what was seen, the teaching was good or very good. It was satisfactory or better in eighty-six per cent of lessons.

The good and very good teaching is the major factor in driving up standards.

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

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	The pupils are responsive and in most lessons their behaviour is good. They are respectful of each other and adults and enjoy taking responsibility.
Attendance	Below average but the school works very effectively to improve and encourage good attendance.
Ethos*	The headteacher, with the support of the governors and staff, is building on an ethos that strongly supports achievement and learning.
Leadership and management	The school is very well led and managed. The headteacher, senior staff and governors are very good at analysing the school's strengths and weaknesses and in deciding what needs to be done to raise standards and to improve the school.
Curriculum	Broad and balanced. In English and mathematics the teachers are clear about what the pupils should learn. As a result, standards are improving. The content, planning and organisation of the foundation subjects need to be reviewed.
Pupils with special educational needs	There is a good level of classroom and individual support for pupils and they make good progress in improving their basic skills.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	A strength of the school. There are high expectations of pupils' behaviour and the way they relate to each other. Good use is made of the pupils' cultural heritage to enrich their learning.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	The school is well staffed. Support staff work very effectively. The deployment of support staff does not ensure sufficient support for pupils or curriculum leadership.
Value for money	Standards are improving; the quality of education is good; the headteacher has a clear vision for the school's development and the teaching is good. The school gives good value for money.

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

The parents' views of the school

What most parents like about the school	What some parents are not happy about
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teachers are open and welcoming • The school achieves high standards • The children are well behaved and happy to come to school • The school has a good reputation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The children could be given more • The way in which the children are managed

The inspectors agree with the parents' positive views of the school. Homework is a regular feature in most classes and the precise requirements are to be made clear in the home-school agreement that will be published shortly. The children were managed very effectively at lunchtime during the inspection and the staff are to receive additional training to support them in their role.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

Whilst maintaining their priority of raising standards in the core subjects, and improving the quality of the teaching to the best in the school, the headteacher and staff should:

1. Review and evaluate the arrangements for the use of the ethnic minority support staff and ensure that:
 - IV. *the staff employed under the terms of this grant have opportunities to develop their professional skills in line with their changing roles and responsibilities;*
 - V. *the teachers employed under this grant are able to provide appropriate leadership and support for class teachers in their understanding of how a pupil's first language can be used to support the learning of a second; that they are able to provide the levels of subject support that class teachers and the more advanced learners of English need.*

[paragraphs 3,19, 22, 42, 50, 65]

2. Improve the standard of the pupils' writing by: updating the school's English policy and practice to reflect a consistent and systematic approach to the teaching of spelling and handwriting

[paragraphs 63,64]

3. Review and update the schemes of work and teachers' planning for science, religious education and the foundation subjects and ensure that the school's strategy for raising standards in the key skills of literacy and numeracy is reflected in these changes; and, that the work provided is more demanding.

[paragraph 20]

INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school

Bentinck Primary School is close to the centre of Nottingham. The pupils are drawn largely from the immediate area surrounding the school. Although most of the housing was built before 1900, there are some newer homes. Most of the dwellings are rented.

The children normally enter the nursery on a part-time basis at the age of three. They move to full-time attendance in the reception class in the term in which they are five. The school serves a diverse inner-city community and more than sixty per cent of the pupils come from minority ethnic families. Around seventy per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, and there is an exceptionally high turnover of pupils. The school has identified sixty pupils on its special educational needs register.

In addition to the nursery there are seven classes in the school. Class teachers are supported by a range of other staff including learning support assistants, a home-school liaison teacher and staff employed under the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant.

The school has identified the following as its main priorities for the current academic year:

- VI. To improve standards in the basic skills of literacy;
- VII. to improve standards in the basic skills of numeracy;
- VIII. continue to develop ICT access, providing high quality learning for pupils and enhanced use by staff;
- IX. to improve the quality of teaching and learning, particularly in literacy, numeracy and ICT;
- X. to improve the standards achieved by pupils with special educational needs;
- XI. to improve the performance of underachieving pupils;
- XII. to improve attendance and behaviour;
- XIII. to develop leadership and management;
- XIV. to improve the physical environment for learning.

Key Indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 1¹

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

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1998	15	22	37

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	5	5	7
	Girls	13	13	14
	Total	18	18	21
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	53(n/a)	53(n/a)	62(n/a)
	National	80 (78)	81 (79)	84 (82)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	5	7	11
	Girls	15	13	16
	Total	20	20	27
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	59(64)	59(75)	79(93)
	National	81(79)	85(83)	86(84)

Attainment at Key Stage 2²

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

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1998	11	15	26

National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	3	5	4
	Girls	8	7	7
	Total	11	12	11
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	48(48)	52(84)	48(64)
	National	65(63)	59(62)	69(69)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	3	5	5
	Girls	9	9	9
	Total	12	14	14
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	52(48)	61(60)	31(64)
	National	65(63)	59(64)	69(69)

Attendance

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

		%
Authorised Absence	School	8.1
	National comparative data	5.7
Unauthorised Absence	School	1.6
	National comparative data	0.5

¹

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

²

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

Exclusions

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

	Number
Fixed period	6
Permanent	0

Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is :

	%
Very good or better	32
Satisfactory or better	86
Less than satisfactory	14

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

Attainment and progress

1. The attainment of pupils on entry to the nursery is well below average. They make good progress in their personal and social development and in their speaking and listening. By the time they are five most of the children are likely to achieve the desirable learning outcomes in their personal and social development, physical development, creative development and in speaking and listening. They make satisfactory progress in reading, writing, mathematics and their knowledge and understanding of the world, but few of the children are likely to achieve the desirable outcomes in these areas of learning.
2. Standards in English, mathematics and science are below the national average at age eleven. The results of national tests and benchmark data for the 1998 tests indicate that the performance of the pupils at age eleven in English and science was well below the national average, but it was above average when compared with pupils from similar backgrounds. The pupils' performance in mathematics was broadly in line with the national average, and well above the average for similar schools. The 1999 results show a significant decline in the pupils' performance in the mathematics and science tests. There are a number reasons for this: continuity in the teaching was disrupted by a large number of temporary teachers; and, the class had a significant number of pupils who had only recently joined the school. The school's teacher assessments for 2000 show a significant improvement and inspection evidence confirms this picture of a rising trend in attainment in Years 5 and 6. The school is well placed to reach its targets for improvement. Overall, the progress the pupils make in these subjects is satisfactory.
3. The teaching of reading is given a high priority and by the end of Key Stage 1 most of the pupils are well launched into reading and enjoying books. The pupils are developing an appropriate range of skills and the very good teaching ensures that they quickly learn common words by sight and develop their word-building skills. Few of the pupils develop as fluent readers, but they enjoy books and make progress. Those pupils who are learning English as an additional language are given very good support from Nursery Nurses and the Bilingual Instructor. These good features continue through Key Stage 2, but the teaching does not always recognise that although the older pupils are more advanced learners of English, they still need continuing support. Overall the progress made by these pupils is inconsistent. The work of the Nursery Nurses is particularly effective when working with small groups of pupils in Years 3 and 4. Many of these pupils are on the school's special educational needs register and they make good progress with their reading. By age eleven, most pupils are able to locate information in a range of books and talk confidently about the books they are reading. As a result, they are able to benefit from the more demanding work that they are being required to do in the English and mathematics sets. The focus on developing the pupils' literacy ensures that their independent writing shows improvement over time. Their written work does, however, contain some persistent difficulties with spelling and handwriting. Many of the older pupils lack confidence in using more adventurous words.
4. The implementation of the numeracy lesson, with its emphasis on developing the pupils' mental calculation skills and understanding of the processes of mathematics, has already had a considerable impact on standards in both key stages. This, together with teaching pupils in groups where work is carefully structured according to their ability, is helping to raise levels of achievement, especially in those groups taught by class teachers in Key Stage 1 and the upper end of Key Stage 2.
5. The youngest pupils are able to count to ten and beyond, recognise written numerals and sequence numbers from nought to ten. Year 1 pupils demonstrate an increasing ability to count forward and backwards, recognise the order of numbers and spot missing numbers in a number line. Number bonds to ten are regularly practised in a variety of ways. The pupils are familiar with the basic properties of a square, rectangle, triangle and circle. They demonstrate the ability to identify common two-dimensional shapes. In the lessons observed mental skills were generally in advance of the pupils' scribing and recording skills.
6. In years 5 and 6, higher attaining pupils have a satisfactory recall of number facts to 100 using them to add, subtract, multiply and divide. Some are able to recall and apply their knowledge of multiplication tables when solving problems. Pupils learn to measure length in non-standard and standard units and tell the time in analogue and digital modes. In a lesson on probability, Y5 pupils are able to predict the outcome of rolling a pair of dice and are able to record their results in graphical form. Particular attention is given to discussing the ways in which problems can be tackled and pupils are encouraged to find as many ways as possible for solving them and then

explain their reasoning to the rest of the class.

