

# **INSPECTION REPORT**

## **HOLLY SPRING JUNIOR SCHOOL**

Bracknell

LEA area: Bracknell Forest

Unique reference number: 109806

Headteacher: Mr M Purdy

Reporting inspector: Miss M A Warner  
17288

Dates of inspection: 10 – 13 July 2000

Inspection number: 188991

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Lily Hill Road Bracknell
Postcode:	RG12 2SW
Telephone number:	01344 422367
Fax number:	01344 306577
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Dr G Barnard
Date of previous inspection:	25 June 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Miss M A Warner	Registered inspector	Geography Religious education English as an additional language	The characteristics of the school Results and achievements Teaching and learning Assessment
Mrs J Mynett	Lay inspector		Attendance How the school cares for the pupils Partnership with parents
Mrs S Matthews	Team inspector	English Art History Equal opportunities	Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development
Mr J Haslam	Team inspector	Mathematics Information technology Design and technology	The curriculum and other opportunities offered to pupils Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
Mrs V Ives	Team inspector	Science Music Physical education Pupils with special educational needs	Leadership and management

The inspection contractor was:

*PkR Educational Consultants Ltd.*

6 Sherman Road  
Bromley  
Kent  
BR1 3JH

Tel.: 020 8289 1923/4/5  
Fax: 020 8289 1919

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33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Holly Spring is a community junior school in Bracknell. There are 185 pupils on roll, which is small compared with junior schools nationally. Twenty-six per cent of pupils have special educational needs, which is above the national average and higher than in previous years. Three per cent have formal statements of need, which is also above the national average. Three per cent of pupils come from minority ethnic backgrounds. Six pupils have English as an additional language. In 1999, 19 per cent of pupils were eligible for free school meals, which is broadly in line with the national average. This dropped to 13 per cent in 2000. The attainment of Year 6 pupils in 2000, on entry to the school, was below the national average, but was in line with the national average when they left the school. The attainment of present Year 3 pupils, on entry to the school, was in line with the national average. These factors reflect a changing intake to the school.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

The overall effectiveness of the school is good. The school has a dedicated and hard-working staff. Taking into account the good quality of education the school provides through good teaching and strong management; pupils' very good personal development, the improving standards of attainment; pupils' good progress across the school and the school's commitment to raising standards further, the school provides good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- The school's procedures for monitoring pupils' academic progress in English and mathematics are very good.
- Information technology is integrated well into subjects across the curriculum.
- Pupils show a well-developed understanding and awareness of different faiths and cultures.
- The quality of teaching is very good in a quarter and good in three-quarters of the lessons. There is no unsatisfactory teaching.
- The leadership of the headteacher and key staff is very good, reflecting the school's aims and values well. The governors have a very clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and play a very important part in shaping the direction of the school.
- Pupils form very good personal relationships with each other and adults in the school, and take initiative and personal responsibility.
- The school has very good procedures for the support, care and welfare of pupils and for the monitoring of pupils' personal development which are effective.

#### **What could be improved**

- Investigative work in science is insufficiently developed. The targets set are higher in English and mathematics than in science.
- Procedures for supporting new members of staff are not sufficiently implemented.
- The presentation of pupils' work is not sufficiently enhanced by the drafting and redrafting of work, and regular use of word processing and ink pens.
- Support for pupils with special educational needs who do not have formal statements is insufficient for them to make good progress.
- The specific needs of pupils with English as an additional language are not formally and regularly assessed.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Improvement since the last inspection in June 1996 has been good. Standards in all subjects have been maintained, and attainment in information and communication technology has improved from below to above expectations. The quality of teaching has improved with no unsatisfactory lessons during the inspection.

The key issues of the previous inspection have all been addressed:

- In the last inspection, teachers lacked skills and confidence to teach information technology. The school has addressed this issue through the effective provision of support and training given by the information technology co-ordinator. All strands in information and communications technology are now covered. Resources for information technology have improved and the school is seeking to standardise the systems.
- Assessment is now used well to match work to pupils' different attainment.
- Provision for developing pupils' multicultural awareness has improved and is good in subjects such as art, English and religious education.
- Relationships with the wider community and businesses have been strengthened.
- The school has actively promoted parental involvement, albeit without much success in classes.
- The involvement of the governing body is now very good.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				<b>Key</b>
	all schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
English	B	C	C	C	well above average    A above average        B average                C below average        D well below average    E
mathematics	B	C	C	C	
science	B	D	D	E	

The attainment reached by pupils at the end of Key Stage 2, in English, mathematics and science, over the last four years, has been broadly in line with the national trend. Results in 2000 were similar to those in 1999 in English and mathematics, with a higher percentage of pupils, 88 per cent compared with 74 per cent in 1999, attaining Level 4 and above in science. Standards in science have improved.

The targets set by the school in English and mathematics in 1999 were 65 per cent (71 per cent attained) in English and 68 per cent (79 per cent attained) in mathematics. In 2000 they were 63 per cent (73 per cent attained) in English and 58 per cent (80 per cent attained) in mathematics. In both years pupils attained higher than the targets set. Higher targets could, therefore, be set.

Inspection evidence shows that pupils' progress in art, geography, history, music, physical education and religious education is good and in information technology and design and technology is satisfactory.

Standards at the end of the key stage are good compared with those attained by the same pupils on entry to the school.



## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very good attitudes to learning and are proud of their school. The majority is highly motivated and prepared to undertake and persevere with challenging tasks.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' good behaviour makes a substantial contribution to their attainment and progress and to the harmonious and purposeful atmosphere of the school. Any poor behaviour is dealt with promptly and well. The number of fixed period exclusions in the school is low.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships within the school are very good. There is an obvious rapport in most classes between teachers and pupils, based on mutual respect. Pupils of different backgrounds work well together.
Attendance	Attendance is now good, having improved significantly since the last inspection. The large number of parents who are taking their children on holiday in term time, however, affects the attendance figures. There are a small number of parents who regularly bring their children to school late in the mornings, and in many instances these pupils are also frequently absent from school.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

Teaching is satisfactory or better in all lessons. It is good or better in 73 per cent of lessons and very good in 31 per cent of lessons. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is good and often very good. The quality of teaching in English and mathematics is good. Consistently good teaching in science enables pupils to make good progress as they move across the key stage. As a result, the standards of the same group of pupils rise from below average in Year 2, to in line with the national average in Year 6. The teaching of information technology and physical education has improved considerably since the last inspection. Strengths of teaching are, for example: the teaching of mental mathematics, which is raising standards; teachers' planning of literacy and numeracy; the teaching of skills and good questioning in art, and systematic teaching of subject related vocabulary in geography. The teaching of both geography and religious education are very good. Where teaching has weaknesses, the expectations of younger pupils are not always high enough, higher attainers occasionally are not sufficiently challenged and marking does not show pupils how they could improve their work. Texts are sometimes difficult to read when photocopies are used instead of books. In most lessons teachers provide well for pupils of all attainment. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good overall. However, there are insufficient support assistants to enhance the learning of pupils with special educational needs and for pupils with English as an additional language. Particular strengths in pupils' learning are in their intellectual and creative efforts, their interest, concentration and independence and in their own knowledge of their learning, as in religious education.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum. After school clubs are provided for sport, music and drama and there are visits to places of interest, visits from theatre groups, religious groups, a regular book week and a visiting poet. There are good links with local business and commerce. The quality and range of the curriculum is good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision for pupils with statements of need is good. Provision for others with special educational needs is satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs enjoy a broad and balanced curriculum.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Provision for pupils with English as an additional language is unsatisfactory. Although extra support is given through the school's special educational needs provision, the school has no specific policy for analysing the specific needs of these pupils.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Pupils' spiritual awareness is provided for satisfactorily. Moral teaching is good. The school stresses to the individual how their actions affect others. The school has high expectations of pupils' social development and provision is very good. The development of pupils' cultural awareness is good, overall.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school's care for pupils is very good. There is a good mix of rewards and sanctions, which teachers are applying consistently. Health and safety issues around the school are regularly monitored but no recent report on risk assessment has been undertaken.
How well does the school work in partnership with parents?	The school seeks to foster strong links with parents. This is now a strength of the school. Parents feel that the teachers are very approachable, being open and responsive to their questions and enquiries. Parents are generally very supportive of the school and the opportunities it provides for their children. However, the school finds difficulty recruiting volunteers to help out with classroom activities, or listening to readers. Currently only a small number of parents are able to help. The school has run coffee mornings, reading seminars and governor 'drop in sessions' as a service to parents but with little response. School events, such as concerts, plays and sharing assemblies, however, are well attended. The Friends' Association runs a number of successful fund raising and social events in conjunction with the infant school. These events are well attended and provide valuable support for the school, with nearly £2000 raised each year.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Strong and determined leadership has enabled the school to make good progress. The headteacher offers very good leadership and is most ably supported by his deputy and the senior management team. There has been considerable improvement in the role of the co-ordinators since the last inspection, when their role was considered to be under-developed.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil their responsibilities very well. They are exceptionally well informed about the school and the area it serves. They are very supportive, work hard to help the school move forward and give much of their time to raise the profile of the school in the neighbourhood.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher, the teaching staff and governors work well together as they strive to maintain stability in school numbers and improve standards. The appraisal of teachers was regularly carried out and professional development has taken its place more recently.
The strategic use of resources	Governors are very well aware of the school's financial position and the financial implications of their decisions and initiatives. There is a good level of teaching staff but a low level of support assistants to match the needs of the curriculum. Governors have made plans to improve this situation. A low level of reserves is retained to cover any unexpected contingencies and the budget is monitored carefully as the year progresses. Grants for specific purposes are used appropriately for their designated purpose. The accommodation is very good. The school grounds are large and very attractive with a good-sized, hard-surfaced playground. Learning resources are adequate to support the curriculum.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their child makes good progress in school.</li> <li>• The school expects their child to work hard and achieve his or her best.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>• The teaching is good.</li> <li>• Their child likes school.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The right amount of work to do at home.</li> <li>• Being kept well informed about how their child is getting on.</li> <li>• The ranges of activities outside school.</li> </ul>

