

INSPECTION REPORT

LONESOME FIRST SCHOOL

Mitcham, Surrey

LEA area: Merton

Unique reference number: 102636

Headteacher: Mrs H.Leppington

Reporting inspector: Mr.S.Beaumont 8440

Dates of inspection: July 3rd – 6th 2000

Inspection number: 188633

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 8
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Grove Road Mitcham, Surrey
Postcode:	CR4 1SD
Telephone number:	020 8648 1722
Fax number:	020 8640 8662
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Fr. Paul Ensor
Date of previous inspection:	8 th – 11 th July 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Stephen Beaumont	Registered inspector	Science Physical Education Religious Education	What sort of school is it? What should the school do to improve further? The school's results and pupils' achievements.
Sarah McDermott	Lay inspector	Equal Opportunities	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents? How well is the school led and managed?
Raminder Arora	Team inspector	Under fives English as an Additional Language English Design and Technology Geography Music	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
John Bartholomew	Team inspector	Special Educational Needs Mathematics Information Technology Art History	How well are pupils taught?

The inspection contractor was: Capital Inspections, Chaucer Building, Canterbury Road, Morden, Surrey, SM4 6PX.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This is a larger than average primary school with 341 pupils on roll aged between three and eight years. This includes 52 full time places in the nursery. Children enter the nursery, on a part time basis, at the beginning of the term following their third birthday, and most stay for five terms. Children join a reception class at the beginning of the term in which they become five. Pupils leave at the end of Year 3. There are about the same number of boys and girls. 94 children come from families where English is spoken as an additional language, and about a third of these children are at the early stages of speaking English. This is a much higher proportion than in most schools nationally. 28 percent of pupils receive free school meals, which is above the national average. There are 77 children with special educational needs, of whom one has a statement. Again this is above the national average.

The school welcomes families from a wide range of different cultures and beliefs, and sees this as an advantage. Families come from varied backgrounds, with most having social and economic conditions below those enjoyed by the nation as a whole. Children join the reception classes with skills and knowledge below that achieved by most children of their age in Merton, particularly in speaking and listening. Attainment on entry is well below that expected nationally.

Governors and staff aim to provide exciting and challenging opportunities for learning, within a friendly atmosphere, based on trust and respect. Current priorities are to raise standards further, and plan and prepare for the school to grow into a primary school for pupils up to the age of eleven.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an improving school, with several good features, which recognises that further improvement in standards, particularly in English, is needed. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with good teaching in the nursery, reception classes, and in Year 3. The headteacher and key teaching staff give good leadership, and the school provides satisfactory value for money

What the school does well

- Provides good teaching in the nursery and reception classes and in Year 3.
- Gains standards above those expected nationally in art, design and technology, and history.
- Makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, and social growth.
- Welcomes families from varied ethnic backgrounds and ensures all pupils work and play together, and learn to live in a multi-cultural society.
- The headteacher, assistant headteacher, and key staff give good leadership.
- Provides very good accommodation and a good range of extra-curricular activities.

What could be improved

- Standards in English, particularly speaking and listening, writing, and spelling.
- Standards in information technology.
- Standards in geography and music
- The involvement of parents in the education of their children.
- The effectiveness of the governing body especially in comparing standards with that of other schools, and from year to year.
- Attendance of pupils.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

There has been marked improvement since the last inspection in July 1996. The 'follow up' Ofsted visit in July 1997 noted good progress in overcoming weaknesses. Good progress has been maintained. There has been an improvement in standards; schemes of work are in place, and the quality of learning has improved. A wider range of teaching styles is now used, and the quality of teaching is much better than in 1996. There has been a very great improvement in behaviour, and the resultant calm atmosphere now has a positive effect on the quality of learning. The staff have the skills and commitment to ensure that progress continues.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
Reading	E	E	E	D
Writing	E	E	E	E
Mathematics	E	D	E	D

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

Children enter the school with skills and attitudes below those for most children of this age in Merton, and well below nationally expected levels, especially in speaking and listening. Results from the 1999 National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds show that pupils' attainment was well below national averages in reading, writing, and mathematics. Standards were below those achieved by pupils from similar backgrounds in reading and mathematics, and well below them in writing. Standards have shown a steady improvement over the last three years, with the percentage of pupils reaching the expected national standard rising. Standards of pupils currently in Year 2 are broadly in line with the national average for mathematics, but are still below average for reading and writing. Standards in Year 3 are below average in English and mathematics. Standards at the end of Year 2, and when pupils leave the school at the end of Year 3, are above national expectations in history, design and technology, and art, but below them in information technology, geography, and music.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have good attitudes. They enjoy coming to school and most settle quickly to their tasks and maintain their concentration.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in classrooms, and in playgrounds and at lunchtime is good. A small number of pupils show challenging behaviour in lessons, and this slows the pace of learning for all in the class.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils develop well, they take on responsibilities eagerly, and carry them out well. They work and play well together, and relate well to adults and other children. There is very good racial harmony.
Attendance	Attendance is unsatisfactory, with higher than average unauthorised absence.

The attitudes, behaviour, and relationships of pupils have a very positive effect on the quality of learning, but attendance is unsatisfactory, and this limits some pupils' progress.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-8 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Satisfactory	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.

The teaching of mathematics is consistently good, and English teaching is satisfactory throughout the school. Literacy and numeracy are well taught, but not enough use is made of pupils' numeracy skills in all subjects. The new teaching strategies for literacy and numeracy have been introduced well.

There is consistently good teaching in the nursery and reception classes and in Year 3. Teaching is also good in religious education, art, design and technology, and history. Pupils make good progress and achieve high standards in these subjects. Staff have good subject knowledge, other than in information technology, and use this well. In the best lessons teachers have very high expectations of pupils, and make them work very hard. Where teaching is unsatisfactory it is because activities set do not match pupils' needs, lessons are too long, and close time targets are not set.

Of the 60 lessons inspected seven percent were excellent, 23 percent were very good, 38 percent were good, 24 percent were satisfactory, and eight percent were unsatisfactory. The quality of learning is satisfactory in pupils of all levels of attainment.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum for children under five is good and covers all recommended areas of learning. The curriculum for pupils in Key Stage 1 and in Year 3 is satisfactory other than in information technology, where the requirements of the National Curriculum are not met. Although priority is given to literacy and numeracy, a wide curriculum is provided, and this has a positive effect on learning.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	There is good provision for these pupils, and they make satisfactory progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good provision is made for the high number of pupils who are at the early stages of learning English, and for those still developing their skills. Pupils make satisfactory progress towards the targets that are set for them.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	There is good provision for pupils' personal development. Pupils are taught the difference between right and wrong and to learn to live amicably with each other in a multi-cultural society. There are good arrangements to ensure social development, and to help pupils reflect and grow spiritually.
How well the school cares for its pupils	All adults know the pupils well, provide good role models for them, and ensure they are secure, safe, and confident. Although procedures are good there is no agreed child protection policy.

The school works hard to involve parents in their own children's learning, but this is often not successful. The curriculum is well planned, other than in information technology where it does not meet statutory requirements. Teachers' lesson planning is satisfactory, but because it is done on a two weekly basis, it does not always ensure that activities are meeting pupils' present needs. Individual lesson plans do not always show clear learning objectives, and in these cases the progress of pupils is limited.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher, assistant headteacher, and curriculum co-ordinators give good leadership and effective management. They work very well together, and have a clear vision for the school. The school development plan, and subject plans reflect the aims of the school, and are carried through. Monitoring of standards is carried out regularly, but not all curriculum co-ordinators check on the quality of teaching in their subjects. Some co-ordinators have too many responsibilities at present.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are not yet fully effective in meeting their responsibilities. Many are very recently appointed. They support the school very well, but do not check the school's standards and compare them with other similar schools sufficiently. Not all statutory requirements are in place. Daily financial planning is satisfactory and all available grants are received and correctly used, but the budget is not closely linked to the school development plan.
The school's evaluation of its performance	There is satisfactory checking on standards and performance by the headteacher and staff. The school is careful to check results at the end of Year 2 to see if any groups of pupils are not performing well enough.
The strategic use of resources	There is very good accommodation, which is well used. The school grounds are excellent, but are underused in some subjects to extend learning. Teachers and other staff are well deployed and work well together. The effectiveness of adult assistants in classrooms is having a positive effect on standards.

There are good resources for learning, and a favourable adult to pupil ratio, and this improves the quality of learning. There is insufficient systematic evaluation of standards by the governing body.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school. • Teaching is good. • Expectations are high. • Helps pupils become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homework. • Information about progress.