7. The arrangements for setting and grouping pupils by ability in English and Mathematics have resulted in reducing the range of attainment in classes. The impact of these arrangements on the pupils' learning and progress is a response to the quality of teaching they receive. In Key Stage 1 the pupils who are taught by the class teachers make good, and often very good progress. The pupils in the remaining group are making less progress than expected in both English and mathematics. In Years 5 and 6 the pupils in the average and above average sets make very good progress. The work they produce shows that they are learning at a good rate and it is evident in the lessons that they are engaged and informed by the good quality teaching they receive. The pupils in the lower set are making less progress than expected.
8. The results of the 1998 national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 indicate that standards in science are below the national average but they are above average in comparison with similar schools. The inspection has found work of much higher quality in years 5 and 6 this year and there is evidence that standards are rising. On entry to Key Stage 1 the pupils' knowledge and understanding of the world is below average. In their work in science most of the pupils know that the daytime shadows are caused by the sun's light being blocked and that they can cast shadows. They enjoy playing with shadow puppets and experimenting with different shapes to create effects. In Year 2 the pupils quickly assemble a simple circuit using crocodile clips, wires, a bulb and a battery. They know how to break the circuit and which materials will allow electricity to pass through and those that will not. They are able to make sensible predictions about what they think might happen and they use the correct words to explain their ideas. Early in Key Stage 2 the pupils complete work on magnetism. In the part of the lesson observed, much of the work was directed by the teacher with little opportunity for the pupils to predict and hypothesise. In their work on electricity the pupils are investigating simple circuits and the work is very similar to the work being done in Year 2. Towards the end of the key stage pupils are investigating how to separate a solution of sand and salt. In small groups they complete their experiments and they are able to use appropriate vocabulary such as soluble, dissolve, filter and solution when working and in recording their work. They reflect carefully on the processes and they are able to say why things happened and what made the experiment a success. The more able pupils were able to explain the principle of the dispersal of molecules. At the end of the key stage the pupils have been conducting a series of experiments on sound. They are able to talk confidently about how sounds can be made and altered by pouring different amounts of water into a bottle, for example, and producing higher or lower notes. They are developing greater proficiency in aspects of measuring and controlling factors in these experiments.
9. Among other subjects standards are improving in information technology and, since the introduction of lessons in the computer suite, the pupils are making satisfactory progress. There is evidence of good work in art.

Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

10. Throughout the school pupils are generally keen to learn and enjoy coming to school. In the most successful lessons the pupils are able to listen with interest, respond well to questions, show enthusiasm and maintain good concentration. In many of these lessons they are given opportunities for working in pairs or small groups and can work well with others. Equipment is used sensibly and pupils are careful when clearing their classroom at the end of a lesson. Relationships between adults and pupils are good, and there is a very pleasant and purposeful working atmosphere. In the less successful lessons, the group and individual work is not well managed. A noisy working atmosphere prevails and the pupils' are unenthusiastic in their response to the work.
11. The good standards of behaviour described in the previous inspection report have been maintained. The pupils are friendly, polite and courteous to staff and visitors. Movement around the school is quiet and orderly, especially on entry to the hall for assemblies or lunch. Pupils enter and leave school sensibly at all times. Behaviour and play during breaks and the lunch hour is good-natured and results in enjoyable playground games. Schools rules are clearly displayed on classroom walls. They are well understood and the pupils are generally happy to abide by the accepted code of conduct.
12. The pupils' personal development is good. Older pupils are given many opportunities to take responsibility, which include regular duties such as tidying the library, collecting registers, preparing the hall for assembly or physical education and assisting with the smooth running of the lunchtime arrangements. Within classrooms, there are rotas for jobs that need to be done and pupils are always eager to take their turn. The youngest pupils

quickly learn to become independent in finding equipment and tidying the classroom at the end of a lesson and this good practice is reinforced throughout the school. There are many examples of children working well together, both to ensure that day-to-day routines are kept, and in their work and at playtimes.

Attendance

13. The pupils' attendance is below average. Unauthorised absence is low, but authorised absence is well above average. This is almost entirely due to families taking extended leave for visits overseas. The pupils enjoy coming to school and most are punctual. Registration is prompt and effective. Lessons start and finish on time.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

Teaching

14. The quality of teaching is good overall. The teaching observed was satisfactory or better in eighty-six per cent of lessons and it is good, very good or excellent in fifty per cent of lessons. The good and very good teaching is reflected in the progress made by the pupils in the lessons. The key skills of reading, writing and number are given an appropriate emphasis and, overall, they are taught well. The headteacher and the senior management team have done a good deal of monitoring of the teaching. They have set as a priority improving the quality of the teaching to the best in the school.
15. Where the teaching is at its best, the teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the subjects they are required to teach and this is demonstrated in the range and the quality of the work which is produced by pupils. The teacher's planning is thorough and detailed. Lesson plans contain clear objectives; they build very successfully on previous work and the pupils are given challenging tasks. The teachers organise pupils in a variety of ways, but most lessons begin with carefully directed whole class teaching. This is followed by small group and individual work. The pupils are required to work at an appropriate pace and the teachers make it clear to them what they are going to learn. The teachers use skilful questioning to assess and extend the pupils' understanding. They are able to target their questions at individual pupils and this ensures success. The pupils are confident and enjoy the interactive word work in the Literacy Hour and develop their skills of rapid mental calculation in mathematics. The small group work is monitored carefully and the pupils find the tasks demanding but achievable. They stay on task throughout, maintain a good work rate and make sensible contributions to the class discussions.
16. The arrangements for setting and grouping pupils by ability have resulted in reducing the range of attainment in classes but the quality of teaching varies from very good to unsatisfactory. The weaker lessons begin with well organised whole class teaching, but the teachers' skills in questioning pupils are weak. Many of the questions are of limited scope and have only one possible answer. In mathematics, for example, the teachers rarely ask the pupils to reflect on how they have arrived at an answer. The questions do not encourage the pupils to think, suggest alternative ideas and engage in discussion. The group work is not well managed and independent work is not promoted effectively. Many of the tasks fail to engage the pupils sufficiently and result in a mechanical and unenthusiastic response.
17. The teachers generally have appropriate expectations of the pupils' behavior in class, and most pupils respond by behaving well. In the best lessons, the teachers are vigilant in ensuring that all pupils remain attentive and committed to their work. They use praise and encouragement very effectively and celebrate the pupils' work. There is a calm and purposeful working atmosphere. There is good evaluation of the pupils' work, both orally and in writing, and the pupils are clear about what they should do to improve.
18. The teachers have been keen to implement the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The lessons follow the recommended structure and in the most successful lessons there is a large amount of whole class interactive teaching. The teachers communicate clearly to the pupils what they expect them to learn and specify the amount of time in which the work will be done. The group work is usually well suited to the pupils' abilities. In the less successful lessons there is a lack of confidence and expertise in using the recommended approaches. The transitions between the different parts of the lesson are well defined but is not always clear how each part of the lesson relates to the whole. The learning objectives become confused with a range of activities to be undertaken.

