

INSPECTION REPORT

ST PAUL'S CRAY CE PRIMARY SCHOOL

St Paul's Cray

LEA area: Bromley

Unique reference number: 101647

Headteacher: Mrs A Ward

Reporting inspector: Mrs J M Punnett
17826

Dates of inspection: 17th to 20th July 2000

Inspection number: 188567

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Buttermere Road St Paul's Cray Orpington Kent
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body St Paul's Cray CE Primary School
Name of chair of governors:	Cllr. W Hawthorne
Date of previous inspection:	July 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs J M Punnett	Registered inspector	Physical education	What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
Mrs D E Lott	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils?
Mr R Lever	Team member	Science, design and technology, children aged under five	
Miss D Latham	Team member	Art, music, religious education, special educational needs	
Mrs J Worden	Team member	Mathematics, information technology, equality of opportunity	How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mrs M Gibbon	Team inspector	English, geography, history, English as an additional language	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Paul's Cray Church of England Primary School educates boys and girls aged between 3 and 11. The school has 40 children who attend on a part-time basis in the Nursery and, during the term of the inspection, a further 19 children were aged under five in a Reception class. In total, there are 256 full-time pupils which is bigger than most other schools of the same type. The school has 16 more girls than boys on roll. Four pupils have English as an additional language. There is a high incidence of children from traveller families in the school, and whilst the number of these changes fairly frequently due to travelling, the recent percentage has been around 18 per cent. Overall, 25 per cent of the intake, including travellers, are from ethnic minority backgrounds. Around 40 per cent of the pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is well above the national average. Current figures for pupils with special educational needs in this school total 114; this is 50 per cent of pupils, much more than twice the national average. Nine pupils have statements of special educational need, which is above the national average. The school is located in an urban regeneration area. During the last school year, 26 pupils entered the school other than at the usual time of first admission and 33 left it at times which were not those of the normal leaving or transfer for most pupils. There is high mobility across the school: 42 per cent of the current Year 6 did not receive all their schooling at St Paul's Cray. Children enter the Nursery at standards well below the national average. Their language and literacy skills are very low.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school, which is committed to meeting the needs of all its pupils. The good quality of its leadership and management and the good quality of the teaching result in the pupils making good progress and achieving high standards for their capabilities particularly in mathematics and science. There is good teamwork that supports teaching and learning and answers the varied needs of pupils. The headteacher has a clear vision for this school and leadership is strong. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- The leadership and management of the school are good and give it a clear sense of direction.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs and those from traveller backgrounds is very good and assists their learning very well.
- The provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good.
- Pupils' attitudes to school are very good and support their learning very well.
- The quality of teaching is good overall and promotes good progress.

What could be improved

- Standards in English in both key stages.
- Standards in science at Key Stage 1 as higher achieving pupils are not given sufficient challenge.
- Information technology in Year 6. The National Curriculum requirements to teach all aspects of the subject are not met at Key Stage 2.
- The role of curriculum co-ordinators as they have insufficient time to observe teaching in their subjects.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in July 1996 and, since then, it has made a good improvement and has a similar capacity to continue to improve. There are substantial improvements in the quality of teachers' assessment practice, learning objectives are more clearly identified in teachers' lesson plans, and the needs of higher achievers are better, but not fully, met. Teaching has also improved as there is now less unsatisfactory teaching. The trends for improvement in English, mathematics and science are similar to the national trend, although at a much lower level. Support for pupils with special educational needs and for pupils from traveller families has improved, and is now very good. The organisation of the teaching of information technology has improved and, with the planned in-service training for teachers due to take place next term, the school is on course to meet the previous

key issue fully. Statutory requirements in one element of the information technology curriculum are not met in Year 6. Standards in information technology and music have improved at Key Stage 1 but standards in art, design and technology and physical education are not as good as they were at Key Stage 2, although swimming is better. Lower standards are due in part to the school's concentration on the core subjects.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with				Key
	All schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
English	E	E	E	C	Well above A average above B average Average C Below average D Well below average E
Mathematics	E	E	E	E	
Science	E	E	E	C	

The information shows that, compared with all schools, standards are consistently well below average. However, compared with similar schools, standards are average in English and science and weakest in mathematics. The school has set appropriate targets to improve standards in the end of the Key Stage 2 national tests in English and mathematics and is on course to exceed these targets. The findings of the inspection judge standards in English to be below those found in most other schools. This is an improvement which is due to the school's successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. In mathematics and science, the inspection finds standards to be similar to those found in most schools, which is an improvement on the 1999 test results. The improvement in results in mathematics is due in part to the support given to the school by the Local Education Authority's mathematics team who have been working with them for the past year. In science the improvement is due to challenging teaching in Year 6. In English, standards are below average in reading, speaking and listening and well below average in writing. In mathematics, pupils show good abilities when undertaking mental calculations and, in science, their investigative skills are well developed. In art, design and technology, geography, history, music, and physical education in Year 6, standards are broadly similar to those found in most schools. Religious education meets the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus. In information technology, statutory requirements are not fully met in Year 6, and standards are, therefore, below those found in most schools. The pupils at this school come in with well below average attainment, and by the age of 11, have reached below average attainment in English, and average attainment in mathematics and science. The school does add value, especially given the high turnover of pupils and the large number of pupils with special educational needs in the current Year 6.

The findings of the inspection are that the current Year 2 pupils are attaining standards in reading, writing and science which are below those found in most schools. Standards in mathematics, information technology, art, design and technology, geography, history, and physical education are similar to most schools. Standards in music are above those in other schools. Religious education meets the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus. Children aged under five reach satisfactory standards in their knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development, physical development and personal and social education. Children reach lower than expected standards in their language and literacy and mathematical development. Throughout the school, pupils, including those with special educational needs, traveller pupils, and pupils for whom English is an additional language, make good progress in their learning and achieve standards which reflect their potential. Higher achievers make good progress in Year 6 and satisfactory progress throughout the rest of the school.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy lessons and generally work hard.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good both in and out of lessons. There was no evidence of bullying or oppressive behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils co-operate well, work well together in lessons and share resources sensibly.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Many pupils are late for school and many take holidays during term time.

Pupils' positive attitudes to school are a significant factor in helping them to make good progress in their learning. Lateness and absence slow down pupils' progress.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Seventeen per cent of the teaching observed during the inspection was very good or better, 49 per cent was good and 31 per cent was satisfactory. Just under three per cent of lessons were unsatisfactory. The teaching of English and mathematics, including literacy and numeracy, is good. There is very good teaching of pupils with special educational needs, which is part of the overall good provision for these pupils. Teaching meets the needs of all pupils satisfactorily. Teachers have a sound knowledge of the subjects that they teach and impart basic skills, such as literacy and numeracy, well. They have appropriate expectations of the standards that the pupils can achieve and, in almost all cases, manage them well. Assessment information is used well, especially in literacy and numeracy, to plan the pupils' work and teachers make it clear to pupils what they are expected to learn in the lesson. Assessment information is not well used to support learning in other subjects.

Throughout the school, the quality of learning is good. Pupils of all ages and levels of attainment work hard and make good progress. They rise to the challenges that are presented to them, apply themselves with interest and sustained concentration and produce good amounts of work. In mathematics, pupils make very good progress in their learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall. Good provision for the children under five. It meets the requirements of the National Curriculum, where these apply, and religious education, apart from information technology in Year 6.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision and support for pupils with special educational needs are very good and are strengths of the school. The provision and support, as well as the family liaison, for traveller children are very good and are strengths of the school.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Pupils with English as an additional language receive good quality support from classroom assistants.

Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Very good provision for pupils' moral and social development because adults have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and relationships with others.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory overall. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very good. Pupils' academic and personal development is well monitored. Arrangements for child protection are satisfactory although there are weaknesses in health and safety provision. Assessment procedures in subjects other than English and mathematics are underdeveloped.

Very effective links with parents. Visits and visitors enhance the learning opportunities for all pupils from the Nursery to Year 6.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher has built an effective senior management team. Job descriptions are being appropriately reviewed. There is a good team spirit at the school which contributes to the good ethos.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Statutory requirements are not fully met in information technology in Year 6. The school development plan is not costed or formalised beyond one year. Finances are managed efficiently and the value for money is considered when making purchases.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Appropriate and meaningful targets are set for improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Good use is made of all staff, time, curricular resources and the building. The role of curriculum co-ordinators is underdeveloped: there are insufficient opportunities for them to observe teaching in their subjects. There is no secure outdoor play area for children under five in Reception classes. There is no designated medical room.

Although there are inadequacies in the library provision, overall, staff, accommodation and resources are adequate to support the curriculum.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like coming to school. • The school is well led and managed. • Behaviour is good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A small minority of parents have concerns about the amount of homework. • The changes of teachers in the Year 5 class. • The amount of information about what is taught.

The inspection team agrees with the positive views of parents. Homework is variable with some inconsistency in the Year 5 class. The inspectors judge that parents' concerns about the Year 5 class are justified although the school has made efforts to ensure consistency in supply cover during the long-term absence of staff. The school already has suitable plans in place to address the issue of curricular information.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The national end of Key Stage 2 tests for St Paul's Cray Church of England Primary School in 1999 show that, compared with all schools, standards were well below average in English, mathematics and science. Compared with similar schools, standards were average in English and science and well below average in mathematics. Standards in all three subjects have been consistently well below average compared with all schools since 1996. During the period 1996 to 1999, taking English, mathematics and science together, the performance of girls was below the national average and that of boys was well below the national average.

2. The percentage of pupils attaining Level 4 and above, and Level 5 and above, in the 1999 tests in English, mathematics and science was well below the national average in all cases except for Level 4 and above in mathematics where the percentage was very low and at Level 4 in English which was below the national average. The assessments made by teachers were well below average except for English and science at Level 5 and above which were below average.

3. In English, standards have been improving since 1997. In science, there was a significant improvement between 1998 and 1999 due to challenging teaching in Year 6. However, in mathematics, standards have been declining since 1996 although this inspection finds a significant improvement in pupils' attainment due to the support from the Local Education Authority team and the effort made by the school to address the low standards. This year, there has been a 35 per cent improvement in the provisional test results. Taking the previous four years together, there are differences in the performance of boys and girls. Boys achieved less well in English and mathematics and their performance in science was very low.

4. The findings of the inspection judge standards in English, including literacy, to be below those found in most other schools. This is an improvement on the school's 1999 end of key stage test results which is due to the school's successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. In mathematics and science, standards are judged to be similar to those found in most schools, which reflects the 1999 results in science and represents a considerable improvement in the results in mathematics. Standards in numeracy are good. The school has successfully tackled the issue of underachievement in mathematics at Key Stage 2 well, with good support from the local authority. The results in mathematics have improved by 35 per cent, exceeding the school's target by 11 per cent. This year, there is an improvement of 18 per cent in science results and an eight per cent improvement in English test scores. These are good improvements. Since 1996, the amount of pupil mobility has increased significantly resulting in very few Year 6 pupils having attended the school throughout Key Stage 2. In the current Year 6 class, there is 42 per cent mobility and 58 per cent of pupils have special educational needs. Pupils in the current Year 5 class have achieved less well due to a succession of supply teachers covering long-term absence of staff. In information technology, standards are below those found in most schools. Aspects, such as handling and analysing information, are underdeveloped and opportunities for Year 5 and Year 6 to monitor changes in the environment have not been taught due to the long-term staff absence. In art, design and technology, history, geography, music and physical education, standards are similar to those found in most schools. Standards in religious education meet the requirements of the locally Agreed

Syllabus. Compared with the findings of the school's previous OFSTED inspection, standards are not as good as they were in English, art, design and technology and physical education, although swimming has improved. In information technology, they are the same as the last inspection, but for different reasons. In music, history, geography and religious education, standards are similar to those found at the school's last inspection.

5. In English, in Year 6, standards are below average in speaking and listening and reading and well below average in writing. The school is aware of the weakness in writing and this is clearly identified in the school development plan. Higher achieving and average pupils respond to questions clearly and concisely. They use an appropriate and widening range of vocabulary and communicate their ideas confidently. Very few pupils are able to read with sufficient fluency and the awareness of information retrieval skills and the use of the library are too limited. The high proportion of lower achieving pupils write coherently using simple sentences but levels of accuracy in spelling and punctuation are very variable and ideas are limited in their expression. Handwriting is below average, and the standard of presentation is inconsistent. Pupils with English as an additional language attain standards that reflect their abilities. In mathematics, by the end of Key Stage 2, the pupils find patterns in their number work and understand the term 'factor', although not all are certain about the term 'prime factor'. When solving problems mentally, most can use strategies, such as doubling and halving, and a few higher achieving pupils use rounding to find approximate answers to problems. By the age of 11, in science, the pupils describe the functions of some important plant and human organs. They understand pollination and photosynthesis and, in their study of humans, they consider healthy living and misuse of drugs and substances. In information technology, by the time pupils are in Year 6, most can log on competently and use the mouse and tool bar menus with ease. In lessons, they are able to collate data collected in science and enter it into a database.

6. In Year 6, in art, pupils represent chosen features of the world around them with increasing accuracy and attention to detail. They use computer programs to produce both designs and artistic compositions. In design and technology, they designed and made games for the school fair and raised a significant sum of money. In history, pupils have an increasing depth of factual knowledge and understanding of Tudor times, Victorian Britain and Britain after the 1930s. There are weaknesses in the range of extended writing for higher achievers in history. In Year 6, in geography, pupils use atlases in their research on different countries, but there is a weakness in their study of distant localities. In music, the choir composed and sang a Millennium song at the opening of the Bromley religious education centre. In physical education, pupils understand the effect of exercise on the body. They swim well by the end of Year 6. In religious education, pupils understand some Bible stories and how they are linked to their own experiences. They discuss the implications of rules in their own lives and how rules and laws help communities to live together.

7. The national end of Key Stage 1 tests in 1999 show that standards in reading at Level 2, and at Level 3, were below the national average. In writing, standards at Level 2 and above were well below the national average and below the national average at Level 3 and above. In mathematics, the percentage of pupils reaching Level 2 or above was well below the national average. At the higher Level 3, the percentage of pupils was close to the national average. When the averages of the school's test data are compared with those of all schools, they show that standards were below average in reading and mathematics and well below average in writing. When the averages of the school's test data are compared with those of similar schools, they show that standards were above average in reading and mathematics, and average in writing.

