

INSPECTION REPORT

CROWNFIELD JUNIOR SCHOOL

Romford, Essex

LEA area: Havering

Unique reference number: 102294

Headteacher: Mr G Nott

Reporting inspector: Andrew Matthews
Rgl. No. 19410

Dates of inspection: 3 – 6 July 2000

Inspection number: 189154

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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:	White Hart Lane Collier Row Romford Essex
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Appropriate authority:	governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr. A. Sargeant
Date of previous inspection:	20 May 1996

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Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr A C Matthews	Registered inspector	Information technology	How high are standards? a) The school's results and achievements.
		Music	How well are pupils taught?
			How well is the school led and managed?
Mrs H Barter	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils?
			How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development.
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mrs M Warner	Team inspector	Mathematics	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
		Religious education	
		Special educational needs	
		Equal opportunities	
Mrs P Walker	Team inspector	English	
		History	
		Geography	
		Art	
		English as an additional language	
Mrs K Taylor	Team inspector	Science	
		Design and technology	
		Physical education	

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The Registrar
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Crownfield Junior is a popular school that is larger than other primary schools with 340 pupils on roll – 153 girls and 187 boys. The school has a stable roll. The school is situated in the Mawney ward and the great majority of pupils, who come from the adjacent infant school, are from this ward and the Collier Row ward. Pupils are from a wide variety of socio-economic backgrounds and their families live in a mixture of local authority and privately owned dwellings. An increasing number of pupils come from outside the catchment area. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is 17 per cent which is broadly in line with national averages. The percentage of pupils on the special educational needs register is 25 per cent, which is above the national average. There are 11 pupils with statements and this percentage too is above average. One per cent of pupils come from ethnic backgrounds and 0.3 per cent of pupils speak English as an additional language; both these figures are below average. Pupils' attainment on entry to the school has improved recently and is now broadly average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Crownfield Junior School has some excellent features. It is very well led by a resourceful headteacher, ably supported by knowledgeable governors and a dedicated and hard working staff. Teaching is good overall, with a significant proportion of teaching being very good and excellent. This leads directly to a good proportion of pupils achieving at the higher levels by the age of 11. Standards in mathematics are above average and average in English and science. Subject managers are very effective in their work and the well-planned curriculum helps pupils develop the relevant skills and knowledge as they move through the school. The school manages its budget very well and prudent financial management has enabled the school to invest in a new computer suite and a new building for the creative arts. The overall effectiveness of the school is very good and it provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The headteacher provides very good leadership and is well supported by governors and staff.
- There is excellent prioritisation in the use of the school budget and excellent procedures for the development of teachers' professional skills.
- The quality of teaching is good overall with a significant proportion of teaching being very good or excellent.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school, behave very well, have good attitudes to work and form good relationships.
- The school has very effective links with parents who give good support to its activities and are extremely happy with the education it provides.
- The school provides very good opportunities for pupils to work together in a range of extra-curricular activities.

What could be improved

- The time for some lessons needs to be reduced to enable pupils to sustain concentration.
- The provision of support assistants to help teachers with the lower-ability sets in English and mathematics.
- The procedures to improve the school's attendance rate.
- The curriculum for art and design and technology during the last year.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good improvements since the last inspection in 1996 and has an excellent capacity and enthusiasm to continue this improvement. The overall standards in English, mathematics and science have risen well throughout the school, although the curriculum for art and design and technology this year is unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching has improved significantly and there is now no unsatisfactory teaching. The school's recent "Investors in People" award recognised the very good quality staff training that has successfully developed teachers' subject knowledge and teaching skills. The very good monitoring of teaching and of pupils' work by the

headteacher, assistant headteacher and subject managers, is having a positive effect on standards and is leading to continuous improvements in most subjects. Standards in history, religious education, geography and music have all improved. The provision for pupils with statements of special educational needs is very good and good for other pupils on the special educational needs register. However, some of the lower-ability sets do need more classroom assistants to work alongside the teacher to support these pupils. Higher-attaining pupils are now particularly well challenged in the ability sets for English and mathematics. The new computer suite is constantly in use and now gives good opportunities for pupils to develop their information technology skills across the curriculum. The newly created library is well stocked with books and provides good opportunities for pupils to develop their independent research skills.