Inspectors agree with the positive comments made by parents. Inspectors consider that homework is set appropriately and supports pupils' learning well. Good use is particularly made of opportunities for research in homework. Some parents felt that parents' evenings were rushed and they did not have enough time to discuss their child's progress adequately. The school is aware of this concern and is considering ways of addressing it. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities, which include both clubs and visits. No residential visit is organised and there are fewer clubs for younger pupils.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and achievements**

1. Attainment on entry is in line with the national average, but was below the national average when the present Years 5 and 6 entered the school. The changing intake is a major feature of the school, with standards now higher in the lower end of the school than in the upper end. Twenty-five per cent of Year 6 in 1999 had, and five per cent of Year 3 in 2000 have, free school meals. The attainment of the present Year 6 pupils, on entry to the school, was below the national average and was in line with the national average at the end of the key stage. This shows good achievement and good progress across the school.
2. The 1996 inspection report found that standards of attainment were in line with the national average in English. The 1999 National Curriculum test results show that attainment in English, overall, at the end of the key stage was again close to the national average, with 71 per cent of pupils achieving Level 4 or above and 22 per cent Level 5 or above. The school's results were broadly in line with those of similar schools. The 2000 National Curriculum test results show that 73 per cent of pupils attained Level 4 and 12 per cent Level 5 at the end of Key Stage 2. These levels of attainment were observed in the present Year 6 during the inspection.
3. The 1996 inspection report found that results were above the national averages in mathematics. The results of the National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999, show that pupils were attaining standards that were above average at Level 4 and close to the national average at Level 5. The school's results were broadly in line with those of similar schools. The 2000 National Curriculum test results show that 80 per cent of pupils attained Level 4 or above, and 15 per cent attained Level 5 at the end of Key Stage 2. Above average standards were observed in the present Year 6 during the inspection.
4. The 1996 inspection report found that results were in line with national expectations in science. The results of the National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999 show that pupils' attainment was below the national average at both Levels 4 and 5. The school's results were well below those of similar schools. The 2000 National Curriculum test results show that 88 per cent of pupils attained Level 4 or above, and 12 per cent attained Level 5 at the end of Key Stage 2. Findings, during the inspection show that the standards that pupils in Year 6 attain are broadly in line with the national expectations for this age group, but fewer than expected numbers of these pupils are working in the higher levels of the National Curriculum.
5. The performance of boys, taking the last four years together, was above the national average in English and mathematics and below the national average in science. Overall, boys' attainment was close to the national average. The performance of girls, taking the last four years together, was close to the national average in English, mathematics and science. The school has planned to look at the needs of boys' underachievement next term.

6. Trends have fluctuated over the last four years in all three subjects. In 1996, they were above average in English and mathematics and close to the average in science. They rose in 1977 and then dipped to below average in 1998, rising again in 1999. In 1998, the school had its highest number of pupils with formal statements of educational need, 3.6 per cent compared with 1.5 nationally. The overall trend in the school's average National Curriculum points for English, mathematics and science together for the years 1996 to 1999, was broadly in line with the national trend.
7. The school set comparatively low targets for English and mathematics in 1999 and 2000, having had low results in 1998. In the 2000 National Curriculum test results, the pupils easily exceeded the targets set, 63 per cent for English and 58 per cent for mathematics, with pupils attaining 71 per cent in English and 80 per cent in mathematics respectively. Good teaching has resulted in good progress and targets should be set at a higher level to reflect this.
8. Overall, the progress pupils make in English, mathematics and science, the foundation subjects and religious education is good. In the foundation subjects it is good in art, geography, history, music and physical education, and also in religious education, and is satisfactory in information technology, and design and technology. Pupils who have special educational needs make satisfactory progress when taking account of their prior knowledge and achievement and the limited number of support staff available to support them.
9. The school has a small number of pupils with English as an additional language. Their first languages include Bengali, Bulgarian, Chinese and an African dialect. The attainment of these pupils is variable. Some pupils' progress is very good indeed: such as when two in Year 6 came to the school with no English and achieved Level 5 in English, mathematics and/or science at the end of the key stage, supporting one another. A small minority of pupils find the language barrier more difficult and make unsatisfactory progress, because they need more support than they receive, have no other pupil with English as an additional language in the class to support them, and have too little additional adult support allocated to them. Assessment of the needs of pupils for whom English is an additional language should be a priority when they enter the school. Although the school has only a small number of pupils with English as an additional language, their progress ranges from excellent to unsatisfactory. The majority, however, make good progress, sometimes supported by a classroom assistant.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

10. Pupils have very good attitudes to learning and they are proud of their school. The majority are highly motivated and enjoy their time in school, responding enthusiastically in lessons and participating well in class discussions. They are prepared to undertake and persevere with challenging tasks and, when the opportunity is presented to them, are eager to take responsibility for their own learning by engaging in research tasks and group activities. A particular strength is their willingness to evaluate their own and other pupils' work in the review sessions that often take place at the end of lessons. Good examples of independent learning were observed in lessons and Year 5 pupils, for example, produced some excellent examples of research-based activities related to their study of the Victorians. Pupils have access to computers, which enable them to pursue their own project work and complete research assignments. The majority of pupils are conscientious about homework tasks and take a pride in the completion and good presentation of their work.

11. Behaviour in and around the school is good and this makes a substantial contribution to pupils' attainment and progress and to the harmonious and purposeful atmosphere of the school. The school is justifiably proud of the way pupils behave on school visits and the way in which they respond to visitors. Pupils are courteous and friendly, being happy to talk about what they are doing and to show their work to visitors. Pupils show respect for the property of others and the school environment is free from litter. Parents feel that the school promotes positive attitudes and that behaviour is generally good. Pupils are well aware of the behaviour code and the schools' expectations of them. Codes of conduct negotiated by the pupils are displayed in classrooms. This has a positive impact on standards and there is little inappropriate behaviour or evidence of bullying in the school. Any incidents that do occur are taken seriously and dealt with promptly and well. The number of fixed period exclusions in the school is low.
12. Relationships within the school are very good, both between pupils and between staff and pupils. In the majority of classes there is an obvious rapport between teachers and pupils, based on mutual respect. Pupils of different backgrounds work well together; pupils work well in paired and group situations. Pupils are particularly caring and supportive of others who have special educational needs and, during the inspection, they responded very well to an assembly which focused on the positive aspects of disability. There are many examples of effective co-operative and collaborative work - with the high level of mutual support promoting improved levels of attainment.
13. Pupils respond well to the frequent opportunities provided for them to share their ideas, values and beliefs and to consider and talk about important issues. Pupils take on responsibilities around the school and make a real contribution to its day-to-day management. Younger pupils take care of books and lunch boxes and all pupils help clear up at the end of practical and other activities. Year 6 pupils are involved in a paired reading scheme with younger pupils and they take responsibility for the music and the overhead projector in assembly.
14. Levels of attendance in the school are now good at 95.5 per cent, having improved significantly since the last inspection. The school has focused on improving the levels of unauthorised or unexplained absences by encouraging parents to contact the school when their children are away. The large number of parents who are taking their children on holiday in term time, however, affects the attendance figures. There are a small number of parents who regularly bring their children to school late in the mornings, and in many instances these pupils are also frequently absent from school. The school works closely with the Education Welfare Officer to follow up frequent absences and ensure pupils attend school regularly.

## HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. Teaching is satisfactory or better in all lessons. It is good or better in 73 per cent of lessons and very good in 31 per cent of lessons. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. The quality of teaching in English and mathematics is good. There has been a considerable improvement in teaching since the last inspection.
16. The teaching of literacy is good and often very good. Class teachers have a good understanding of what is expected. Teachers' planning for the literacy hour is good and the strategy has been implemented effectively. In the best lessons teachers have high expectations, but in a minority of lessons teachers do not always ensure that pupils are kept firmly on task. The teaching of numeracy is good. Lessons throughout the school start with mental work, associated with number facts and quick calculations enabling the pupils to practise their number facts every day. This is having a positive effect on raising standards. Teachers are familiar with the Numeracy Strategy framework and use it to plan their lessons. A particular strength is the teachers' subject knowledge and their planning, which is linked carefully to the framework for teaching.
17. In English teachers have high expectations of pupils, work is marked regularly and comments are helpful as well as encouraging. Homework is used effectively to support learning. Teachers' subject knowledge is particularly good in Mathematics where a good range of investigative work challenges and meets the needs of all pupils, including higher attainers, well. Consistently good teaching in science enables pupils to make good progress as they move across the key stage. As a result the standards of the same group of pupils rise from below average in Year 2, to in line with the national average in Year 6. Teachers use display well to stimulate pupils' interest and encourage enquiry, particularly in science and geography. The teaching of information technology has improved considerably since the last inspection. Most teachers now have secure knowledge and understanding of the subject and appropriately high expectations of pupils. The teaching of religious education is very good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and the particular strength of teaching in the subject is the clear links between the two attainment targets: learning about religions and learning from religion.
18. The teaching of art is good with an appropriate emphasis on the teaching of skills of drawing and painting. Three-dimensional work is taught particularly effectively, and learning is good. Challenging questioning helps pupils reflect on their own work. The quality of teaching and learning is very good in geography because of the strong emphasis on fieldwork, cross-curricular links and the systematic teaching of subjects-related vocabulary and this results in very good learning. As a result pupils' learning is methodical, giving them confidence. Cross-curricular links are also good in history and a particular strength in the teaching of this subject is in pupils' acquisition of research skills. In the few music lessons observed, the quality of teaching was good. There are no opportunities, however, for less skilled teachers to observe good practice so that they can improve their knowledge and expertise. Physical education is well taught and as a result, pupils' learning is good and they not only acquire a good range of physical skills, but also evaluate their performances and that of others well, resulting in improvements to their work.