8. When the end of Key Stage 1 reading, writing and mathematics results for 1999 are compared with 1998, 1997 and 1996, they show that standards in reading and mathematics have improved. In writing, standards show little improvement since 1997. Over these four years, the performance of both boys and girls was well below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics. Girls achieved very low standards in mathematics. The national end of Key Stage 1 assessments by teachers for 1999 show that standards in science at Level 2 and above were below the national average and well below the national average at Level 3 and above.

9. The findings of the inspection show that, in Year 2, standards are similar to the 1999 test results in English and science. In mathematics, standards are higher than indicated by the 1999 national tests. Attainment in religious education meets that expected by the locally Agreed Syllabus. In information technology, standards are similar to those found in most schools, which is an improvement on the findings of the last inspection. In Year 2, standards are also similar to most schools in art, design and technology, history, geography, physical education and religious education. The standards found in music are above. The application of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum is generally good.

10. In speaking and listening, by the age of seven, most pupils listen carefully to their teacher and to each other. They enjoy listening to stories and poems and answer questions about them willingly and with interest. Their attainment is below average. Pupils enter the school with low language and literacy skills and a number of pupils on the register of special educational needs are receiving support for hearing and speech problems; these factors inhibit their progress. However, throughout the school, pupils are doing well for their capabilities. The findings of the inspection are that standards are below average in Year 2 in both reading and writing. Pupils generally read simple texts accurately and higher achieving pupils are developing a sound sight vocabulary. Most pupils' writing conveys meaning and some higher attaining pupils write simple sentences with accurate spelling of simple words and correct use of capital letters and full stops. In Year 2, in mathematics, the pupils know the names of two-dimensional shapes and can measure using non-standard and metric measurement. By the age of seven, in science, pupils compare materials and their various states and record their work in simple tables. They understand the importance of diet and exercise for good health and understand what plants need to grow well. In information technology, pupils use the computer to draw straight lines and in-fill segments with colour in the style of the artist Mondrian. In design and technology, they use models and pictures to develop and communicate their designs. In physical education, pupils plan and perform simple skills with safety and in geography, they identify features on plans of the area around the school. In history, pupils know about the achievements of famous people in the past, such as George Stephenson, and in music, they respond sensitively to music by Bach in assemblies. In art, pupils show satisfactory painting skills when painting in the style of Georgia O'Keeffe. In religious education, pupils know that a church is a special place for Christians.

11. Children enter the nursery with well below average standards of attainment. They make good progress in the Nursery and build on this well in Reception. Most are on course to reach suitable levels in their personal and social development, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical and creative development by the age of five. However, they are not on course to attain the expected levels in their language and literacy and numeracy because of their low levels on entry to the school.

12. Throughout the school, pupils of all capabilities make good progress, although higher attaining pupils are not always fully challenged, and attain well from a well below average level on entry to the school. Pupils with special educational needs generally make

good progress in their learning relative to their previous learning. The individual education plans drawn up for many of these pupils, with targets which are revised termly, show steadily increasing learning and achievements. This is due in a large part to the very good support and special tuition that they receive, as well as to the well co-ordinated teaching in the classroom. Those pupils with English as an additional language make good progress in their learning.

13. Pupils from traveller families also make good progress in their learning, especially where attendance has been fairly consistent. Some do very well indeed in their achievements. The range of attainment for the group is generally below average compared with the usual attainment of pupils in all primary schools, but not so much against the norm for this school. These pupils often do better in mathematics than in English.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

14. The pupils have good attitudes to their work and to others. They are keen to learn, interested in their work, listen attentively and are eager to respond to the requirements of the lesson. They are polite and friendly, know right from wrong and are considerate of other people and property. They work well in pairs and groups, are sensitive to each other's needs and enjoy helping each other. Pupils share and handle resources well. They are courteous and react positively to adults. The attitudes of the traveller pupils, pupils with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs are very good, and in the Nursery, pupils have consistently good attitudes to all that they do and to each other.

15. Pupils' behaviour is good. This was particularly noticeable since the inspection was held during the last week of the summer term. This judgement compares with 'very good' in the last inspection. Pupils know the school rules and right from wrong and are usually aware of the possible consequences of their actions. When gathering for assemblies and lessons they wait patiently, without talking or fidgeting. They know the school's high expectations of behaviour, value the rewards they receive and are aware of the sanctions that can be given. In class, their behaviour is good despite, at times, some less stimulating teaching. Pupils play well during break times and respect the environment so that there is no litter or graffiti. They know that bullying is unacceptable and what to do should they, or their peers, experience it. During the last academic year, there was one exclusion and there have been three during this year, all for a fixed period of time and for appropriate reasons.

16. Relationships in the school are very good. There is a good degree of racial and multicultural harmony and the school takes firm action on any unacceptable incidents. Pupils respond very well to the school's guidance for self discipline. They sometimes show initiative in the classroom, and there is good support for the extracurricular activities. At present, there are few specific opportunities for them to take responsibility for their own learning. Pupils show care and respect for others and their achievements, which was particularly evident when Year 5 went swimming in the local pool.

17. Pupils with special educational needs generally have very good attitudes to school, and to their work. They are interested in all the activities and experiences presented to them, and they try hard, against their capabilities. Their behaviour is generally good, although there are a few with behavioural difficulties. They usually show good respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others.

18. Pupils from traveller families also have very good attitudes to school and are interested in their work and all the activities and experiences provided. They try very hard, and behave well. They show good respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others.

19. Children aged under five settle well, work and play independently. Most are willing to ask for help when they need it and they are willing to take turns and share equipment well. The children have a caring attitude towards each other. Those who have special educational needs, those with English as an additional language and traveller children, are very well integrated. All children under the age of five respond positively to new challenges and enjoy their work. They are attentive and interested in all that they do and are polite, friendly and well behaved. The children quickly make effective relationships with adults and are learning to make friends with other children. Role-play in the home corner and the "post office" enables them to work co-operatively with each other. They express their feelings, behave in appropriate ways and are developing an understanding of what is right and wrong.

20. Attendance is satisfactory. During this last academic year, it has averaged just over 93 per cent, which is an improvement on previous years but still below the last available national average. Unauthorised absence at 0.6 per cent is in line with the national average. Many pupils are late for school in the morning despite the school's hard work to improve their punctuality. The school is aware of the factors that impede the time keeping of some pupils. Authorised absences are mostly for acceptable reasons but there are some for unacceptable reasons. Many pupils take holidays during term time, and a few are for more than the permitted number of days.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

21. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. It was found to be good or better in almost two thirds of lessons. Teaching was satisfactory in a third of lessons and unsatisfactory in a small minority of lessons, less than three per cent. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection which judged teaching to be at least satisfactory in 94 per cent of lessons, unsatisfactory in six per cent of lessons. The quality of teaching in the upper years of Key Stage 2 was judged to be of a high quality. The findings of this inspection show that the quality of teaching has improved overall.

22. The quality of teaching and learning is good in the Nursery and in the Reception class in all areas of learning. The teachers have a very encouraging manner which helps the children to contribute to lessons well. They ensure that every child has the opportunity to take part in all activities, which helps to build the children's confidence. Children are encouraged to be independent, and tidy up and dress themselves. Open-ended questions are used very well to encourage the children to think and answer clearly, before the adult reinforces their understanding by clear explanations. Adults assess each child very well on a one-to-one basis by close observation and questioning to ensure that an appropriate curriculum is planned and taught, so that the children can make further progress. The teachers have a thorough understanding of the needs of young children, which enables them to provide suitable experiences. A strength of provision is the level of co-operation between all adults involved in teaching the children under five. They provide a good quality learning environment especially in the Nursery, and demonstrate a sound understanding of the intellectual and pastoral needs of young children. Staff are successful at improving children's social skills and provide good opportunities for children under five to learn self-discipline and independence.

23. At Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching is good overall. At this key stage, of the 36 lessons observed during the inspection, 26 lessons were good or very good, nine were

satisfactory and one was unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching is good in English, mathematics, art, information technology, music, physical education and religious education and satisfactory in all other subjects. The quality of the teaching of literacy is good overall. The quality of numeracy teaching is good as a result of more sharply focused teaching in line with the National Numeracy Strategy. Lesson plans set out clear objectives in all subjects observed. Resources that will be needed are identified. Opportunities to identify assessment tasks in the lesson planning are well thought through in literacy and numeracy, and some good examples were also seen in history and physical education. Features of good teaching include the development of good relationships with the pupils, confident use and reinforcement of specific vocabulary and lessons that develop careful observational and analytical skills. Teachers' verbal comments are often useful and assist pupils to make progress. Support staff are generally well organised by class teachers although, occasionally, teachers' requirements are not made clear which results in a slower pace of learning.

24. Due to the good quality of the teaching, the quality of learning at Key Stage 1 is good. The pupils make good progress in English, art, information technology, music and religious education and very good progress in their learning of mathematics where the quality of learning is good. They make satisfactory progress in science, design and technology, geography, history and physical education where the quality of learning is satisfactory. Thirty-six lessons were observed at Key Stage 1 and learning was good or better in 26 of these, satisfactory in nine and unsatisfactory in one lesson. Good learning is evident where pupils use simple dictionaries independently in Year 2 to support their writing of their science experiment. In English, pupils learn to spell a greater range of words accurately and to use them in writing. They gain greater control in their use of paintbrushes and pencils and in religious education they improve their understanding of the need to care and share and how these relate to the wider world. An example of good quality learning was found in a history lesson where pupils closely observed old photographs and artefacts. They reached conclusions about the differences between schools and dress in Victorian times and those of today. The development of subject specific language is also well encouraged across the key stage. For example, in a Year 1 games lesson, the pupils learnt key vocabulary such as retrieve, field, relays, and teams..

25. At Key Stage 2, the overall quality of teaching is good. At this key stage, of the 32 lessons seen during the inspection, a half of lessons were at least good and just under a half were satisfactory. One lesson was unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching is good in English and mathematics, including literacy and numeracy, and satisfactory in all other subjects. In lessons where the teaching is good or better, teachers employ a wide range of strategies to develop pupils' learning. For example, in a very good English lesson, the teacher's subject knowledge enabled the pupils to gain a sound understanding of connectives by providing a good level of challenge to pupils of all abilities. The plenary was effectively used to reinforce pupils' awareness of using more complex sentence structures in their writing. In a lesson about religious journeys, the teacher created an atmosphere, which contributed significantly to pupils' spiritual development. This resulted in pupils making very good progress in their learning. Weak classroom management and control and low level activities in an athletics lesson resulted in pupils making little progress in their learning.

26. At Key Stage 2, overall, the good quality of teaching promotes good quality learning. This promotes good progress in English and, in mathematics, the good quality of learning helps pupils to make very good progress. The quality of learning is satisfactory in science, design and technology, art, geography, history, music and religious education and promotes sound progress. In physical education, the quality of learning, and progress, are good in swimming and satisfactory progress in other aspects of the subject. The quality of

learning in information technology is satisfactory overall, and most pupils, including those with special educational needs and those from traveller backgrounds, make satisfactory progress but this is slower towards the end of the key stage. At Key Stage 2, 32 lessons were observed during the inspection. In these lessons, the quality of learning was at least good in 16 lessons, satisfactory in 15 and unsatisfactory in one. Where learning is good, pupils use and improve their learning skills. They co-operate well in pairs to discuss their science work about liquids and solids. In the unsatisfactory lesson, the activities were too basic for the pupils' abilities and little learning took place.

27. Good learning takes place in English as pupils widen their speaking and listening skills through expressing their ideas and opinions in classes. Pupils show an awareness of how they can improve their work. They show interest and concentration on English work due to the focused teaching during the literacy hour. Sound progress is made in reading, particularly in improving fluency and accuracy. During the numeracy hour, focused teaching ensures that pupils stay on task and apply themselves intellectually to problem solving tasks. In information technology, pupils log on competently and use the mouse and tool bar menus with ease. In geography, pupils develop their environmental awareness in their study of the importance of water.

28. In the previous inspection, the higher achieving pupils were insufficiently challenged at the lower end of the school. This inspection finds some improvement in this area although it is not consistently good across the school. High expectations are evident for pupils of all abilities in Year 6 and work is clearly differentiated by task for the age and ability of the pupils. Assessment shows some good improvements since the last inspection. In some subjects, teachers use the government's published schemes of work to ensure that learning intentions enable pupils to make progress in each subject. However, this is not in place for all subjects such as art, music and religious education. Teachers have satisfactory or better subject knowledge in most areas of the curriculum.

29. The teaching and learning of pupils with special educational needs is very good indeed. The knowledge and understanding of what needs to be taught, by the co-ordinator for special needs provision, the specialist teachers employed for specific tuition, and class teachers are very good. There is very good liaison between class teachers and specialist staff, and very good integration of the support teaching within mainstream classroom work wherever possible. Where pupils need special individual or small group tuition, this is done by specialist teachers in withdrawal groups, but timetabling is carefully monitored to provide the best opportunities with the minimum of disturbance to the entitlement to the National Curriculum. There is expert use of testing and assessment, both for initial identification of needs, and as ongoing evaluation of progress, and a bank of tests and assessments is available for different uses. Assessment is well used to formulate plans for next steps in teaching. Specialist agencies are utilised well. There is excellent support for those with dyslexia and other specific learning difficulties, and for those with behavioural problems. Early identification and intervention are a priority for the school, particularly in the field of literacy. The "Reading Recovery" scheme is used to aid progress in reading, and is taught by a specially trained teacher.

30. The teaching and learning of children from traveller families is very good: there is specific support for these pupils, from specialist teachers who sometimes work within the classroom in mainstream lessons, and sometimes withdraw pupils for specific tuition individually or in small groups. There is very good liaison between class-teachers and the specialist travellers' team teachers. These teachers have had special training that enhances the support they are able to give to these pupils, and their knowledge and understanding of the curriculum they teach and of the needs of pupils from travelling families are very good indeed.