The small percentage of parents who commented or filled in questionnaires are generally very supportive of the school, and inspectors generally agree with their views.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Children enter the school with skills and attitudes below those for most children of this age in Merton, and are well below nationally expected levels, especially in speaking and listening. Results from the 1999 National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds show that pupils' attainment was well below national averages in reading, writing, and mathematics. Standards were below those achieved by pupils from similar backgrounds in reading and mathematics, and well below them in writing. Despite standards remaining low overall, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected national standard has improved steadily over the last three years. This represents a marked improvement.
2. There was no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls, but girls did not outperform boys to the same extent as they did nationally. There was a high proportion of pupils attaining below the nationally expected levels in English and mathematics, and far fewer pupils achieving the higher levels gained in most schools. Teachers assessed that standards in science were above the national average with a high proportion of pupils achieving higher levels. The school reached the targets that were set for it.
3. Standards achieved by pupils currently in Year 2 are broadly in line with the national average for mathematics, but are still below average for reading and writing. Skills in listening and speaking are not well developed and are well below what is expected from pupils of this age. Standards in Year 3 are below average in English and mathematics. Standards at the end of Year 2, and when pupils leave the school at the end of Year 3 are above national expectations in history, design and technology, and art, but below them in information technology, geography and music.
4. Pupils are particularly good at setting up their own 'fair tests' in science, and can predict what they think will happen. Skills in dance are very good, pupils can move very sensitively, expressing their ideas with good quality movement. Knowledge and skills in information technology are below national expectations as not enough is taught.
5. Pupils use their literacy skills to good effect in several subjects, especially science, history, and religious education, and this helps progress. Teachers are careful to make good links, as when poetry was used to develop a scientific exploration of 'mini-beasts'. Teachers have introduced 'Literacy Hours' well, but texts from history, or maps from geography drama and role play are not used enough in them. Numeracy skills are not as well used in other subjects. There is very little number in science or geography in the work seen.
6. Pupils of all abilities in mathematics and science make satisfactory progress. Progress in reading and writing is also satisfactory when the low starting point of many pupils is taken into account. Pupils make appropriate progress in relationship to their prior achievement. Pupils with special educational needs, and those with English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress and meet the targets that are set for them.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. Pupils have good attitudes to the school. They arrive positively and happily in the morning and know the start of day routines very well. All the parents that returned questionnaires reported that their children are happy at school. Most parents come right into the school and are fully involved in helping their children to hang up their coats and to hand in the lunch boxes. Pupils get down to work very quickly. In the classroom many are eager to answer questions, although in some lessons which are over directed or lack pace, the pupils fail to have a real desire to know more and find learning uninteresting. Many are proud of their work as in a Year 3 design and technology lesson making moving robots, where pupils talked with animation about how their inventions could be operated. However, presentation of work across all the classes is often untidy, and does not show a genuine pride in writing and neatness. The

nursery children are particularly positive about learning. They respond very well to the enthusiasm of their teachers and love showing visitors around their classroom and outdoor area. Many pupils take part in the after school clubs. Boys and girls were eager to participate in the skipping club and prepare for their summer show.

8. The behaviour of the pupils is good. It has improved greatly since the last inspection. There have been no exclusions in the last academic year. The pupils are very orderly as they move about the school. The behaviour in assemblies, in the lunch hall, and at break times is very good. In an assembly demonstrating the use of incense, the pupils became excited but returned to quiet control quickly and sensibly. In lessons most pupils behave well. They listen and follow instructions carefully. However, some pupils tend to fidget and go off task easily. The resulting need for the teacher to catch their attention slows the pace of the lesson, and affects the learning for all. In some lessons the pupils behave particularly well in potentially difficult situations, for example in a frustrating lesson learning how to use inappropriate software in the computer room, the pupils waited patiently for assistance. During the inspection week there were no incidences of bullying or other oppressive behaviour seen. Examples of bullying are rare.
9. The personal development of the pupils is good. The Year 3 pupils take on small jobs sensibly. They responsibly stack chairs after assembly, operate the tape machine and tidy books in the library. The nursery children are very proud to return the registers. They politely say good morning to the staff in the school office. In lessons some pupils are starting to take personal responsibility for their learning. For example, in a Year 3 history lesson, the pupils independently used encyclopaedias, reference books and dictionaries to find out more about the Roman way of life. In a design and technology lesson pupils selected their own materials to make the moving robot. However many other pupils lack initiative in increasing their knowledge. They expect to be directed and helped by the teachers or support staff, rather than making the first move to learn more. As at the last inspection, there are still too few opportunities for pupils to show initiative.
10. Relationships are good. Pupils relate very well to the adults in the school. Most are confident to confide in teachers or support staff. Pupils work and play well together. In a physical education lesson in the hall pupils collaborated well in teams, and were able to calculate individual running times. Outside at break time pupils of all backgrounds were happy to share balls and play together on the mound or "Explorers' Challenge" climbing trail. Most pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the effect of their actions on others. They know that by following the school rules they will help everybody to work well together. However the few pupils who misbehave in lessons are not sufficiently aware of how their inappropriate behaviour is spoiling the learning for their classmates. Pupils have a good level of respect for the feelings and values of others. Most bow their head appropriately for prayers in assembly. In a history lesson about the Titanic disaster, pupils could express with real feeling how they might have reacted in the same situation. Pupils are able to show appropriate respect for the values of different religions. In a particularly good religious education lesson on Judaism the Year 1 pupils showed a well-developed sense of occasion as they sampled the Challah bread and passed round the spice boxes.
11. The attendance of pupils is unsatisfactory. The overall attendance rate was just under that for most primary schools for the last full academic year and remains at this level for the current year. However unauthorised absence is still above the national average. The actual attendance of pupils has improved since the last inspection, but when compared with the national increase in attendance and taking into account the many instances of absence without permission, it has not improved sufficiently. The majority of authorised absence relates to unavoidable sickness and medical reasons, although there is still a significant number of family holidays taken in term time. A substantial number of pupils are late for the start of the school day. The unsatisfactory attendance and punctuality are having a detrimental effect on the learning of the pupils.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

12. Teaching is satisfactory overall, resulting in the sound progress of pupils throughout the school. Most of the 60 lessons seen during the inspection were good, some were very good or excellent, and there were also five which were unsatisfactory. There are particular teaching strengths in the nursery and in Year 3.
13. This constitutes a major improvement since the last inspection. A key factor has been the development of a very thoughtful learning and teaching policy. Teachers have identified factors that foster or hinder learning, and have amended their practice accordingly. These have been used as criteria for monitoring activities including classroom observations by head, deputy, and core subject co-ordinators. Additional monitoring by other subject co-ordinators is based on examination of teachers' plans to ensure coverage of the subject. A particular role of the co-ordinators is to add extension ideas to plans, which is a good device for enabling the expertise of the subject co-ordinator to be shared in a useful way, enabling teaching to take place at a higher level. An example of this, from the art co-ordinator, for a lesson on flower paintings illustrated by Van Gogh suggests that Georgia O'Keefe is also studied for a different approach.
14. Consistently good teaching was seen in mathematics, design and technology, art, history, and religious education. It was consistently unsatisfactory in information technology. In other subjects it was mostly satisfactory. This was reflected in the pupils' attainment and progress. The school has fully implemented the numeracy and literacy strategies, and the methodology of these has been applied to lessons in some other subjects. Numeracy is well taught, and the teaching of literacy is sound, being most successful when teachers vary the timings of the literacy hour to meet the needs of the particular lesson.
15. Excellent teaching was seen in a Year 3 religious education lesson which required pupils to examine why the 'passers by' did not help the injured man, and how they could help others. Pupils were made to see things from other points of view, and the use of role-play produced excellent responses. Very high expectations, with very well chosen music, and great enthusiasm from the teacher produced dance of very high quality in a Year 2 physical education lesson. In an English lesson for Year 1 excellent and varied methods were used very effectively, there were very high expectations of what pupils had to produce, and they were appropriately required to work in silence. The work that came from this was of a good standard. In an excellent session in the nursery the teacher put on her number hat, made mathematical learning fun, and was very effective in getting children to use mathematical vocabulary precisely.
16. Where teaching was unsatisfactory it was mainly because tasks were not well matched to pupils' abilities. Too little was expected of pupils in a physical education lesson for Year 1 pupils. Here pupils were not challenged, did not extend themselves physically, and behaved poorly. In an English lesson, also for Year 1, the tasks were too difficult, and pupils could not read the texts provided.
17. Most lessons were characterised by good behaviour management. In the less successful lessons, poor behaviour by a minority of pupils is often a factor - the distraction caused by their reprimand sometimes delaying the learning of others. Overall, good use is made of learning support assistants. They are a skilled and dedicated group, and they contribute very well to pupils' learning. Part of their role is to support pupils in behaving well in classrooms, and this is done effectively and, for the most part, unobtrusively. They are also used well to support tasks and group work. In many lessons they are well used in plenary sessions also; for example, on the carpet with pupils offering support, and helping individuals to focus on the teacher's input. In just a few cases, this time was not used effectively.
18. Most lessons are well paced, but in some cases, they are too long, and the extra time given does not necessarily lead to extra learning. For example in a Year 2 geography lesson, which stretched to over an hour, many pupils were just colouring in a photocopy of a photograph without any learning taking place. This criticism also applies sometimes in the unbroken one and a quarter hour morning session before break, and in the half hour periods where time is not made for varied activities so the pupils are kept for too long in a listening situation. In other cases where the pace is slow, a factor is the failure to set pupils close time targets.

19. The teachers set appropriate homework. A good example of this is the mathematics challenge, which provides opportunities for parents to collaborate with their children in using and applying mathematics. Not all the parents respond to this opportunity.
20. Assessment strategies are good, and increasingly, teachers are using assessment to review learning intentions for the next lesson. This will happen more readily when the school carries out its intention to plan in weekly rather than fortnightly blocks. The teachers plan well in year group pairs. Planning is mostly effective with objectives shared with the pupils. The importance of these was demonstrated in parallel lessons in one year group, where the same material was far more successfully taught in the class where the pupils were given the highly focused learning objectives. Expectations are mostly appropriate. Assessment through the recording of 'significant achievements' by individuals is an effective and economical way of noting progress, which is appreciated and valued by pupils.
21. Good subject knowledge was demonstrated in early years education, mathematics, history, religious education and design and technology. For example, the teachers' deep knowledge of Jewish celebrations and of the Islamic faith led to a fascination in pupils, close questioning, and learning of high quality. Several teachers show less confidence with information technology and music.
22. Most teachers use sound questioning techniques, with questions framed to meet the needs of pupils of varied abilities. Although questioning is sometimes very good, often one-word answers are accepted too readily and there is no follow-up question. This is indicative of the lack of planned opportunities for speaking and listening. Many of the pupils come into school with a limited language culture and some teachers fail to do enough to enhance this. The teachers have to work hard to achieve a verbal response from some children, and are not always successful in doing so. In the very best lessons, the teachers get children to think, give time for them to respond, and build on their answers.