STANDARDS

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

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

Since the previous inspection, results achieved by 11 year olds in the national tests have improved considerably. Taking the three subjects together, pupils' attainment has remained slightly above the national average over the last three years. However, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels is well above average in mathematics and above average in English. The school has identified that standards in science need to be raised and this development is being successfully implemented. Inspection evidence shows that the present Year 6 is achieving well and attaining above average standards in mathematics and average standards in English and science. Some pupils make exceptional progress, usually in mathematics, moving from below average on entry to the school to above average when they leave the school. The school has set even more challenging targets, which did not take into account sufficiently the higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs when compared with previous years. As a result, these targets have not been met in English and mathematics. Pupils make better than expected progress in religious education, geography, history and physical education. Pupils' instrumental playing and the quality of music is above average and makes a positive contribution to the life of the school. However, this year, pupils have made unsatisfactory progress in design and technology and art.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils are very enthusiastic about school and have positive attitudes to work.

Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good at all times.
Personal development and relationships	Very good; pupils take responsibility seriously, get on well together and show increasing confidence as they become older.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory, although the great majority of pupils attend school punctually and lessons begin on time.

Throughout the school politeness and very good behaviour are the norms. Pupils have good relationships with each other and with their teachers and show very good understanding and consideration for others. Pupils are confident, have good attitudes to work and respond positively to the good quality teaching. They take part enthusiastically in the very large number of extra-curricular activities and benefit socially from the other good opportunities that they are given. Attendance is not high enough when compared to national averages and results in too many pupils regularly missing lessons. A significant proportion of pupils with special educational needs do not arrive punctually at the beginning of the day.

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.

Overall the quality of teaching is good and makes a very positive impact on pupils' learning. All lessons observed were satisfactory or better: 37 per cent were good, 27 per cent were very good and 6 per cent were excellent. Teaching is particularly good in mathematics, information technology and music. The teaching of basic skills is good in numeracy and satisfactory in literacy, where some teachers' subject knowledge is less secure. Teaching in science is satisfactory overall, but again there are some weaknesses in teachers' subject knowledge. However, in the majority of subjects, teachers have good subject knowledge, plan lessons carefully and use questioning well to challenge and develop pupils' understanding. As a result pupils achieve well. Pupils with statements are particularly well taught but pupils with special educational needs, who are in the lower sets for English and mathematics, do not get enough support and do not always make the progress that they are capable of. Teachers manage the pupils effectively but some lessons are too long and pupils' concentration wanes. Specialist teachers from outside the school give regular music tuition and this results in high quality instrumental playing and good quality teaching in music lessons. Although Year 6 pupils have a short course of lessons taught by swimming instructors, a significant minority does not reach the expected national standard.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall but good in information technology and very good in mathematics. However, the curriculum in art and design and technology has been unsatisfactory this year.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good overall and very good for pupils with statements. Pupils with individual education plans have clear targets set for them and make good overall progress towards meeting these targets.
Provision for pupils'	Good overall. Satisfactory provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural

personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	development and very good provision for their social and moral development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There are very good procedures for looking after pupils' personal welfare and good procedures for monitoring their academic performance.

Numeracy and literacy strategies are well established and lead to pupils' improved achievement. This is particularly so in the proportion of pupils achieving at the higher levels in English and mathematics. The curriculum for design and technology and art this year has been unsatisfactory. The planned curriculum for painting and the making element of design and technology did not take place for much of the year due to the late completion of the creative arts block. Parents give good support to their children in the regular homework that is set and some give valuable help when accompanying trips and residential visits. However, parents do not have an opportunity to help in school and as a result there are missed opportunities for using their expertise. Very good opportunities exist for the older pupils to take responsibilities. The prefect system is very well developed, with pupils providing very positive role models for their younger peers and a very warm welcome for parents and visitors. The school is a very caring environment where pupils are valued, challenged and flourish. The planned school council will give pupils an even greater say in the life of the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very good leadership and has a very supportive and hardworking staff who are all committed to raising standards. Subject leaders give teachers very good support in the planning of their lessons.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are very supportive of the school, visit regularly and play a full part in the strategic planning and in the monitoring of school developments.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Test results are carefully analysed and challenging targets set. Subject leaders regularly monitor teaching and learning in their subject and make recommendations for improvement. The monitoring of teaching is very good and is used very effectively in the excellent appraisal process for teachers.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school has made very good use of funds to improve resources, particularly in English and information technology. The school does not have enough support staff to support pupils with special educational needs in the lower-ability sets.