31. The quality of teaching and learning for pupils for whom English is an additional language is good. They receive good quality help from learning support assistants and take a full part in class activities.

32. In general, throughout the school, homework is used well to support learning. Younger pupils are encouraged regularly to take books home to read and spellings to learn. The homework policy has been reviewed and is ready to be sent to parents at the start of the new term. Seventy seven per cent of parents who replied to the parents' questionnaire are satisfied with the work that children are expected to do at home. At the parents' meeting, the views supported the school's approach.

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

33. Overall, the curriculum provided by the school is satisfactory. It includes all subjects of the National Curriculum, together with religious education and personal and social education. The curriculum meets all statutory requirements and offers pupils a good range of opportunities at Key Stage 1 and a satisfactory range of opportunities at Key Stage 2. Older pupils at Key Stage 2 do not receive all aspects of the curriculum in information technology. The time allocated to each area of the curriculum is appropriate and weekly teaching hours are satisfactory. There is regular teaching of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, which the school is fully implementing. These make good provision for pupils' learning. The curriculum promotes the aims of the school effectively and generally supports intellectual, physical and personal development of all pupils well. The very small numbers of pupils who have English as an additional language are able to participate in all the school's opportunities and receive support which is well matched to their needs.

34. The school's previous inspection report identified as a key issue the need to ensure that the good practice of planning effectively to meet the needs of the higher achievers, was extended to all classes. A further key issue was to improve the organisation for teaching information technology, so that pupils' learning in all the programmes of study was coherent and progressive. The school has satisfactorily addressed these issues although the needs of the higher achieving pupils are not consistently met in all classes, for example, in Year 4 insufficient challenges are offered to the higher achievers in physical education lessons. Opportunities for extended writing in history and geography are not apparent in all classes. Literacy and numeracy are now taught in ability groups with effective strategies, which support the good progress of pupils of all abilities. The school has also introduced target setting in literacy and numeracy to identify specific groups of pupils. Teachers' planning is regularly monitored by the head teacher and some subject co-ordinators. Planning in information technology is not fully implemented although there has been satisfactory improvement in the programme of study with an appropriate range of experiences across the school.

35. Literacy and numeracy lessons are taught daily and other subjects are taught and planned separately. Planning in subjects makes appropriate allowance for the school's occasional mixed-age classes. In some subjects, there is a good focus on developing pupils' knowledge base, but there is insufficient focus on the progressive development of their skills. However, the school has made good use of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's guidelines to respond to the requirements of Curriculum 2000 in planning for geography, music, history and physical education. These revised programmes of study plan for the appropriate focus on pupils' skills development and are in place to be implemented in the next academic year.

36. The school's literacy curriculum is effectively enhanced by the teaching of the programme for Additional Literacy Support in Key Stage 2. The application of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum is generally good. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop and consolidate their literacy skills, such as in the annotation and labelling of a range of plans and diagrams in science and geography. Although pupils write letters as evacuees when they learn about Britain in the 1930s, opportunities to write at length in subjects such as history and geography are limited. Numeracy is used effectively in other curriculum areas such as art, science, design and technology and information technology. In registration, pupils are given good reinforcement of their numeracy skills in Key Stage 1 when they work with attendance and registration numbers.

37. The quality and range of learning opportunities provided for pupils with special educational needs are good and, in terms of specialist support and help, very good. In particular, the support for teaching in literacy and mathematics is carefully planned and executed, making good use of ongoing individual assessment to plan the next steps in learning. Early intervention in literacy is a priority, and identification of special educational needs in this area is carried out by early screening in the Reception year and in Year 1, followed by a special programme to address these needs. There is also a programme of "Reading Recovery" taught by a specially trained teacher.

38. The quality and range of learning opportunities for children from traveller families are also good, and the specialist support and teaching they receive from the travellers' team teachers are very good indeed. Distance learning packs are available for those pupils who are travelling and unable to attend school on a regular basis for a time, and when such pupils return to school, there is a facility for booster tuition to help them catch up as far as possible.

39. The school continues to put a strong emphasis on the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. This is a strength of the school which underpins the work of the teachers and the progress and personal development that pupils make. The positive, very caring ethos of the school informs all activities and relationships. All teaching and support staff have a shared sense of purpose and their relationships with pupils are based on trust and respect. All pupils with special educational needs, those with English as an additional language and those from different cultures take a full part in all lessons, activities, responsibilities and experiences available in the school.

40. The school's provision for the pupils' spiritual development is good and spiritual awareness is fostered and developed through several areas of school life. The carefully planned and monitored programme of a daily act of collective worship has a mainly Christian focus and allows pupils time to reflect through prayer, singing and discussions in a thoughtful and peaceful atmosphere. The vicar of the local parish church is closely involved with the school and gives regular input to pupils who visit the church for festival services. There is a good spiritual element in the religious education curriculum where pupils have a growing understanding and respect for other faiths. In these, as well as other lessons, pupils are encouraged to share their personal experiences and to reflect on the feelings of others. Key Stage 1 pupils visited the local nature sanctuary at Eagle Heights; this gave them the opportunity to experience the awe and wonder of nature through snakes shedding their skin and the movement of birds' wings in flight.

41. Pupils' very good moral and social development is founded on the well-established and known behaviour policy. This is made clear to all parents and pupils and is a constant point of reference for all members of the school community. Pupils are led to a high degree of maturity for their age after a remarkably short time in the school. Staff are good role

models for pupils in their application of the school's rules, rewards and sanctions. The rules are clearly displayed in each classroom and other areas of the school. Right from wrong is made very clear to pupils. The weekly achievement time gives recognition to pupils' good behaviour and application to school life as well as their academic progress. Sanctions are applied consistently and fairly and are used to reinforce expectations. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own behaviour, to show kindness and consideration and to accept and value the differences in others. The school is a well ordered, happy and caring community where each child is acknowledged as an individual and where pupils feel personally valued and secure in their surroundings. The school recognises the need and has organised a much wider range of opportunities for pupils to take responsibility from next term.

42. There is a good programme for pupils' personal, social and health education which is mainly taught as an adjunct to science. The scheme of work lacks sufficient detail and does not reflect all that is being taught. There is no co-ordinator for the subject, at present, but the school has begun to review this need together with the forthcoming requirements for citizenship. The school provides appropriately for pupils' personal and social education. The programme is taught in Key Stage 2 through a range of subject areas and is well enhanced in Year 6 through a specific 'circle time' programme. There is an appropriate sex education policy taught through the science curriculum which also includes reference to drug misuse. Personal development is an area of importance in the teaching of both pupils with special educational needs and those from travelling families, and the school makes every effort to promote and maintain good relationships and positive attitudes. Teaching is sensitive and caring, and pays a great deal of attention to the establishment and building of self-esteem and social skills, with considerable success.

43. At the time of the last inspection, there were insufficient opportunities to provide pupils with an awareness of the multicultural aspects of life in Britain. This has been addressed well and particularly good use is made of the multicultural backgrounds of the pupils and parents of the school. Aspects of the lives of the travelling community have been incorporated into the comparison of life in the pupils' grandparents' childhood and that today. The cultural traditions of travellers are welcomed and respected as part of the cultural diversity within the school, and they are currently celebrating features of the travelling life with an attractive display in the school library of photographs and books, together with interesting drawings and writing by traveller children. The school is conscious of the multicultural nature of Britain when choosing resources, particularly in computer software, and is looking at ways to develop this further through literature and the literacy hour. An awareness of cultures beyond Britain continues to be well featured in the curriculum with a particularly strong understanding of life in Japan, which is supported by input from parents. Making potato prints of Japanese characters, drawing a waterfall in the style of Hokusai and origami are some of the work that have been done. Music is played at the beginning and end of each assembly and is a good area of the curriculum. Pupils now have a good input to their cultural development.

44. The school has maintained the good range of extra-curricular opportunities seen in the previous inspection, and has extended it to include a computer club. Pupils are able to take part in a good range of visits and benefit from visitors to the school. They visit the local parish church and take part in services, the National Gallery and the Millennium Dome and in the school, they take part in drama productions and art and book weeks with visiting artists and writers. In their work in geography, they visit places such as Shoreham and Lullingstone and make good use of the local area around the school. They take part in local competitions and festivals and the choir sings in places such as the Civic Centre and a local store. Pupils take part in a good range of sporting activities and have very recent success in a kwik cricket competition.

45. Older members of the community help to enrich and enhance pupils' experience and understanding. In history lessons, they visit the school to talk about their lives as children and the changes they have experienced. The school has established a good link, through a member of staff, with the International Children's Education Trust. This has resulted in the whole school becoming involved in an exchange of pictures with a Japanese school. Parents in the school have also helped to enhance pupils' understanding of Japanese art and traditions.

46. The school has appropriate links with the secondary schools to which the oldest pupils transfer. Most, but not all, pupils are able to visit their new school at least once before they start in September and staff from the secondary school visit to talk to the pupils. However, due to the systems and selection procedures over which the school has no control, some pupils are unable to make these connections before they transfer.

47. Overall, pupils have satisfactory access to the curriculum and equality of opportunity to learn and to make progress. The last report did not make a judgement on this aspect but there were references to good features, which are now very good, such as the curricular provision for pupils with special educational needs and from traveller backgrounds. Previously information technology planning was not systematic enough to ensure a complete and coherent coverage but this too has improved. In addition, the school has worked hard to find out why underachievement of boys, at Key Stage 2, is greater than that of girls. Test results have been analysed closely and, to encourage greater interest in reading, the range of non-fiction books has been extended. However, not all pupils have benefited equally from what the school provides. Examination of the work in Year 5 reveals significant weaknesses, however, the school has made significant efforts to ensure consistency of supply cover during the long term absence of staff. Work is not always well matched to the needs of all pupils and, in some subjects, for example, in one of the mathematics groups, there is uneven development of some of the topics. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have not experienced the full range of the planned curriculum for information technology and because this is the end of the academic year, provision in Year 6 does not meet the statutory requirements.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

48. The school takes care to ensure pupils' welfare and knows each one as an individual together with his or her home circumstances. It provides a friendly, welcoming and secure atmosphere with good relationships between adults and pupils and understanding support for those in need. This has positive effects on pupils' attitudes to learning and their achievements.

49. Staff are attentive to child protection matters and all have been trained recently although the headteacher is awaiting training in her role as co-ordinator. The child protection policy and procedures do not stand alone at present and are not school specific, but the school is aware that this needs to be updated. The satisfactory records are not securely stored at all times.

50. Some aspects of the management of health and safety do not meet the requirements, including risk assessments in all the required subjects. The lack of a secure play area for the Reception classes, the carpet in the computer room and the storage of cleaning materials are amongst other matters drawn to the attention of the school. First aid is given by a good number of qualified staff, but doing so in the front entrance hall is unacceptable. The school does not have a medical room and not all requests are recorded. The borough's procedures for school visits are followed but there are no school procedures to guide staff for these occasions.

51. Pupils' personal development is carefully monitored with a school system of pupil profiles and annually updated records which are used to inform teachers when completing the annual reports to parents. The personal and social education programme provides good support for pupils' development and includes sex and drugs education. The school has very good relationships with, and enjoys helpful support from, the many external agencies that it uses to support this programme, those with special educational needs and other aspects of pupils' development. The school meals provided contain the required nutritional components, but the last class to eat does not always have the option to choose a hot meal.

52. The school generally works hard to promote good attendance but the attendance registers are not always marked to meet statutory requirements fully. Although the pupils who are late are monitored, attempts to improve their punctuality are insufficiently rigorous. Parents are well versed in the school's expectations for attendance but some holidays are being requested, and authorised, above the permitted number of days and there is no system to monitor easily the days taken over the year. Most reasons for absence are acceptable but the school passes some unacceptable reasons.

53. The behaviour policy is a well-embedded and strong foundation of the school's ethos and is constantly being updated. The rules are posted in many areas of the school and pupils and parents are in no doubt about the school's high expectations of behaviour. There is a suitable school system to monitor good and unacceptable behaviour closely and rewards and sanctions are fairly given. The records kept for exclusions are satisfactory but insufficiently refined. The weekly achievement time provides a good focus for pupils and the opportunity for the direct intervention by the headteacher with those who are not matching up to expectations. Pupils are given a good understanding of bullying and the school is aware that there should be a specific policy for bullying. Incidents are speedily and effectively dealt with and monitored within behavioural issues.

54. The school's procedures for monitoring pupils' academic progress are good. Assessment procedures in some subjects have been effectively improved since the school's previous inspection. A key issue from this report was the improvement of the quality of routine assessment of pupils' progress and attainment, by ensuring that teachers identify learning objectives which can be assessed, more clearly in their lesson plans. Since the previous inspection the school has, through in-service training and regular monitoring of teachers' planning, addressed this issue well.

55. The school has recently reviewed its policy for assessment to reflect the development of assessment procedures within the school. This school's assessment co-ordinator has a good understanding of her role and has prepared a clear and useful draft document which has still to be discussed by staff and governors.

56. The school now uses a good range of standardised tests in all years to track pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science through the school. The results of these tests, including the national tests, are carefully analysed and are used well to create targets for the development of pupils' skills and for the development of the curriculum and teachers' planning. This good practice is evident in assessment in mathematics where teachers assess pupils' individual and group strengths and weaknesses on their weekly planning. To support the identification that pupils' writing skills are a priority for development, the school has recently undertaken termly assessments of pupils' writing and these are related to National Curriculum levels. This information enables the school to track pupils' progress throughout the school. It is too soon to assess the full effect of these measures, but teachers feel that they have a sounder understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of pupils' writing skills. In information technology and in some other subjects

the tracking of the development of pupils' skills is not fully in place and links with assessment are weaker. The school has made good responses to the requirements of Curriculum 2000 and has made good use of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority to develop new policies and schemes of work in history, geography, art and physical education. These include assessment arrangements, which more satisfactorily link with pupils' skills and elements of the subject. Although these documents are in place, they will not be implemented until the beginning of the next academic year.

57. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and in reading and writing, mathematics and science, they keep careful records of pupils' achievements. These records are passed on at the end of each year to the pupils' next teacher and form the basis for setting individual targets for each pupil. Recording of other subjects is more variable and follows an individual format. There is no monitoring of these assessments by co-ordinators.