19. Less successful lessons occur when teachers use photocopies instead of books. In science, there is sometimes a lack of challenge for higher-attaining pupils and marking in this subject is seldom used to help pupils know what they should do to improve their work. In some lessons in information technology objectives are not clearly identified and pupils are not given enough time to use a computer effectively. Teaching is also less successful, particularly with newly qualified or temporary teachers, when the expectations of the presentation of younger pupils' work and of what they can complete in a given time are not high enough. They do not always provide pupils with the tools to enable them to produce well-presented work, nor check that they stay on task. Occasionally, there is no challenging work planned for those who finish early. Resources, although available in the school, are not always used to support teaching and learning, such as in geography lesson on the local area.
20. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good overall. This is seen through the thorough planning of lessons, the conscientious match of work to the attainment of each pupil and the individual preparation of resources to support their work. A secure learning environment is achieved and very good relationships are established which enable pupils to become confident and want to improve. In addition, clear instructions build confidence and enable pupils to sustain concentration and complete the tasks set for them to do. However, there are insufficient support assistants to enhance the learning of pupils with special educational needs, particularly in English, and for all pupils with English as an additional language, particularly in lessons where they are expected to write.

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

21. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum for all subjects, but the monitoring of attainment and progress in the foundation subjects is not used sufficiently to inform teaching and planning. There are also few opportunities to develop skills in speaking and listening and particularly in writing as part of topic work in each class. Class teachers, generally, have suitably high expectations of pupils' work on a daily basis, in spite of the school setting targets, at the end of the key stage, which are below those that pupils actually reach. Good behaviour ensures that lessons engage pupils' diligent attention and involvement. The programmes of study, for the majority of subjects, are covered throughout the school using the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's (QCA's) guidelines where they are available. Provision for pupils' personal development, health and sex education are satisfactory. There is a good balance of time between the English, mathematics and science and other subjects.
22. Equal opportunities issues are dealt with effectively and the school has an appropriate equal opportunities policy. At present, however, the school does not sufficiently assess and provide for the needs of all pupils who are learning English as an additional language and, although some individuals are making very good progress in learning English, others' needs take too much of the class teacher's time.
23. The school successfully promotes its equality of opportunity for pupils of different gender and attainment. Provision for pupils who have English as an additional language is not as well developed and as a result has variable impact on pupils' attainment. There is a strong ethos of respect and care for each pupil and the school aims for equal access for all pupils to the whole curriculum. Boys and girls are treated equally. There is no evidence of especially low achievement amongst boys or



of any gender-related behaviour problems. Results are monitored by gender, and all children have equal access to computers and extra-curricular activities. The school is aware that boys are often less attracted by fiction books than girls are and, as a result, there is a positive policy to widen the range of reading materials. As this includes a focus on the very popular Harry Potter books, all pupils are being encouraged to read more. Teachers usually plan different activities for pupils of different prior attainment, although in some lessons the extended activities intended for these pupils are additional activities for those who finish quickly rather than activities that hold more challenge.

24. The teachers' careful and detailed planning of literacy and numeracy is a strength of the school, but the long-term targets for the end of the key stage are set too low. Each teacher uses the framework for literacy and numeracy to plan work for English and mathematics. Each lesson is planned with details of the learning objectives for that lesson and the different activities for pupils of different attainment. Each lesson is evaluated. As yet there is no evidence of the use of individual target setting in literacy and numeracy, but the results of regular testing of pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics are now used to set overall school targets for improvement. This should help the school to set more appropriate targets in future. There are schemes of work for other subjects. Teachers plan in detail what is to be covered each term in each year group together with the learning objectives, related to the guidance set out in the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority documents for each subject where this is available. There are effective strategies to ensure continuity and progression within subjects. The senior management team and subject co-ordinators have formal monitoring roles, seeing teachers' plans and reviewing samples of pupils' work. The school has successfully offered two practical workshops for parents to give advice and support about how parents can assist their children's learning in literacy and numeracy.
25. There is a good range of after-school clubs for sport, music and drama and extra-curricular activities, which enhance learning. There are visits to local museums and places of interest which are related to school topics to enrich pupils' experiences and support learning. There are visits to the school by theatre groups, religious groups, a regular book week and a visiting poet. The community police constable visits the school and gives talks on a range of issues. Governors take an active part in the life of the school and observe lessons as well as working with small groups of pupils. There are good links with local business and commerce and pupils have opportunities to display their work in local outlets where it is well received. Local business sponsors the governors' newsletter, sports kit and equipment.
26. The school very successfully meets its aims to provide an environment committed to mutual care. Pupils develop their capacity for thoughtful reflection, self-discipline and a respect for others. Provision for pupils' moral and social development is a very strong feature of the school.
27. Pupils' spiritual awareness is provided for satisfactorily through assemblies and across the curriculum: for instance, in the good use made of the study of how special each individual is, developing pupils' insight and self-knowledge. Opportunities for quiet reflection are given in school assemblies and were promoted particularly well in one religious education lesson observed. Teachers listen attentively to pupils' contributions to discussions and always give them time to express themselves thoughtfully. This promotes pupils' respect for each other's ideas and values.

28. Moral teaching is good and is emphasised particularly well in the every-day life of the school and in subjects such as English, art, history music and religious education. The school stresses through assemblies and to the individual, how their actions affect others and emphasises the need for fairness. This teaching is supported by the school's positive behaviour framework.
29. The school has high expectations of pupils' social development and provision is very good. Pupils are given many opportunities to show respect for their teachers and to show consideration for others. Pupils are encouraged to be kind and supportive of each other and polite. The school is effective in fostering good relationships. Where appropriate, pupils are given good opportunities to work together in groups and in pairs in lessons. Overall, the school is particularly successful in promoting a clear sense of community in which all are valued and respected.
30. The development of pupils' cultural awareness is satisfactory. There are opportunities for pupils to take part in local activities and to study local sites of historical and environmental interest. The multicultural aspects of the curriculum are promoted well in literacy lessons, art, geography and religious education, ensuring that the school celebrates the cultural diversity of this country. This is an improvement since the last inspection. There is insufficient evidence in displays around the school, however, to raise pupils' awareness and appreciation of other cultures fully. Pupils have knowledge of their own culture through the links with the church and community and through visits to places of local and national interest.
31. There is a broad and balanced curriculum, including a clear and comprehensive special educational needs policy. Careful consideration is taken of the needs of all pupils through differentiation, modifying activities or providing support. The curriculum for those with special educational needs is related to clear and practical targets in individual education plans: it concentrates mainly on English - speaking and listening and literacy and numeracy: tasks are related to other subjects where appropriate. In addition, pupils who have a statement of special educational need are well supported by special needs assistants in areas that have been identified. Pupils are often withdrawn from class during the group activity time in the literacy and numeracy hours. The support for pupils with special educational needs is sound and groups of lower-attaining pupils are supported in class for literacy. The school is providing challenging work for pupils of above average attainment and there is clear evidence in teachers' planning of extension work in lessons for higher attainers. Research activities are also encouraged as part of homework. Attitudes to people with disabilities are positive, with the issue providing the focus for an assembly during the inspection.
32. Currently, there is no co-ordinator for pupils with special educational needs and the headteacher is effectively covering this role. The school uses various published assessment tests to make successful diagnoses of the pupils' needs. These are used regularly to measure what the next step is. Regular reviews are planned. Assessment and recording is used at termly reviews and the yearly audit. Achievable targets are planned in individual education plans by the class teacher in discussion with the special needs co-ordinator. These targets are also disseminated to the special needs assistants. Work is planned well to match these needs.

## HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

33. The school successfully aims to create a happy, secure and disciplined environment in which children are encouraged to develop their full potential. The school's procedures for ensuring the welfare, health and safety of pupils are very effective. Teachers know their pupils well, and provide a caring and supportive environment, which enables pupils to flourish. Parents feel that the school treats pupils as individuals, giving them the support they need whatever their level of attainment. This is a strength of the school. There are satisfactory systems in place to support the academic and personal development needs of pupils with special educational needs, and appropriate links with the external agencies.
34. Procedures for monitoring and promoting discipline and good behaviour are very good, and reflected by the orderly atmosphere in the school. The school has a well-developed positive behaviour policy encouraging pupils to take responsibility for their own actions. Guidelines include a number of strategies for promoting an atmosphere free from harassment and bullying, and promoting good behaviour. Following the previous inspection report, there is a good mix of rewards and sanctions, which teachers are applying consistently. Pupils know the rules, and spoke positively about the system of stickers and certificates, which they felt acted as an incentive for increased effort, work and good behaviour. Parents were enthusiastic about the certificate system, and appreciated being informed about their children's behaviour and awards. The behaviour procedures are also closely linked in with the special educational needs support programme for some of the more challenging pupils. This includes behaviour modification programmes, targets and reward books.
35. The school seeks to promote prompt and regular attendance. There are very good systems in place to monitor pupils' punctuality and attendance which have helped to increase levels of attendance this year. Close liaison has been established with the Educational Welfare Officer who visits once a month. Parents are kept informed of their responsibilities for ensuring their children attend regularly, or informing the school of the reasons for absences. The school encourages parents not to take their children away on holiday in term time, and especially during 'SAT's' week. Attendance certificates are awarded for those achieving full attendance.
36. The school has very good child protection procedures, with the headteacher as the designated responsible person. He has undertaken relevant training, which is regularly updated. Information regarding these procedures and any changes are disseminated to staff. The school is very effective in dealing with the medical needs of pupils. Well-established procedures are in place to care for pupils who may have accidents of need medical attention. All members of staff have received basic first aid training, and one is a certificated first aider.
37. There are very comprehensive health and safety guidelines and procedures in place, which have recently been reviewed and revised by the premises committee. The committee, headteacher and site manger regularly monitor health and safety issues around the school. There has, however, been no recent external health and safety report or risk assessment undertaken. The school is aware of potential hazards with regards to uneven flagstones and the playground area. This is being repaired during the summer break.