Leadership and management are a strength of the school and have helped the school build on the good standards of the last inspection report. The school's excellent commitment to constant evaluation of its practices is helping it to improve even more. There is very good delegation to subject managers who are very well trained for their role. As a result, the school has a good curriculum for most subjects. The governors are very supportive of the school but also act very well in their capacity of critical friend. The setting of end-of-key-stage targets for pupils on entry to the school shows a strong commitment to raising standards. However, the school does not yet have a rigorous enough assessment system to ensure that these targets are met. Resources are generally used well but better use could be made of resources to improve some Year 3 and Year 5 pupils' skills in mental mathematics. The playground is large but uninspiring and does not meet the play needs of the different ages of pupils. The school applies the principle of best value well, particularly in consultation with parents, when buying resources and in the monitoring of its end-of-key-stage results.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The school is very well managed and very approachable.• The commitment of all staff in the education of the children.• Children enjoy coming to school and make good progress.• The school promotes good values and attitudes.• The teaching is good and children behave and achieve well.• The school has good relationships with parents and works closely with them in the education of their children.• The very good range of extra-curricular activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The provision of homework.

The inspectors fully endorse all the parents' positive comments about the school but do not agree with some parents' concern about the provision of homework. This they consider to be sufficient and relevant for the age of the pupils who have a clear understanding of the importance and relevance of this work.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests for 11 year olds show that pupils met the targets set for them by the school and their performance when compared to national averages and similar schools was above average in mathematics, average in English and well below average in science. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 was well above average in mathematics, above average in English and below average in science. The school's trend in the last three years is broadly in line with the national trend.
2. The school's assessments for the present 11 year old group, which has a significantly larger proportion of pupils with special educational needs than the previous Year 6, show that standards have been maintained in English and mathematics but have risen considerably in science. These are confirmed by the recent release of the results of the National Curriculum tests in these subjects. However, these results also show that these pupils have narrowly missed the challenging targets set for them by the school. The analysis of the work of the present Year 6 pupils, who have a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs than the previous year, indicates that their overall attainment is above average in mathematics and average in English and science. There is no notable difference between the attainment of boys and girls. These results show a good all round improvement in all three subjects since the last inspection and particularly in the proportion of pupils scoring at the higher Level 5.
3. Standards in English by the end of the key stage are average overall, with strengths in reading and speaking and listening. Pupils make good progress in developing their speaking and listening skills through the years and develop these skills well in paired and group work in class and class discussions. However, opportunities to develop these skills in some subjects are restricted when teachers insist on quiet during collaborative practical work, such as in science and design and technology. The good use of open-ended questioning by teachers has a positive impact on the development of pupils' speaking skills, with pupils also developing good listening skills that are used effectively by teachers in all subjects. Pupils make good gains in their reading skills through the school and achieve above average standards. This progress is due to pupils' enthusiasm for reading and their development of effective strategies for approaching unfamiliar words. Pupils' writing is satisfactory, with pupils using vocabulary appropriately to make work more vivid and interesting. Basic punctuation and spelling are accurate and used consistently but older, higher-attaining pupils are not confident in their use of paragraphs to make their work more structured and better organised.
4. Pupils' attainment in mathematics is above average, with pupils making very good overall progress as they move through the school. Setting by ability provides particularly good opportunities for higher-attaining pupils to achieve well above average and sometimes very high standards. For example, higher-attaining pupils in Year 6 use their very good number skills when exploring the solving of algebraic equations. A strength of the subject is the investigative work, where pupils in the top and middle-ability Year 6 sets are working consistently at the above average Level 5, as a result of good teaching and a methodical approach to problem solving. However, pupils' mental mathematics skills in the Year 3 and Year 5 middle and below-average sets are not so well developed.
5. Standards in science are in line with national averages and show a good improvement on the previous year and since the last inspection. Higher-attaining pupils in Year 6 have made particularly good progress through the school. Pupils make good progress in all aspects of the subject; they demonstrate good skills in their experimental and investigative work, clearly evident in their work on the construction of burglar alarms during the inspection week. Pupils have good knowledge of life processes and living things and use their good knowledge of materials to classify substances into solids, liquids and gases. Pupils also have a good understanding of physical processes, clearly shown in their understanding of what occurs when more than one force is brought to bear on an object.