58. The monitoring of academic performance and of personal development for pupils with special educational needs is very good. It is careful and thorough, and is used well to plan the next steps of teaching and learning for each pupil. The procedures used for assessing their attainment and progress are very good and, beyond the basic procedures, are varied according to need. Early intervention is a priority of the school, and in the field of literacy, there is screening in the early years, followed by a special programme for those identified as having special needs in this area. Individual education plans are appropriately specific, with regularly updated targets.

59. The monitoring of academic performance and personal development for pupils who come from traveller families is also very good. It is very thorough and detailed, and again, ongoing assessment is used well to decide the next steps a pupil needs to be taught to gain success in learning. Although continuity is sometimes a problem, specialist teachers use assessment and booster tuition when pupils return to school after an absence, and liaise well with class teachers to maintain records and keep progress going.

60. For some Year 6 pupils, a special social skills course has taken place, within the school's general personal and social education programme, run by a travellers' team teacher and the education welfare officer for the school, to prepare pupils for transfer to secondary school. There will be follow-up during Year 7, at secondary school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

61. Overall, the school works well in partnership with the parents. This is borne out by the positive views that most parents have of the school. A clear judgement was not made in the previous inspection although there were many encouraging features reported and the school was at that time 'continuing to develop a strong and productive partnership with parents'. Views from the parents attending the meeting and replying to the questionnaire, although small in number, were generally very supportive. Parents felt they were welcome in the school and found the headteacher, teachers and the school secretary very approachable. Parents said their concerns were listened to and good procedures were in place to deal with any incidents, such as bullying or bad behaviour. Teachers are available to talk to at the beginning and end of each day and parents were of the opinion that staff knew their pupils and their problems. Most parents felt that they were kept well informed about the school and their child's progress. However, there were also parents who expressed their disquiet and this is a significant difference from the last inspection. There were concerns about the curricular provision and the annual reports in Year 5 where the pupils have had a number of temporary teachers due to the absence of staff. In addition parents highlighted inconsistencies across the school, about the provision and marking of homework and the limited information provided on the topics to be taught. The findings of

the inspection support these views. The school recognises that listening to parents' views is essential for a good partnership and plans are already in place to address both issues and to update parents in September.

62. Parents are appropriately involved in the work of the school and make a fitting contribution to children's learning. They go on school trips, provide transport and support for after-school matches, and assist with extracurricular sporting activities, such as 'kwik-cricket' and cross-country running. They are also involved in fund-raising through the Parent Teacher Association and good assistance is given by a parent to help with the organisation of the school's book week. A few parents help either on a regular basis, such as hearing readers, or in response to a request. For example, during the inspection a parent supported a history lesson in Year 1 by bringing in school photographs of her grandparents and a golden guinea.

63. The school makes good links with the parents of pupils with special educational needs, and is in touch with them at, or before, identification of problems and onwards. Where pupils have specific individual education plans, parents are aware of the objectives provided, and they are able to access information about annual reviews or to attend them. The school has an "open door" policy for parents, and the co-ordinator for special educational needs, or a member of her specialist staff, or the class teachers are available by appointment if parents require an update or some discussion about any anxieties. There is a governor with oversight of provision for pupils with special educational needs.

64. The travellers' team teachers seconded to the school for support of pupils from traveller families make strong links with these families, and liaise with parents very well indeed. They are available frequently at the beginning and end of the school day, to talk informally with parents, but when needed, will have telephone conversations or make home visits. They build up good, positive relationships with the families of their pupils and act as mediators between school and home on frequent occasions when coming to school may be difficult for parents. The team has initiated toy libraries in the Nursery, to enrich play in the home, and parents have shown that they appreciate this facility.

65. The very effective links with parents are a particular strength of the school. The induction procedures for children aged under five in the Nursery and Reception classes are good and there is very good information provided for the parents and carers, which is appreciated. There has also been a very valuable initiative in the Family Literacy project, for both parents and pupils, which is taking place within the school. This has been a big commitment for the parents and children participating and has proved successful. For example, one parent has applied for further training as a classroom assistant. In the spring term, the school had a course on supporting behavioural problems, which was well attended, and additional training courses for parents on Family Numeracy and basic information technology skills are planned for the autumn term. Each class also has a representative parent in the Parent Teacher Association and this group was invited to discuss a draft document with the headteacher about home/school links. Good use is made of homework books to involve parents with their child's learning in some year groups. For example, in Year 2, helpful guidance is given on comprehension skills to help parents support their child in the best way.

66. The school provides good quality information for parents. In addition to the pack provided for children aged under five, there is a school brochure, the governors' Annual Report to parents, which has some minor omissions in the section on special educational needs, and a wide range of letters and newsletters. These include items, for example, about school uniform, parent governor elections, diary dates and forthcoming concerts. The school brochure provides appropriate information that can be easily understood but the

section on homework is not sufficiently clear about the exact nature of the assignments and on which days homework is set. There are parents' consultation meetings in the autumn and spring terms and opportunities to discuss pupils' annual summer report. School reports provide clear information on pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science and have relevant targets for further development. However, details about the progress made in information technology, religious education and the other subjects are not specific enough to enlighten parents of their child's particular strengths and weaknesses in these subjects. Parents of pupils in Year 5 are concerned about the accurate compilation of information for their annual reports. Evidence from the inspection supports this view. Examination of their work showed irregularities in the development of skills and knowledge in some subjects and work was not always in step with the needs of all pupils.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

67. The headteacher and governors lead and manage the school well. The headteacher is newly appointed and in her first year at the school. The deputy head was appointed in January, 2000. The headteacher is well supported by the senior management team. The purposeful development of the school is clearly indicated by the good improvement, which the school has made since it was last inspected in July 1996. Since that inspection, standards have risen in information technology at Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching has improved as less unsatisfactory teaching was observed during this inspection and the key issues for action have, overall, been addressed successfully. Standards in English remain low at both key stages due in part, to the high mobility factor across the school, especially in Key Stage 2, and the proportion of pupils in the current Year 6 class with special educational needs: 58 per cent. There is a shared commitment evident in the school to enable pupils to achieve the best of which they are capable and this gives the school a good capacity to continue to improve. It also means that the school's aims are fully met. The governing body fulfils its responsibilities well. The governors have an appropriate sub-committee structure that assists them to manage their work effectively. They are very well aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and use this knowledge effectively to ensure that the school provides children with all-round development of the best quality.

68. The staff, who are involved with children who are aged under five are suitably qualified and experienced. They receive regular training and information on national developments that influence this phase of education.

69. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is well organised by the co-ordinator, who has a very good knowledge of special educational needs, and expertise in managing members of her team and in ensuring good liaison with class teachers. She makes very good use of specialist agencies, for the benefit of pupils. There is good quality documentation for the school's provision for special educational needs. Overall, the funding available for these pupils is very well used and a high level of care, concern and knowledge is given to the education of pupils who have special educational needs.

70. The work of the specialist team providing for the support of traveller pupils is very good indeed, and it is very well organised. Whilst these teachers work within the school, and often, although not always, as part of the special educational needs provision, they are part of a centrally organised local team working within several schools in the area, and are subject to leadership and management within this local team. The structure of this organisation is excellent.

71. Overall, the school monitors its performance well. The headteacher has a thorough knowledge of the school, addresses any weaknesses she identifies effectively and sets appropriate targets for the improvement of the school's end of key stage test results. The

governors also keep a careful watch on the school's performance and have regular debates about aspects of its work. Careful financial planning, administration and monitoring of expenditure ensure that the school's resources are well used to promote the pupils' learning. An appropriate contingency fund is kept to cover the high pupil mobility factor at the school. The governors oversee all aspects of the school's income and expenditure. The school was audited some four months ago and received a positive report which contained only minor suggestions for improvement. In order to ensure best value for money, three quotations are obtained when significant expenditure is planned. Good use is made of information technology for administration and for the education of the pupils. Criteria to determine how well the money used is spent are not established.

72. A strong senior management structure is in place, and curricular planning is well developed. The role of teachers with curricular responsibilities is insufficiently developed. There are no regular opportunities for them to monitor their subject or to share good practice with their colleagues, nor a requirement that they sample pupils' work. The headteacher has undertaken some monitoring of mathematics in conjunction with the school's adviser, but co-ordinators have too few opportunities to influence classroom practice. There is an agreed and written policy for the induction of new and newly qualified teachers to the school. Job descriptions are appropriately being reviewed.

73. Some governors visit the school, but the governors do not have a structured visiting programme to help them to extend their knowledge of the school still further or, for example, to monitor the progress of the school development plan. It is planned that governors will develop a visiting programme and a curriculum-linking plan by the autumn term. The school development plan is a very useful document for the one year it covers. However, it is not formalised beyond this period and not costed, therefore, it is difficult to link educational priorities securely to financial planning.

74. The match of number and qualifications of staff to the demands of the curriculum is good. There is a satisfactory system in place for the appraisal of teachers, although this is currently in abeyance.

75. Accommodation in the school as a whole is satisfactory. It allows the curriculum to be taught effectively. The outside is well maintained although there is no secure outdoor play area for children aged under five in the Reception classes. There is no designated medical room. The school uses the accommodation to its fullest extent although opportunities are missed to use the extensive school grounds for science and environmental study work. The library is not an immediately attractive environment and does not encourage pupils to develop their enthusiasm for reading and books. There are few areas around the school where pupils can read quietly. The accommodation for children aged under five consists of a separate Nursery building and the Reception classes. The Nursery classroom is spacious, bright and airy. There is a small outdoor play area; storage for outdoor toys and equipment is unsatisfactory.

76. Learning resources are satisfactory overall, and provide adequately for the curriculum. In English and mathematics, they have been improved to provide for literacy and numeracy teaching. In information technology, they are very good; in physical education, they are good. In all other subjects, learning resources are satisfactory. The resources for the January intake of children to the Reception class are limited. There are some outdated and worn copies of books both in the library and in the book resources in classrooms. The present range of computers is good, and the school has recently established a new computer room. In addition to the school's own learning resources, pupils enhance their learning at places such as the Millennium Dome and Eagle Heights where they observe wild birds in flight.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

77. In order to further raise standards the headteacher and governing body should:

(1) Raise standards of attainment in English at both key stages by ensuring that:

- (i) an even higher profile is given to the development of literacy skills;(paragraphs 94, 99, 100, 102, 105)
- (ii) using the school environment more to promote the development of language; (paragraphs 99, 107)
- (iii) pupils' speaking and listening skills are further developed through discussion, reading aloud, drama and opportunities to speak in assemblies;(paragraphs 93, 94, 100)
- (iv) pupils in Key Stage 2 have more opportunities to develop their skills as independent writers;(paragraphs 95, 102)
- (v) pupils' research skills are further developed. (paragraphs 94, 95, 99, 102, 130, 132,133, 136, 138)

(2) Raise attainment in science at Key Stage 1 by ensuring that:

- (i) sufficient challenge is offered to higher achieving pupils; (paragraph 117)
- (ii) ensuring that the planned environmental area is developed in the school grounds. (paragraphs 75, 118)

(3) Ensure statutory requirements are fully met in information technology at Key Stage 2. (paragraphs 4, 33, 47, 140, 144)

(4) Develop the role of curriculum co-ordinators by :

- (i) providing time for classroom observation and sampling of work and further development of the school's self-evaluation strategies; (paragraphs 72, 107, 112,123, 134,139,144, 148, 152, 156)
- (ii) making clear the expectations of them through more precise job descriptions.
(paragraph 72)

(5) Further develop the school development plan so that it is costed and shows more clearly evaluation criteria to aid school management. (paragraphs 73)

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

- Ensure that health and safety issues are dealt with. (paragraph 50 and those notified to the school)
- Improve assessment practice in information technology and some other subjects. (paragraphs 28, 57, 123,128, 134, 139, 144, 148, 152, 156)
- Ensure that attendance meets statutory requirements.(paragraph 52)
- Make better provision for a secure outdoor play area for the children under five in Reception classes. (paragraphs 50, 75, 80, 88)
- Improve the quality of the library. (paragraph 75, 76, 99,107, 148, 156)
- Improve the arrangements for the care of sick children by providing a medical room. (paragraph 50, 75)

The raising of standards in English, science and information technology and the improvement of the quality of routine assessment are identified in the school improvement plan for April 2000/2001.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	76
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	39

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1	16	49	31	3	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Year 6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	20	236
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		102

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Year 6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	9
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	10	104

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	26
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	33

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.8
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.6
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	23	18	41

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	18	15	17
	Girls	15	15	15
	Total	33	30	32
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80(59)	73(53)	78(59)
	National	82 [80]	83 [81]	87 [84]

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	15	19
	Girls	12	12	16
	Total	25	27	35
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	61(62)	66(62)	85(84)
	National	82 [81]	86 [85]	87[86]

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	15	12	27

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	4	9
	Girls	8	5	8
	Total	15	9	17
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	56(44)	33(41)	63(37)
	National	70 [65]	69 [59]	78 [69]

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	6	5	9
	Girls	7	7	7
	Total	13	12	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	48(33)	44(48)	59(37)
	National	68 [65]	69 [65]	75 [72]

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	2
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	1
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	150
Any other minority ethnic group	50

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	1	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	1	0
Other minority ethnic groups	2	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	12
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.6:1
Average class size	26.2:1

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	12
Total aggregate hours worked per week	155

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20:1

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	30

Number of pupils per FTE adult	11:1
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/00
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	£
Total income	491766
Total expenditure	487568
Expenditure per pupil	1833
Balance brought forward from previous year	50220
Balance carried forward to next year	54418

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	278
Number of questionnaires returned	62

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	53	44	0	3	0
My child is making good progress in school.	43	50	0	7	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	43	55	0	2	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	29	48	7	9	7
The teaching is good.	56	40	0	4	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	34	56	0	8	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	65	32	0	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	54	43	0	3	0
The school works closely with parents.	25	67	3	3	2
The school is well led and managed.	38	60	0	2	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	41	54	0	5	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	43	43	2	9	4

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

78. The provision for children under five is good in the Nursery and satisfactory in Reception. The Nursery provides children with high quality teaching, good classroom accommodation and resources and a well-organised curriculum. From a very low level, all children including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make good progress. The traveller children make very good progress in both classes. The teaching in the Reception class is good overall, which is an improvement on the findings of the school's previous inspection, and the curriculum for these children is appropriate for their age. Planning is in line with the nationally recommended areas of learning for children under the age of five.