19. The provision made for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The pupils' individual education plans guide the teaching and the pupils' progress is very effectively supported in the small group teaching by the Nursery Nurses. Pupils with English as an additional language receive very good support from the Bilingual Instructor, but the deployment and effectiveness of the teachers employed under the ethnic minority achievement grant does not ensure sufficient targeted support for all of these pupils.

9. **The curriculum and assessment**

20. The quality of the curriculum for children who are under five is satisfactory. It is broad and balanced and is mostly suited to their needs. The teachers' planning is linked to the Desirable Outcomes and there is appropriate coverage of all of the areas of learning. Planning and provision for the development of early reading skills and the pupils' knowledge and understanding of the wider world is, however, limited. The school conducts a baseline entry test when children first start in the nursery and again in the term in which they reach the age of five. This provides a useful benchmark against which staff monitor the children's progress.

21. The school plans a broad curriculum which, over the year, is suitably balanced. It covers all of the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. An appropriate emphasis is given to teaching English and mathematics and the National Literacy and Numeracy Frameworks guide most of the work. The staff are clear about what they intend to teach and what the children should learn in these subjects. A draft policy for teaching sex education is soon to be presented to governors. Pupils are taught about the dangers of drugs misuse through health related topics and the programme run by the local police. On balance, however, more emphasis is given to improving the pupils' knowledge than to the progressive acquisition of skills and understanding. This is particularly evident in the planning for science and the foundation subjects. The planning describes the themes and activities to be covered, but it is not always clear about what will be taught and assessed. Much of the content of the history and geography topics is left to the discretion of individual teachers. In science, topics are revisited with the intention of consolidating and deepening the pupils' knowledge and understanding. However, there is little evidence of progression in much of the work in science and the foundation subjects, particularly in Key Stage 2, and the acquisition of skills of scientific investigation are slow. The work in information technology has benefited from a significant investment in new computers and software. The staff are becoming more confident in using computers and the pupils enjoy their lessons in the computer suite. The school has adopted the model scheme of work produced by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and this is providing a good steer to the work. The school recognises that more needs to be done to ensure that standards are raised.

22. The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs. The co-ordinator works very effectively to support staff and to ensure that the pupils' individual educational plans are reviewed and implemented. The pupils' needs are clearly documented and through careful targeting, all of the pupils who experience difficulties in learning receive some additional teaching. A small number of pupils display challenging behaviour. There are sensitive and effective procedures in place to help these pupils overcome their difficulties.

23. The school has recently made significant changes to the way in which teachers employed under the ethnic minority achievement grant are used. There is good identification of those pupils who need additional language support at Key Stage 1 and the class teachers' planning and teaching methods take very good account of the pupils' needs. Very effective use is made of the Bilingual Instructor in Key Stage 1 to promote learning within classes and through some withdrawal from classes. The deployment of the teachers employed under this grant does not ensure that the pupils in Key Stage 2 have the same access to supported speaking and listening. The school's policy is to be revised. It provides little guidance to staff on how the first language can be used to support the learning of a second, or how the curriculum can be adapted to meet the needs of minority ethnic pupils.

24. Over the year the school provides a suitable range of extra-curricular activities. Opportunities to encourage competitive sport are limited because the school has no playing fields. Good use is made of the skills of the site manager who volunteers his time for football coaching. Visiting speakers, artists, dancers and educational visits to local places of interest such as the Brewhouse Yard Museum, the castle and local parks enhance the curriculum.

25. The school's arrangements for assessing and recording the pupils' attainment and progress have developed

rapidly since January 1999. The national assessment tests and outcomes of other assessments are being used to set targets for groups and individual pupils. Staff are identifying the pupils' strengths and weaknesses and, in the best lessons, this information is being used very effectively to plan future work. This is having a positive impact on the pupils' achievements in these subjects this year. Similar procedures are being put in place in science.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

26. The school's provision for the pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Provision for the pupils' moral, social and cultural development is good.
27. The ethos of the school is very good, reflecting the commitment of many teachers to raising standards and achieving the aims stated in the school brochure. Assemblies are carefully planned to provide pupils with thought provoking ideas and to give them time for quiet reflection. Teachers receive and value pupils' ideas and, through careful questioning and encouragement, help them to talk about their own feelings and beliefs and to treat those of others with tolerance and respect. The pupils learn to be proud of their own achievements in work and behaviour and to acknowledge the achievements of other children, for example, during the 'Good Book' assembly.
28. All of the staff are consistent in teaching the difference between right and wrong and they expect pupils to abide by the code of the school. Adults and children are expected to treat each other with fairness, courtesy and respect at all times. Through assembly themes such as 'Owning up', pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own actions, to tell the truth and to speak up for what is right. Positive attitudes are promoted and instances of unacceptable behaviour are dealt with fairly and openly.
29. Provision for the pupils' social development is good. Staff and children get on well together. The pupils are given many opportunities to take responsibility and they respond with eagerness and efficiency. In most lessons they work well in pairs or small groups within their classrooms and play together in harmony during break times. Older pupils are often required to look after younger ones and enjoy helping them with their work when the need arises. The school frequently takes in new pupils, many of whom are learning English as an additional language. They are well looked after and welcomed into the community.
30. The provision for the pupils' cultural development is good. The wide mix of different cultures within the school is an immediate and valuable resource which is used well. The major festivals of many faiths are celebrated, providing a rich source of material for art, music, dance and writing. Classes visit local churches and temples where, by comparing the different style of architecture, art and religion, they gain a greater insight into the richness and diversity of the different cultures within the school. Pupils are given opportunities to take part in school plays and, whenever possible, enjoy the work of visiting drama groups. The school choir performs in the local shopping precinct. There are many examples of artwork on classroom walls and around the school and pupils are given the opportunity to study and appreciate the work of great artists such as Hockney and Mondrian.

Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

31. The school has maintained the very good procedures for the support, guidance and welfare of pupils described in the previous report. All of the adults provide good role models for the children. The care and encouragement of the children is of paramount importance in this inner city school. The work of the home-school liaison teacher is exemplary. This role ensures that many of the barriers to attendance and schooling are overcome. Parents, pupils and staff feel supported and the teachers can concentrate their efforts on each pupil's academic achievement. All of the adults in the school, including lunchtime supervisors, work hard to know the pupils well and treat them as individuals. They constantly encourage and praise the pupils' good work and endeavour. Parents support the attitudes and values promoted by the school. They indicate that the staff are very approachable and willing to provide advice and guidance. The parents of pupils in the nursery and those pupils who have special educational needs are well informed. The school works very effectively to ensure that the youngest children settle quickly and that pupils who experience difficulties in learning are assessed and supported.
32. Relationships between pupils and all adults in the school are very good. The school is an orderly place. The headteacher and staff work hard to ensure that the pupils grow in confidence and self-esteem. This reflects the very good ethos of the school. All pupils, even the youngest in the early years, can confidently share their

thoughts or concerns with staff. There are strong links with outside agencies to aid personal, social and health education programmes. For example, sex education is introduced through the curriculum according to pupils' age and understanding under the guidance of the school nurse. The police promote appropriate drug misuse and stranger danger schemes.

33. The procedures for promoting and monitoring discipline and behaviour are very good. Parents appreciate the school's approach to high standards of discipline. The school's approach is successfully implemented in most classrooms and the pupils' behaviour outside the classroom is very good. Occasional bad behaviour and any reports of harassment or bullying are dealt with firmly and fairly, involving the pupils and their parents as necessary.
34. Although the pupils' attendance is below average, the school has very good and effective procedures for promoting and monitoring attendance. Everyone connected with the school is made aware of the importance of punctuality and regular attendance as good habits to be fostered for the future. Non-attendance is carefully monitored and any concerns are raised at a very early stage with parents. This work is very well supported by the educational welfare officer.
35. All adults in the school are familiar with the local child protection procedures. Arrangements for children who have accidents or are unwell are very good. The school has good contacts with a range of medical, social and educational specialist services. Overall, the general health, safety and wellbeing of pupils is secure.