6. In information technology standards have improved since the last inspection and pupils' attainment by the age of 11 is in line with national expectations. Pupils make very good use of the computer suite and benefit from the weekly session in which computer skills are taught. They have good word processing skills which they use well to present their work in various forms. However, too many pupils use only one finger for typing and this does inhibit the speed of their work. Pupils are making increasing use of the internet to support their learning in different subjects, such as when Year 6 pupils find relevant information about the Blitz for their newspaper front page article. Pupils have above average skills in data handling. They are confident in interpreting data through a variety of graphs and understand how spreadsheets can be used to analyse data. Higher-achieving pupils throughout the school benefit from the two extra-curricular clubs where high quality work takes place. Pupils' control and modelling skills are satisfactory overall but are not as well developed as their communication and data handling work.

7. By the age of 11, pupils' attainment in religious education is higher than that described in the locally agreed syllabus. They have a very good knowledge of Bible stories and the life of Christ and know how Christianity has influenced the lives of people such as Florence Nightingale and Mother Theresa. Pupils learn to relate what they discuss to their own lives and this makes a strong contribution to their personal development. Despite the comparatively short time for religious education lessons, the great majority of pupils make good progress, with a good understanding of the main differences between Sikhism, Judaism and Christianity.

8. There have been improvements since the last inspection in music, history and geography where pupils attain standards above national expectations. Good progress in geography results in pupils having good geographical skills to interpret evidence and record their understanding. These interpretation skills are also used well in history, where Year 6 pupils use a wide range of sources to make hypotheses about the past and come to balanced opinions about events and historical figures. Pupils' enthusiasm for music and the good quality teaching of the subject, leads to above average standards through the school, with pupils having good quality skills in composing and performing. These are enhanced through pupils' good knowledge of musical terminology to evaluate their work. Although pupils make good overall progress in developing their skills in physical education, their swimming skills are not so well developed due to the small number of swimming lessons they have throughout the key stage. Pupils' progress in art and design and technology has been unsatisfactory during the present year due to the restrictions on creative work in the classrooms whilst the creative arts building was being completed.

9. There are no significant differences in the standards achieved by pupils of different gender, background or ethnicity. The school monitors pupils' results carefully and has clear interventionist strategies when needed. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to the targets set in their individual education plans. They make good progress both in English and mathematics. Across the school, there are examples of pupils coming in at Level 1 in mathematics and leaving with Levels 4 or 5. This is a considerable improvement on the last inspection. Those at stages one to three on the special needs register are given good overall support through the setting system in literacy and mathematics, although there are occasions when work in these subjects is too difficult for the pupils. Evidence shows that pupils move off the register when they begin to achieve well. Those pupils with statements are very well supported in a small withdrawal group taught by a specialist teacher who is able to make learning fun, even when the work appears to be very difficult. In science, Year 6 pupils with special needs are also withdrawn to be taught in a small group, and as a result two have made very good progress by achieving Level 4, the expected average level, in this year's National Curriculum tests. Success is also evident in the fact that pupils who have statements also improve to the extent that they no longer need a statement.