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

23. The quality and range of learning opportunities are satisfactory overall. The school has effectively addressed some of the weaknesses identified in the last inspection. There are now appropriate policies and schemes of work for most subjects and an overall curriculum plan, which provides a broad, relevant and generally balanced curriculum for children under five, Key Stages 1 and Year 3. The curriculum successfully provides opportunities to meet the interests and aptitudes of all pupils, including children under five and those with special educational needs. However, it is not effectively balanced in that it does not meet statutory requirements to teach all aspects of information technology. Information technology has not yet been planned and consistently taught to meet the needs of all pupils. Insufficient time is allocated to information technology and geography. There is an appropriate emphasis on literacy and numeracy and an effective balance of time in other subjects. The lack of opportunities for composing in music remains a weakness.
24. The school has successfully implemented the National Literacy Strategy and it is already having a positive impact on pupils' learning. More recently, the school has introduced the National Numeracy Strategy very well. It is improving pupils' mental arithmetic skills and has also increased teachers' confidence in teaching the subject.
25. The school has a caring and positive approach to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The overall provision is good and makes a significant contribution to learning by establishing a supportive atmosphere within the school. Since the last inspection, the school has taken positive steps to improve provision further, especially for moral development.
26. The provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. Religious education, design and technology, history and art effectively support the development of pupils' spiritual awareness. The assemblies are used well to promote a sense of community and shared values, and to provide a good setting for pupils to reflect on their own and others' lives. The stories and talks in assemblies are interesting, and pupils are

given suitable opportunities for a spiritual thought or prayer. The assemblies are effectively used to highlight and award achievements with certificates, stickers and headteacher's awards.

27. Good provision is made for pupils' moral development. The school is strongly committed to encouraging care and respect for others and teachers ensure that all pupils are valued. The difference between right and wrong is effectively taught and most pupils have a good understanding of what is inappropriate behaviour. The school actively promotes positive values and the pupils respond positively, enjoying their work and showing care for the school. Moral values are well taught through stories, songs and discussions. Pupils regularly raise money and support various charities, Teaching and support staff provide good role-models and encourage pupils to relate well to each other and behave courteously.
28. Good provision is made for the pupils' social development through planned opportunities for them to work co-operatively, the personal and social programme and local educational visits. The school has a secure environment in which pupils feel cared for. Children under five settle quickly into school life and are encouraged to become independent and confident. Key Stage 1 and Year 3 pupils carry out responsibilities with confidence when provided with appropriate opportunities, such as paired reading and caring for those new to the school.. Year 3 pupils set up the hall for assemblies, and carry out wet play responsibilities very effectively . The quality of relationship between adults and pupils is good. A range of after school clubs and extra curricular activities such as drama, skipping and recorders, effectively support pupils' social understanding.
29. The provision for pupils' cultural development is good. It is supported through the celebrations of Christian festivals and assemblies to highlight festivals of other major religions of the world, such as Eid and Divali. The African day celebrations and the Book Festival are some of the other highlights. The school through its aims and policy of equal opportunities promotes respect for cultural diversity. Regular visits to the local church effectively enhance pupils' knowledge and understanding. However, opportunities for pupils to visit different places of worship and listen to visitors from other faiths in order to improve knowledge of their own culture as well as faiths other than Christianity, is under developed.
30. The curriculum provides good equality of access and opportunity for all pupils to learn and make progress. All children have full access to the curriculum and make appropriate progress. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language have good opportunities for learning. Withdrawal sessions are kept to a minimum, and pupils receive support from adult helpers within normal lessons. There are clear aims and objectives that have equality of opportunity at their very core. The principles of the school's equal opportunity policy are well followed in practice. Boys and girls have equal chance to achieve in all subjects of the curriculum. In the skipping club boys were enthusiastically encourage to participate. Pupils from different cultural backgrounds are well included in school life. Parents with different religions have contributed to school assemblies. Translation of documents is not automatic for parents with languages other than English, but interpreters are made available if necessary. The school has formally monitored the National Curriculum test results by gender, special educational needs, free school meals and how long the pupils have been in the school to identify if there has been any inequality of access to the curriculum. The school is swift to remedy any inequalities.
31. The long and medium term planning of the whole curriculum is satisfactory and based on the national guidance in most subjects, which provides the framework for a broad and relevant curriculum. However, the short term fortnightly planning has weaknesses. It is not closely related to the teaching of lessons with clear objectives and suitable activities for effective learning.
32. The range and number of extra-curricular activities is good and makes a significant contribution to pupils' personal and social development. Pupils have opportunities to take part in clubs such as, drama, recorders, skipping and homework at different times in the year. Take up on most lunchtime and after school activities is generally satisfactory.
33. A well-planned programme for personal and social education provides appropriate opportunities for pupils to learn about health issues and the dangers of drug misuse. The programme encourages pupils to make personal choices and take decisions.

34. The school has satisfactory links with the community and partner institutions. The local police officer regularly talks to pupils on aspects of safety. There are good links with the local church, and regular visits from the vicar and other members of the church community. Visits are made to other places of interest based on topics in history, geography, science, and art.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

35. The school provides a happy and caring environment for its pupils. Every pupil is well known to all the staff, and particularly well supported by individual class teachers. The procedures for ensuring the pupils' safety and welfare are satisfactory. The school has a good policy for health and safety, which is effectively followed in practice. Risk assessments are regular, and there are tight systems to check the good working order of fire, gas, and electrical equipment and apparatus. The governors are responsive to any worries that the parents may have on site safety. The security of the site has improved since the last inspection, but there are still areas of concern of which the school are aware. Despite reminders in the newsletters, many girls were seen wearing hoop earrings. Although the staff are vigilant in ensuring that the earrings are removed or covered for physical education, this jewellery is potentially hazardous in the classrooms and playground.
36. The school has good procedures for welfare and first aid. There are two staff with up to date first aid certificates and a well-appointed medical room. All staff are aware of pupils with particular medical needs, and are kept well informed by appropriate notes in the attendance register. All accidents are meticulously recorded in the accident book. There is a very large number of entries for the last year but accident trends are not monitored rigorously.
37. The school is not satisfactory in following the formalities of child protection legislation, it fails to meet legal requirements in not having an agreed child protection policy or organising training of the staff in the latest advice and procedures for child protection. In practice all staff know how to react sensibly and practically should they be suspicious about child abuse.
38. The procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good. Parents are regularly reminded of the need for regular attendance through the prospectus, attendance policy leaflets, and end of year reports. Each class has a very good system of pupils completing their own "attendancy cards" on arrival in the morning. This heightens awareness for pupils and their parents of the benefits of good attendance and punctuality on learning. Most class teachers are rigorous in clearly marking the difference between authorised and unauthorised absences. Registers are marked promptly at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions, and returned for safety to the school office. The school helper carries out a thorough check of the registers each half term, and brings any concerns to the attention of the head teacher. On a daily basis she carefully follows up any absence which is not notified. The school has effective links with the education welfare officer to support pupils and families with attendance problems.
39. The school has good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. The consistency and appropriateness of behaviour management has improved greatly since the last inspection. There are very clear systems for rewards and sanctions. These are well understood by pupils and parents. Each class, without fail, has a well-maintained 'Behaviour Book' and 'Well Done Book'. They are often referred to in lessons and concentrate the pupils' minds well on appropriate behaviour. The head teacher monitors behaviour effectively, and knows where support is needed. The 'Best Work Board', recently introduced by the head teacher, celebrates and displays particular pieces of good work for all to see. Pupils are well supervised at lunch and play times. The good, consistent management of behaviour is having a positive impact on the learning of all pupils. Bullying is not a problem for the school,
40. There are good procedures for assessing the attainment and progress of pupils. In addition to the recognised national tests and assessments, the school has established a thorough system for identifying the progress of individual pupils. The staff work together effectively to scan the work in English, mathematics and science and ensure that there is progression in learning. The "Significant Achievement" charts are particularly useful in identifying the subjects in which pupils are learning well,

and in picking out those individual pupils who are achieving as they should, and those who are not. Most teachers mark books regularly to help learning progress. The recent National Curriculum teacher assessments were considerably higher than the pupils' test scores, pointing to a need for a more rigorous approach in identifying how the pupils are progressing.