9. Partnership with parents and the community

36. Partnership with parents and the community is satisfactory. There are regular and informative letters to parents. The school prospectus and annual governors' report is clear and informative.
37. Some parents feel they are not sufficiently informed about their children's progress and not given a clear understanding of what is being taught. The parent consultation evenings are very well attended and they are viewed very positively by parents. Most parents feel the school enables their children to achieve a good standard of work. The pupils' reports are evaluative and clear about the progress each child has made. Teachers are always willing to meet parents to discuss any concerns. The school is aware that some parents are not happy with the inconsistent levels of homework. The homework policy is being revised in conjunction with the new Home-School Agreement. The school values the partnership with parents and the contribution parents make to their children's learning at home. Overall, the majority of parents feel that they are encouraged to play an active part in their children's education.
38. There are valuable links within the community, particularly with the diversity of religious and cultural leaders in the area. Parents are welcome in school and many attend the 'Good Book' assemblies. Some share faith and cultural traditions with the pupils during their festivals. Produce from the Harvest assemblies has been donated to local charities. Parents feel the school encourages pupils to be involved in more than just their daily lessons and to develop as citizens in their local community.
39. There are good, purposeful links with business and community based groups. A local swimwear company, through the 'Adopt a School' scheme has visited the school to assist with the Literacy Strategy. The local Rotary Club supports the school and the local adult and community education colleges provide a range of courses for parents.
40. The induction of children into school is thoughtfully and sensitively structured. Good liaison and visits to the home ensure that the parents and children feel welcome, particularly those for whom English is an additional language. The school ensures that the many pupils who join the school throughout the year are made to feel welcome and are able to settle into its routines quickly. The procedures for pupils moving on to secondary schools are well developed.

Leadership and management

41. The school has undergone significant changes in its staffing since the last inspection. It has operated without a permanent headteacher for almost two years. The new headteacher was appointed in January 1999. The deputy headteacher was promoted to another post in April 1999 and was replaced in September 1999. In all, seven staff left the school over the last two years. In spite of these changes, many of the positive aspects of the school have been maintained. The new headteacher provides very effective leadership. With the support of the governors and staff, he is building on an ethos that strongly supports achievement and learning. He is clear about what needs to be done to raise the quality of teaching to the best in the school and to raise standards. Since his appointment a focus of the work has been to monitor teaching and learning. This has led to greater consistency in the quality of teachers' planning and is a very good basis for future improvement. The headteacher has a clear vision of what he wants for all of the pupils, both academically and socially, and this puts the school in a very favourable position to achieve its aims.
42. The headteacher and the senior management team set a very good example through the quality of their own teaching. All of the staff share responsibility for curriculum leadership. The introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has been well managed and this has enabled most of the teachers to make a confident start. The headteacher has taken responsibility for developing Information Technology (ICT) and the teachers' confidence and skills with computers is developing well. Curriculum leadership, and the school's documentation for science, religious education, the foundation subjects and the needs of minority ethnic pupils are currently under review. The timescale for this review is appropriate and the present arrangements are ensuring that the curriculum is broad and balanced.
43. Newly qualified teachers and those who are new to the school are well supported and quickly develop their confidence and a willingness to contribute to the school's positive ethos. Pupils with special educational needs and those who require support for attendance or behaviour are very well supported. The co-ordinators provide very good support for staff. The special educational needs co-ordinator ensures that the pupils' individual education plans are clear about what is to be achieved and parents are kept well informed about their child's progress. The home-school liaison teacher works very effectively to improve the pupils' attendance and to extend the encouraging ethos of the school to the home. The school has recently made significant changes to the way in which teachers employed under the ethnic minority achievement grant are used. There is good identification of those pupils who need additional language support at Key Stage 1 but the deployment of staff does ensure that the pupils in Key Stage 2 have the same access to, for example, supported speaking and listening. There is a lack of leadership and guidance to staff on how the first language can be used to support the learning of a second, or how the curriculum can be adapted to meet the needs of minority ethnic pupils.
44. Overall, the school is very well led and managed. The headteacher, senior staff and governors are very good in analysing the school's strengths and weaknesses and in deciding what needs to be done to raise standards and to improve the school. This is being effectively promoted. The school improvement plan provides a clear basis for action and is well understood by staff and governors. The governors play an active role in supporting the school. Many are relatively new to their role but they are effective in monitoring the work of the school and in supporting its development. There is a clear commitment to maintaining the good and improving on the best.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

45. The school is well staffed by appropriately qualified and experienced teachers and has a good number of support staff. There has been a recent high turnover of staff including the appointment of a new headteacher and deputy headteacher. Induction is thorough and, as a result, all work well together as a team. The secretary, bursar and site manager make a significant contribution to the smooth running of the school.
46. The statutory appraisal of teachers has lapsed. The arrangements for the professional development of teachers is, however, generally good. But the teachers employed under the ethnic minority achievement grant need additional training to equip them for their changing role within the school.
47. The accommodation is very well maintained; it is clean, warm and welcoming. It is generally appropriate for delivering the national curriculum but it has not been adapted for pupils with physical disabilities. The classrooms are well organised and there are attractive displays, but they are rather cramped for classes over thirty. There is a good hall; it is well used for a full range of activities. Play areas are well organised and very

well used with marked out games, soft play areas and permanent adventure structures. A good secure fence has been added since the last inspection. The school has no sports field and this limits the opportunities for competitive sports and games.

48. Provision of resources is good for mathematics, music, and physical education and for those pupils with special educational needs. It is very good for information technology. There are some gaps in the resources for history and geography. The library is a good size and well organised, but many of the books are over ten years old and are fast reaching the end of their useful life.

The efficiency of the school

49. The last report stated that the quality of overall financial planning was good, that strategic management of resources was good and that the use made of monies, staff and resources was efficient. The school was said to give very good value for money. Many of these good features have been maintained.
50. The financial planning is very good. The preparation of the budget is linked to the priorities in the school development plan and the headteacher, senior management team, assistant budget manager and governors all play a part in prioritising the school's needs. The budget is very responsibly managed by the assistant budget manager and is continually monitored. Detailed financial reports are prepared for each meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee. Needs are projected and a suitable contingency sum is maintained. Past spending is used to predict future needs but priorities in the current year are carefully considered. Spending on resources is thoughtfully planned to ensure value for money.
51. Effective use is made of staff, but more needs to be done to ensure that the ethnic minority support staff are able to provide appropriate leadership and support for class teachers, and to be able to support the learning needs of pupils with English as an additional language in Key Stage 2.
52. Effective use is made of resources to support learning in most curriculum areas. This is most noticeable in information technology where the installation of a new computer suite is having a good impact on developing the pupils' technology skills. The accommodation and playgrounds are well used to support the curriculum.
53. Financial and school administration is excellent. The assistant budget manager ensures that very good systems are maintained to properly administer the school budget. The day-to-day administration is extremely efficient and excellent office routines have been established. The secretary and assistant budget manager work as an effective team and give valuable support to the headteacher. The minor recommendations in the recent auditor's report have been dealt with and a full report has been prepared for the Governing Body. Financial control is secure.
54. The school provides good teaching; standards are improving; the pupils' behaviour and attitudes are good; and, there is very good leadership and management. The school gives good value for money.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

55. Children enter the nursery after they are three and move into the reception class in the term in which they are five. At the time of the inspection there were thirty eight children in the nursery and four children under five in the reception class. All the children in the nursery attend on a part-time basis. Through the week they are taught by a full time teacher and one nursery nurse with additional support from three learning support assistants and a member of staff funded by the Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant to support those pupils for whom English is an additional language. In the reception class the teacher has some support from an assistant or a nursery nurse. Each teacher plans individually but detailed records and samples of work ensure that the reception teacher is aware of prior learning. By the time they are five, baseline tests indicate that most of the children meet the Desirable Outcomes in personal and social development, physical development, creative development and in speaking and listening. They do not meet them in reading and writing, mathematics or knowledge and understanding of the world. During their time in the nursery the children make satisfactory progress. They make good progress in personal and social development and speaking and listening. In the reception class the children are making good progress. They make very good progress in mathematics.