38. Careful support and guidance are given to pupils with special educational needs and their parents. Effective use is made of outside agencies, such as the Education Welfare Officer and the Education Psychologist who make termly visits.
39. The monitoring of pupils' academic and personal development is very good. The school has assessment procedures, which are effective in ensuring that records are both useful and manageable. The monitoring of pupils' personal development is concise and very good. Assessment information is used well to plan the transition of pupils from the infant school and to the secondary school, and to target in-service training needs. As a result, the school has planned to look at the needs of boys' underachievement next term.
40. Assessment procedures are particularly effective in English and are now being used to set targets for pupils. Tests are carried out each year to assess standards in mathematics and these are analysed and are beginning to influence planning and teaching. Teachers have yet to establish a system for tracking and setting individual targets for pupils in mathematics. Assessment arrangements in science and design and technology are less well developed. Teachers keep excellent records of the skills that pupils achieve in different subjects and co-ordinators are building up portfolios of levelled work in their subjects. The need to include assessment opportunities on medium term plans has been identified by the school. The optional National Curriculum tests are taken in English and mathematics but not in science. The school is in the early stages of using assessment data to track the progress of individual pupils across the school and assess the needs of pupils with English as an additional language.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

41. Parents generally have very positive views about the school. Their children are very happy and enjoy school, and parents feel that they are encouraged to develop into mature individuals with responsible attitudes. The school seeks to foster strong links with parents and has focused effectively on this since the last inspection, making it a strength of the school. Parents feel that the teachers are very approachable, being open and responsive to their questions and enquiries. The quality of information provided is very good. Parents receive regular newsletters and information regarding forthcoming events and activities. The governors produce an attractive and informative newsletter – 'The Governors' Grapevine' - each term, which is widely circulated and well received. Curriculum workshops, particularly to do with the literacy and numeracy schemes, were well attended. Termly consultation meetings and the open-door policy keeps parents informed about their child's progress, and enables parents to raise any issues or concerns. A small number of parents expressed concerns about the homework provided, and the lack of extra-curricular activities for the younger pupils. The teachers' annual reports to parents provide outlines regarding pupils' attainment and progress, and include targets for improvements. These reports have been effectively redesigned this term. Reading records and homework diaries provide a day-to-day method of communication between home and school.
42. Parents were consulted during the development of the home/school agreement, and most parents have signed and returned the document. Parents are generally very supportive of the school and the opportunities it provides for their children. However, the school has difficulty in recruiting volunteers to help out with classroom activities, or to listen to readers. Currently, only a small number of parents are able to help. The

school has run coffee mornings, reading seminars and governor 'drop in sessions' as a service to parents but with little take up. School events, such as concerts, plays and sharing assemblies, however, are well attended.

43. The Friends' Association runs a number of successful fund raising and social events in conjunction with the infant school. These events are well attended and provide a valuable support for the school, with nearly £2000 raised each year. This has helped to provide additional resources for the school including new curtains for the hall, books, artefacts and PE equipment.
44. Parents are regularly involved in discussions with the school and the class teachers when children have special educational needs. They are invited to review with their child the targets set for them in their individual education plans. These take place twice yearly during parents' meetings. It is a concern to the school that some parents do not attend these meetings. Reviews with parents of pupils with formal statements take place annually.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

45. Strong and determined leadership has enabled the school to make good progress in the key issues from the last inspection and the school is improving in effectiveness because of the systems that are in place to manage it. The improved standards of attainment and pupils' good progress in information technology, the development of good assessment systems, the fostering of pupils' awareness of multicultural aspects of life, the enrichment of the school's work through more active participation in the wider community and determining that the governing body takes a more active lead in the school have all been successfully addressed.
46. The headteacher offers very good leadership and is most ably supported by his deputy and the senior management team. He has a good overview of the school and knows where improvements are needed. There has been considerable improvement in the role of the co-ordinators since the last inspection, when their role was considered to be under-developed. Co-ordinators are confident and secure with a clear understanding of the targets they need to set in order for their subject areas to progress and improve further. Currently, they monitor planning and keep samples of pupils' work but do not have the opportunity to observe the lessons in order to assess the strengths and areas for improvement in the teaching of their subjects.
47. The governing body is exceptionally well informed about the school and the area it serves. Governors are very supportive and work hard to help the school move forward and give much of their time to raise the profile of the school in the neighbourhood. For example, a very well produced newsletter to promote the school entitled "Grapevine" has been circulated to a large number of homes in the vicinity and beyond. A number of governors visit the school regularly and report back to the full governing body on what they have seen and discussed. The headteacher, the teaching staff and governors work well together as they strive to maintain stability in school numbers and improve standards.
48. Provision for supporting pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. The headteacher, as the acting co-ordinator, liaises with the designated governor for special needs and has continued to organise the policy and practice efficiently. The governing body maintain a good oversight of work through this nominated governor reporting back to it. The governing body previously made the decision, because of

budget constraints, to make cuts in the budget in this area. This has meant that many pupils with special educational needs have not received additional support. However, now that funds are available, the governing body has appropriately identified the importance of employing four more support staff and a co-ordinator from September.

49. Governors are very well aware of the school's financial position and the financial implications of their decisions and initiatives. The budget is set after due consideration of the priorities defined in the school improvement plan. An appropriate level of reserves is retained to cover any unexpected contingencies and the budget is monitored carefully as the year progresses. Grants for specific purposes are used appropriately for their designated purpose.
50. The financial administration officer gives very good support and ensures that the day-to-day management of the office runs efficiently. The systems in place ensure that the school runs smoothly and that money is handled securely. Income and expenditure are carefully recorded. There are good systems for monthly checks on expenditure and for secure cash processing which provide a good level of internal control. Office staff work in an efficient, calm and professional manner and support the school's work very well. Information technology is used well to maintain records and generate invoices. The school improvement plan is a comprehensive document, which helps to focus initiatives, and gives clear direction to the work of the school. It includes success criteria, personnel responsible for carrying out improvements according to a clearly defined time-scale, targets that are appropriately costed and how initiatives will be monitored and evaluated.
51. Although, currently, there is no formal appraisal system operating, the headteacher provides all staff with informal personal interviews for career development and concerning their co-ordinator roles. Co-ordinators keep contact with available courses and produce yearly action plans for the future development of their subjects. There is a good level of teaching staff but a low level of support assistants to match the needs of the curriculum. Although there is a very thorough and detailed staff handbook, there is no written policy to support staff new to the school.
52. The school has a dedicated and hard-working staff. They are suitably qualified to teach the age range and pupils who have special educational needs. The teaching staff offer an adequate range of expertise in the subjects of the National Curriculum and in religious education. Very little additional classroom support is available other than for those pupils with statements of special educational needs and Year 4, which is a large class with a high number of pupils identified as having special needs.
53. The accommodation is very good. The school grounds are large and very attractive with a good-sized, hard-surfaced playground and adventure climbing frames. The visual appeal of the grounds is enriched by a copse area that is used effectively to enhance the curriculum. Learning resources are adequate to support the curriculum. Resources for information technology have improved since the last inspection but still remain unsatisfactory, in that there are two systems operating which are not compatible. This dual system results in added expense for the school and less time for pupils to work on a given task. The school has plans to rectify this over time. In English, there is a good range of equipment and books for guided reading, mainly the result of the implementation of literacy hour. The library has an adequate range of non-fiction books and there is a good range of storybooks in classrooms. In mathematics, resources are sufficient to support numeracy hour. Generally resources are well stored, clearly labelled and accessible.
54. Since the last inspection, pupils' attainment has improved in information technology,

history, music, physical education and religious education and is similar to that found in other subjects. Overall, improvement has been good since the last inspection with all key issues addressed well. The school analyses results and makes comparisons between schools and different groups of pupils within the school successfully. The governors debate alternative ways forward and are prepared to challenge a spending decision. The governing body consults widely to ensure that it grasps all opportunities to maintain an effective school. Taking into account the pupils' very good personal development, the good quality of education the school provides, the improving standards of attainment, pupils' good progress and the school's commitment to raising standards further, the school provides good value for money.

## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

55. In order to raise standards further, the governors and staff should:

- (1) set more appropriate end-of-key stage targets in English and mathematics and ensure that investigative work in science is developed sufficiently (Paragraphs 7, 71-75);
- (2) improve procedures and support for the induction of staff, including newly qualified teachers and students in training (Paragraph 19);
- (3) improve the presentation of pupils' work by an increased use of drafting and redrafting of their work, including more frequent use of word processing and ink pen (Paragraphs 19, 58, 93);
- (4) increase the support for pupils with special educational needs; particularly in literacy lessons (Paragraphs 8, 20, 48, 52, 58, 65). (The need for additional support has already been identified by the school.);
- (5) develop assessment to analyse and meet the needs of pupils with English as an additional language, by providing effective models of spoken and written language, for example, through 'writing frames', high-quality culturally relevant visual aids and additional classroom support (Paragraphs 9, 20, 22, 40, 93).

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	56
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	49

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	31	42	27	0	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

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	185
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	21
<i>FTE means full-time equivalent.</i>	
<b>Special educational needs</b>	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	48
<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	6
<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	18

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.7
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.8
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year (1998/99). Attendance rates were 92.6per cent in the same year. By the end of the academic year 1999/2000 attendance rates had improved to 95.5per cent. No national data was available as a comparison for the same year.