41. The use of assessment to guide planning is satisfactory. Currently the teachers plan on a fortnightly basis. This time lag affects the flexibility needed to make the best use of assessment of a previous lesson and adapt the plan to meet the needs of the pupils in the next lesson so that activities match pupils' needs. However, on a day to day basis, some teachers react very effectively to change their teaching methods or coverage as necessary. For example the Year 3 teachers felt that the mathematics lesson had not been understood by the lower attaining pupils, hence they revised the objectives for the next day's lesson so that these pupils would not miss out on any learning.
42. The procedures for monitoring academic and personal development are good. At the end of each year a full record of personal and subject development for each pupil is passed to the next teacher. Young children are settled in well to the nursery. All classes have an opportunity each week to discuss personal and social issues. The older pupils are given a good chance to grow in responsibility as they take on tasks around the school and participate in the residential journey. Pupils are making a good start in making goals for their own learning. Each pupil has their own target card for language, which is carefully monitored by the teacher, and valued by the pupils. End-of-year reports include a useful section that shares with parents how their children can improve in personal and educational areas. Pupils with special educational needs have well kept individual education plans with specific, achievable and relevant targets. Higher attaining pupils also have individual education plans, and this helps their progress.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

43. Parents have positive views of the school. Relatively few attended the parents' meeting or returned questionnaires, but nearly all who did so expressed solid support for the school. This is a great improvement from the last inspection, when a large number of parents with high levels of complaint attended the meeting. This time there is only minor concern on homework and on lunchtime and after school activities. The inspection team judges that there is an appropriate level of homework and that there is a good range of extra curricular clubs, including the residential journey, for pupils of this age.
44. The effectiveness of the school's links with the parents is satisfactory. The school is very open and welcoming. Every morning parents can come in and help to settle their children into class or speak to the teacher. The head teacher is available and is always prepared to have a word with parents. The information provided to parents is satisfactory. Parents are given useful leaflets on attendance, behaviour, lunchtime behaviour and the home school agreement, which allows them to share in supporting their children's learning and behaviour. There are several parents' notice boards, but they do not contain sufficient interesting information about events and happenings in the school. The annual report of governors meets legal requirements, but does not give a sufficient overview of the last year. The teacher with responsibility for co-ordinating links with parents has initiated some good strategies to attract parents into the school. The monthly "Dads' Day" is an innovative way to involve fathers, and provide good role models to the boys. The African Day was very successful, and brought in many parents the school would otherwise not see. Parents are given sufficient opportunities to discover how their children are progressing. The end-of-year reports give a satisfactory overview of what pupils have been learning, but they are not all clear on how each pupil has progressed over the year. Parents who speak little English do not have satisfactory access to translation. This hampers their ability to be fully involved in their children's learning, and sometimes has a negative effect on supporting their children's regular attendance at school.
45. The impact of the parents' and carers' involvement on the work of the school is unsatisfactory. Parents are rarely seen helping in the school. A notice board where parents can sign up their availability to help in classrooms or with general school activities was blank in the inspection week. There is a Friends of Lonesome Association, but it is held together by a small core of active members. Events involving the pupils' participation are generally well supported, but other meetings, such as curriculum evenings and

the annual governors' meeting are sparsely attended. Although the Family Learning Group and the Literacy Festival proved to be successful, still many parents do not read with their children at home. Overall the involvement of parents in their own children's learning is unsatisfactory. Some parents of faith communities have contributed well to school life by leading an Eid assembly and organising Diwali celebrations.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

46. The leadership and management of the head teacher and key staff are good. At the time of the inspection the head teacher had been in post for less than a term. She is astute, very well organised and has very quickly grasped what the main issues are for the school's future development. During the inspection the head teacher was frequently seen about the school, talking to staff and pupils, as well as always being on hand to greet parents in the morning. As a result of these new factors, the school is well prepared to move forward to become a bigger 3-11 primary school under the reorganisation of education in the borough.
47. The delegation and contribution of the senior staff are very good. The senior management team is a very hard working and committed group of teachers. The assistant head teacher gives good support. She is a very good role model for teachers throughout the school. Several teachers hold a number of co-ordination responsibilities, and in some cases this hampers the member of staff from putting her full energy into the co-ordination. The school is aware of the imbalance and is reallocating responsibilities. Co-ordinators provide good support to their colleagues. Particularly effective notes added to the teachers' plans, give suggestions for activities that will extend and challenge the more able pupils in the class.
48. The school's aims and values are well reflected in its work. There is a real commitment to including all pupils in the life of the school, and giving them all a chance to succeed. The action plans of the co-ordinators are well linked to the school's aims.
49. The governing body is not yet fully effective in fulfilling its responsibilities. Many governors are new and not fully aware of their statutory role in monitoring the progress of the school. However they are very willing, supportive, and ready to gain the necessary knowledge. They are already aware that the standards are low in the school and can form a view on why this may be. As yet they are not fully conversant with rigorously analysing the assessment tests, and comparing the results with similar schools. The governors are not sufficiently clear on understanding the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The governors have commendable sentiments about the need for all pupils to be happy and ensuring a smooth transition to the reorganised primary phase, but there is insufficient reference to priorities to raise standards in particular curriculum areas. The governing body is failing to meet statutory requirements by not ensuring that appraisal of the teachers' performance takes place, or that information technology teaching meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. A few governors have attended training sessions, but there has not been an effective whole governing body session to address issues relating specifically to the school and so enable the governors to have a clear view of how they can challenge and support the school's improvement. Consequently the governors are not yet sufficiently effective in shaping the direction of the school.
50. The school's monitoring and evaluation of its own performance and its ability to take resulting effective action is satisfactory. All the co-ordinators are very clear on the benefits of monitoring plans and the work of the pupils. They spend many hours a week in meetings. The effect of their monitoring is good, but there is insufficient prioritised time given to watching and supporting their colleagues actually teach, other than in English and mathematics. The school uses the results of monitoring satisfactorily to pin point where professional development is needed, or to re-deploy staff to the school's and their best advantage. The head teacher has already identified the need for more opportunities for teachers to attend training out of the school and watch colleagues teach in other schools. Formal appraisal is currently in abeyance, but the head teacher has managed to gain a satisfactory overview of performance by observing teaching in each class, and having an informal interview with each teacher in the first few weeks of her headship.

51. The school has appropriate priorities set out in its school development plan and it is taking satisfactory action to meet its targets. The development plan has three very clear priorities easily identifiable in the three year over view. However there are too many individual action plans relating to curriculum subjects and other school issues which do not always feed into the year's major priorities. The many initiatives undertaken do not help the school to focus on the real priorities for the year. In practice the school has a very good shared commitment to improvement and capacity to succeed. The good work in addressing the issues for action from the last inspection, the positive staff morale and a new, energetic head teacher all point very positively to the future.
52. Day to day financial control is satisfactory. The school development plan has agreed targets for the next two years, but there is an insufficiently rigorous link to the available budget. The school's effective use of new technology is unsatisfactory. In the office the staff use the computers well to help the smooth running of the school. However the large amount of money spent on hardware, software and the refurbishment of an information technology room for the pupils is not yet proving cost effective, due to lack of expertise and the unsatisfactory organisation of pupils using the computers. Grants awarded to the school for specific purposes, such as special educational needs and ethnic minorities, are satisfactorily used for the benefit of the particular pupils.
53. The match of teachers to the demands of the curriculum is satisfactory. Although there have been five new teachers in the last two years, the staff team is cohesive and works very well together for the good of the pupils. Currently the expertise in music and information technology is unsatisfactory and affecting the pupils' learning in these subjects. The ratio of pupils to teachers is high, but with careful management and organisation the teachers cope well. Support staff are very well used to help the pupils' learning. They have their own plans and carry out effective assessment to assist the teacher. Often they are seen in lessons managing behaviour very well, or directing the teacher to pupils who need special attention. Staff who are new to the school are inducted well into the routines.
54. The school has very good accommodation. Classrooms have sufficient space for group and individual work, and the central area is very well used for resource areas and group teaching. The library is attractive, comfortable and placed in an appropriate central position. The information technology room is not used enough to promote learning across the school. There are very spacious and attractive grounds, which are well used to benefit recreation and learning. There are many stimulating areas, including climbing equipment, grassy mounds and hard surfaced areas. The wild nature area is currently underused, but some teachers have made good use of the little orchard to give the pupils practical ideas when writing their books on "The Apple Tree". The school has good levels of resources for learning in all subjects other than information technology.
55. The principle of best value is applied satisfactorily. The school is only just beginning to compare their performance with other schools. The head teacher is in a good position to challenge the services provided and is already asking why the school does certain things. The school is receptive to the views and concerns of staff, parents and pupils, and is starting to be effective in competing for the best value. For example the governors were careful to receive several quotes for new windows, there is a drive to turn off lights to save electricity and the caretaker is currently looking to replace the taps in the pupils' cloakrooms with ones which turn off automatically and save water.
56. Taking into account the satisfactory quality of teaching, the good attitudes and behaviour of the pupils, the strong leadership of the head teacher and key staff, and the good improvement since the last inspection against the below average achievements of the pupils and the comparatively high cost per pupil, the school gives satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

57. In order to raise standards further the governors, headteacher and staff should;

- (1) Improve standards in English, particularly in speaking and listening, writing, and spelling. By giving fuller and further opportunities for children in the nursery and reception classes and pupils throughout the school to listen and use speech in all subjects. [See paragraphs 1, 3, 22, 75, 78, 80, 97 and 112]
- (2) Improve standards in information technology by ensuring that all teachers and classroom assistants are confident in using computers, making sure that the National Curriculum is covered, and that there are appropriate resources. [See paragraphs 3, 4, 14, 21, 23, 54, 93, 119, 120, 121 and 122]
- (3) Improve standards in geography and music by ensuring that these subjects are given sufficient time and that teachers expect higher levels of performance. [See paragraphs 3, 16, 23, 110, 111, 125, 127 and 128]
- (4) Ensure that parents are more fully involved in the education of their own children. [See paragraphs 43, 44 and 45]
- (5) Develop the role of the governing body in checking on standards, and ensuring that all statutory requirements are met. [See paragraphs 37, 49 and 51]
- (6) Improve attendance by reducing the amount of unauthorised absence. [See paragraphs 11 and 38]

In addition, governors, headteacher and staff should consider the following in their action planning:

- Use numeracy skills to a greater extent in other subjects, particularly science and geography; [See paragraphs 5, 87, 95 and 111]
- Ensure that all lessons have clear objectives for learning by planning lessons on a weekly rather than a fortnightly basis; [See paragraphs 20 and 31]
- Evaluate the effectiveness of all lessons on a daily basis, and ensure that activities closely match pupils' abilities; [See paragraphs 16, 40 and 41]
- Review the length of lessons, make teaching brisker and set pupils close time targets; [See paragraph 18]
- Make more creative use of Literacy Hours so as to use texts from history, or examples from geography, and to involve pupils in more drama and role play; [See paragraphs 5, 14 and 79]
- Make greater use of visits out of school and visitors in, to school, and make fuller use of the excellent grounds in all subjects; [See paragraphs 29, 54, 99, 113 and 138]

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	60
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	19

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
7	23	38	24	8	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 – Y3
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	52	268
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		74

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR– Y3
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	8	66

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	94

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	36
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	32

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.8
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.3
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	39	28	67

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	29	30	32
	Girls	19	21	20
	Total	48	51	52
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	72[64]	76[71]	78[76]
	National	82[80]	83[81]	87[84]

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	33	34	38
	Girls	21	22	23
	Total	54	56	61
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	81[67]	84[67]	91[83]
	National	82[81]	86[85]	87[86]

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	16
Black – African heritage	28
Black – other	3
Indian	7
Pakistani	11
Bangladeshi	3
Chinese	0
White	110
Any other minority ethnic group	28

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y3

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.8
Average class size	33.3

Education support staff: YR– Y3

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	248

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	100

Number of pupils per FTE adult	10.4
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	666,963
Total expenditure	665,460
Expenditure per pupil	1,963
Balance brought forward from previous year	26,719
Balance carried forward to next year	28,222

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	276
Number of questionnaires returned	44

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	68	32	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	48	48	2	2	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	39	48	7	0	7
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	33	52	7	5	2
The teaching is good.	57	43	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	52	36	7	2	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	61	34	0	2	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	56	44	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	40	49	5	0	7
The school is well led and managed.	44	47	2	0	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	44	53	2	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	41	41	9	5	5

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

58. The school has a 52 place part-time nursery unit for three to four year-olds. Children are admitted to the reception class at the start of the term in which they become five. At the time of inspection the majority of children in the reception classes were under five and following a broad range of learning experiences within the nationally recommended areas of learning, broadly incorporated into the National Curriculum programme of study.
59. On entry to the nursery children have limited skills in the areas of language, mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world. They enjoy first-hand experiences and purposeful play. The overall attainment of the children at the age of five is below what is found nationally. However, attainment is in line with expectations in personal and social, physical, and creative skills. Most children show satisfactory progress in all areas of learning over their time in the nursery. Children with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, receive good support to enhance their progress.
60. The quality of teaching in the nursery is good. The staff work effectively as a team, and support one another.

PERSONAL AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

61. Children quickly feel confident and secure in the nursery unit and make good progress as they learn to cooperate, share, and take turns. They work both as part of a group and independently through a variety of learning situations. They are attentive and eager to learn. Children behave well at all times and show consideration and respect for property and each other. They form positive and respectful relationships. Most children participate enthusiastically in teacher-led and self-initiated activities. They are both happy and secure at school, and personal and social skills are in line with those expected nationally.
62. The staff share appropriate expectations of work and behaviour. The learning areas are always well prepared and organised with a good range of interesting activities both indoors and out. They manage children very skilfully, and keep them purposefully occupied. Children's play and responses are supported and extended sensitively.

LANGUAGE & LITERACY

63. Progress shown by children in language and literacy skills is satisfactory. By the time they are five, children listen attentively and respond well to stories and songs, but many under achieve in speaking. Pupils are given planned opportunities, for example, daily discussion times to talk about their experiences. They develop new vocabulary through following stories such as 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears', and re-tell them using story props and pictures. They enjoy imaginative play and are beginning to take part in conversations speaking increasingly confidently and clearly. Many older children are gaining satisfactory hand control in writing. A few write their own names unaided. They can draw and paint with increasing control, and some produce strings of letter type shapes. Older children regularly participate in a range of opportunities structured to develop mark making and early developmental writing skills. Good progress is made when adults work with children in small groups, or with individuals to provide opportunities for direct eye contact and individual attention. Children handle books carefully and know how these are organised. They regularly listen to stories, and behave like readers, but many do not yet associate sounds with words and letters.

64. The teachers effectively familiarise children with written vocabulary through stimulating activities to focus on key words and effectively promote the development of early reading and writing skills. Children show knowledge of the sequence of events in a story, and use the key words confidently. They are encouraged to undertake a range of activities related to literacy, such as, dramatising and listening to taped stories. The assessment procedures and the recording of children's day to day progress are satisfactory, and teachers consistently build on what has already been achieved.

MATHEMATICAL AREA OF LEARNING

65. Children's progress in the mathematical area of learning is satisfactory. They achieve at levels appropriate to their prior attainment. Most children can match, sort and count, using every day objects. A few children are able to count to ten, and have a satisfactory grasp of 'one to one' when counting. Many under five can recognise basic shapes, and gain some knowledge of capacity and weight from practical experiences with sand and water. A few older children can describe objects by position, shape, size, colour, and quantity. They are beginning to use mathematical phrases of comparisons such as, bigger, smaller and middle size. This is evident in their use of large and small construction equipment and working with jigsaws. The majority of children by the time they are five, lack recognition of number symbols. There are sufficient opportunities especially for the oldest in the reception group, to make representations and write the number symbols correctly. Most children demonstrate limited knowledge and understanding to solve simple problems involving addition and subtraction, and vocabulary such as, add one more or take one more away, how many altogether and how many left.
66. Opportunities include practical activities to understand and recognise numbers and to consolidate the correct use of language involved, for example, bears in boxes and bean bags on washing line as well as the number rhymes and songs to enhance learning. There is effective adult involvement in children's activities and useful timely assessments made of the individual children's progress.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

67. Most children under five have a knowledge and understanding of the world appropriate for their age. The outside provision in the nursery is effectively used to promote children's knowledge and understanding of the idea of growth. Children freely explore with sand, water and play-dough, but cannot yet explain clearly what they are doing. Opportunities for investigation such as, floating and sinking, growing cress for sandwiches and making porridge for the three bears are regularly provided and greatly help learning. There are opportunities for children to explore with everyday objects of interest; as well as select from a variety of reclaimed materials to make imaginative models and develop skills, such as cutting, joining, folding and building. Most under-fives demonstrate satisfactory development of computer skills expected for their age.
68. There is effective adult involvement in children's activities and encouragement to explore new ideas. The science element of this area is suitably emphasised. Staff respond positively to children's responses and provide appropriate explanations to the questions they ask.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

69. The overall progress in the physical development of children under five is satisfactory, and achievement at the age of five is in line with national expectations. Children are confident and well co-ordinated in the use of large play equipment such as bicycles. The spacious outside provision, and the available outdoor resources, are used well to promote the development of skills such as running, riding, throwing and catching, balancing, climbing and jumping. Children move imaginatively, demonstrating satisfactory body control and awareness of space. They use construction toys and shape materials with appropriate tools, and demonstrate reasonable hand and eye co-ordination. They are developing confidence in the use of different joining materials and tools such as, scissors, glue, and tape for developing hand control and manipulative skills. However, the under-fives in reception classes do not have provision for outdoor play or a regular opportunity to share nursery outdoor equipment.

70. The teachers plan effectively to match tasks to own expectations and children's level of functioning and skill. They provide calm and sensitive support and show a good understanding of how young children learn.

CREATIVE LEARNING

71. Most children show sound progress in all areas of creative learning and achieve in line with national expectations. They experiment with paint and use their observations and imagination to create pleasing results. They are given opportunities to explore colour, texture, shape and form, through working with a wide range of materials to create collage and use construction toys to make models. Children sing, clap and copy simple rhythms and express enjoyment. There are good opportunities for children to explore sound and depict ideas and feelings through using percussion instruments. In one lesson children were observed passing a tambourine round skilfully without making a sound.
72. The planning for under-fives' curriculum is currently based on the nationally recommended areas of learning, incorporating the Desirable Outcomes by the age of five. The programme of work in place is effectively based on the advancement of children's skills, knowledge and understanding related to the key areas of learning and future National Curriculum work. The teachers' planning on long, medium and short-term basis is systematically linked to the required programme for the under fives children.
73. Resources for the under-fives are sufficient and accessible. These are well organised and used effectively for all areas of learning. The nursery classroom is spacious and organised imaginatively into logically defined and visually attractive areas with stimulating and interactive displays to enhance children's learning.
74. The overall provision for all children under five is good.

ENGLISH

75. Standards are below average at the end of Key Stage 1, and well below by the time pupils leave school at the end of Year 3. In the 1999 tests for seven-year olds, pupils were well below average for reading and writing when compared with all schools. In reading, fewer pupils achieved the higher level compared to that achieved nationally. In writing, the number of pupils achieving level three was close to the levels achieved nationally. Standards in both reading and writing are well below average in writing and below average in reading when compared with similar schools. These well below average standards have not been materially improved in these pupils whilst in Year 3, although they have had good teaching.
76. However, the results of the current year's national tests show some improvement particularly in reading, although the national comparisons of these results are not yet available. The inspection findings confirm the improving picture. The attainment in all aspects has improved from 'well below' to 'below' national average as a result of school's satisfactory implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, and more recently the Additional Literacy Support in Year 3. The standards in Year 3 although improved in reading are well below in all other aspects of the subject. There is no significant difference in attainment between girls and boys in both reading and writing.
77. The analysis of the school's assessment of children entering the school indicates that most pupils in reception classes start at lower than average attainment. Pupils' progress is satisfactory over their time in school based on the analysis of completed work through the year. A significant number of pupils make good progress, particularly in reading. The class teachers make consistent on-going assessments to inform their planning and set individual targets to support pupils' progress. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported on the targets set in their individual educational plans, and make satisfactory progress in relation to their prior attainment. The pupils for whom English is an additional language also make satisfactory progress. They are effectively supported in the lessons by the staff with relevant expertise.

78. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards in speaking and listening are below average with most pupils unable to respond confidently to questions and ideas in discussions. A significant number of pupils in both key stages have a relatively limited vocabulary and less well developed listening skills. Most pupils are keen to talk about their work at the end of lessons. For example, pupils in Year 2 confidently discuss the context and establish the characters before writing their own stories based on Martin Waddell's 'Little Bear Gets Lost'. By the end of Year 3, pupils begin to be aware of the appropriateness of a formal vocabulary and when to use it. However, they do not have sufficient skills in speaking at length, or in substantiating opinions with examples or reasons.
79. Standards in reading at the end of Key Stage 1 and Year 3 are below the National average but some pupils read at better than average levels in each group. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils confidently use the library and show preferences for different types of books, and many can discuss the different characters in their stories. In Year 3, pupils begin to use dictionaries reasonably competently and through their reading, respond to main points in fiction and non-fiction. Most pupils learn that reading offers both enjoyment and information, and they are beginning to appreciate the qualities of different texts, for example formal letters, as in one to the Roman Gladiator. Pupils make independent choices from the range of fiction available, but most lack familiarity with the range of popular authors or series of books. The progress pupils make with learning to read is satisfactory overall. The guided reading sessions enhance pupils' progress in reading.
80. Standards of writing are below average at the end of Key Stage 1 and well below in Year 3. A few more able pupils in Year 2 and 3 have good ideas for their writing, plan their writing well and write at length imaginatively and clearly. In most writing sessions pupils were observed writing in focused silence, reflecting their initial discussion, and using well-sequenced sentences. While some pupils in Year 2 form letters correctly and write in a consistent style, many others find joining letters very difficult. This also affects the presentation of their work. Most pupils leave a space between words and know when to use capital letters and full stops, but they do not make consistent use of this knowledge in their writing. This also applies to many pupils in Year 3. Weaknesses in pupils' writing include the insufficient use of commas, paragraphs, and adjectives. Insufficient use is made of information technology to support pupils' word and sentence work or for drafting and editing their stories or accounts. Attainment in writing is hindered by inaccurate spellings, as some commonly used words are often spelt incorrectly.
81. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 1, and good in Key Stage 2. Teachers plan lessons together in year groups. Their work is carefully based on the National Literacy Strategy framework for teaching that serves as their scheme of work. This is developed at a satisfactory level. Teachers develop pupils' understanding of different texts effectively, but they do not always assure the correct match of text to pupils' level of understanding and the ability to read. Fortnightly lesson plans vary in quality and do not support teachers with clear lesson objectives and match of appropriate activities to aid effective learning. Homework is consistently planned to reinforce learning and to prepare Year 3 pupils for their next school.
82. In the successful lessons, teachers use a variety of teaching strategies to keep pupils interested. Effective use is made of questioning to help pupils clarify ideas and to provide further information. Good examples of questioning to support pupils' reading comprehension were seen in all Year 3 lessons. Here teachers really make pupils think, and give them time to answer. In these lessons pupils were very focused and had good attitudes.
83. There is satisfactory use of assessment to identify pupils who require support. National tests are used to set targets for improvement in English for pupils of all abilities. Marking is positive, but does not consistently indicate to the pupils what needs to be done to improve. The English curriculum is taught both as a separate subject and as a component of other activities. The temporary co-ordinator has clear direction for the subject. Teaching in the subject is monitored effectively. There has been an improvement in the organisation of teaching and learning, but this has not been reflected in sufficient increase in standards since the last inspection. The school is in a good position to bring about further improvement.
84. The school has good resources. The class and central libraries are well organised and sufficiently stocked with fiction and non-fiction. However, many books are rather tatty and in need of replacement. There is a satisfactory collection of books covering all subjects, including the range and quality of dual language texts.

MATHEMATICS

85. Standards in mathematics are in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1. Last year's Year 2 pupils, who are currently in Key Stage 2, will leave the school this year below the standard expected for their age, but have made sound progress from a low baseline. In this group, last year's test scores showed boys and girls to be one to two terms behind the level expected. This year's unpublished test results show the present Year 2 pupils to be in line with the expectation for their age. Over the last four years, the school's results have been consistently below the national average but on the evidence of the inspection, effective implementation of the numeracy strategy, and good teaching are having a significant effect on pupils' achievement and progress. This represents a considerable improvement since the last inspection.
86. Teacher assessment shows a relative weakness at using and applying mathematics, which has been confirmed by the school's own monitoring activities. This is a current development priority in the school, and during the inspection some good examples of this aspect were seen.
87. Reception pupils can identify missing numbers from a 100 square, and can say what number is needed to make the initial number up to five. Lower attainers can do this with support. Most are able to double small numbers mentally, and they can identify a triangle, a circle and a square. A higher attaining pupil was able to say that three could not be taken away from a smaller number. Year 1 pupils are familiar with the mathematical vocabulary required at their age, and are able to double and halve numbers up to twenty. They estimate and compare mass and the length of different items. Almost all pupils in Year 1 can add two items for shopping - a few can say how much change from 30p. Year 2 pupils know that subtraction is the inverse of addition, applying this knowledge, for example, to $24+28=52$ and $52-28=24$. They also know that halving is the inverse of doubling. They have completed investigations, for example, making up correct amounts when stamps are only available in certain denominations. Standards of presentation are below what is expected, and the use of worksheets does not encourage this skill. The pupils' main strengths are in number work, and there is little evidence of data handling. The only use made of information technology is from commercial maths reinforcement programmes, and there is no evidence of children learning to use computers to assemble data. Pupils do not use writing enough in their mathematical activities, nor do they use mathematics sufficiently in other subjects. Pupils with special educational needs, and those with English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress.
88. In Key Stage 2, the Year 3 pupils are able to count in tens to 100. The higher attainers can understand halves, quarters, fifths and tenths. However, more than half the children experience difficulty with fractions. They are uncertain of their number bonds to twenty. They can organise data into block graphs, but there is little evidence of using this in varied ways. They are aware of 'edges', 'vertices' and 'faces' on three-dimensional shapes, but their mathematical vocabulary is generally limited. Apart from a small number of higher attaining pupils, they are below or well below the attainment expected for their age.
89. Teaching is good in this subject. It was good in six of the eight lessons observed in Key Stages 1 and 2, and there was also an excellent lesson in the nursery. The methodology of the numeracy strategy has been enthusiastically applied by the teachers, and is starting to have a positive effect on the pupils' progress. Good features included the use of visual prompts to demonstrate fractions, and success in some classes in getting children to explain the way they were doing things. In other classes, however, teachers talk through the answer, children respond with monosyllables and there is no attempt to draw them out further. A well-selected and challenging task was given to a very able pupil, and this helped learning. In the reception classes, good early learning is maintained in the numeracy lessons; mathematics is done alongside other activities, but all pupils receive focused time in a group with an adult.
90. In the last inspection, attitudes to mathematics were reported as unsatisfactory in some classes. This is no longer the case; appropriate behaviour and good concentration is now seen in most lessons.

91. The curriculum is enhanced by 'mathematical challenge' homework activities, requiring parental participation and next term there is to be a numeracy festival with visiting mathematicians, hall activities, parental participation and mathematics for fun. A good range of learning opportunities is provided. Assessment by 'significant achievement' is well annotated in books. The pupils are aware of their own achievements.
92. The subject is very well led. Partly because of the implementation of the numeracy strategy, mathematics has been stringently monitored by the co-ordinator, and the headteacher has recently done a second monitoring of teaching. Issues arose from this monitoring over using and applying mathematics and the use of language. The level of challenge was found not always to be sufficient, for example, cubes being provided when the challenge was to do it without cubes. The monitoring of pupils' folders was used to reflect the response of teachers to these issues. There has been a high level of in-service training, and this has had a significant impact on the improved quality of teaching.
93. There are good resources, but information technology is not used enough. Accommodation is good, and is well used for group and practical activities, and this has a positive effect on the quality of learning and on the improvement of standards.

SCIENCE

94. Teachers judged standards in science for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 to be above those gained nationally. Similarly the number achieving higher levels was seen as above the national average. Results show a steady increase over the last three years.
95. Inspectors judged the attainment of pupils currently in Year 2 to be in line with national standards, Pupils have well-developed skills in making up their own 'fair tests', and predicting what will happen. They can use scientific vocabulary correctly, and make and record simple observations and measurements effectively. Their knowledge of every day materials and their properties is good. For instance Year 2 pupils can describe different sorts of paper and suggest which would be most effective in mopping up water. Good links with design and technology have been made and pupils can explain which materials would be best to take water from a roof, and which shape would be best for this. They have satisfactory knowledge of living things, but there was not enough work on the needs of humans in healthy living. Their knowledge of electricity and sound are satisfactory and they understand simple concepts of light.. Some good recorded work was noted in Year 2 on the life of pond creatures coming from a study of the school pond, and most pupils can set up good investigations as to which surfaces snails prefer to move on. There is not enough use of information technology in teaching.
96. Although pupils currently in Year 3 are at expected levels for their age, the good teaching has not led to accelerated progress.
97. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, with some notably good teaching in Year 3. Teachers work very hard to get verbal responses from pupils, but their efforts are often met with one-word answers or lack of interesting expression. Many pupils find it difficult to ask questions. Lessons are well prepared. In the best teaching very clear statements as to what is to be learned are shared with the pupils, and this helps their learning. Teachers make good links with other subjects, as in the use of poetry to develop work on 'mini-beasts'. Good teaching in a Year 1 class followed the investigation of snails with a very well chosen reading of 'God's Silent Things' which extended understanding and gave a valuable spiritual element to learning.
98. Assessment is satisfactory, and teachers are careful to record 'significant achievements', which show progress in learning. Although the pace of some lessons is slowed by teachers having to manage behaviour, pupils' attitudes are positive and they enjoy their learning. Concentration and effort are generally good except where lessons are too long.