In foundation subjects and

religious education, work is not always matched well to the needs of pupils with special educational needs and as a result too much work is not completed. This is particularly the case in religious education, where pupils often do not make the progress they are capable of.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. The school continues to be the orderly community described at the last inspection. Pupils have maintained their positive attitudes to work and their high standards of behaviour. Pupils continue to make very good progress in their personal development and relationships.
11. In the questionnaires completed before the inspection and at the parents' meeting with the registered inspector, parents showed very positive attitudes towards the school and the way in which it was supporting their children. Parents spoke very highly of the behaviour in school and when pupils go out of the school on visits. They say that their children are keen to come to school. Nearly all parents say that the school is helping their child to become mature and responsible. Some parents said that pupils respect each other well and show care towards others who may have difficulties. They report that their children know where they are doing well and where they need to make improvements and that they want to do their best. At the meeting, parents said that by the time their children leave to go on to secondary school, they are confident and well prepared.
12. Pupils are enthusiastic about school life and they show very good interest and involvement in the activities provided for them. Their positive attitudes have a clearly beneficial impact on the progress that they make. In lessons, pupils are well motivated and are keen to extend their knowledge through questions and making observations, or by listening to their teachers explaining things to them. Pupils work carefully and quietly. They work individually without difficulty. When given the opportunity, most pupils work well together in pairs or in small groups. For example, pupils in Year 6 showed very good skills in collaborative working when designing a burglar alarm together in a small group as part of their science work. Pupils pay very good attention in lessons. They are keen to demonstrate their knowledge in the plenary at the end of the lesson and they put forward their views well.
13. Pupils' behaviour is a very good feature of the school and the very high standards have been maintained since the last inspection. They know what is expected of them and clearly understand the difference between right and wrong. They are polite, courteous and friendly and make visitors to the school welcome by talking readily to them in the playground and the dining hall. Their behaviour as they move around the school is impeccable. In lessons, pupils work with quiet concentration and are often absorbed in what they are doing. Pupils behave well even when the pace of lessons is slow or when they find the work hard or challenging. There are occasions, however, in the long morning lessons for literacy and numeracy when pupils become inattentive and are easily distracted or there are requests to go to the toilet because they need to move. However, they return quickly and get on with their work.
14. In the playground, pupils get on well with each other and there is no evidence of bullying. There is little to occupy pupils other than some playground markings or balls that pupils bring from home, and yet they do not appear to be bored or behave badly. Their response to the bell and their queuing to go back into school is exceptionally well controlled and teachers spend no time at all in organising pupils. Pupils say that they are happy and that the strongly disciplined environment helps them to feel safe because other pupils are not a threat to them. They are very aware of the school rules and have no doubt that any misdemeanours will result in a detention; a sanction which pupils clearly treat very seriously. There have been no exclusions during the last year.
15. Pupils make very good progress in their personal development. They respond very well to the opportunities given to them to take responsibility in and around the school. They are proud of their roles as prefects, house captains, librarians and as newly elected school councillors. Pupils who man the reception desk at lunchtime take their task very seriously. Pupils enjoy participating in extra-curricular activities and have pride in their achievements. In music they understand that they must practise to improve their skills and in sports they understand the importance of working together as a team when representing the school at, for example,

rounders and football. Pupils are encouraged to make suggestions about improvements for the school, through the suggestions box and their ideas are taken seriously. They are proud of their school and enjoy talking about photographs displayed in the corridors, which show pupils taking part in drama, sport and residential visits. Pupils have good relationships with each other and show understanding of those who may have difficulties. Their relationships with their teachers are also good and, although the atmosphere in lessons is one of discipline and control, pupils enjoy the opportunity to have more relaxed conversations with teachers; for example, as seen during a 'wet play' period during the inspection.

16. In spite of these very positive attitudes towards school, the overall level of pupils' attendance at school is unsatisfactory. Since the last inspection, pupils' levels of attendance have not risen in line with the national trend and they are now below the national average and the national minimum expectation of 95 per cent. Although levels of unauthorised absence are low, a significant number of pupils have absences from school, which are authorised by parents, including term-time holidays. These absences prohibit pupils from benefiting from the good quality of education that the school provides and have a negative impact on the standards of their attainment.
17. Pupils with special educational needs have good attitudes overall and those with statements of need have very good attitudes when taught in small groups. Pupils with behaviour difficulties respond well to small group teaching where they can be constantly reminded of what is acceptable behaviour in a caring and non-threatening way.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