79. Many children enter the Nursery with well below or very low standards of attainment. At the time of the inspection, there were 44 children, who were attending part-time in the Nursery. In the September or January in the half year they will be five, they enter the Reception class and attend full-time. At present, there are 19 children in the January Reception class. Children make good progress in the Nursery and build on this well in Reception. By the age of five, most are on course to reach appropriate levels in their personal and social development, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical and creative development. However, they are not on course to attain similar standards to those found in most schools in their language and literacy and numeracy because of their low levels on entry to the school. These judgements are comparable to those made in the school's previous inspection report.

Personal and social development

80. Children are on course to achieve the appropriate levels in their personal and social development, due to the good opportunities offered to them. From the time they enter the Nursery, they are encouraged to make independent choices from a wide range of appropriate activities. There is a calm, purposeful atmosphere in the Nursery and the Reception class, which enables the children to feel safe, secure and able to learn. They settle well, work and play independently and most are willing to ask for help when they need it. Most of them take turns and share equipment well. The children have a caring attitude towards each other. Those who have special educational needs and traveller children are very well integrated. All children under the age of five respond positively to new challenges and enjoy their work. They are attentive and interested in all that they do and are polite, friendly and well behaved. The children quickly make effective relationships with adults and are learning to make friends with other children. Role-play in the home corner and the "post office" enables them to work co-operatively with each other. They express their feelings, behave in appropriate ways and are developing an understanding of what is right and wrong. The teaching of relationships and interactions is of good quality. The good provision for free outdoor play in the Nursery supports their personal and social development, and enhances the children's co-operation with others and their ability to work and play collaboratively. This provision is not available for children in the Reception class and this slows down their development. Children make slower progress in their personal and social development due to reduced provision in the Reception class.

81. The quality of teaching and learning is good in the Nursery and in the Reception Class in this area. The teachers have a very encouraging manner and value each child's contribution. They ensure that every child has the opportunity to take part in all activities, which helps to build the children's confidence. Children are encouraged to be independent, and tidy up and dress themselves.

Language and literacy

82. On entry to the school, children's attainment in language and literacy development is very low. The teaching and learning of language and literacy receive a high priority. Teachers concentrate on providing an environment, which is rich in language to ensure that the children develop a more varied and extensive vocabulary. Although they make good progress they are overall still below average at the age of five. Their listening skills are reinforced well and they enjoy listening to stories. However, few respond readily to questioning about stories or reply using whole sentences. The children enjoy being in the various role-play areas, which provide them with a secure, welcoming atmosphere. Opportunities for the children to extend their language skills through imaginative play are extensive. An adult often participates in the role-play situations to extend the children's vocabulary in a range of contexts. They enjoy 'reading' and are encouraged to handle books with care and to understand how they are organised. They know that words and pictures carry meaning and some are beginning to acquire early reading skills. In the Nursery, children know that marks and shapes on paper carry meaning and make attempts at writing. They are encouraged to make their own storybooks and their early attempts at drawing and writing are valued. In the Reception class, a few are starting to recognise a small range of words on sight. Some are beginning to associate sounds with letters, but are not really confident at using known letters and words to write. Their pencil control is developing but many have difficulty forming letter shapes correctly. Information technology activities are used regularly to encourage reading and to extend the children's basic language skills.

83. The quality of teaching and learning of language and literacy is good, with many imaginative, short activities, which are appropriate to the limited concentration spans of this age group. Children are being taught, and are learning, the phonic sounds for letters, which some are able to recognise in other words or in their own names. Overall, children are making good progress.

Mathematics

84. On entry to the school, the attainment of these children in their mathematical development is low. They make good progress but their attainment is still below average by the age of five. They are provided with many practical activities to stimulate their learning. They gain experience of basic activities underlying the development of mathematical concepts, such as capacity and volume through play with sand and water. They can match and sort objects, according to colour or shape. They enjoy singing number rhymes, such as 'Ten In A Bed' and 'Currant Buns', which helps to reinforce their understanding of numbers. Children show a basic understanding of two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes. They can count single numbers and some have an idea what they represent, but few beyond five. The higher achieving children can order, count and record sets of objects to 20. Their understanding of numbers, shapes and quantities is reinforced by the use of number apparatus and games such as 'counting rabbits'.

85. The quality of teaching and learning of mathematics is good. Open-ended questions are used very well to encourage the children to think and answer clearly, before the adult reinforces their understanding by clear explanations. Adults assess each child

very well on a one-to-one basis by close observation and questioning to ensure that an appropriate curriculum is planned and taught, to enable the children to make further progress.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

86. Children's knowledge and understanding of their immediate world are broadly average. They make good progress in both the Nursery and the Reception class. There is good range of well-organised experiences on offer in both classes. The post office activities in the Reception class provide a range of activities to study 'people who help us' and the local environment. Children are interested in events in the world around them and in features of living things. They know the routine of the day and understand that there are different times for daily events. Members of staff encourage the children to be observant. In both classes, children have studied life cycles and have visited a farm. In the Nursery, children make appropriate use of the computer and a good range of software to develop basic skills and develop their skills in using the mouse. These are built on well in Reception, as children regularly use the computer suite, and attain above average levels for their age. They also use the listening centres independently to enjoy stories.

87. The quality of teaching and learning is good and the good range of activities provided makes a substantial contribution to the children's good progress. The topic on the seaside enables the children to explore a wide range of activities for future work in many areas of the curriculum in the Nursery, as does the post office in Reception.

Physical development

88. In the Nursery, the children are provided with a wide range of activities to develop their physical skills. They have regular access to an outside area, where they can run, jump, and climb in order for them to develop good skills in co-ordination and control of their bodies. The storage provision for outside apparatus is, however, unsatisfactory. The children in Reception do not have free access to a secure outdoor area or to wheeled vehicles or climbing apparatus to extend their physical development and this limits their progress. They have regular sessions in the hall, where they use the apparatus and start to acquire early gymnastic skills, and listen and respond to music. In both classes, they are given many opportunities to develop their physical skills through a range of activities, such as using small construction toys, cutting and sticking, picking up pieces of puzzles and using the computer mouse. Most children are on course to reach standards similar to those found in most schools by the age of five.

89. The quality of teaching and learning is good in the Nursery and in Reception. The teachers have a thorough understanding of the needs of young children, which enables them to provide suitable experiences.

Creative development

90. Children make good progress and are on course to reach similar standards to those found in most other schools by the age of five. In both the Nursery and the Reception class, teachers offer a good range of experiences and the teaching of different techniques enhances the children's knowledge and skills very well. They are encouraged to experiment with paints and have an adult with them to extend their learning. The role-play areas are very popular and provide good opportunities for imaginative play, as well as helping to build good relationships. The children know many nursery rhymes and are starting to memorise the words of new songs. Although not observed during the inspection, it is evident that they enjoy listening to music and playing instruments and have good

resources. The quality of teaching and the quality of learning are good in this area. Teachers have high, yet realistic expectations for the children. The provision of a wide range of appropriate activities and experiences is extending the children's progress in their creative development.

ENGLISH

91. Standards in English at the end of Year 6 are below those found in most other schools. The averages of the school's end of Key Stage 2 test results in 1999 show that, compared with all schools, standards were well below the national average. Compared with similar schools, standards were close to the average. Over the past four years, standards have been well below average but there has been a slight improvement overall. Taking the past four years as a whole, the standards attained by boys were below the standards attained by girls when compared with national averages. However, this difference had become less marked in the school's 1999 national test results. The school's belief is that this is the effect of the National Literacy Strategy and the school's effective monitoring. The school set formal targets for 52 per cent of its pupils to reach Level 4 and above in 2000. This represented a realistic degree of challenge as the present group of pupils has experienced a high degree of turbulence and has a well above average proportion of pupils on the register of special educational needs. Early indications are that the school has exceeded its targets. Although standards are low, all pupils are achieving well for their abilities.

92. The findings of this inspection are that standards in Year 6 are below those found in most schools. No significant differences were observed between the attainment of boys and girls. This judgement represents an improvement in standards when compared with the school's 1999 end of Year 6 national tests. Although standards in writing remain well below average, standards in reading have improved. Differences between the end of Year 6 test results in 1999 and the judgement of the inspection are due to the differences between different groups of pupils and to the school's effective support for pupils in literacy. Pupils have benefited from the Additional Literacy Support programme, the support of the Ethnic Minorities and Travellers' Advisory Services and the school's careful assessment and its use in setting targets. There has been a fall in standards since the last inspection when standards in English were found to be similar to national standards.

93. In Year 6, pupils attain below average standards in speaking and listening. Higher achieving and average pupils respond to questions clearly and concisely. They use an appropriate and widening range of vocabulary and communicate their ideas confidently. However, there are a number of lower achieving pupils who contribute only when directly questioned and who often speak very quietly. Pupils generally listen with good attention to their teacher and to each other and contribute relevantly to discussions in response to what others have said. There is a small minority of younger pupils in the key stage whose listening skills are not appropriately developed. There were no opportunities to observe more formal presentations and discussions during the week of the inspection. However, teachers' planning indicates that there is an appropriate range of opportunities through good links with work in other subjects such as in geography, science and history.

94. Standards in reading are below average. Higher achieving pupils read with accuracy and fluency and sometimes with expression. They are able to draw on a range of techniques to help them read unfamiliar and more difficult text and vocabulary. Most pupils are able to read and understand the texts used in school but a number of pupils are not able to read with sufficient fluency or speed to make efficient use of skills such as skimming or scanning. Higher achieving and some average pupils read an appropriate range of books within school and most pupils are able to talk about their personal preferences and

reading experiences. They are able to identify the main points and discuss some aspects of meaning or character and plot. Lower achieving pupils often need support to discuss their reading in any detail. They are able to express some preferences in their reading and briefly discuss main events. Across the key stage, research skills are insufficiently developed.

95. In writing, standards are well below average by the age of 11. Pupils write for a satisfactory range of purposes and readers, for example, reports, formal letters, descriptions, information pamphlets, poems, personal accounts, writing about their reading and narratives with different structures. Higher achieving and average pupils write in an organised way, sequence ideas, and choose appropriate vocabulary. Some higher achieving pupils are beginning to use more complex structures, paragraphs and a varied vocabulary, including, in some pieces of writing, appropriately formal expressions. This was seen in a newspaper report where one pupil was able to use reported speech accurately. However, there are few opportunities for pupils to write at length or to develop their ideas in depth or in good detail. The high proportion of lower achieving pupils write coherently using simple sentences but levels of accuracy in spelling and punctuation are very variable and ideas are limited in their expression. Throughout the school, planning of written work takes place but there are more limited opportunities to draft, edit and refine. Handwriting is generally clearly formed but joined and fluent formation is limited. In Year 6, standards of presentation are generally good and consistent across the whole class. However, in some other classes in the key stage, standards of presentation are variable.

96. Standards in Year 2 are below those found in most schools. The averages of the school's 1999 end of Key Stage 1 test results show that, compared with all schools, standards were below average in reading and well below average in writing. Over the past four years, standards in both reading and writing have been well below average. However, there has been a steady improvement in both reading and writing since 1997. Taking the past four years as a whole, there are no significant differences in the standards attained by boys and girls.

97. The findings of the inspection are that in Year 2, pupils are attaining standards in reading which are below those found in most schools and standards in writing which are well below. No significant differences were observed between the attainment of boys and girls. This judgement represents similar standards to the school's 1999 end of Year 2 national tests and early indications are that similar standards have been maintained in the recent end of year national tests. In the school's previous inspection, similar standards were found in reading but there has been a slight drop in standards in writing.

98. In Year 2, pupils attain below average standards in speaking and listening. Pupils enter the school with low language and literacy skills and a number of pupils on the register of special educational needs are receiving support for hearing and speech difficulties. The school develops their abilities well. By the end of Year 2, most pupils listen carefully to their teacher and to each other. They enjoy listening to stories and poems and answer questions about them willingly and with interest. This was seen when pupils were talking about poems written by Hilare Belloc, which they had been reading in their literacy lessons. Pupils read the poem together with lively enthusiasm and some expression and contributed well to a class discussion about similarities and differences between two poems. A small number of pupils in each class have support during whole class literacy sessions to help them listen more productively. Most pupils ask and respond to questions appropriately. Some higher achieving pupils are able to develop their answers in more detail and use complete sentences in their explanations. However, most pupils answer briefly and a number of pupils speak very quietly and need support and encouragement to speak audibly to all the class. There were no opportunities to observe pupils developing their skills through drama

and role play in the week of the inspection but teachers' planning indicates that such opportunities are planned appropriately.

99. By the end of Year 2, standards in reading are below average. Most pupils enjoy reading sessions in class with their teacher, a learning support assistant or a parent helper. They are able to retell simple elements of the books they are reading and, through their work in literacy lessons, they understand some of the main differences in the organisation of fiction and information books. Pupils generally read simple texts accurately and higher achieving pupils are developing a sound sight vocabulary. They understand and use a range of simple techniques to help them read unfamiliar or difficult words and understand how to use a dictionary to help them with their spelling. However, some average and lower achieving pupils do not sufficiently use their knowledge of phonics to help them in their reading and often need support in this activity. Pupils' library skills and some aspects of information retrieval are insufficiently developed because the library provision for Key Stage 1 is not appropriately organised.

100. Pupils' writing skills at the end of Year 2 are below average. Pupils write for a generally sound range of purposes such as writing about their work in other subjects, writing thank you letters, instructions, descriptions, stories and poems. Most pupils' writing conveys meaning and some higher achieving pupils write simple sentences with accurate spelling of simple words and correct use of capital letters and full stops. A few pupils are beginning to use words to create more interest and they have a sound awareness of the structure of a story. A lively use of language was seen in the simple parody of Edward Lear's 'The Owl and the Pussycat' written by two higher achieving pupils and entitled 'The Monster and the Wonky Donkey'. Spelling and punctuation are variable in the work of some pupils of average ability and lower achieving pupils. Some inaccuracies in expression arise out of pupils' speech patterns and these are reflected in their writing. Pupils' handwriting control is variable with some higher achieving pupils acquiring a joined clear style. However, size of letters and patterns of joining are variable across the range of ability in the year. The school has recognised the variability of pupils' handwriting control and has identified a programme for its consistent development, which will be implemented in the next academic year.