99. The scheme of work has been recently revised, and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. The quality and range of learning opportunities is good. Teachers are preparing well for the introduction of the new curriculum in September 2000. There are good resources for teaching, and these are well used except fuller use could be made of the excellent grounds.
100. The curriculum co-ordinator has very good knowledge of science and great enthusiasm for improving teaching and learning. She has helped to raise standards through developing better planning and gaining more resources. Release from class responsibilities for half a day each fortnight helps her to assist teachers with their planning, add extension activities, and monitor standards regularly. The budget is well managed and there is a good subject development plan to improve standards further. There has been good improvement since the last inspection.

ART

101. Standards are good overall, and this is maintained across all the age groups. In Key Stage 1, standards are very good and above national expectations. A wide range of media is introduced from the nursery and these are revisited throughout the school to maintain good progress, although the need to further develop the element of progression is noted in the subject development plan. Examples were seen of print work, pastel, charcoal, paint, collage, weaving and sculpture. Reception children show good colour mixing skills. Good collages on seaside and plant-life using natural materials were seen both in Reception and in Year 2. There was a very good representation of John Baur dandelion paintings in Year 1, and Year 3 pupils were able to reproduce Andy Warhol's style, using colour and to appreciate the rationale for his work. A display of weaving, including work by virtually every pupil in Year 2, was outstanding. Also in this year group, an examination of the work of Andy Goldsworthy and Richard Long led to a good attempt at sculpture using found materials. Standards have improved since the last inspection.
102. The quality of teaching is good. Teacher demonstrations illustrated techniques without pre-empting pupils' own ideas. In a reception class, a demonstration was carefully sequenced, good questioning referred children back to earlier learning, and the pupils' own activity was sensitively supported by a learning support assistant. In some classes, good discussion between the teacher, the learning support assistant and the pupils, allowed the work of artists to be explored successfully and with understanding. A good strategy at the end of one lesson was to invite all the pupils to look round at the work on other pupils' desks to see the range of possibilities for interpretation that were possible in the task. This teaching contributed to the good standards and the serious and creative attitudes demonstrated by the pupils.
103. The curriculum is well balanced, and the co-ordinator's initiative of introducing the work of more contemporary artists, alongside that of masters such as Van Gogh, has further enriched it. No classes have made visits to galleries, but teachers have made a preliminary visit to the Tate Modern. There have been no recent visits by artists to work alongside pupils and teachers.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

104. The overall standards and quality of teaching in design and technology has improved since the last inspection. Pupils produce work of good quality, which is above that expected of pupils of their age. There is appropriate emphasis on the design aspect of the subject, and on pupils' ability to assess and improve the quality of their completed products.
105. In Key Stage 1 and Year 3, pupils learn to use simple tools to cut, shape and join. Most pupils handle scissors with increased skill and use paper, glue and stapler to join and make three-dimensional models. For example, the seed packets by younger pupils are well finished by using a computer program to decorate it, and appropriate techniques used to close the edges. Reception pupils design and make bags of paper and fabric. They compare and evaluate these effectively identifying difficulties faced and improvements needed. Pupils work with a range of constructional equipment to develop early making skills.
106. Other examples of pupils' work with different materials include, roofs made out of wood to test best materials as part of science and to acquire skills such as cutting, shaping and joining. Pupils use a range of

materials to design and make useful models, such as 'Incy Wincy Spider' models using levers by Year 1 and monsters with moving parts using hydraulic syringes and tubes by Year 3. They are encouraged to give appropriate attention to safety, neatness and details. Year 2 pupils note down ideas for materials and tools to make their product. They are sufficiently encouraged to develop use of appropriate language and understand the process. They make models out of construction materials to develop the use of step by step plans for example, how to make a vehicle and test it out successfully. Good use is made of food technology for the youngest in Key Stage 1. There are limited examples of using computers in the design process. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make similarly good progress as others.

107. The overall quality of teaching is good. Teachers carefully organise their lessons and take sufficient time to teach correct ways of using tools and appropriate vocabulary. Pupils are guided effectively in their choice of materials and techniques; as a result, they make good progress in acquiring craft skills. Teachers encourage pupils to see how they could improve their work. For instance in a Year 3 lesson the teacher was careful to get pupils to test the model monsters they were making against their initial plans, and to make changes. In a Year 1 lesson making winding spiders, the teacher and classroom assistant evaluated each other's work to give a good example for pupils to judge their own finished products. Teachers are careful to focus on the development of safe and controlled skills. The ongoing assessment procedures are well used to help in the planning of work. The attitude and response of pupils towards learning is good. They enjoy design and technology, and work collaboratively in pairs and small groups. They bring their own ideas and skills well to the tasks. In most lessons, pupils listen attentively and become absorbed in their work. They work hard and take pride in what they make.

108. The teaching of design and technology makes sound contributions to literacy. Effective questioning, encouragement to talk about the product and use appropriate terminology, for example, lever, and axle extends pupils' vocabulary, and improves their speaking and listening skills. Good use is made of numeracy skills in measuring and marking.

109. The co-ordinator uses her expertise to good effect, she is enthusiastic and gives clear direction. The monitoring role of the co-ordinator is not yet fully developed in observing others teach. Resources are good in range and quality, and are used well.

GEOGRAPHY

110. Due to the arrangement of the timetables, only one geography lesson was observed. There is insufficient recorded work in books or on displays around school. Evidence for progress is therefore derived from interviews with pupils and teachers' planning. The standards reported in the last inspection have not been maintained, and are below that expected nationally.

111. The progress made by pupils is unsatisfactory. Pupils' geographical skills of observation, enquiry, recording and communicating information as well as making appropriate use of geographical language are under developed. Some gaps in the curriculum plan are too long and the agreed units of work are not consistently followed. For example, pupils in Year 2 were observed using seashore pictures and an aerial photograph of the local area. They showed insufficient progress in the lesson, as it was not effectively built on their previous knowledge. Their last unit of work was seven months ago when they learnt to use symbols to represent features around the playground. Pupils have insufficient knowledge and understanding of the use of keys and symbols in atlases and maps. Year 3 pupils go on a residential journey to Sayers Croft and effectively use it to gain knowledge about human and physical features of a locality different from own. They compare amenities such as the post office and the school to Mitcham, their local area. There is limited evidence of the use of information technology to promote pupils' geographical skills. Opportunities to use sources of information, such as books, photographs, and maps of different scales are limited.

112. Pupils for whom English is an additional language and those with special educational needs make unsatisfactory progress. Many pupils have insufficient skills in English to express themselves clearly, verbally and in writing, for example when recording or explaining a familiar route. As a result their overall achievement in the subject is low.
113. There is no formalised assessment. The subject co-ordinator is aware of the need to raise subject status as part of the whole curriculum. The available resources in geography are sufficient. The school has well chosen reference books and materials, including suitable atlases, globes and large maps. Resources are well maintained and centrally organised. Pupils benefit from visits to local places of geographical interest, but not enough use is made of the school's own excellent grounds.

HISTORY

114. During the last inspection, little history was seen, but on the evidence available, attainment was judged to be in line with national expectations. In this inspection there was plenty of evidence and pupils now achieve standards above those expected for their age. A further improvement is the extent to which pupils now are taught to interpret history and use eyewitness accounts, primary sources and information from books. They have good factual knowledge, but this is no longer the limit of their learning.
115. The curriculum is well planned. Four of the nine termly topics followed in the nursery and reception classes on a rolling programme include an important historical element. In Key Stage 1, Year 1 pupils' local study is entitled 'In the street', Year 2 pupils look at old toys and the Titanic disaster. As the pupils in Key Stage 2 leave the school after one year, there is a local agreement with the middle schools that they will study the Romans.
116. At the time of the inspection, the early years pupils were looking at their personal time lines as part of a study of growth, and this was helping them to develop a good sense of short term chronology. They have brought photographs of themselves at various ages, and are aware of the changes that have taken place. The reception children are able to link favourite toys at different stages of development to these photographs very well for their age. There are good links to learning in literacy and numeracy with the use of sequencing language such as first, second and third. In Year 2, where the children are considering the Titanic disaster as a significant historical event, they have enhanced their understanding through a study of first-hand accounts and show good reflective empathy for the victims of the disaster. Year 3 children studying the Romans had a very good factual knowledge of the period, and this study had been used as a context for them to develop their research skills with books. They know that the Romans were in Britain two millennia ago, could define the words 'ancient' and 'modern', and were partly correct in their unprompted use of the word 'contemporary'.
117. The subject is well taught. A Year 2 teacher drew a good comparison between the partly fictitious film account of the Titanic and eyewitness accounts of the real event. The study of the Romans was enhanced by the visit of a 'centurion' who described his lifestyle and displayed artefacts. The pupils were aware that this was a representation. Assessment by significant achievements is less successful in this subject than in some others as there are extended periods each school year when history is not being studied.
118. The teaching promoted good attitudes to the subject and children at all ages showed a lot of enthusiasm. Year 3 pupils were animated when describing the learning they had done and also came in during lunchtime to work on a computer program about the Romans.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