### ***Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2***

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	29	29	58

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	21	25	23
	Girls	20	20	20
	Total	41	45	43
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	71 (61)	79 (63)	74 (70)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	20	20	21
	Girls	18	17	13
	Total	38	37	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	66 (50)	64 (48)	59 (45)
	National	68 (64)	69 (64)	75 (70)

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

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	2
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	2
Chinese	0
White	180
Any other minority ethnic group	1

*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	2	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

### ***Teachers and classes***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: Y3 – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.1
Average class size	26.4

#### **Education support staff: Y3 – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	76

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1998/9
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	£
Total income	358,461
Total expenditure	351,453
Expenditure per pupil	1,890
Balance brought forward from previous year	14,547
Balance carried forward to next year	21,555

## ***Results of the survey of parents and carers***

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	157
Number of questionnaires returned	46

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	59	33	7	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	46	52	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	33	57	4	4	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	33	46	11	7	4
The teaching is good.	41	54	0	2	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	39	39	15	4	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	50	41	7	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	54	43	2	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	35	50	9	2	4
The school is well led and managed.	35	59	7	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	30	59	7	2	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	17	43	20	9	11

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

### **ENGLISH**

56. The 1996 inspection report found that, overall, standards of attainment were in line with the national average although it identified some weaknesses in speaking and listening. The 1999 National Curriculum test results showed that attainment in English, overall, at the end of the Key Stage was in line with the national average, with 71 per cent of pupils attaining Level 4 or above and 22 per cent Level 5 or above. The school's results were in line with those of similar schools. The performance of boys was above the national average and that of girls was close to the national average. The 2000 National Curriculum test results show 73 per cent of pupils attaining Level 4 or above and 12 per cent attaining Level 5 or above. Similar levels of attainment in this year group were observed during the inspection. Comparative data are not available yet for 2000. Standards have fluctuated over the last three-years. They were well above the national average in 1996, dropped to below the national average in 1998 and rose to slightly above the national average in 1999. The lowest results in 1998 reflect the percentage of pupils with statements of need in that year group. Standards in literacy, overall, are now in line with the national average and the school is determined to improve the quality of writing, which is an area of weakness for many pupils. Inspection evidence shows that standards in Years 4 and 5 are improving.
57. Attainment in speaking and listening is in line with the national average and listening is sometimes above. In all years, speaking and listening skills are developed through planned discussions and individual pupils are able to speak confidently to adults and in school assemblies. Pupils generate ideas during brainstorming sessions and can contribute well to discussions. They have opportunities to show these skills in presentations and through role-play. Skills in listening are fostered in the work planned for the literacy hour and in other subjects such as geography, history and religious education. These also make a valuable contribution to the development and use of wider literacy skills. Pupils in Year 5 in history, for example, presented information on the Great Exhibition in a variety of ways and are very confident in sharing the information they acquire through research. Pupils also comment on and review their own and others' work at the end of many lessons and this adds to their confidence and ability to express themselves clearly.
58. Reading across the school is in line with the national average. Standards in reading are good for some pupils and there are some very high attaining readers in all year groups. Standards in reading in Year 6 are particularly good. Pupils, across the school, are introduced to a wide range of literature and can talk with enthusiasm about poems and stories read in class. Many of them choose to read poetry, which they seem to enjoy very much. They also have a wide experience of non-fiction texts. For example, information in newspapers and advertising material were in use during the inspection. The literacy programme is encouraging higher standards in reading and pupils enjoy a detailed study of fiction books and also the development of library skills. For example, most average attainers understand about the classification system for non-fiction books and can explain the use of an index. Pupils' library and research skills are well established and many pupils belong to public libraries. Pupils are also able to use computers to develop their skills in some aspects of reading and research. A minority of pupils show weaknesses in their basic reading skills and their narrow range of vocabulary affects their understanding of what they read. Lower-attaining

pupils use a published reading scheme and all pupils are encouraged to use a variety of books appropriate to their attainment levels.

59. Attainment in writing is in line with the national average. Work is usually well presented, with most pupils being able to join their writing. Skills in handwriting are practised regularly, although pupils almost always use pencil except for specific handwriting practice. This use of pencil for most work, even the work on display, however, has an adverse effect on the appearance of their work. Pupils use word processors effectively, although they are not used enough for drafting and redrafting work. Higher-attaining pupils write about and illustrate their ideas well and many can produce pieces of extended writing to support their work in other subjects, for example, in work on aspects of life in Victorian Britain. Pupils are encouraged to concentrate on grammar, spelling and punctuation; for example, pupils of average attainment are able to understand the use of commas, inverted commas and the apostrophe. Many pupils in all years, however, make too many errors in basic spelling and punctuation, especially in the use of the capital letter. The range of written work is good, with evidence of imaginative work and of writing for a variety of purposes and audiences. The literacy hour provides many opportunities for creative work and writing poetry, for example their own clerihews in Year 3, and, in Year 5, anthologies of traditional verse, in the style of Shakespeare's sonnets. By Year 6, pupils recognise different forms of persuasive writing and write formal letters of complaint to express their dissatisfaction, such as when an imaginary adventure holiday failed to meet their expectations. Individual pupils of lower attainment and some of those with special educational needs find it difficult to express their ideas clearly on paper and struggle to produce extended pieces of writing. They often make valuable contributions to class discussions, however, and all write simple sentences and attempt pieces of extended writing.
60. There is evidence that the focus on reading and writing skills during the literacy hour is raising standards. In the majority of lessons pupils' progress and achievement are good. Their progress is monitored well, with assessment used by teachers to plan for pupils of different attainment. This contributes to a high quality of learning for pupils in the majority of literacy lessons. Pupils with special educational needs are given support that enables them to make good progress and all pupils are kept on task very well. In a minority of lessons the activities are not sufficiently well supervised to ensure consistently good progress and there is no extra support available for those with learning difficulties. Homework is set regularly and this also helps pupils to make good progress in all aspects of reading and writing.
61. Skills in literacy are developed well in other subjects, especially in history, geography and science. Good progress is made in the development of skills in literacy, and pupils have frequent opportunities to develop oral communication through discussion, presentations and role-plays.
62. Pupils enjoy their work in English and their behaviour and response in lessons are good. They are happy to talk about their work and they can recognise and enjoy a variety of types of writing because of the well-chosen range of texts used in class. Pupils take real pride in their creative efforts and in their research projects. Most can talk about their own favourite books and authors. The exploits of Harry Potter are particularly popular. Higher-attaining pupils in Year 6 are also very familiar with the books of C. S. Lewis, and Year 5 pupils showed good general knowledge of the work of Charles Dickens. Most pupils approach tasks in English with confidence and enthusiasm. The majority can distinguish between fiction and non-fiction and enjoy

reading both types of book. In all classes it is obvious that pupils really enjoy discussion and brainstorm activities; they really wanted to contribute their ideas and share them with others.

63. The quality of teaching is good. There were no unsatisfactory lessons. Class teachers have a good understanding of all aspects of the subject and they are able to provide inspiring examples and set interesting tasks. In the most successful lessons, teachers have high expectations of the work and behaviour of their pupils and provide work that is interesting and challenging for all pupils so that time is used well. In less successful lessons there is a less rigorous approach and a failure to ensure that all pupils are kept firmly on task. The school is well resourced with books and computers in the library and in the classrooms. Photocopies tend to be used rather than books or an overhead projector, however, which means that pupils cannot always see the text sufficiently well. Planning is good and the literacy programme has been implemented effectively. Pupils with special educational needs are identified and individual education plans and learning support are used well. Homework is used effectively to support and extend learning in the classroom. Work is marked frequently and comments are helpful as well as encouraging. Assessment procedures are particularly effective. Assessment is used to set targets for pupils and to ensure that both tasks and resources in literacy lessons suit the needs of individual pupils.
64. Although there was no co-ordinator for English in post during the inspection, there is evidence that the subject has been managed well, particularly with regard to the introduction of the literacy hour. There has been a clear focus on ensuring continuity and progression, the choice of resources and the development and use of assessment and target setting. This careful approach to planning and monitoring has made a valuable contribution to raising standards.

## **MATHEMATICS**

65. The 1996 inspection report found that standards of attainment were above the national average. The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2, show that pupils were achieving standards that were, overall, in line with the national average and those of similar schools. Seventy-nine per cent reached Level 4 or above, which was above the national average and 19 per cent reached Level 5, which was close to the national average. The results of the 2000 National Curriculum tests, show that 80 per cent reached Level 4 or above and 15 per cent reached Level 5 or above. No comparative data are yet available. Standards have fluctuated over the last four years, with the lowest results in 1998 reflecting the percentage of pupils with special educational needs in the year group and in particular the percentage with statements of need.
66. The inspection findings show that 11-year-olds attain standards that are above average in spite of the percentage of pupils with special educational needs being higher than before. These standards are due to improvements in the quality of teaching, the advice and support provided by the subject co-ordinator, together with the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy and the staff development that has accompanied it. The introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy is supporting improvement in attainment and progress but there has not been enough time for it to impact fully on the curriculum.

67. Pupils in all years are taught in specific ability groups and make good progress in their learning. They have opportunities to solve number problems in mental and oral mathematics sessions and are quick to grasp the strategies that are needed to find a solution. In mental and oral sessions, pupils carry out calculations with speed, accuracy and confidence. The majority of eleven year-olds are able to add and subtract numbers up to 1000. They derive number facts from word problems and use appropriate arithmetical operations to calculate the answers. In Year 6, they calculate ratio in word problems; for example, in a ratio of 3:1, if X gets £3, how much does Y get. They double and halve decimal numbers such as half of 48.6, double 37.2. They are confident when explaining how they have solved number problems for example multiplying and dividing decimals by 10 or 100 and can also explain how to order a mixed set of numbers with up to 3 decimal places. In Year 5, pupils create graphs and charts using a scale and interpret the information from line graphs to calculate temperature over time. Pupils are familiar with the use of X and Y axes and the use of values to plot a graph. They also calculate using multiples of 8, 16 and 32. In Years 3 and 4, the pupils make good progress. They add and subtract numbers in thousands, and multiply and divide by tens and units accurately. The pupils do so correctly and to a high enough standard to reach the expected standards. Pupils interpret data and use Venn diagrams to order information into different categories. They are confident when using mental strategies to double and halve numbers up to 100 and when adding or subtracting two-digit numbers. They have opportunities to use the computer to develop their numeracy skills and to produce graphs and charts.
68. Pupils' learning and the progress they make, including those with special educational needs, is good overall over a longer period of time, and in lessons. Higher-attaining pupils, at the end of the key stage, make satisfactory progress. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress through the key stage, often supported well by classroom assistants.
69. The pupils show sound attitudes to mathematics and respond well to the questioning skills of the teachers, who often ask pupils to explain their thinking. The pupils answer confidently, as they know their answers will be received well, and if they are incorrect they will be asked to think again.
70. The teaching of mathematics is good. Teachers are familiar with the Numeracy Strategy framework and use it to plan their lessons well. A particular strength is the teachers' subject knowledge, expertise and their planning, which is linked carefully to the framework for teaching. There are clear learning objectives for each lesson. Lessons are evaluated daily and the information used to inform subsequent planning and teaching. The pupils are successfully taught mathematics in groups, according to their prior attainment. The lower attainers are in smaller groups and are often supported by classroom assistants; the effectiveness of this support is consistent between classes and year groups. The other groups are larger in number and, with the average attainers being in the largest groups, the pupils' work is well matched to what they have learnt before. The work planned for the higher-attaining pupils provides sufficient challenge. Lessons throughout the school start well with mental work associated with number facts and quick calculations enabling the pupils to practise their number facts every day. This is having a positive effect on raising standards. Teachers plan problem-solving tasks which are clearly matched to the abilities of all the pupils in the lessons. There is a good range of investigative tasks set for all pupils, which are challenging and varied. The planning is good across the school and teachers are using a common format to plan lessons half-termly and to plan a sequence of lessons on a weekly basis. There are summative assessments

using standard tests in each year to assess attainment and progress. The results are analysed and are beginning to have an impact on influencing planning and teaching. Teachers have yet to establish a system for tracking the attainment of pupils and setting individual targets for pupils. Evidence from the analysis of pupils' workbooks shows that there is good coverage of the mathematics curriculum. The recording and presentation of work is satisfactory.