18. The quality of teaching is good overall and has improved significantly since the last inspection, with a much higher proportion of very good and excellent lessons. No unsatisfactory lessons were observed and 70 per cent of all lessons seen were good or better, with 19 per cent being very good and six per cent being excellent. The good quality teaching was spread evenly through the years but significant strengths were seen in mathematics, information technology and music lessons and this high quality teaching contributes significantly to pupils' good attainment in these subjects.
19. The quality of teaching in literacy has improved considerably since the last inspection and is good overall, ranging from satisfactory to excellent. In a quarter of the lessons observed, teaching was very good. Teachers plan their lessons thoroughly, with clear identification of what pupils are to learn during lessons. These are shared with pupils, who then have a clear understanding of the expectations of the lesson. Pupils respond well to the wide range of reading material that teachers select for their texts. Whilst teachers use questioning well to extend pupils' thinking and assess their understanding, work is not always appropriately matched to the range of ability in some of the English sets. Occasionally, there are some weaknesses in teachers' subject knowledge, such as in spelling and grammar.
20. The good quality of teaching in mathematics has been maintained since the last inspection. Teaching is particularly strong in Years 4 and 6, with very high quality teaching in the higher-ability set of the older pupils, resulting in high standards of attainment. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use assessment well to plot pupils' progress and plan future work. Whilst pupils in the higher-ability set have good mental recall, the teaching of this skill in the middle and lower sets is not sufficiently emphasised and resources that would help pupils to improve in this area are rarely used.
21. The quality of teaching of science remains the same as at the last inspection and is satisfactory overall. Good use is made of teachers' expertise by the exchange of classes. This is resulting in some very good quality teaching in Year 6, where teachers' good subject knowledge and very high expectations of all pupils are leading to much improved standards being attained compared to the previous year. A strength of the teaching throughout the school is the good pace of lessons. However, some teachers do not have secure subject knowledge and, on some occasions, incorrect scientific information is given to pupils.

22. Planning has improved since the last inspection, with teachers having a clear understanding of what pupils are to learn. The school has changed from all lessons being planned by subject managers to 30 per cent being planned by the manager and the remainder being planned by year teachers. This is a good initiative and has led to clear improvements. For example, in information technology teachers' knowledge has improved significantly and enables teachers to build successfully on the subject manager's planned input. As a result, nearly all lessons observed were taught well, with pupils making good gains in the acquisition of relevant skills and knowledge. The management of pupils is good overall and often very good. This results in pupils' very good behaviour and initial enthusiasm for learning. However, some pupils find some lessons too long to sustain full concentration and often the pace of their learning slows and work output diminishes. This was particularly the case with the lower-attaining sets for numeracy and literacy and in one of the music lessons observed. Whilst the good management of pupils' behaviour is a strength, there are some occasions when unrealistic demands are put on pupils' behaviour and this has a detrimental effect on their learning. For example, in some practical science and design and technology lessons, teachers were too concerned about the need for pupils to work quietly when working collaboratively.
23. Another strength of all the teaching is the good quality questioning which makes a significant contribution to the development of pupils' above average speaking and listening skills. Questioning is used particularly well in the initial teaching session at the beginning of a lesson and in the end of lesson whole-class discussions, where teachers consolidate pupils' learning and assess their level of understanding; for example, in a Year 6 lesson on emigration to Australia and a Year 3 religious education, on the birthday of Guru Nanak. Pupils' good collaborative skills are used well by teachers in physical education, information technology, music and science lessons and enable pupils to learn from each other and improve their skills and understanding. Year 6 pupils' particularly good interactive skills were used well by the music teacher and resulted in really high quality group work in the performance of a rondo. There are, however, not enough classroom assistants to work alongside teachers who take the lower-attaining sets. As a result, some teachers often give too much time to working with a small minority of these pupils and do not create sufficient opportunities to support and question others in the class.
24. Relationships between teachers and pupils are good overall and result in pupils having confidence to ask for help when having difficulties. Marking is consistent and supportive through the years but a weakness is the lack of explicit advice to pupils on what they need to do to improve their work. Teachers use information technology satisfactorily to support pupils' learning across the curriculum. Particularly good links were seen in music with Year 3 pupils using a "compose" program and in the collaborative poem writing in Years 3 and 4.
25. The teaching of pupils with statements of need is very good and sometimes excellent. Although the withdrawal group covers the full age-range of pupils, the work is pitched at the appropriate level for each pupil and the pupils work as a cohesive unit. The teacher prepares resources well, with a view to making learning fun. For example, when in mathematics they were learning about doubling numbers the teacher had prepared a 'magic box', which doubled the counters. Only she could hear the counters doubling as she held the box to her ear! Pupils respond well to this approach and, whilst struggling to learn at a very low level, they enjoy the process of learning. In literacy, amusing poems are used to help pupils remember exceptions to spelling rules. This proved to be successful when one pupil remembered what he had been taught in the morning, when withdrawn for one to one support in the afternoon, and could explain the meaning of the word 'voyage'. The constant repetition, possible only in such small groups, is also a strong factor in the progress the pupils make.
26. Teaching of pupils with special educational needs in class is good, overall. The setting of pupils for literacy and mathematics is successful and the positioning of these pupils in the classroom where the teacher can give them maximum support proves successful. Only in the planning of some lessons is teaching unsatisfactory. When this occurs, teachers' planning is not sufficiently tailored to meet the needs of the individual pupil. As a result some pupils may meet the objectives of the lesson but are not able to complete work. An example of this was in a literacy lesson where lower-attaining pupils only managed to write the address, date and greeting and did not have enough time to write the letter itself.