101. Pupils with special educational needs, pupils from traveller families and the small number of pupils who have English as an additional language are well integrated into their classes and achieve good standards, relative to their previous attainment. A number of pupils who receive support join the school during Key Stage 1 and a high number join during Key Stage 2. These pupils' needs are quickly identified and they receive well targeted support either through the Additional Literacy programme in Key Stage 2 or through the help of the advisory teachers from the Ethnic Minorities and Traveller Support Services which effectively supports pupils throughout the school.

102. Throughout the school, standards in literacy are similar to standards in English. Pupils are given appropriate opportunities to broaden their range of writing skills through their investigations and evaluations in science. They annotate and label a range of plans and diagrams in science and geography. Good use is made in the study of non-fiction with pupils' learning in science and history. There are, however, insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop their individual research and information retrieval skills or to write at length to present an argument or a point of view.

103. Standards of teaching and learning across the school are good in both key stages. In the school's previous inspection, there were generally similar standards of teaching. Pupils enter the school with low levels of language and literacy. They make good progress to the end of Key Stage 1 because well structured literacy lessons and well targeted support for pupils with special educational needs and for pupils from traveller families, raises their attainment to below average levels. Pupils continue their good progress throughout Key Stage 2 and, although standards are low, pupils of all abilities are achieving well for their abilities. The high proportion of pupils in Year 6 on the school's register for special educational needs receive good support from the school and outside agencies and make good progress against their earlier attainment. A significant proportion of pupils in Year 6 joined the school during Key Stage 2 and a number in the previous academic year. These pupils, a number of whom have special educational needs, develop well from their point of entry to the school because their teachers identify their needs quickly and target effective support.

104. Strengths of the teaching of English and its impact on learning were well illustrated in a very good Year 6 lesson in which pupils were comparing two extracts from books on the theme of dreams. The teacher quickly established a calm, productive atmosphere in which pupils were able to be well involved with their work and to concentrate on their tasks. Questions were used very effectively to ensure pupils' understanding of the most important elements in a new text and to enable pupils to make useful links with earlier work. The teachers' good subject knowledge was used to help pupils develop their understanding of how complex sentences can be structured and to create interesting strategies to involve pupils in their learning. All pupils' contributions were treated with consideration and respect and helped them to feel valued as learners. There was a good level of challenge for all ability levels in the group activities and the plenary session was used very effectively to reinforce pupils' awareness of developing more complex structures in their writing. At the end of the lesson, the pupils had made very good gains in their understanding of how language can create atmosphere and how their writing can be made more effective using more complex structures. This was the result of careful planning, good interaction with pupils and high expectations and a sense of challenge.

105. Where teaching is weaker, it is frequently the result of a slower pace where pupils lose their best concentration and activities that do not provide sufficient challenge for all ability levels. In the situation where a number of different teachers have been teaching a class, a lack of appropriately structured development in pupils' learning leads to some repetition of writing experiences and insufficient breadth in other areas of their programme.

106. The curriculum in English balanced and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. The format of the literacy hour has been effectively established and teachers are confident in the use of its components. The framework of the National Literacy Strategy provides the scheme of work and ensures appropriate development in the teaching of skills and knowledge. Assessment procedures in English are good and effectively identify pupils who need additional support. Good use is made of assessment information, on a formal and informal level, to set and review individual and group targets and to track the development of pupils' learning. There is good partnership between teachers, learning support assistants and parent helpers to support pupils in class, in hearing them read and in maintaining detailed records of pupils' achievements and difficulties. This is an improvement since the last inspection when teachers' day-to-day assessment of pupils' work was not systematic enough to help teachers in their future planning. Homework is used appropriately, across both key stages to reinforce and extend the work in class. Teachers' marking in pupils' work is generally satisfactory. Teachers regularly see all pupils' work. In the best practice, there are both supportive and encouraging comments and guidance for pupils to develop further.

107. The co-ordinator for literacy is an experienced teacher who has a good understanding of her role. She has carried out a useful detailed audit of literacy across the school and has analysed the results of standardised tests in all years. The information has been used to create clear and relevant priorities for the development of the subject, which are well supported by the governing body. The school has created an effective and productive link with the Adult Education Service to develop a Family Literacy initiative within the school. The success of the initiative was recognised by all those involved and the school hopes to continue with the initiative in the future. The co-ordinator has monitored pupils' work and teachers' planning but has not been able to monitor teaching in the subject. Resources in English are satisfactory overall. There have been some recent good quality purchases for literacy, which is well resourced. However, there are a number of outdated and worn copies of books in both the library and in the classroom book resource areas. The non-fiction library is not sufficiently used for the development of pupils' research and information retrieval skills. It is not an immediately attractive environment and does not encourage pupils to develop their enthusiasm for reading and books. There are few areas around the school where pupils can read quietly. The curriculum in English is well enhanced by regular book fairs, which give reading a high profile and which help to supplement the school's range of reading materials. Younger pupils take part in whole school productions such as 'Whoops a Daisy Angel' and 'Bossy King' and older pupils take part in pantomimes and tableaux in the local parish church. Through a local business partnership, the school was able to invite a local poet to work with pupils who then performed their work for the school. The school encourages pupils to use their writing skills. This was seen in the success of a pupil in Year 2 who recently won a national writing competition and in the poems, which the school contributed, to the Borough of Bromley's Millennium collection of poems. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

MATHEMATICS

108. The findings of the inspection show that a high proportion of pupils in Year 6 make very good progress and standards which are similar to, or above, those found in most other schools. These findings are similar to the previous inspection but differ from the school's results in the 1999 tests when standards in Year 6 were well below average. The school has pupils from traveller backgrounds and a high percentage of pupils on the special educational needs register, nearly double the national average. A significant feature of the school's population is the high number of pupils who join or leave the school during their time there. This turbulence, which has been carefully analysed, can affect the rate of pupils' progress and standards achieved at the end of the key stage. A downward trend was evident over the period covering 1996 to 1999 and the school's results showed boys' performance to be well below the national average and lower than that of girls. The school set targets to raise standards by 20 per cent this year; a good degree of challenge. Although this year's results have not yet been validated they indicate a marked improvement on the 1999 results and exceed the school's targets by a significant amount. This improvement is due to the valuable way the school has analysed pupils' performance, received support from the Local Education Authority and the effectiveness of the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy.

109. The standards that most pupils achieve in Year 6 represent very good progress in relation to their earlier attainment. Pupils with special educational needs and those from traveller backgrounds, also make very good progress. There is very good provision for their needs and they are very well supported by specialist teachers and support staff at both key stages. By the age of 11, most pupils can explore number patterns and

understand the term 'factor' although not all are certain of the term 'prime factor'. When solving problems mentally most can use strategies such as doubling and halving and a few higher achieving pupils use rounding to find approximate answers to problems. Most pupils have an increased understanding of place value and multiply and divide whole numbers by ten or 100 and add or subtract decimal numbers. They understand the use of brackets in an equation and can interpret co-ordinates. When working on two-dimensional shapes, pupils investigate their symmetry and can draw their mirror reflections. In work on measurement, they use centimetres to find the perimeter of simple shapes and can also tackle some topics at a higher level, for example, they can draw angles to the nearest degree with accuracy and can correctly identify whether they are acute, right angled or obtuse. When handling data, pupils record information in frequency tables and are able to construct and interpret simple line graphs.

110. In Year 2, the findings of the inspection are that most pupils, including those from traveller backgrounds, those with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs, achieve standards which are similar to those found in most other schools. This represents very good progress from the time pupils start school, when the level of attainment for most children on entry to the Nursery is well below average. It is an improvement on the last inspection and the 1999 test results, which were below average. By the age of seven, pupils are able to discuss their work and use mathematical language appropriately. They use resources, such as number lines, to assist them with addition and subtraction and are developing a sound understanding of how to tackle problems written in words. In work on number, most pupils can find half or a quarter of a quantity, they understand about odd and even numbers and can add numbers which involve tens and units. They know the names for common two-dimensional shapes and some which are less common for this age group, for example, pentagon and rhombus. Most pupils are developing their knowledge of time effectively by using digital clocks and clocks with dial faces. They use non-standard and metric measures when estimating capacity and length and sometimes add comments once they have checked and measured their estimates. One child having measured the height of a sunflower commented "Growing well so far!" Shoe sizes and birthday months are recorded in simple block graphs and higher achieving pupils can construct and interpret data in bar charts.

111. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good at both key stages. This shows an improvement at Key Stage 1 where previously, in the last inspection, it was judged to be satisfactory. Teachers plan their lessons according to the National Numeracy Strategy and use resources from various commercial schemes to supplement tasks as needed. Teachers also add their own very good ideas, for example, in a Year 1 class when pupils were learning about the value of coins through real-life money problems. They were very well organised in small groups and showed considerable independence and good behaviour as they worked. One group took turns to buy pizzas and another group learnt about saving money and how much more would be needed. In a Year 2 class, the teacher challenged pupils well through her questioning techniques during the introductory oral session. This ensured that pupils worked at a good pace and maintained their concentration. Pupils' ideas for adding on 21 were used to help others. As they developed their confidence, so the teacher steered them towards using subtraction. "My answer is 78 but I have already added on 21 so where did I start?" In work on symmetry, demonstration by the teacher was put to effective use so pupils could check their work as far as they were able. Higher achieving pupils worked with their teacher to create a Rangoli pattern with two lines of symmetry. Once they understood what was required, they were eager to get started on their own patterns. Pupils applied themselves well and persevered when the designs were difficult to check for accuracy. Designs were rotated carefully so they could check all four of the mirror images. A high expectation for good presentation is apparent in most classes. In Year 4, for example, it is evident that the appropriate skills are taught so

that most pupils use rulers neatly and accurately to construct their graphs. In the upper part of the school, setting arrangements are put to effective use. Special educational needs support assistants work well with pupils who require more help and good use is made of errors or unexpected answers as teaching points. Teachers keep up a good pace by the level of interaction, praise and timely reminders to get work completed. "Brilliant! Now move on and get your graphs done." Occasionally, in Key Stage 1, the pace is too slow during the oral work. Teachers spend an overly long time checking to see that all pupils have had a turn or talk for too long when introducing the main activity.

112. The subject covers all the requirements of the National Curriculum and daily lessons are well planned and organised to reflect the structure and content of the National Numeracy Strategy. Mathematics is used appropriately in other curricular areas: symmetry and repeating patterns in art, measurement in design and technology and graph work in science. Information technology is used well to support work on spatial directions, using a screen turtle, and to investigate information held on a database. Although most teachers use ideas from commercial schemes appropriately, there is undue reliance on worksheets by some teachers at both key stages. All pupils have access to the curriculum throughout the school but not all pupils have benefited equally from this provision. A percentage of pupils in Year 5 have had a series of temporary teachers and their work reveals significant weaknesses. It is not always matched appropriately to the needs of all pupils; there is uneven development of some of the topics and homework has been inconsistent or not marked. The subject co-ordinator provides good leadership for the subject and has supported staff well, through additional training, following on from their training for the National Numeracy Strategy. In the autumn term, the school hopes to extend its partnership with parents through the Family Numeracy project. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and well focused on the strengths and weaknesses of the school. She has formally monitored pupils' books throughout the school but has not been involved in the process that has taken place to monitor teaching. Pupils' academic performance is effectively checked and the school has worked hard to find out why boys' underachievement is greater than that of girls at Key Stage 2. Test results have been analysed by gender, for each question, but no clear-cut reason has emerged. The assessment procedures are very good with optional standardised tests in Years 3, 4 and 5 to provide yearly checks between the national testing that takes place in Years 2 and 6. In addition, teachers make notes about strengths and weaknesses of individual pupils or groups of pupils on their weekly plans to notify the next stage of planning. A new record has been formulated to refine the present arrangements further and it is planned to introduce it in September.

SCIENCE

113. The findings of the inspection are that the standards attained by the pupils in Year 6 are similar to those found in most other schools. This finding shows a significant improvement on the school's results in the 1999 end of Key Stage 2 national tests when they were found to be well below average. They are now in line with the findings of the school's previous OFSTED inspection. They are high when compared with similar schools. The percentage of pupils exceeding the national expectation at the higher Level 5 has increased significantly as a result of challenging teaching in Year 6. There is no significant difference in the performance of boys and girls. Over the past four years, standards have been erratic. There was a significant rise in 1999 with a further significant rise this year. Teachers generally plan work which is well matched to the needs of all pupils. This results in all pupils, including those with special educational needs, higher achievers and traveller children, making steady progress through the key stage, with rapid progress in Year 6.

114. In Year 6, pupils use the resources that they are given for experimental work and are beginning to devise their own investigations, for example, on their study of camouflage. They describe the functions of some important plant and human organs. They understand pollination and photosynthesis and, in their study of humans, they consider healthy living and misuse of drugs and substances. Pupils are aware of methods such as filtration and evaporation for separating simple materials and can classify materials as solids, liquids or gases. The pupils have a sound knowledge of magnetism and use symbols accurately to draw an electrical circuit.

115. The inspection's findings are that, by the age of seven, standards are similar to the national average. This finding broadly reflects the assessments made by teachers at the end of the key stage in 1999 and the findings of the previous inspection. Although there is a small increase in those exceeding the national expectation the percentage is below the national average. Standards are above those found in similar schools.

116. In Year 2, pupils compare materials and their various states and record their work in a simple tables. They understand the importance of diet and exercise for good health and understand what plants need to grow well. They sort materials according to their properties and understand why some materials are useful for specific purposes. The pupils recognise and name a number of sources of light and can construct an electrical circuit to make a bulb light up. They show appropriate understanding of the forces of pushing and pulling.