119. In the last inspection, standards were below expectations. Pupils were unaware of the impact of information technology in their everyday lives. Word-processing was mostly just copy typing, and curriculum coverage was incomplete. Resource provision was poor, not every class had a computer. There has been some improvement from this, but the standards achieved still fall well below what is required. There is now a computer in every class and an information technology suite with seven computers, which allows discrete teaching of computer skills to groups of pupils. However, this facility is not networked, is too small to be effective, and has failed to bring about much fundamental change in the teaching and learning of computer skills.
120. Standards in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 fall below the national expectations. Progress is unsatisfactory, and there are important gaps in pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. Pupils make good use of painting and drawing programs. Some effective art work has been produced, well supported by learning support assistants, who have some confidence in this program. Evidence of word processing is limited, but Year 2 pupils have used different fonts and boxes to produce news pages about the Titanic disaster. Some aspects of the curriculum, for example, controlling and modelling are not covered at all, and there is no evidence of pupils entering and storing information. Most can use a mouse correctly, but keyboard skills are poor, and children are unfamiliar with the layout.
121. A prime reason for this is the lack of subject knowledge and confidence by some teachers and learning assistants. Teaching in this subject is unsatisfactory. Learning objectives are inadequate and do not offer a sufficient level of challenge to pupils. There is insufficient interaction with pupils using individual computers in the classroom. Pupils have not acquired sufficient technical skills to take advantage of them. For example, for pupils using an entertaining 'Cat in the Hat' program, the learning intention was to use the mouse correctly. This was achieved rapidly, but there was no extension or further challenge offered. Pupils showed great enthusiasm for a city building programme, supporting their learning about the Romans, but they glossed over on-screen instructions, and failed to fully exploit the programme. This was typical of the tendency displayed by most pupils to rush on without appreciating key purposes of on-screen messages.
122. Lessons based in the computer suite were unsatisfactory. Two lessons seen began with effective demonstrations for the whole class, showing how to use the index to retrieve information from an information programme about animals. The children's responses showed that they knew some of the basic commands, and recognised key icons. Half the class were then taken into the suite where they found it difficult to build on the demonstration, partly because each computer had a different program, and some of these – for example 'The Industrial Revolution' - were inappropriate for their age. The room was overcrowded, and the learning support assistant working with the pupils was overwhelmed by their problems. Meanwhile, the other pupils were using poor quality notebook computers in the classroom, where the on-screen menus bore no resemblance to the demonstration, and the instructions were incomprehensible to the pupils.
123. The subject co-ordinator has produced a draft scheme of work which, if followed, would allow the full curriculum to be taught. However, this is not feasible without a comprehensive training programme for the staff, and a review of the existing resources.

MUSIC

124. Due to the arrangement of timetables, only two music lessons in Key Stage 1 and singing as part of the whole school assemblies were attended. Additional evidence was gathered from teachers' planning and discussions with relevant staff. The standards reported in the last inspection have not been maintained, and there has been insufficient improvement.
125. Pupils show satisfactory progress in singing, but their overall progress in performing, composing, listening and appraising is unsatisfactory as they move through the school. There are sufficient resources of appropriate range and quality for both tuned and untuned instruments, but these are not used effectively.

126. In Key Stage 1, pupils were heard singing in the assembly accompanied with a piano and music on tape. They sing in unison and most know the words by heart. In their songs they demonstrate developing awareness of other singers and improving sense of rhythm, control of pitch and breathing. Younger pupils show growing confidence and enjoyment in their singing. Year 3 pupils sing with sound control of their voices and appropriate regard to pitch and tone.
127. Pupils make unsatisfactory progress over their time in school. Teachers' planning documents do not indicate a programme to enable pupils to deal with significant aspects of music such as, rhythm, pulse, pitch and melody when singing. Pupils are given insufficient opportunities to recognise how musical sounds are used to create specific effects, and how sounds are made in different ways, they have limited skills of composing, recording and performing of musical notations. Most pupils gain an understanding of a wide variety of instruments, but they do not confidently work with them. Pupils' sense of rhythm does not develop in a sequential way. Year 2 pupils listen to Handel's Water Music and produce 'Mood Art' pictures. Opportunities to listen carefully to evaluate music from other times and places, and understand the use of rhythm and other musical qualities in defining mood, are limited. Pupils are given too few opportunities to appraise and evaluate each other's work to develop their skills in this area.
128. There is insufficient evidence to form judgement on the overall quality of teaching music. In the lesson where teaching was satisfactory, the teacher used effective questioning technique and demonstrated perceptiveness when responding to pupils' responses. In another lesson the methods and organisation of the activities did not effectively support progress or move lessons along at a suitable pace. In the absence of an agreed scheme of work, teachers do not consistently plan for the skills and knowledge to be developed in a systematic way. There are no formal systems in use for the day to day assessments of what pupils know, understand and can do.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

129. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 achieve standards that are in line with those expected nationally. Pupils' standards at the end of Year 3 are similar to most pupils of their age. Pupils have notably good ability in dance. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection, but pupils' attitudes and enthusiasm have improved. During the inspection pupils took part in gymnastics, dance, and games sessions, and the wide variety of activities which are provided enables satisfactory progress to be made. Pupils with special educational needs take an active part and make good progress.
130. Pupils have appropriate skills in throwing and catching, and can play simple versions of games in small groups with developing skills in marking and moving into space. They co-operate well with each other in pairs and small teams, and this helps their development. Pupils' games skills are greatly enhanced by midday assistants actively playing cricket and other games with them during lunchtimes. There are also good opportunities for learning and practising skipping and other games skills in extra curricular activities.
131. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. All teachers change into appropriate clothing, and for indoor sessions they insist that pupils work in bare feet, and this improves the quality of their movement. Teachers insist that pupils are correctly dressed and that the large number of pupils with earrings wear plasters over them for physical education. The structure of lessons is good, with well thought out warm up and cool down sessions. Where teaching is good, teachers give very direct teaching of skills, allow time for practice and use other pupils as examples for others to copy. In the lesson where teaching was unsatisfactory too little was expected of pupils, and they were given activities which did not challenge them. This meant that pupils were not physically active, their behaviour became poor, and this limited learning. In an excellent dance lesson in Year 2, teaching was inspired, very high demands were made of pupils, and there was very good progress. The pupils worked very well together in pairs, reacted very effectively to the music, and were able to express themselves with great sensitivity. The quality of movement was very high and they were able to deepen their feelings, in this there was very good spiritual development.

132. The recently written scheme of work clearly identifies what is to be taught when, and helps teachers in their planning. The scheme covers the required National Curriculum. The co-ordinator works effectively to support teachers, checks plans, and suggests additional activities. As yet she does not watch other teachers actually teaching. No formal assessments are made, but teachers look for and record 'significant achievements' in performance.

133. There are good resources and excellent grounds, which are used well, and have a very positive effect on standards.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

134. At the end of Year 2, most pupils have reached the standards required in the Merton Agreed Syllabus. They know about Christianity and the religions that are most immediate to them, and are beginning to understand that different faiths have distinctive festivals and celebrations. Pupils relate what they are taught to themselves. At the end of Year 3 standards are appropriate to pupils of this age.

135. Pupils show well-developed skills in describing their practices to others. For instance, reception class children of the Muslim faith were able to explain very clearly how they prayed, and the preparations for reading the Koran were vividly described by pupils in Year 2. Other children listened to them very well, and learned much from them. Pupils ask questions very well, far better than in any other subject. For instance Year 2 pupils were fascinated to know what would happen if any touched the Koran without washed hands, and pupils in Year 3 questioned the teacher and each other as to why the Jews disliked the Samaritans. This good questioning coming from pupils is the result of good teaching.

136. The quality of teaching is good, with some very good and an excellent lesson. Teachers have a very good knowledge of Christianity and other faiths. They use visual materials well, and where possible use actual objects from living faiths. Teachers are careful to treat these with great respect, and demand that pupils do likewise. This was shown in a Year 1 class where pupils were dressed for a Jewish meal, and handled the candles and spice boxes with care and recognised that they were 'special'. An excellent lesson, for Year 3 with content from the Christian faith, really made pupils think. The teacher took on the role of the 'man who fell amongst thieves', and got the pupils to question deeply, and see the situation from another's point of view. The lesson also made pupils think about the effect their own actions had on others. Teachers are careful to use correct religious vocabulary, and insist that pupils do so in their speaking and writing.

137. Pupils show real interest and enjoyment in learning. Those with English as an additional language, particularly Arabic speakers, had immense self-esteem when texts were read to them by the dual language assistant, and they were able to explain the meaning. Where role-play is used, or when real objects are shown, attention is very high. Pupils become fully involved, notably in explaining their own practices, asking questions, or making their own scrolls as in a Year 1 class. In writing out a verse from the Torah to go in these a pupil asked, "If I make a mistake, must I rewrite it all again?" The quality of teaching has a very positive effect, not only on standards but also on pupils' attitudes.

138. There has been very good progress since the last inspection. Lessons are now very well planned, and there are very good resources. Although some visits to local places of worship take place, and visitors from faith communities come into the school, these are very limited. There are good links between religious education and collective acts of worship, and this has a positive effect on the quality of learning and the spiritual growth of pupils.

139. The curriculum co-ordinator rewritten the scheme of work, and is awaiting the revised Agreed Syllabus to prepare staff for the required changes. There has been recent training on spirituality, and there is satisfactory monitoring of teachers' planning. She spends the budget wisely, and is looking to develop video as an additional tool in giving insights into festivals and celebrations.