9. Personal and social development

56. Very good relationships are established between the children, their families and staff. In the nursery the daily routines and rules form the basis for developing the children's understanding of school life and their responsibilities to each other. In both classes expectation is high and the children respond well. Many opportunities are provided for them to develop independence, work and play co-operatively, behave sensibly and to enjoy learning. They quickly establish good relationships with each other and have very good relationships with their teachers and other adults. Most children entering the nursery settle well. Parents are encouraged to stay with their children for as long as they feel necessary. In both classes there is a secure and caring atmosphere where the children feel safe. They quickly learn routines and respond quietly to instructions. They listen carefully and concentrate well in direct teaching groups or when occupied in free activities or group play. Children in the reception class are developing very good attitudes to work. The stimulating environment created for them by the reception teacher encourages them to question and to make sensible choices about their free choice work.

9. Language and literacy

57. Many children enter the nursery with very limited language skills and some do not speak any English. The quiet, gentle approach adopted by nursery staff ensures that by the time they are five the children have made good progress in this area of learning. Teachers encourage the children to talk by asking good questions which require more than one word answers. The children rapidly become confident in speaking to adults and begin to take turns in class discussions and in listening to each other. These skills continue to improve in the reception class. Early reading skills develop slowly. Children in the nursery do not readily choose the reading corner in free activity time. They are not sufficiently encouraged to share picture books with each other or sit with a book in a quiet moment. Although they listen to stories in group story sessions and enjoy counting rhymes and familiar tales, they have not yet acquired an enthusiasm for books that are common to children of this age. By the time they are five all children are familiar with the format of a book. They know that the words relate to pictures but most are unable to discuss the pictures or speculate as to 'why' or 'what will happen next'. Although most children are reasonably familiar with letter names they do not know many of the associated sounds. They know sentences begin with a capital letter and end with a full stop. In the nursery the children enjoy making marks and attempt to copy their names. By the time they are five most are able to write their own names but letter formation is not yet secure. In the reception class the children's language skills are developed well. The teacher's planning has clear learning objectives and the room has a good range of imaginative bilingual resources.

9. Mathematics

58. In mathematics the children make slow progress in the nursery. In small group activities they begin to use the appropriate language, for example big and little, full and empty, but these concepts are not always fully understood. Although the children are familiar with numbers and use them in counting games and computer games they do not have sufficient opportunities to develop their understanding of numbers in everyday situations. There is too little planned work in this area of learning in the nursery. Children in the reception class make very good progress. The work they are given is made interesting and they approach it with eager enthusiasm. They

count and order to 10 and are recognising and attaching appropriate numbers to set quantities with increasing speed. Once their work is complete carefully selected 'free choice' activities further extend their knowledge and understanding of concepts. They consolidate simple shapes learnt in the nursery, for example square, circles, rectangles and triangles and have used these on a computer program to make pictures and patterns.

9. **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

59. Children enter the nursery with very limited knowledge of the outside world. The nursery area is well planned to give them suitable experiences, to cut and stick and make models, to hammer nails, to play instruments and to build with construction toys. However, activities are not varied frequently enough to extend skills and ideas and specific learning objectives are not clearly defined. The 'home' corner is well equipped and is well used by the children. The nursery teacher makes good use of the local environment to extend the children's knowledge. The children have visited the park and woods. They have collected leaves and seeds and are able to talk about their colour, texture, size and shape. They can recognise acorns and 'conkers' and know that they will grow into trees. They now plan to set seeds and monitor their progress. Good use is made of photographs to stimulate language and recall events. The curriculum planned for nursery is generally appropriate in developing basic concepts and knowledge within the children's experience and capabilities. The topic approach in the reception class builds on this. The children have made papier mache rocks on which to stand a lighthouse and simple jointed models to track the moon's orbit of the earth. There is great activity in the 'post office' corner with mobile phones and the pupils are encouraged to 'send' and 'receive' messages and deliveries of parcels and letters. In both classes children are familiar with computers and use the mouse and keyboard confidently. Children in reception, through formal lessons, are now learning to import images and fill in with colour.

9. **Creative development**

60. In both classes children have many opportunities to use their imagination in creative play. They interact well and develop their own stories and conversations. Very good use is made of music to create atmosphere and the children respond quickly and positively to it. They listen quietly and enjoy the moods the music creates. In the nursery the children are free to use musical instruments as a choice activity and they bang, rattle and blow to create their own sounds. In art work the children use paint, pen and other materials to create pictures. However, the teaching is sometimes over directed and the children's skills of selection are narrow. Too often everyone follows the same topic in the same media or colour. Opportunities for free painting and free choice are limited. Children in reception have wider experiences. They have looked at the work of Van Gogh and reproduced his picture 'Starry Night' using pastel, paint, and wax and water wash. They have made 'hot air' balloons and painted portraits. In both nursery and reception all of the work is beautifully displayed and the children see their work given real value and worth.

9. **Physical development**

61. Provision for physical education is good and physical skills are soundly developed. Through structured indoor lessons and outdoor play the children begin to move confidently increasing their control and awareness of space. They use a range of small equipment and mobile toys and have suitable opportunities to take risks and climb and balance on large equipment. Good use is made of the hall where the carpeted floor allows opportunities for floor work and work at various levels. The children improve their hand to eye co-ordination through a variety of activities.

ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

English

62. The results of the national end-of-key stage tests in 1998 indicate that by the age of eleven the pupils' attainment is below average. It was above average when compared with similar schools. The pupils' performance in last year's tests show that around half of the pupils reached the expected Level 4. The teacher assessments of the current cohort of pupils, and the inspection evidence, point to an improvement in standards this year. The progress the pupils make across the school is broadly satisfactory, but it varies from group to group and is a response to the quality of teaching. The pupils who are taught by the Reception and Year 1 and 2 teachers make good progress. In Years 5 and 6 the pupils who are taught by the class teachers make very good progress. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress and the work they do is usually well matched to their capability.
63. The pupils in the lower Key Stage 1 make good progress in learning to read. They begin to develop an appropriate sight vocabulary and in the Literacy Hour they are taught to use phonic, picture and context clues when they are reading. Most of the pupils in Year 2 have appropriate strategies for sounding out combinations of letters and sounds as a way of reading unfamiliar words. They have a good understanding of the books they are required to read. Those pupils who are learning English as an additional language are given very good support for their reading and quickly begin to talk about the pictures and recognise familiar words. The pupils' individual progress in reading is monitored carefully by the class teachers and this contributes to the good progress they make. By the time they leave the school most pupils read independently. They are able to use this skill effectively to retrieve information from the library and computer. They can read silently with concentration and many are developing a personal preference for particular types of fiction. In Years 5 and 6 the pupils are able to analyse a text; identify the narrative structure and use this as a framework for their own writing. The shared texts are used very effectively to develop the pupils' understanding of grammar and punctuation and to draw attention to features of particular text types. Pupils who experience difficulties in learning to read are well supported by the support staff and they make good progress.
64. In both key stages the pupils make satisfactory progress in their writing and spelling. In some lessons there is good and very good progress. This is directly related to the quality of teaching. In Year 1 most of the pupils are able to scribe their name and some write common monosyllabic words correctly. In Year 2 the higher attaining pupils are able to write at length and they are beginning to develop their ideas and use interesting words. Their handwriting is becoming more legible and clear. This very good progress is evident in all of the pupils' work in these groups. Taking account of the abilities in each of the teaching groups, the pupils' progress in writing is inconsistent. The work of the lower attaining pupils varies in its quality from day to day. In this group, aids to writing and spelling, such as sentence makers and word banks, are underused and, as a result, many pupils spend too much time searching for words in inappropriate dictionaries or having their logical attempts corrected by the teacher.
65. In Key Stage 2 the pupils' progress in writing is satisfactory overall. There are improvements in the pupils' sustained writing. In Years 5 and 6 the pupils are able to draft and edit their work but common errors in spelling persist. They are beginning to write at length and for a range of purposes and audiences. Their writing skills are well used and further developed in other subjects. Their imaginative writing shows a widening and varied vocabulary and increasing accuracy in the use of punctuation. The skills of writing are well taught in the Literacy Hour and the pupils are encouraged to improve their work.
66. The progress of those pupils who are learning English as an additional language varies. It is good in Key Stage 1 and unsatisfactory overall in Key Stage 2. In the nursery, reception class and Key Stage 1, the class teachers are very sensitive to each pupil's language proficiency. They make sure that the work is accessible to the pupils and encourage them to talk about their work. The teachers are clear about the language and learning needs of the pupils and this helps them to differentiate their questions and the work that they want the pupils to do. Very good use is made of the Bilingual Instructor to support these pupils in their reading and the use of their home language in the development of English. In the best work in Key Stage 2 these same high qualities are evident. Overall, however, the support for pupils in Key Stage 2 is not targeted effectively. Although many of the older pupils are more advanced learners of English, too much of the teaching does not adequately acknowledge that they need continuing support.
67. The quality of the teaching varies from very good to unsatisfactory. The work is generally well planned and it