71. The mathematics curriculum is well planned, broad and balanced. Resources are used very well to support the pupils' learning. There is a good range of resources for teaching numeracy in every class. The co-ordinator has a very good understanding of the subject and supports other staff very well. The co-ordinator has organised training sessions for staff to develop their skills of teaching numeracy. There is regular testing of pupils' progress and attainment and the information from the tests is used effectively to inform teaching and planning. Workbooks are marked regularly and there is on-going teacher assessment and this is beginning to be recorded. At present teachers are not setting targets for improvement either for groups or individuals. A significant amount of pupils' work across the whole school is well marked and there are constructive comments. The school has successfully offered practical workshops for parents to give advice and support about how parents can assist their children's learning in numeracy.

## SCIENCE

72. The last inspection report in 1996 judged that science was in line with national expectations. At the end of Key Stage 2, National Curriculum test results in 1999 showed that pupils' attainment was below the national average and well below those of similar schools. Seventy-four per cent reached Level 4 or above, and 17 per cent Level 5 which was also below average. The results of the 2000 National Curriculum tests, show that 88 per cent reached Level 4 or above, and 12 per cent reached Level 5 or above. No comparative data are yet available. Results have fluctuated over the last four years. The lowest results in 1998 reflect the percentage of pupils with statements of need in that year group. No direct teaching of science was observed in Year 6. A talk on citizenship, which forms part of the science curriculum, and a role-play follow-up lesson were the only lessons observed in this year group. Inspection evidence has been collected from scrutiny of pupils' past work in books and on display, examination of teachers' planning and analysis of the subject portfolio of examples of pupils' work. From this evidence, by the end of Key Stage 2, the standards that pupils attain are broadly in line with national average for this age group but fewer than expected numbers of these pupils are working in the higher levels of the National Curriculum.
73. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils knowledge of scientific facts has improved, but a significant number do not have an appropriate depth to their understanding. This is because they do not use language well enough to explain scientific ideas. For example, one pupil in Year 6 concluded from an investigation on why certain objects had been made of the wrong substance that a knife made of plasticine would be *too weak and too blunt to cut anything*. Examination of previous work shows that pupils have a suitable range of information in note form and are beginning to improve their skills by conducting investigations, but that they do not have sufficient opportunities to consider and evaluate experimental evidence. Good use is made of information technology to present data in a more interesting way or to record the results of experiments. The development of literacy skills is enhanced when teachers constantly use the correct scientific vocabulary and encourage pupils to do the same. For



example, in Year 5, when defining the characteristics of materials, pupils learned to use the appropriate vocabulary such as opaque, translucent and transparent. Suitable attention is given to numeracy skills, for example, as when pupils record the growth of plants, sort foods into nutrition groups on a pie chart and record their findings on graphs.

74. Overall, achievement is good across the key stage in relation to the pupils' prior attainment. Year 6 pupils were below average at the end of Year 2 and 88 per cent are reaching Level 4 or above by the end of Year 6. Pupils in Year 3 gain good experience in determining how animals adapt to their habitats. For example, they identify that camels live in a desert because *they store water and fat in their hump*. Year 4 pupils are beginning to recognise the difference between vertebrate and invertebrate animals by sorting them into the correct category with varying degrees of success. Year 5 pupils achieve good knowledge about how to identify factors that affect the size and positioning of shadows. Pupils are usually given work that is within their capabilities. However, pupils of higher attainment are not always challenged sufficiently. Throughout the school, the needs of pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are met successfully. They work fully with the rest of the class and are often specifically identified for support during the lessons by higher-attaining pupils.
75. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good. Consistently good teaching enables pupils to make good progress in their learning as they move through the key stage and so raise their attainment from below average at the end of Year 2 to be in line with expectations at the end of Year 6. Teachers plan lessons to include clear learning objectives and these are conveyed effectively to the pupils so that they understand what they have to do and how they are to do it. In the best lessons, teachers manage pupils well and the work is generally well matched to the pupils' needs. The exception to this is the lack of challenge to some higher-attaining pupils. Resources are thoughtfully prepared and activities are usually conscientiously organised. Relationships are good and teachers foster positive attitudes. Class control and discipline are unobtrusive. Teachers question pupils effectively to assess and extend their understanding of scientific concepts. Most of the displays in the classrooms are effectively used to stimulate pupils' curiosity and encourage enquiry. The use of time and resources to support learning is good. Assessment arrangements are under-developed. The quality of marking of pupils' work is variable. It is mainly encouraging but there is too little information given to pupils on what to do in order to improve.
76. The planned curriculum meets statutory requirements. The co-ordinator gives enthusiastic direction for the subject. The school is currently revising the policy and reviewing its scheme of work to take account of new national guidelines in order to develop a scheme that meets the needs of the school. Significant development has been made since the last inspection and the school is well placed to make further improvements. Resources are good and organised for ease of access.

## ART

77. The quality of work observed in classrooms and displayed around the school shows a good level of attainment in many aspects of art including collage, drawing, painting and the use of colour. Standards, overall, are similar to the last inspection when they were judged to be above expectations. The work in collage and painting is particularly effective, as is the quality of work involving creative use of fabric. Pupils use sketchbooks to try out ideas and develop new techniques. They have the opportunity to develop techniques in painting, drawing, and printing, and work in clay in activities, which are well linked to other subjects, for example in the making of Greek vases to support work in history.
78. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in the acquisition of skills in practical tasks and knowledge of the work of famous artists. There is evidence that the range and quality of work noted during the previous inspection have been maintained and extended particularly by the addition of a multicultural dimension to pupils' work. During the inspection, work on art from Australia, which illustrated aspects of the life of the Aboriginal peoples, featured in an assembly and there were displays of work inspired by Japanese art.
79. Pupils' work is generally well displayed although not all classrooms have displays of artwork. Pupils have completed observational drawing, flower paintings and effective scenes of life under the sea related to their work in other subjects. For example, during the inspection Year 5 were working on large collaborative collages using a variety of materials because they had been inspired by the work of artists who lived during the Victorian period. Pupils know a considerable amount about art and about artists because they have been encouraged to undertake research into their lives and to look closely at their work. Pupils in Year 6 were asked to look deeply into a painting by Lowry to try to understand the people depicted and to gain an insight into their lives.
80. Pupils respond very well in art lessons and they talk about their visits to the National Gallery with real enthusiasm. They are very willing to discuss their work and share it with others and to consider very carefully how work might be improved. Their positive attitudes to the subject are reflected in the willingness of pupils to attempt quite challenging activities in art and the study of great artists as they progress through the school .
81. Teaching is good. Planning documents and pupils' work indicate that that there is good focus on the work of artists and on the teaching of skills in drawing and painting. Three-dimensional work is taught particularly effectively. Pupils gain a greater insight into their work because of the challenging questions asked by teachers, which help them to reflect on their own work. Art is well resourced; basic materials and equipment are readily accessible and the use of art related computer software is being developed. The management of the subject is good and the co-ordinator works closely with other members of staff. Pupils are encouraged to value creative work and to understand that they can all produce work of real merit.

## DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

82. All pupils make satisfactory progress in design and technology and, by the time they are eleven, their standards of work are typical of that of most pupils of their age. This is similar to the last inspection. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress as much of the subject involves practical activities.
83. When pupils are eleven, they are accustomed to working from designs which specify the tools and materials that will be needed for their models and they work safely. Most pupils have a good knowledge of a variety of methods to fasten materials together, which includes staples, clips, glue string and thread. Pupils work confidently with tools and are fully aware of the need to work safely.
84. Pupils investigate the use of construction kits to build structures. They explore the way things move and use their knowledge and skills to build models of wheeled vehicles, to make things move and incorporate these ideas in their models. They have opportunities to use a range of materials including fabrics and card and have successfully designed and made glove puppets and models of houses. Only one lesson was observed and this involved joining fabrics permanently and accurately using a needle and thread. The teacher introduced the lesson well recapping on the main points that are important when sewing. She had a good knowledge of fabrics and the skills and techniques needed. By demonstrating each stage each pupil becomes aware of the step by step process involved and they acquire and develop their own skills well. In food technology pupils are familiar with the selection of different ingredients by taste, colour and texture, understand the need for a balanced diet and know facts about healthy eating. Pupils select the ingredients for a packed lunch and design and make food packaging. They use paper, plastic and card to make models of a puppet theatre and use a variety of finishing techniques to decorate the models. The finished designs show attention to detail. Older pupils are beginning to work with electric circuits and have an understanding of how a battery, bulb and switch operate in a circuit. They understand the use of mechanisms such as cams, pulleys, levers and linkages. Pupils have taken particular care and skill when applying decoration and detail to their models. The finished designs show satisfactory attention to detail.
85. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils understand the properties of common materials and make choices when constructing models. For example, they make sensible decisions when selecting materials to make a folding stool or the materials to make puppets and pop up greetings cards they have designed. Pupils understand the importance of planning, which includes deciding what tools they are going to use. The pupils measure, cut and join a variety of materials accurately when constructing models. They assemble carefully simple mechanical models, introducing movement by using axles for wheels, or split pins for joints in card cut out figures. All appreciate the importance of evaluating the quality of their work when it is finished.
86. Teachers widen pupils' vocabulary, and thereby improve their literacy skills, by teaching them to use appropriate vocabulary when naming tools and components and encouraging them to describe what they are doing. For example, they can describe the components in an electric circuit and write out step-by-step instructions.