117. The quality of teaching and the quality of learning are satisfactory at both key stages with good teaching in Year 1 and very good teaching in Year 6. There were no unsatisfactory lessons, but insufficient challenges are offered to higher achievers resulting in lower standards of attainment. In the Year 6 lesson, the teacher had a lively and animated approach, which caught and retained the pupils' interest in the lesson. Her very clear introduction ensured that pupils knew what they would be learning and her skilled questioning led to accurate identification of the attributes and characteristics of predators and prey. She displayed a very calm manner and kept very good order, which ensured that the pupils were attentive, behaved well and were fully involved in the lesson. She set a good challenge for all pupils, particularly those working at a higher level.

118. The subject is capably managed by joint co-ordinators. They have ensured more emphasis on investigations and have introduced a new draft policy and planning that follows national guidelines and ensures that work is systematically built on as pupils go through the school. Half-termly assessments guide future planning well. The co-ordinators monitor pupils' work and teachers' planning but have limited opportunities to monitor teaching. The pupils show good attitudes to the subject, take good care of resources and co-operate successfully in groups. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' spiritual and moral development, for example, through the study of life cycles and consideration of environmental issues such as recycling and pollution. The school has spacious grounds but lacks an environmental area to extend the range of habitats. There is limited use of computers to support the subject in terms of handling data, displaying results of investigations, monitoring external events or for research purposes. The subject meets the requirements of the National Curriculum.

ART

119. In this inspection, only one lesson in art was seen in Key Stage 1, and only two in Key Stage 2, due to time-tabling factors; these included, however, a lesson at the end of each key stage. In addition, displays of work and planning for lessons were scrutinised, but the small sample of actual lesson observations precludes the making of any firm judgements. Indications are, however, that standards attained by pupils by the end of 6

and 2 are similar to those found in most other schools, with good progress at Key Stage 1 and sound progress at Key Stage 2. In comparison with the findings of the previous inspection, this represents a decline in standards, since attainment and progress were said to be good at both key stages in that report. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory attainment in the subject, as do traveller children and those who have English as an additional language; these pupils make good progress for their capabilities and their previous learning.

120. In Key Stage 2, pupils have experience of pattern making, which shows good colour sense and intricate designs, some of which employ both reflective and rotational symmetry. They are able to use computer programs to produce both designs and artistic compositions. Teaching is at least satisfactory in Key Stage 2, and the teaching of direct techniques takes place in a variety of media. There is a good emphasis on developing knowledge and understanding, particularly in terms of appreciating the work of other artists, including some famous painters. Three-dimensional work was less in evidence, although it is present in the planned programme for the year. There is good attention to an appropriate art vocabulary. Learning is also satisfactory and pupils' work in Year 6 shows a valuable focus on textile work, with an attractive display of tie and dye techniques and some colourful weaving, as well as exploring different textures in textile collage. Displays of work from Year 6 also show work in the various styles of a range of modern artists, such as Klee and Hockney, as well as use of the influence of some artists of ethnic cultures. Repeating patterns, in the style of Escher, were also on show. Sketch-books are satisfactorily used in Key Stage 2, except in Year 5.

121. In Key Stage 1, teaching and learning are generally good, and matches the levels found for both key stages in the previous report. Teaching again shows the direct introduction of a variety of techniques. Pupils have had experience of printing with some different materials, including potato prints, and of using clay as a modelling material for the formation of thumb pots and coil pots. Further three-dimensional work is shown in the paper sculpture work in Years 1 and 2, with their attractive origami birds, and their native colourful American masks and decorated tepees. The masks and head-dresses show a good sense of colour and shape in their designs. Paint mixing in Year 1, resulted in some attractive poppy paintings, after studying the work of Georgia O'Keeffe.

122. Display throughout the school currently focuses on a Japanese theme, with many paintings by Japanese children on show, through an international exchange programme. These have been added to by pupils in a variety of ways, such as the paper collage fish in the style of decorations made by Japanese children for their special "Children's Day", and the painted paper fans, made after looking at some real Japanese fans. Paintings and collages of waves and waterfalls were effectively created following a study of the famous print of "The Wave", and a waterfall picture, by Hokusai. This theme adds particularly to the cultural aspects of art in the school, and was also emphasised by the visit to the National Gallery by pupils in Years 2 and 3. Other experiences include an art week, with different artists to present workshops for pupils, including a sketchbook workshop for Year 4.

123. Documentation and planning in art are satisfactory, and show that the planned programme includes a good variety and range of experiences and techniques, at both key stages. The art co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and has updated her expertise with attendance at some challenging in-service training in the past few years, including a course at the National Gallery, and a Department of Education course in St. Ives, a thriving arts centre. There is no release time to allow for the monitoring of lessons by the co-ordinator, and although she surveys teachers' planning, there is no portfolio of work to show teachers a range of work as guidance. There is no specific guidance on assessment,

nor a whole-school approach to it, and teachers make their own notes on a subjective basis. Despite the co-ordinator's good knowledge and expertise, the role remains undeveloped. Resources in the subject are satisfactory, with plenty of materials for practical work, and collections of big prints, as well as of postcards, showing the work of famous artists and artists and craftspeople from other cultures.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

124. During the course of the inspection there were limited opportunities to observe lessons. Evidence gained from these lessons, an analysis of the work on display, teachers' plans and discussions is sufficient to show that pupils attain standards at both key stages which are similar to those found in most other schools. At the last inspection, standards were average at Key Stage 1 and above at the end of Year 6.

125. In Year 6 pupils, understand how to generate a number of ideas to produce a final design that meets the requirements of the task. They evaluate their work as it develops and suggest changes. Pupils work accurately and use tools safely. They pay attention to the quality of finish and function and, in most cases, are willing to adapt their work and learn from their mistakes. They know how to take products apart in a structured way and identify the components carefully. In Year 6, pupils designed and made games for the school fair and raised a significant sum of money.

126. In Year 2, pupils understand that the making process begins with a plan. They use models and pictures to develop and communicate their designs. They select from a range of materials, tools and techniques and learn to join various materials and ingredients. Pupils know the importance of making judgements about what they have achieved and how they might improve.

127. The quality of teaching and the quality of learning are satisfactory overall. All pupils, including those with English as an additional language, those with special educational needs and traveller children, make satisfactory progress. In the lesson seen in Year 1 teaching and learning were good. Pupils designed and made fruit and vegetable salads. They knew the hygiene and safety rules and used a range of tools appropriate to their age. They worked carefully and evaluated their products by appearance, texture and taste. In Years 4 and 5, teaching and learning were satisfactory. In Year 4, the teacher encouraged pupils to evaluate packaging against agreed design criteria. In Year 5, the teacher planned the lesson well to challenge pupils' thinking and extend their understanding of the function and use of cams. Pupils worked with enthusiasm and were keen to experiment and share their findings.

128. The school has recently introduced national guidelines, which ensure that skills are systematically built on but assessment remains a weakness from the last report. There are no assessment and recording procedures in place to indicate the skills that are being acquired as pupils move through the school. Some cross-curricular opportunities are taken to include design and technology in subjects such as history and science, but information technology is not used sufficiently to support the subject.

GEOGRAPHY

129. Standards in geography at the end of Year 6 and at the end of Year 2 are similar to those found in most other schools, including those reached by pupils who have special educational needs, pupils from traveller families and those with English as an additional language. Judgements are based on the one lesson seen, records of past work,

photographs, displays and planning for the subject. These findings are similar to those of the last inspection, where standards were reported as in line with national expectations.

130. In Year 6, pupils are able to find geographical features and places on a map and globes and use an atlas productively in their research on different countries. They develop their environmental awareness appropriately in their study of the importance of water and how water is used. They use their numeracy skills to analyse a range of data when they compare the way cities change and use graphs to show differences in climate around the world. Pupils develop their vocabulary satisfactorily in their studies of the weather and climate. Younger pupils in the key stage make good use of information technology when they design their own town plans and, in a cross curricular link with work in history and religious education, make charts of how Christmas traditions vary around the world in relation to climate and culture. In their study of distant localities, older pupils learn how daily routines in an area of Pakistan compare with their own and understand how geographical features affect differences in people's lives. Opportunities for older pupils to develop their independent research and investigative skills are limited and do not sufficiently enable the development of higher achievers' skills in this aspect.

131. In Year 2, pupils use the local area well to develop their geographical skills. They are able to identify features on a plan of the area around the school. They identify local services and use a questionnaire to identify transport use in their own area. In a nearby contrasting area, pupils compare services and identify simple geographical features. They conduct a simple investigation into types of housing in their local area and soundly develop their awareness of positional vocabulary. They have an appropriate awareness of perspectives in maps and plans. Pupils are able to use simple keys and identify features on maps and plans using two figure co-ordinates.

132. Teaching and learning in the subject are satisfactory and promote satisfactory progress. In the school's previous inspection, teaching was judged to be generally good. In the good lesson seen in Year 6, the teacher used her confident subject knowledge to create interesting ideas and activities in order to involve pupils effectively in their work. The lesson focused on the use of atlases and information from travel agents to create posters for holidays in different areas of Spain. Group activities provided appropriate scope for all ability levels including pupils with special educational needs. The lesson was carefully planned and identified clear learning objectives which were communicated to pupils and enabled them to have a good focus on their tasks. Good encouragement was given to pupils to develop their use of information technology and research in their homework. Scrutiny of pupils' work and planning in the subject indicates that teaching generally has appropriate regard for the majority of subject elements. There are, however, limitations in the range of opportunities offered to older pupils to develop and extend their research and investigative skills and in the depth of their study of other localities.

133. The co-ordinator for the subject is an experienced teacher who has developed a good understanding of her role. As part of its response to the requirements of Curriculum 2000, the school has reviewed the existing plans and policy in the subject and prepared a new draft policy and scheme of work which makes good use of the guidance of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. Existing guidance for the subject does not sufficiently identify the development of pupils' geographical skills throughout the school nor does it adequately identify how pupils' independent research skills can be developed.

134. The school's development plan has identified the need for the development of the monitoring role of the co-ordinator. There is currently no provision for monitoring in the subject. Assessment arrangements in the subject are currently linked to the National Curriculum descriptions of levels but do not sufficiently evaluate pupils' skills in the subject.

The new curricular plans provide appropriate opportunities for assessment more clearly. The curriculum is effectively enhanced by the good use of the facilities of the local area. There are useful visits to such areas as Eynsford in their studies of rivers and Shoreham and Crystal Palace as contrasting localities. Pupils visited a local building site and listened to a speaker from Thames Water. Resources in the subject provide appropriately for the existing curriculum and the co-ordinator has identified the need for further development to accommodate additional aspects of the new curriculum.

HISTORY

135. At both key stages, standards in history are similar to those found in most other schools. The school's previous inspection found the same standards. Throughout the school, pupils with English as an additional language, those with special educational needs and those from traveller backgrounds achieve satisfactory standards, relative to their previous attainment. In this inspection, classroom observations were supplemented by an analysis of pupils' work, teachers' planning and discussions with teachers and pupils.

136. In Year 6, pupils have an increasing depth of factual knowledge and understanding of Tudor times, Victorian Britain and Britain after the 1930s. They have gained a sound insight into the way that people lived at different times and some of the important events that shaped their lives. In their study of Britain after the 1930s, pupils learn how people's lives were affected by war and look at how fashions have changed in the twentieth century. They show an appropriate understanding of chronology and can construct simple time lines from their knowledge. However, there is little evidence of pupils being given scope for independent study. Opportunities are also missed for higher achieving pupils to write their own version of events and to give reasons why the past is represented and interpreted in different ways.

137. In Year 2, pupils have a suitably developed sense of chronology for their ages when they make simple timelines showing the development of transport. They learn to use vocabulary indicating an awareness of the passing of time and discuss some of the ways in which objects such as toys can be 'old' or 'new'. Year 1 pupils recognise differences in the past when they look at differences between modern and Victorian schools. They understand why the life of George Stephenson, the railway engineer, was significant. When they look at photographs of their parents and grandparents at school, they begin to understand how objects from the past can provide information about how lives have changed over time.

138. The quality of teaching and of pupils' learning in history is satisfactory overall with some examples of good teaching and learning in Key Stage 1. The pupils make satisfactory progress. In the school's previous inspection, history was well taught throughout the school. Teachers are confident in teaching the subject and use interesting activities and resources which involve pupils well in their learning. In a good lesson seen in Year 1, the teacher focused on developing pupils' sense of how people's lives change over time. The teacher brought the subject to life by using resources pupils had brought in from home. Photographs and discussion with a parent who talked about her childhood enhanced pupils' experience well. They were able to make simple observations about the past and make comparison with their own lives. Pupils responded very positively to the activity and were fascinated by pictures in an old book. Their behaviour and learning were good because pupils were interested in the topic. Weaknesses in teaching in the subject include some periods of slow pace, which adversely affected pupils' attention and concentration. There are insufficient opportunities for older pupils to develop their independent research skills or to make productive use of their literacy skills.

139. There is an appropriate draft policy for the subject, which has recently been completed and which reflects the requirements of Curriculum 2000. This includes plans for the subject which make good use of the guidance of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. These plans will be implemented in the next academic year. The existing guidelines for the subject do not sufficiently detail the progression of pupils' skills in the subject. The co-ordinator for the subject is an experienced teacher who has a good understanding of her role. Although a part time teacher, she has maintained her expertise in the subject by attending courses and additional training in her own time. Monitoring in the subject has been identified on the school's development plan but the co-ordinator has not had any opportunity for monitoring. Arrangements for assessment in the subject are aligned to National Curriculum level descriptions used at the end of each academic year. They do not sufficiently provide opportunities to evaluate pupils' skills in the subject nor are they adequately linked to teachers' planning. The school makes good use of the local area to enhance pupils' experiences in history. Pupils visit museums such as the Orpington Priory museum, the Horniman and the Imperial War museums. They visit sites such as Crofton Roman villa and talk to older members of their own community about their lives as children. Book and other resources in the subject are appropriate to the present curriculum and provide good support. The co-ordinator has identified the need for further development of resources to support the new curriculum being implemented.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

140. Standards are below those found in most other schools in Year 6. This judgement is similar to the previous inspection but for different reasons. There has been insufficient time for the new scheme of work and the computer suite to have an impact on the standards in Year 6. Aspects, such as handling and analysing information, are insufficiently developed and opportunities for Year 5 and Year 6 to monitor changes in the environment have not been taught. From a scrutiny of the work on display and in folders, pupils demonstrate that they are able to combine word-processing and pictures and research information, held on disk, to support their work in other areas of the curriculum. By the time they are in Year 6, most can log on competently and use the mouse and tool bar menus with ease. In lessons, they are able to collate data collected in science and enter it into a database. They can make simple amendments, if they make an error, and use straightforward lines of enquiry but higher order skills for interrogating information are generally weak.