takes due account of the National Literacy Framework. In the Key Stage 1 classes, and the upper Key Stage 2 classes, the group tasks are well matched to the needs of pupils. The teachers are using the Literacy Hour very effectively to teach sentence and text level work. Word level work is taught well in Key Stage 1. In the less successful teaching, the teacher's skills in questioning pupils are weak. Activities are planned for each part of the hour, but it is not always clear how they relate to each other. In a number of lessons the pupils were confused about their work and they were not helped by the teacher. The pupils' work is marked conscientiously but there is a lack of consistency in the way that points for improvement are communicated and acted upon. In a number of classes, spelling mistakes are regularly indicated but there is no systematic approach to the pupils' addressing their errors.

68. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented appropriately and the co-ordinator has received the training provided by the local education authority. The co-ordinator provides good leadership and has adapted the national guidelines to suit the needs of the pupils and the school. The Literacy Hour is being taught in all classes but the quality of the work varies and some staff will need further training and support to ensure that the hour is planned as a meaningful whole. Resources for teaching and learning are adequate. Good use has been made of the additional funds to buy books for the Literacy Hour. The library is a useful resource but many of the books are over ten years old and need updating.

Mathematics

69. Recent benchmark data indicates that the number of pupils reaching Level 2 or above in mathematics at the age of seven is very low in comparison with the national average and well below the average for schools of a similar background. These results relate to pupils now in Year 3. The percentage of pupils in Key Stage 2 attaining Level 4 or above in the 1999 end of key stage tests was close to the national average and by comparison with schools of a similar background, standards were above the national average. Inspection evidence reveals that standards of attainment in the present Year 2 and Year 6 are below average. However, pupils' progress overall is satisfactory and where it is related to the quality of teaching, it is good. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make satisfactory progress in achieving the targets set for them in their individual education plans.
70. The implementation of the Numeracy lesson, with its emphasis on developing the pupils' mental calculation skills and understanding of the processes of mathematics, has already had a considerable impact on standards in both key stages. This, together with teaching pupils in groups where work is carefully structured according to their ability, is helping to raise levels of achievement, especially in those groups taught by class teachers in Key Stage 1 and the upper end of Key Stage 2.
71. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are developing satisfactory mathematical language and teaching staff are careful to introduce and use correct vocabulary at every stage. The youngest pupils are able to count to ten and beyond, recognise written numerals and sequence numbers from nought to ten. Year 1 pupils demonstrate an increasing ability to count forward and backwards, recognise the order of numbers and spot missing numbers in a line to twenty. Number bonds to ten are regularly practised in a variety of ways. The language of shape and pattern is taught throughout the key stage and by Year 2 pupils are familiar with the basic properties of a square, rectangle, triangle and circle. They demonstrate the ability to identify common two dimensional shapes when given fragments to examine. In the lessons observed mental skills were generally in advance of scribing and recording skills.
72. Understanding of place value is extended throughout Key Stage 2 and in Y5 and Y6, higher attaining pupils have a satisfactory recall of number facts to 100 using them to add, subtract, multiply and divide. Some are able to recall and apply their knowledge of multiplication tables when solving problems. Pupils learn to measure length in non-standard and standard units and tell the time in analogue and digital modes. In a lesson on probability, Y5 pupils demonstrate developing powers of reasoning as they predict the outcome of rolling a pair of dice and are able to record their results in graphical form. Particular attention is given to discussing the ways in which problems can be tackled and pupils are encouraged to find as many ways as possible for solving them and then explain their reasoning to the rest of the class. This is helping to build up greater confidence and interest in mathematics.
73. Throughout the school pupils enjoy their mathematics lessons especially the mental and practical activities. In most classes they are alert, responsive and join in question and answer sessions enthusiastically. In lessons

where the teaching is good or very good, pupils sustain concentration, show enthusiasm, work well and are supportive of one another. However, in both keystages in the few lessons where unsatisfactory teaching occurs, behaviour quickly deteriorates, concentration wanes, interest is lacking and progress is poor.

74. The quality of teaching is satisfactory or better in most lessons with some very good teaching. Teachers plan their lessons very carefully and objectives are clear. Targets are set for each group based on good assessment of pupils' needs and abilities. Where teaching is most successful, a brisk pace is maintained, expectations are very high, pupils are challenged and extended by the tasks that are put before them and independent learning is promoted. In the unsatisfactory lessons observed, too much time is spent on maintaining discipline, tasks are poorly explained and work is unchallenging and repetitive. Teachers are presently using the National Numeracy framework to assist them with their planning and work is already underway to revise the school's mathematics policy to bring it into line with new requirements. There are good systems in place for assessing pupils' progress and a databank has been set up to help analyse the information which is gathered in order to set appropriate targets for each child. The range of resources is satisfactory and is being supplemented to meet the requirements of the Numeracy Strategy.

9. Science

75. The results of the 1998 national tests at the end of Key Stage 2 indicate that standards in science are below the national average but they are above average in comparison with similar schools. The 1999 results indicate lower attainment last year. But the inspection has found work of much higher quality in years 5 and 6 this year and there is evidence that standards are rising.
76. On entry to Key Stage 1 the pupils' knowledge and understanding of the world is below average. In their work on night and day most pupils know that the daytime shadows are caused by the sun's light being blocked and that they can cast shadows. They enjoy playing with shadow puppets and experimenting with different shapes to create effects. This extends their understanding and their use of language in relation to light and dark. In Year 2 the pupils quickly assemble a simple circuit using crocodile clips, wires, a bulb and a battery. They know how to break the circuit and which materials will allow electricity to pass through and those that will not. They are able to make sensible predictions about what they think might happen and they use suitable vocabulary to explain their ideas. They are able to record their findings on simple work sheets. Their ability to record their findings independently, however, is limited.
77. Early in Key Stage 2 the pupils complete work on magnetism. In the part of the lesson observed, much of the work was directed by the teacher with little opportunity for the pupils to predict and hypothesise. Most of the pupils are able to list the equipment they used and describe what they did and what happened. In their work on electricity the pupils are investigating simple circuits and the work is very similar to the work being done in Year 2. The work books provide for extended activities of more complex circuits but few pupils have the opportunity to attempt these. The standard of the pupils' written work is poor. Towards the end of the key stage pupils are investigating how to separate a solution of sand and salt. On a worksheet they quickly record what they know about these materials and consider how they might separate them. In small groups they complete their experiments and they are able to use appropriate vocabulary such as soluble, dissolve, filter and solution when recording their work. They reflect carefully on the processes and they are able to say why things happened and what made the experiment a success. The more able pupils were able to explain the principle of the dispersal of molecules. At the end of the key stage the pupils have been conducting a series of experiments on sound. They quickly select a range of materials for their 'sound' experiments and order them appropriately to produce simple tunes. They are able to talk confidently about how sounds can be made and altered by pouring different amounts of water into a bottle, for example, and producing higher or lower notes. They are developing greater proficiency in aspects of measuring and controlling variables in these experiments.
78. For most pupils their progress is steady. In Key Stage 1 the pupils' progress in acquiring the skills of scientific investigation is a reflection of the good teaching they receive and the opportunities given for them to conduct their own experiments. The pupils' progress slows at the beginning of Key Stage 2. The work is more teacher directed and does not build successfully on the pupils' prior learning. The pupils' progress improves rapidly towards the end of Key Stage 2. The pupils are encouraged to hypothesise and predict; work collaboratively and work systematically at their investigations.
79. Six science lessons or part lessons were observed. In Key Stage 1 the teaching was good and excellent. In key