87. Pupils' attitudes are good. All take a pride in their work, and enjoy taking part in design and technology lessons. Pupils with special needs are equally as successful in making things as other pupils and this raises their self-esteem. Pupils share tools sensibly and help one another willingly.
88. The overall curriculum for the subject is well planned. There is a satisfactory scheme of work to ensure good breadth and balance over time. Planning is based on the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority guidance but within a limited range of activities. There are adequate resources to teach the planned projects in each year. There is satisfactory, although limited, assessment of progress and attainment.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

89. Two lessons were observed, a group of pupils from each of the Year 6 classes was interviewed, work from across the key stage was analysed and a large number of informative geographical displays noted. The subject is a strong one, taught well and led by a knowledgeable specialist.
90. The progress pupils make across the key stage is good and pupils reach above average standards by the end of the key stage. This is similar to the last inspection. In Year 3, pupils begin with a study of the playground and site and as part of a weather study extend their knowledge of geographical vocabulary such as 'atmosphere', 'troposphere' and 'meteorologist'. They complete a local study and learn to use atlases, co-ordinates, compass direction and map symbols. Story frames are provided for pupils with special educational needs that help them complete well-presented work. In Year 4 and 5, when contrasting settlements, they write clearly about what a settlement is and complete evaluative, descriptive writing of their field work in a local village. Higher attainers record their results to above average standards as a result of an enquiry into local land-use. A growing appreciation of the spiritual dimension to life is shown in the poetry they produce after their visit to a local churchyard, such as when they write:
- "Yew tree stretches out  
Over grave stones over me  
Swaying silently."
91. Pupils study an Indian village and St Lucia. When writing about St. Lucia, pupils' knowledge and understanding show clearly in their writing about the island. All, including lower-attaining pupils, show good knowledge of the differences between the two environments, gaining, for example, statistical information about employment in the two localities from the Internet. Information technology is used well in all years. Pupils also use it to draw maps, print out local weather forecasts and record and display their knowledge of the local church.
92. By the end of the key stage, pupils have completed a detailed river study, strongly based on fieldwork. They display a good knowledge of geographical vocabulary in their writing and when interviewed. They use the skills they have learned in literacy lessons to write to the local council and compare the developments planned for the area with a survey they themselves have compiled and carried out regarding changes that their own parents or grandparents would like to see in the area. Their letters are informative and clearly explain what it is they want to know. The response they get from the council is good.
93. Pupils show good attitudes to learning. They work hard, are interested in what is

being taught and are keen to come up with ideas of their own. In one Year 3 class, about a third of the class raised their hands to answer each question. Some pupils remain passive in lessons, however, and need to be encouraged to answer questions. They discuss their work well with one another and Year 6 pupils enjoy working in groups to produce questionnaires and analyse them. When interviewed, they showed a keen interest in the work they were currently doing and remembered clearly work that they had learned in previous years.

94. The quality of teaching and learning, overall, is very good. The subject is strongly based on fieldwork throughout the key stage. Teachers' planning shows that considerable emphasis is put on developing geographical knowledge and understanding through the good systematic use of geographical vocabulary and development of skills. As a result pupils develop a clear understanding of what it is to become a geographer and their learning is methodical, giving them confidence. Teaching is thorough and often links with, and draws on, pupils' learning in different areas of the curriculum. Teachers gain pupils' interest quickly in lessons, using questioning well to help pupils develop their own ideas as well as teaching new concepts. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, provided with work well-matched to their different attainment, but those with English as an additional language, whilst given very good personal support, are not always provided with the learning strategies to assist them reach their full academic potential. In general, however, teachers assess pupils' work thoroughly by appropriate intervention, helping pupils to understand what they need to do to improve their work. This is not, however, always clearly demonstrated in the presentation of Year 3 pupils' work, which is often rather slapdash. Teachers new to the school, who are not fully aware of the school's resources, do not always make full use of the visual aids available.
95. A specialist, who is both enthusiastic and knowledgeable, manages the subject very well. She monitors the pupils' work and is in the process of compiling a good reference collection of levelled work. The policy and schemes of work have been updated twice since the last inspection and meet the requirements of Curriculum 2000. Cross-curricular links are strong, promoted partly through the school's integrated studies system. These links are built into planning and the scheme of work successfully.

## **HISTORY**

96. Few lessons were observed during the inspection but discussions with pupils and teachers and careful scrutiny of pupils' work suggest that pupils achieve well in all aspects of the history. There has been good improvement since the last inspection in that pupils are now researching independently in order to develop their inquiry skills. The subject is being taught through specific history themes such as the Ancient Greeks and the Victorians. Work in local history is particularly strong and computer based research is well developed.
97. The process of learning in history is good throughout the school, with the majority of pupils making good progress. The written work of pupils shows that they are developing a secure foundation of knowledge about life in the past and about how to find out about it. For example, pupils understand that some information about history can be found in written records but they also know that people in their community have valuable knowledge about life and events in the more recent past. Pupils visit museums and are encouraged to acquire the basic skills of the historian including the sequencing of time lines of important events and eras. They can compare aspects of

life today with life in the past and understand and use the appropriate historical vocabulary. Individual pupils in Year 5 are able to talk about the lives of key figures such as Florence Nightingale and other important individuals of the Victorian period because they have researched the details of their lives or read stories about them as part of their work in English. Younger pupils are able to recall key information about the Vikings, studied some six months before, because of the quality of classroom experience, including role-play, provided for them. Higher attainers also understand about the real impact of change in the Victorian period, while those of lower attainment are certainly aware that life for children was very different, as shown in the role-play activities provided by a visiting drama group. Older pupils show a good knowledge of the history of their own school and of changes in the Bracknell area because they have had the opportunity to study photographs and have talked to people who worked in the school when it first opened.

98. Pupils enjoy their work in history and they are eager to talk about it. Creative work related to topics in history is often very good and work is usually well presented because pupils take a real pride in their work, particularly in their research projects. Pupils were seen to have made very good progress when given the opportunity for research using evidence from a wide variety of books and the Internet to find out about the key figures in Victorian England or fascinating details about the Great Exhibition. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the level of support from their teachers and fellow pupils and because they enjoy their work in the subject.
99. The teaching observed was good; teachers are knowledgeable and enthusiastic and the range of topics and skills covered is comprehensive. Pupils are given interesting tasks and planning is effective, especially in ensuring links with other subjects such as art and literacy. Good support is given to pupils with special needs and the approach to the subject ensures that all pupils find the work interesting and challenging. Resources are good and teachers also use artefacts from the museum service. The management of the subject is effective and there is a clear enthusiasm about the development of all aspects of work in history. The teaching of history is successful in that pupils develop a sound knowledge of the past and a real understanding of its relevance to them. They are prepared very well for their work in secondary school because of the very effective development of research skills. The subject is well managed by the co-ordinator and resources are good. The curriculum is well balanced but because of the topic approach there are sometimes long periods when history is not being taught.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

100. Taking account of teachers' planning, discussions with teachers, pupils' previous work, discussions with pupils and observation of lessons, overall, attainment by the end of the key stage is in line with national expectations. All strands in information technology are now covered and this demonstrates a significant improvement since the last inspection, when both pupils' attainment and the quality of teaching were judged to be unsatisfactory.

101. When given opportunities, pupils are confident in using computers to communicate their ideas in a variety of ways. For example, pupils are able to paint and draw on screen, and can enter, amend, save, print and retrieve information without help from the teacher. They change the style, colour and size of text and print. Pupils have opportunities to program a floor turtle using sets of simple commands to construct different geometric shapes. They have opportunities to use paint programs, clip art and logo and they use paint and draw programs to produce designs for projects. They use information from a database to construct graphs and charts.
102. They develop skills in using the equipment and skills in using the mouse to give instructions to the computer, for example, pupils are skilful in using the mouse to draw with precision. They are developing skills in combining text and graphics, using clip art to illustrate stories. Pupils are familiar with controlling devices, they recognise that devices can be controlled by a computer and write a sequence to produce a recognisable event. Pupils have opportunities to use CD-ROMs and the Internet to search for information to help with their project work.
103. The quality of teaching is good overall. Strengths in teaching include teachers having a mostly secure knowledge and understanding of information technology and planning that identifies clearly what pupils are to learn. Teachers' expectations are usually appropriately high and they set tasks that are suitably demanding. The effective way that teachers manage their lessons has a positive impact on pupils' attitudes and willingness to use information technology. Where there are weaknesses in teaching lesson objectives are not clearly identified, the tasks set do not provide enough challenge or the organisation does not give pupils enough time using the computer.
104. Pupils make satisfactory progress, developing particularly in their skills in using computers and communicating ideas and information. By the end of the key stage, the majority of pupils are able to use computers with confidence covering a range of activities. Their progress in developing their information technology capability is in line with what might be expected of pupils of this age.
105. Pupils have particularly good attitudes to their work in information technology. They are well motivated, able to concentrate for suitable lengths of time and respond with enthusiasm. A strong feature is the way pupils are able to access the computer without help from the teachers and work independently. Pupils are very responsible when using computers and can work well together on the computer. They show particularly good respect for the equipment and, indeed, for each other. Behaviour is always good.
106. Information technology is used well across the curriculum. For example, in science good use is made of it to present data in interesting ways and record the results of experiments. In geography, it is used well in all years, such as to draw maps of the locality, print out weather forecasts, display knowledge about a local church and collect information about contrasting localities from the Internet.
107. The subject has been well led by the co-ordinator since the last inspection with a good degree of success. A good policy and scheme of work are now in place, effective training and support have been provided for teachers and pupils have good access to the Internet. Although pupils make satisfactory progress in information technology, this could be better if more computers of a similar kind were available. Whilst the school is adequately resourced in the number of computers available, there are two in each class, these are sometimes different systems and not enough time is therefore

given for pupils to practise a particular skill. The school is aware of this and is replacing and extending equipment, as funds become available. Resources for information technology have been improved since the last inspection but still remain unsatisfactory because of this dual system which also gives the school added expense in supporting them with different software. However, the school is seeking to standardise these systems.