141. Overall the quality of teaching and learning in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory which is an improvement since the school was last inspected. Teachers are confident, well prepared and interact effectively with pupils to support their learning. The progress that most pupils make, including those with special educational needs and those from traveller backgrounds is satisfactory, but slower towards the end of the key stage. Pupils work well, alone and in pairs, and generally know their way around a computer. In Years 3 and 4, pupils make appropriate progress and meet the expected standard for their age. Good use is made of lesson time by introducing the task beforehand in the classroom so that pupils' time in the computer suite is used to its full. Good intervention to the class as a whole is used well when frustration creeps in, for example, when pupils are investigating an adventure program. The teacher and support assistant, to ensure progress is maintained, then provide continuing support to pupils with difficulties. In Year 4, pupils were highly motivated and keen to search information held on a database. Due to a technical problem, the teacher had to take them through a step-by-step procedure, but this was efficiently managed and the lesson progressed at a good pace. Her skill in questioning provided challenge and an opportunity for pupils to use their skills and knowledge freely. In Years 5

and 6, progress is satisfactory, and occasionally good. For example, skilled management of pupils and resources, high quality support for those who have difficulty and a short and snappy plenary to extend learning ensure that most pupils make good progress. However, teaching has to take account of limitations in aspects of pupils' understanding because the acquisition of skills and knowledge over time has not reached the required level. Although not evident in all year groups, there are some weaknesses in teaching. This relates to teachers not ensuring that all pupils listen attentively and concentrate, either during the plenary or while they are still at work on the computers.

142. In Year 2, standards are similar to those found in most other schools. Occasionally, they are above, for example, when using a creative drawing program. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when standards were below average. Most pupils make good progress, including pupils from traveller backgrounds, those with English as an additional language and those with special educational needs. They acquire new skills and knowledge and show increased understanding during this key stage. By Year 2, pupils can use information technology to draw straight lines and in-fill segments with colour in the style of the artist Mondrian. They can also use it freeform to create portraits using different techniques, such as broad-brush strokes or an airbrush. They know how to print their work, change colours, erase what they have done and use the mouse with good control. Scrutiny of their work shows that they can use capital letters, punctuation and different styles of print when word-processing.

143. The quality of teaching and learning at Key Stage 1 is mostly good. There is a good range of tasks provided and appropriate challenge. Early work that precedes the use of information technology is generally well taught but, occasionally, it is unsatisfactory. Resources, such as cassette recorders, are not used well to promote the learning objectives. Instead of investigating how this device responds to different commands, pupils have an inappropriate worksheet, which is cumbersome and time-consuming. Their understanding of the different outcomes in response to pressing a button is limited and little progress is made. Good teaching has many strengths. Teachers are well prepared and organised with the necessary resources to hand. Planning is effectively linked with earlier work and good introductions ensure that pupils listen attentively. For example, pupils working on directional commands, before using a computer program, worked in the hall using a grid to plot their route across it. They concentrated and behaved well and showed great interest. In response to their teacher's introduction, they were eager to offer their own suggestions and to start work. When working in the computer suite, good control is kept, pupils enter quietly and, when over-excited and talkative, clear warnings are given about 'time out'. Helpful demonstration by the teacher involves pupils giving their ideas and instructions, which they are keen to share and show what they have learnt so far. Lesson planning is good with assessment clearly linked to the learning objective.

144. The school has worked hard to address the key issues surrounding this subject and significant improvement has taken place. Previously, there were weaknesses throughout the school in the planning, which was not systematic enough to provide a coherent sequence for teaching and learning, and teachers lacked confidence and expertise. The policy is in the process of being updated, the curricular provision has been revised and clear guidance for teaching and learning is supported through a new scheme of work. The expertise and confidence of staff have improved through additional training and there are new developments planned to improve professional knowledge further through a study visit to Australia. A considerable investment has been made from school funds to install the new computer suite, which is also to be used for adult education next term as part of the St Paul's Cray Children's Project. Careful consideration has been given to new software to ensure that it does not promote stereotypical viewpoints of gender and other cultures. A new co-ordinator for the subject who has expertise in the subject was appointed in January.

A good start has been made but elements have not been maintained due to the co-ordinator's long term absence. Although planned for, the subject has not been monitored formally. The requirement to teach the full range of the curriculum to Years 5 and 6 did not take place and, in this respect, the subject does not meet the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum at Key Stage 2. The current method for assessment, to annotate pupils' strengths and weaknesses on the teaching plans, whilst useful, does not enlighten teachers about individual pupils' skills development so that systematic checks can be kept on their performance and progress. Pupils' reports generally reflect this weakness as they lack specific detail and do not inform parents sufficiently.

MUSIC

145. During this inspection, although two music lessons were seen in each key stage, including lessons in Year 2, no music lesson was seen in Year 6, due to timetabling factors. Judgements are, therefore, based upon lessons seen in Years 4 and 5, along with a survey of planning for lessons in the subject through the school. The attainment indicated towards the end of Key Stage 2 is similar to those found in most other schools, with a picture of sound progress through the key stage. In Year 2, pupils attain good standards in music, generally in advance of those usually found in most schools. This reflects an improvement from the standards reported in the previous inspection. Progress is good through Key Stage 1. Although this is an apparent decline in progress from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2, factors such as pupil mobility over a longer period in Key Stage 2, coupled with repeated changes of staff in Year 5 explain this. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, those with English as an additional language and those from traveller families, do well for their capabilities and previous learning at both key stages.

146. In Key Stage 2, teaching and learning are both satisfactory. The subject knowledge of teachers displayed is good, and resulting in pupils making satisfactory progress within lessons. Pupils collaborate with each other in composing musical sequences using body percussion and percussion instruments, and compose a simple accompaniment to a class song using tuned percussion instruments. They enjoy music making, and older pupils in Year 5 listen to each other's group compositions and offer some appraisal. Pupils are able to listen to music in assemblies, and information is provided each week about a different composer. During the week of the inspection, Bach was the chosen composer. Although planned for, the appreciation of the work of famous composers and of music from other times and places is not strongly in evidence. The curricular map of work for the key stage provides little in the way of example for this area of the subject.

147. In Key Stage 1, teaching and learning in music are both good. Teachers' subject knowledge is good, and understanding of its relevance to pupils' stages of learning is also good. Pupils in Year 2 are able to compose a brief tune, using the pentatonic scale, and to perform it with others. This is challenging music making for the age group, but the teacher's support for pupils in their efforts is good. Pupils in another Year 2 lesson were able to identify well sounds of different pitch and timbre, and to play simple sequences as well as using dynamics and rising and falling scales. Pupils show good initiative in their simple compositions, and a good sense of rhythm. They enjoy music making and work with enthusiasm.

148. The documentation for the subject is satisfactory in terms of the policy and curricular mapping, apart from weak representation of examples for musical appreciation. The scheme for music throughout the school being currently adopted is good. The music co-ordinator has only been in post for less than two terms to date and is not a music specialist. In the short time she has so far had at her disposal, she has attended a music course and has drafted the new subject policy that is very clear. She has also made arrangements for

specialist input into the subject next term, to improve teaching and learning in Key Stage 2. However, there is currently no monitoring of music lessons by the music co-ordinator, and no specific method of surveying the outcomes of teaching in the school, such as systematic sampling of planning or listening to tapes of sample compositions. There has been no audit of instruments or resources. The present situation is that co-ordination is undeveloped. There has not been a whole-school approach to assessment until the new policy was drafted, but this has some useful advice concerning the records that class teachers should keep. Resources in the form of instruments, and including those from a variety of cultural origins, are adequate, and so is the range of tapes and CDs to provide music for listening to and appraising. Books about music and musicians form only a small section in the library.

149. The school has a strong choir, selected by audition, which forms a good core for singing at times such as Christmas and Easter. This year, the choir composed and sang a Millennium song at the opening of the Bromley religious education centre. The choir was a finalist in the national "Voices of Promise" competition for the Millennium, and won two days' tuition for improving performance as a result. Tuition in violin and piano is available to pupils at the school and those who learn these instruments sometimes play in assemblies.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

150. Throughout the school, standards are similar to those found in most other schools. In swimming at Key Stage 2, standards are above. These judgements are based on the observation of games and swimming at Key Stage 2 and the observation of dance and games at Key Stage 1. No gymnastics was taking place, as this was the last week of the academic year. The judgement is not as favourable as that made by the school's previous OFSTED inspection when standards at Key Stage 2 were judged as above expectations for pupils' ages, although swimming has improved. At Key Stage 2, pupils show good levels of accuracy when catching and throwing, demonstrate developing javelin throwing techniques and are agile when dodging and chasing. Most pupils swim unaided and safely for at least 25 metres by the time that they leave the school. At Key Stage 1, the pupils show simple ball throwing techniques involving under and over arm strategies, with appropriate levels of co-ordination. They respond well to instructions and show good awareness of the effects of exercise on their bodies. At both key stages, the pupils' ability to evaluate their own and others' performance in order to improve is insufficiently developed.

151. The quality of teaching and the quality of learning, including for pupils with special educational needs, traveller pupils and English as an additional language, are satisfactory at Key Stage 2 and good at Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2, teaching and learning range from good to unsatisfactory in quality. At Key Stage 1, teaching and learning are consistently good. In most lessons throughout the school, teachers start physical education lessons promptly and mostly have well-organised resources. Warm-up activities are appropriate and interest the pupils who work at a good pace. Most lessons are developed by challenging and varied activities that are suitably related to the aims of the lesson and encourage the pupils to work hard and to sustain concentration. Teachers show confident knowledge of the subject in the instructions and demonstrations that they give and these factors, along with their use of pupils to demonstrate, help to ensure that the pupils understand what they are doing and acquire new skills. This was evident in a Year 1 lesson during which pupils practised ball-throwing skills and developed them into a paired activity that they thoroughly enjoyed. The major weaknesses in the quality of teaching are weak class organisation and control that prevent effective teaching and learning taking place and inappropriate activities for the ages and abilities of the pupils.

Both of these weaknesses mean that, although pupils make satisfactory progress, they do not make the progress of which they are capable.

152. The pupils show good attitudes to physical education. They mostly behave well, form constructive relationships and work hard. The subject makes a good contribution to their social and moral development as they learn to understand the benefits of teamwork. The subject is satisfactorily managed although the co-ordinator has no release time to monitor the subject. The current scheme of work is appropriately under review. Assessment procedures are not sufficiently supporting teaching and learning. The school has a large hall, a good-sized field and hard surfaced area and adequate resources to support the teaching of the subject. The statutory requirement to teach swimming at Key Stage 2 is met.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

153. In Year 6, attainment in religious education meets the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus. However, in some individual lessons, pupils reach higher attainment. Progress through Key Stage 2 is generally satisfactory, although both attainment and progress in Year 5 are unsatisfactory as there are small amounts of interrupted work and interrupted frequency of work, due to the frequent changes of staff. In Year 2, pupils' attainment is good, and progress throughout Key Stage 1 is good. The judgements in this inspection of good attainment and progress at Key Stage 1 reflects that reported in the last inspection. Pupils from traveller families and those with English as an additional language make good progress for their capabilities and previous learning. Those pupils with special educational needs also make good progress against their capabilities and their previous learning.

154. At Key Stage 2, both teaching and learning are generally satisfactory, although in an exceptional lesson seen in Year 6, teaching was excellent and learning was very good. The lesson was planned with imagination and flair on the theme of pilgrimage. The concept was explained with great sensitivity, making use of an antique book of pressed flowers from the Holy Land as an introduction. Pupils in this lesson responded very well indeed, and the atmosphere was reverent and spiritual. In a Year 5 lesson, techniques of "hot-seating" and role play were used to advantage in engaging pupils' interest and attention in a discussion of the Ten Commandments. Pupils in Key Stage 2 have studied the stories of Christian festivals, and stories of Christ's life, as well as stories he told. They have also looked at the way people pray and celebrate within the faiths of Judaism and Islam, for example, the festival of Divali. The work of pupils shows that teaching places a good emphasis upon meaning, and relating principles to the everyday lives of pupils.

155. In Key Stage 1, both teaching and learning are good. In a Year 2 lesson, the teacher was revising with the class a recent visit to the local parish church. The focus was not only on pupils' impressions of the building, but also on recognition of signs and symbols that make the church a special place designed for worship. Pupils were keen to comment and showed good levels of recall and understanding of the visit. The lesson went on to include looking at photographs of a mosque, and a discussion of how Muslims use their place of worship. In the final phase of the lesson, pupils designed in simple terms a church or a mosque to be constructed from cardboard boxes and other junk materials in a subsequent lesson. The good use of active methods enhanced the learning of pupils. Active methods were also used to good purpose in a Year 1 lesson about "The Good Samaritan", where role-play was employed to make an impact. Pupils' work in key Stage 1 shows exploration of Christian festivals and stories, of celebrations of the festivals of Divali, Hannukah and Christingle, and some understanding of the need for rules.

156. The documentation for the subject is satisfactory, and reflects adequately the locally Agreed Syllabus. Allocation of units of study across the school is well arranged to provide for continuity in learning. Planning of lessons is sound. The co-ordinator has only very recently been given this subject responsibility, and has not yet had time to develop it. There has been no monitoring of lessons, sampling of work, whole-school approach to assessment or auditing of resources. The role of the co-ordinator is undeveloped. However, the present co-ordinator has already attended some in-service training on the co-ordination of the subject, and has visited the local schools' religious education resources centre, in order to arrange further use of resources the school's collection. The action plan includes a resources audit. Resources are adequate in terms of artefacts and pictures, together with those available on loan, but the book stock in the library in the section on religion is small. Although classes visit the local parish church, and clergy come to school, experiences to enrich the subject, particularly those connected with multi-faith aspects, are insufficiently developed.