Stage 2 the teaching ranged from unsatisfactory to very good. The pupils work most effectively in those lessons that are interesting and challenging. When the work is repetitive or when they are not sure what they are expected to do, their attention wanders. All of the lessons have clearly defined learning objectives and in most lessons a plenary session is used well to evaluate what has been learned. Where lessons were very good or excellent a very positive atmosphere was evident and there was high expectation of both attitude and attainment. Pupils were given responsibility for their own ideas and experiments. All teachers emphasise the use of correct scientific vocabulary. In the less successful lessons, however, the work lacks challenge and the organisation does not develop the pupils' ability to carry out experiments and investigations for themselves. Although the school's long term plans ensure coverage of the programmes of study, they do not ensure that the work is covered in sufficient depth and this frequently leads to repetition of work at a similar level with only limited progress. Although there is a portfolio of work to help teachers assess the pupils' attainment and progress, the examples only cover one aspect of the programme of study. In order to raise teachers' expectations of what can be achieved this portfolio could usefully be extended to illustrate progression in the range of topics covered.

80. Resources for science are satisfactory and easily accessible to teachers. Some use is made of information technology for recording data on tables and spreadsheets.

9. OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

Information Technology (IT)

81. Five lessons or part lessons were observed, three in Key Stage 1 and two in Key Stage 2. Further information was gathered from talking to staff and pupils, a scrutiny of pupils' work and the teachers' planning. In spite of a greater emphasis on teaching IT skills recently, few of the pupils in the current Year 6 reach the expected standards for their age. A small number reach the expectations in communicating information, but few are using IT with sufficient skill and understanding in handling and presenting information, controlling and measuring or in modelling.
1. Pupils in reception are learning to use the mouse to move images around the screen. They are able to select from a menu of shapes to complete a pattern and colour it in. Pupils in Year 1 are able to complete similar tasks and they begin to use the correct terminology, mouse keyboard and menu. At the end of the key stage pupils are learning the correct fingering for the keyboard using both hands. They are slowly mastering this difficult skill. They have enjoyed computer art and they have drawn simple pictures and patterns. Few of the pupils are able to confidently save, load, retrieve or print work independently. In each of the classes computers are used to support the work in reading and mathematics. The pupils' progress over Key Stage 1 has been slow. However, pupils were observed making good use of the new computer suite and the progress in the lesson seen was satisfactory.
2. The school is making very good use of the new computer suite to address some of the gaps in the pupils' learning in both key stages. This is having a more immediate impact in Key Stage 2. Throughout the key stage the pupils are using word processing to record their work. They are becoming more adept at selecting suitable fonts for different styles of work and to emphasise key words and capital letters. They can vary the layout and colour of the type with a good regard for audience and subject matter. Older pupils in the key stage are able to illustrate their work by incorporating images from the digital camera. Some groups have incorporated sound into their work. At the end of the key stage a group of pupils have produced a news sheet, 'Bentinck News' which is very well laid out in tabloid form. The pupils are beginning to handle information, use the Cd-rom for research and are being introduced to data bases and spreadsheets. They are learning how to use E-mail and to scan a web site with a view to creating the school's own web page. Some pupils have used a turtle giving instructions to complete a given course and some have created pie and bar graphs. The most recent work is very promising and there are pockets of excellence in some aspects but the great majority of the pupils do not reach the standards expected.
84. All of the pupils enjoy information technology whether it is a formal lesson or in pairs in the classroom. They listen carefully to instructions and follow them sensibly. They sustain interest and concentrate, persevering until they achieve the desired results. Most pupils share a keyboard sensibly and are able to work together. All pupils are eager to share information, ask questions and show what they have done. They look at the efforts of others and praise them. They treat the equipment carefully.
85. The teaching observed was always satisfactory, mostly good and sometimes very good. Some classes are supported very effectively by a part-time technical assistant. All of the teachers have recently undergone

intensive training to improve their own understanding and use of IT. This has had a very positive impact on staff confidence and their attitude to information technology. The staff are more at ease with the new machines and are beginning to integrate IT into their lessons. During the lessons seen, the teachers monitored the pupils' progress well. Much praise was given and the pupils' positive attitudes often stemmed from the teacher's genuine delight at their success.

86. The resources for information technology have improved significantly since the last inspection and there is evidence that the pupils' rate of progress has improved significantly over the last two terms. The subject is a priority in the school improvement plan. The school is in a good position to improve standards.

83.

83. **Religious Education**

87. During the inspection it was only possible to observe one lesson in each key stage. Judgements are made on the evidence of these lessons, a scrutiny of previous work, talking to pupils and conversations with the headteacher. The pupils' knowledge and understanding in religious education is in line with the expectations in the agreed syllabus and they make generally satisfactory progress in both key stages. The school's scheme of work and the time allocated to the subject is currently under review.

88. The pupils in Key Stage 1 learn about the major festivals of the Christian calendar such as Christmas and Easter and relate them, where possible, to other faiths. In their lesson on Houses and Homes, Year 2 look at pictures of houses from all around the world, identify similarities and differences and suggest words which describe the things they like or consider important about their own homes. They listen to the story about the man who built his house upon sand and are able to make sensible suggestions as to why this was unwise.

89. In Key Stage 2, the pupils deepen their knowledge and understanding of other world religions. As part of a project on Sikhism, all classes visit a local Gurdwara and learn about the rituals of the Sikh religion. This provides a rich source of inspiration for writing, art and music. The school has elected to teach religious education through a system of themes and, where possible, to find links between all the major religions of the world within these. On the theme of 'Creation', Year 6 pupils listen to stories from the Chinese Taoist tradition, the Cherokee Indians and Australian Aborigine myths. Through challenging questioning they are encouraged to think deeply about what they hear, to understand the place of myth and legend in the history of religion and to approach all beliefs with an open mind. There is evidence in the pupils' work from the previous year that they study the lives of people who make a great impact on the world such as Martin Luther King and Nelson Mandela.

90. In the two lessons observed the pupils' behaviour was very good. They listened with great absorption to the stories, joined in eagerly in discussion and made sensible contributions. This good response was directly related to the quality of the teaching. The lessons were well planned, expectations were high and the views of the pupils were respected and valued.

91. Resources for teaching and learning are generally adequate.

83.

83. **Art, geography and history**

92. It was not possible to observe art being taught. The scrutiny of pupils' previous work, displays in classrooms and around the school and teachers' planning indicate that these subjects have a secure place in the school's curriculum. Discussions with pupils and the scrutiny of their past and present work indicate that by the age of eleven they are achieving standards that are broadly in line with the expectations for their age.

1. In Key Stage 1, in art, the pupils experience working with a good range of media including pencils, paint, collage and sewing. Reception and Year 1 pupils draw and paint and are encouraged to observe carefully such things as leaves and their faces. The pupils in reception class look carefully at the work of Van Gogh and represent elements of his work in their own. Colour mixing skills are effectively developed as demonstrated by Year 1 sunset paintings. In Key Stage 2 there are many examples of pupils studying the work of great artists. Paintings, watercolours and pastels are used after having previously studied artists such as Hockney. As part of their topic on 'The Egyptians', Year 5 pupils produce a range of closely observed work incorporating pattern and computer generated graphics. Pupils use their skills to support their learning in other subjects, for example when drawing

and painting weather pictures in Year 3 or in their topic work in Year 6. The pupils cover an appropriate range of work and very good use is made of the skills of support staff and visiting artists. Where possible, teachers establish links with other areas of the curriculum. Skills are generally well taught and the work is progressively more demanding as the pupils move through the school.