## **MUSIC**

108. Pupils' progress in music, including those pupils who have special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language, is good throughout the school. On some occasions, it is very good. This has greatly improved since the previous inspection when the rate of pupils' progress was judged to be satisfactory.
109. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils effectively build on their previous learning and they make very good progress in developing their musical skills. They experience a wide range of musical instruments to compose in groups and organise and perform their compositions expressively. For example, five groups of pupils in Year 6, successfully composed a different tune to the chorus of a song and made some very thoughtful evaluations of each others' performance, giving some very constructive criticism and appreciation. Very good quality lessons ensure that all pupils in Years 4 and 5 effectively learn to play a brass instrument and are quickly acquiring the skills to play the notes and use the correct fingering. They are well placed to progress to reading music on the treble clef stave. Extra-curricular activities in guitar and violin lessons for a small number of pupils further enhance the music curriculum. The high level of the co-ordinator's commitment and high expectations of achievement have a very significant impact on pupils' progress. All pupils in Key Stage 2 sing songs together confidently and sensitively with clear diction. The progress of those pupils who attend choir and learn to play a musical instrument is very good.
110. Pupils' attitude to music is positive. They enjoy performing, whether it is singing or playing an instrument. Pupils demonstrate a good appreciation of music and take pride in what they create. The majority of pupils listens attentively, are well behaved and persevere at tasks set. In Year 6, the level of concentration is high and is sustained throughout the lesson. Literacy skills are promoted well through the emphasis that is placed on learning the words of a wide range of songs and on teaching the correct technical vocabulary.
111. Insufficient teaching was seen to judge its overall quality. In the lessons observed, teaching was mainly very good and never less than satisfactory. These teachers have a very secure knowledge of the subject and make very good use of time and resources. They use classroom management to very good effect to create a stimulating and highly motivating learning environment. Pace and content is brisk and this challenges pupils of all abilities and keeps them focused. Teachers work very well together. Planning is effective and they have high expectations of pupils' participation and behaviour. Currently there are no opportunities for teachers to observe good practice so that they can improve their own knowledge and expertise.



112. Pupils are given a range of opportunities to perform publicly, for example, at Christmas and end-of-the-school-year concerts, through a yearly organised Musical 'Extravaganza' and during whole-school assemblies. The school choir has had many worthwhile opportunities to perform to the local community. For example, the pupils participated in the nationally organised JC 2000 project; they composed music and arranged percussion parts to accompany it. In addition, they have sung to the adjoining Infants' School and in the Borough-arranged school proms at the Albert Hall. There are many opportunities provided for pupils to learn to play musical instruments. Visits from music specialists enhance the curriculum for music. For example, the school welcomed the visit of the Berkshire Music Trust 'Rock Band' to demonstrate playing the drums, guitar and keyboards. Pupils in Year 6 were given a very useful opportunity to participate in the session. Afterwards, they sent carefully written letters of thanks to the group. One pupil wrote, "I really enjoyed it. It was better than listening to one of my mum's CDs." All this provision helps to provide a rich music curriculum.
113. The subject is managed skilfully and effectively by the co-ordinator, who is very experienced and knowledgeable. The co-ordinator is currently revising the policy and reviewing its scheme of work, to ensure the consistent development of music throughout the school. This gives effective guidance to the teaching of skills throughout the school. The resources for music are adequate to support the curriculum. They are well organised, kept centrally for accessibility and used effectively. Instruments and music tapes and CDs reflect western and world-wide traditions and are regularly used to create mood and atmosphere. Currently, information technology is not used to enhance the curriculum. The school has maintained its good standards since the previous inspection.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

114. The school has maintained its good provision for physical education since the last report. For example, swimming is timetabled in Year 4, a wider selection of team and individual games have been introduced, including more opportunities for competitive sport in football, netball, athletics and cross-country events. The school was inspected at the same time of year last time: this means that the same programme was available for inspection and that other strands of the curriculum have not been seen. Further evidence has been obtained from examination of teachers' planning, other documents and discussion with the co-ordinator. By the end of the key stage, pupils attain standards, which are in line with expectations. This is the same judgement as at the time of the last inspection.
115. Physical education is well taught to all pupils and they are acquiring a good range of physical skills. This has a positive impact on the pupils' learning. Pupils, including those who have special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, achieve well and make good progress when taking account of their prior learning. The good and sometimes very good teaching ensures that they build successfully on what they already know and can do. There is a clear emphasis on safety and the importance of warm-up activities. Pupils understand the necessity for warm-up and cool-down routines and carry them out conscientiously and enthusiastically. Very good provision is made by the teachers for the pupils to evaluate their performances and that of others. This is handled skilfully and sensitively, which results in a positive response from the pupils in their criticisms when they consider the improvements to be made in their work. Pupils in Year 6 practise the skills of cricket. They bowl, bat, and learn how to stop the ball behind the wicket.

They put their skills into immediate effect, for example, in a practice game with five on the field and a batsman. They progress well and play by the rules. In Year 5, pupils effectively improve their throwing and jumping techniques through the good coaching and demonstration from the teachers and the appropriate practice organised, while pupils in Year 4 find it more difficult to throw over-arm balls, but make some improvement with practice by the end of the lesson. Pupils in Year 3 perform a good range of physical activities that show an understanding of different speeds, directions and use of space. For example, pupils show an awareness of their body through making curled and stretched shapes and are creative in their interpretation of ideas.

116. All pupils demonstrate their enjoyment of physical education activities by responding positively and behaving well in lessons. This reflects a good level of concentration and the well-organised and planned sessions which keep the pupils focused on what they are learning. Pupils work very well in groups while engaged in games or gymnastics. For example, pupils in Year 3 worked co-operatively in groups of two and four to create a sequence that included stretching, curling, twisting and turning movements, while pupils in Year 6 worked collaboratively in groups of three and five to practise and improve their skills in cricket.
117. Overall, the quality of teaching is good throughout the school. This is an improvement since the last inspection when it was judged to be satisfactory. Teaching is bright and stimulating and the lessons move forward at a good pace. Pupils are encouraged to be bold and enthusiastic in the activities they undertake. This enables them to develop self-confidence. Teachers intervene appropriately to emphasise key skills and often demonstrate what they want pupils to do. Pupils' progress is consistently recorded on termly and half-termly check lists.
118. The physical education curriculum is broad and provides access to competitive games. The co-ordinator shows great enthusiasm for the subject and works hard to support it throughout the school. The school is well provided with an adequate range of equipment that is well stored and easily accessible. The scheme of work is currently being reviewed to take account of the new curriculum. The school is well served with very good outdoor accommodation which greatly enhances the subject.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

119. Attainment at the end of the key stage is above the expectations of the Local Agreed Syllabus. This is a considerable improvement since the previous inspection. Particular strengths of the subject are the continuously clear links made between learning about religion and learning from religion. In Year 3, pupils visit the local church and build on what they learn from this visit in class. For example, they design a stole taking into account the use of different colours for different seasons and the use of different Christian symbols. They have a good knowledge and understanding of these facts and can apply them to their work and explain what they mean, for example, the fish sign was used in Roman times as a secret symbol. Pupils know about the main beliefs and teaching of the Sikh religion and higher attainers write good descriptions of different aspects of the religion, showing a clear understanding of what they have been taught. Pupils consider seriously, in their own lives, who it is that they admire and the kind of person they are. When studying Judaism they link their learning well with their knowledge of Ancient Egypt and the stories of the Old Testament and their own experience of moving house. Work on Hinduism includes an assessment task to show their good understanding of some of the teaching and traditions of Hinduism, such as worship at the Mandir and at home. They consider

and explain aspects of their own personalities well before studying the Hindu deities.

120. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a good knowledge of Christianity, Judaism and the Sikh religion and an introductory knowledge of Hinduism. They know about important Christian beliefs such as the Trinity and about the different aspects of Jesus: as healer, teacher and friend. They know about His followers, the disciples, His teaching about care for others and the way He often taught by telling stories and parable because, as one pupil suggested, 'People like listening to stories'. In Year 5, pupils have Bible stories, such as the healing of Jairus's daughter, read to them from appropriate versions of the Bible, which holds their interest and develops discussions well. They discuss thoughtfully the importance of faith and being able to trust people, how some versions of the Bible are difficult to understand, and that the story read in class happened also to have been read in church the previous Sunday. They are able to see links across the different subjects clearly when they consider what they have learned about Roman times and the Bible stories they discuss. They learn well how Victorian Christians applied their faith in their own lives: such as Florence Nightingale, Lord Shaftesbury, Barnardo, Mary Secole and Elizabeth Fry.
121. Pupils' attitudes are very good. They are thoughtful, reflective and responsive. The strong links between the two attainment targets enable pupils to apply what they learn to their own lives well. They are keen both to ask and answer questions. They set to work enthusiastically and work is mainly presented well. When opportunities are given for silent reflection after discussing how people care for others today, and suffering in other countries, pupils take the opportunities seriously and reflect afterwards that they were thinking about countries in Africa that have not had rain for three years.
122. The quality of teaching, and as a result pupils' learning, are very good. Teachers are knowledgeable, plan very well always applying what is being taught to pupils own lives. They encourage a thoughtful, reflective attitude to the subject. Work is recorded in a very wide range of ways which adds additional interest to the subject and very good provision is made for pupils of differing attainment although those of higher attainment could sometimes have more expected of them. The clear links between subjects is also very good and builds well on the knowledge that pupils already have. The management of lessons and pupils is very good.
123. The subject is very well managed by a specialist, who has a clear view of the way in which the subject should be developed. This is conveyed well to colleagues through staff meetings, help with planning and visits to classrooms, although no lesson observations have taken place. The co-ordinator has been on various courses and visited different places of worship herself. She has compiled a useful portfolio, which includes examples of pupils' work. Considerable thought has been put into the development of the updated policy and the scheme of work, to ensure that the two attainment targets are taught well, drawing on religious teaching and applying it to pupils' own experiences. Examples from history are used and brought up to date, such as when the work of Victorian Christians is considered, followed by reflection about present day doctors who give up their holidays to operate on children with cleft pallets in developing counties. The school has good resources, bought mainly by the school parent teacher association, and builds well on the very worthwhile visits to the local church and synagogue. The local curate also visits the school and provides further insight into how lives have been changed through faith.