2. The pupils in Year 6 talk confidently about most of the work they have been doing in history and geography. In geography, the pupils are able to make observations of the physical features of their surroundings and they use appropriate vocabulary. When looking at maps they are able to distinguish between roads and rivers, sea and land and settlements. The pupils in Year 3 can describe some of the features of land that is represented on maps and they understand and can interpret weather symbols. The pupils in Year 6 have a sound understanding of large scale world maps and symbols, but this has not progressed to using local or Ordnance Survey maps with any confidence. They talk enthusiastically about their current work and offer persuasive arguments for limiting the pollution caused by cars. Of particular note in these discussions, was the pupils' skilled and confident use of language and their ability to present their case orally. They clearly enjoy the work and more could be made of this enthusiasm for the subject by providing more demanding work.

95. By the end of Key Stage 2 the pupils' knowledge and understanding of the work they have done in history is generally sound. They are able to talk confidently about their past work on Ancient Egypt. Their understanding of the chronology of events is less secure but they are able to use the library to find pictures and books to help them to answer questions.

3. These subjects are taught as part of the school's programme of topics and, where possible, links are made with other subjects. This is most effective in art. The school's schemes of work for geography and history set out what should be taught but are not entirely clear about how the work becomes progressively more demanding from year to year.
96. Resources for teaching and learning in art are good. The topic boxes provide a reasonable steer to the teaching in history and geography but there is room for improvement in these resources, particularly maps of various scales, atlases and resources for both subjects that will support field work.

95. **Design Technology**

98. There was limited evidence of the pupils' work in design and technology presented during the inspection. Teachers' planning would suggest that the subject has a secure place in the curriculum but the present arrangements leave a lot to the discretion of individual staff and the pupils' progress is patchy. Few of the pupils are likely to reach the standards expected for their age.
99. In Key Stage 1 the pupils have made simple masks from paper plates, soft toys and thumb pots. These are well made and show some good attention to detail but the pupils have not been required to evaluate their work or make suggestions about how it could be improved. In Key Stage 2, one group of pupils are able to make magnetic fishing games and take great pride in the finished article. Some pupils use lego to investigate the effect that pivot, effort and load have on force or increasing movement. They are recording their work on prepared sheets, but their lack of prior learning is evident in the way they approach the task. Towards the end of the key stage the pupils are designing soft toys for the nursery. They have considered their ideas carefully and looked at design criteria. Once they have completed their toys they will test them out in the nursery. This work is making a good contribution to their understanding of how to critically evaluate their work. The pupils enjoy the work and the lessons are well planned.
100. Overall, however, there is too little progression in the work the pupils are required to do. The teachers' planning and the subject guidance is not clear about how the work will become progressively more demanding and how the pupils will learn a wider range of skills.

95. **Music**

101. All classes are taught one session of music each week and this is done by a peripatetic music specialist and, in addition, there are regular singing practices, recorder groups and, when preparing for concerts, school choir practices. During the inspection it was only possible to observe one lesson in Key Stage 2 and singing practice

in both key stages.

102. The Key Stage 1 singing practice is conducted in a most imaginative way with the three classes seated in large circles and pupils performing a number of well known songs such as 'Any old iron' and 'She'll be coming round the mountain'. They sing tunefully, with good volume and verve. In their rendition of 'Kookaburra sits in the old gum tree' they demonstrate their ability to sing a three-part-round maintaining good time and staying in tune. There is good variation in the programme that is planned for them as they sing 'Brown girl in the ring' with movement and actions. During the Key Stage 2 singing practices the pupils demonstrate their ability to keep time with syncopated rhythm as they perform 'Island in the sun' and suggest the instruments which they will be using to accompany their singing in the next lesson. They have an appropriate understanding of dynamics in singing louder and softer. The singing practices in both key stages are greatly enhanced by the spirited piano accompaniment of a visiting musician.
103. The lesson observed in Year 6 was very well planned by the peripatetic music teacher whose good subject knowledge enabled the pupils to identify the sounds of instruments in a piece of taped music and make suggestions about the style of music. They listened to complicated, clapped rhythms and reproduced them accurately. When following simple rhythm notation on the board, most pupils were able to complete the sequence accurately. Working in small groups, they were able to produce their own short, polyrhythmic compositions which were then performed for the rest of the class.
104. The response of the pupils to their music lessons is good. They clearly enjoy singing and performing. When given the opportunity to perform before an audience, they do so confidently knowing that their efforts will be listened to with interest and commented upon kindly. Opportunities for performing to a wider audience are provided through the school Christmas show and through the choir recitals at various times of the year.

95. **Physical Education**

105. During the inspection it was only possible to observe one gymnastics lesson in Key Stage 1 and two games lessons in Key Stage 2. The evidence from these lessons, a scrutiny of teachers' planning and timetables and the information contained in the policy and scheme of work for the subject would indicate that physical education has a secure place in the school curriculum. The pupils' attainment and progress is satisfactory in both key stages.
106. Year 1 pupils demonstrate the ability to climb, roll, walk and move along apparatus safely. They are learning to listen carefully to instructions and to obey commands. When given the opportunity to demonstrate their work to the rest of the class they do so confidently. Year 3 pupils are able to work sensibly in pairs when practising football skills in the playground. Many of them show great proficiency when kicking, dribbling and stopping a ball and take care to respect the space of others in the class. Year 5 pupils work in small groups bouncing and catching a ball and are able to do so from a standing position or on the move. All Key Stage 2 pupils have the opportunity to attend swimming lessons at the local pool.
107. The pupils respond with enormous enthusiasm to their physical education lessons. They are learning to control their natural exuberance as they listen to instructions, obey commands and sustain concentration for increasing lengths of time. They are developing their ability to work independently and co-operatively in pairs or small groups.
108. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in both key stages. The lessons are well planned and all aspects of the subject are covered. The resources for teaching physical education are good. After school games clubs, such as football and netball, which are run by teachers, support staff and the school's site manager, help to enhance the pupils' interest in sport and healthy activity.

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

109. The inspection was undertaken by an independent team of inspectors, led by Mr. Robert McGovern, a Registered Inspector of Schools. During the inspection fifty lessons or parts of lessons were observed; this amounted to over thirty-eight hours. Assemblies and a number of registration periods were observed. Planned discussions took place with the headteacher, the teachers, non-teaching staff and governors. Samples of work from a selection of pupils across all year groups were scrutinised and a selection of pupils were heard to read. Additionally, the inspectors talked to many pupils about their work and asked them to read books and samples of their own work. All of the documentation provided by the school was analysed. A parents' meeting was held and parents' questionnaires were completed by forty of the families. These were analysed and the results used to help inform the inspection.

110. DATA AND INDICATORS

Pupil data

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR- Y6	190	1	50	112
Nursery Unit/School	19	0	5	0

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	10.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18:1

Education support staff (YR – Y6)

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked each week	99.5

Qualified teachers (Nursery school, classes or unit)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	1:19

Education support staff (Nursery school, classes or unit)

Total number of education support staff

5

Total aggregate hours worked each week

46.5

Average class size:

19

Financial data

Financial year:

1999/00

	£
Total Income	444,000.00
Total Expenditure	445,400
Expenditure per pupil	2,381
Balance brought forward from previous year	49,900
Balance carried forward to next year	48,500

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:

190

Number of questionnaires returned:

40

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	35	47.5	2.5	15.00	
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	47.5	47.5	2.5	2.5	
The school handles complaints from parents well	28.9	42.1	21.1	7.9	
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	35.9	53.8		10.3	
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	51.3	33.3	2.6	12.8	
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	60.00	40.0			
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	55.0	45.0			
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	36.8	34.2	10.5	18.4	
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	53.8	30.8	7.7	7.7	
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	42.5	50.0	5.0	2.5	
My child(ren) like(s) school	67.5	32.5			