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

27. The clear emphasis on literacy and numeracy is reflected in the length of time allocated to lessons in these subjects, which is more than is recommended and has been at the expense of other subjects. The effectiveness of the literacy strategy is satisfactory and the numeracy strategy, good. Since the introduction of the strategies pupils have made good progress and, as a result, standards standards have improved. Time is not always used well, however, in some of the over-long literacy lessons. The criticism of over-long lessons was made in the last inspection report and has not been satisfactorily addressed.
28. The quality and range of the learning opportunities that the school provides are relevant and satisfactory, although the breadth and balance of the curriculum this year is unsatisfactory. This is due to lack of creative opportunities in the art and design and technology curriculum. The school had hoped to have a newly built creative arts centre completed by October where all such work would take place. In readiness for this, the previous design and technology room was converted into a library. Due to delays that were totally out of the control of the school, the building was only completed and provision for these subjects restored a week before the inspection took place. In the interim period, no creative work took place in the classrooms. The time given to religious and physical education lessons is short although pupils make good progress in lessons. The remaining curriculum is broad and mainly balanced, meeting the requirements of the National Curriculum and the content laid down by the locally agreed syllabus for religious education.
29. Policies are in place for all curriculum subjects, which have been recently updated to meet the requirements of Curriculum 2000. The overall curriculum policy for September aims to provide a broad and balanced curriculum which will 'provide all pupils with meaningful challenges in each area of school life'. The writing of policies and schemes of work, and the reviewing and updating of them is a strength of the school. Subject managers are given both the responsibility and authority to carry out their duties well. There are clear procedures for regular review of long-, medium- and short-term plans and changes are made by subject managers in the light of teachers' evaluations. This 'evaluation of the curriculum' process is very good and ensures that constant reappraisal and refinement of the curriculum takes place.
30. Provision for extra-curricular activities is very good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. There are many popular sports clubs including football, athletics, netball, basketball, cricket and tennis. There are good opportunities outside lessons for pupils to take part in musical activities; such as choir, recorders, instrumental playing as well as two local music festivals. During the autumn term all pupils take part in a school production which involves many pupils attending after school for an hour and a half twice a week. There are also two computer clubs, two art clubs, a library club and earlier in the year Booster classes for Year 6 pupils. Local visits and a Year 6 residential visit to France also enrich the curriculum.
31. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Those with statements of need are provided with a curriculum that improves their basic skills in literacy and numeracy and meets the requirements of their individual education plans. Pupils with statements are taught together for numeracy and literacy in a small group with a specialist teacher. They join their own class for other subjects and have additional teaching to meet their individual specific needs. The provision for pupils with special educational needs, who do not have statements, is also generally well provided for through setting, but the lack of differentiated work sometimes prevents these pupils from accessing the full curriculum because they do not complete the work set. Teachers' daily planning does not specify the provision for pupils with special educational needs to ensure that they have worthwhile experiences in lessons and will be able to complete the tasks set.
32. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education (PHSE) is satisfactory. There is a policy that includes a multicultural unit and includes such topics as Chinese proverbs, Chinese New Year, Indian customs, Mehindi patterns, and Islamic buildings, Irish music and African

food. Sex education and drugs awareness education are taught as discrete topics at present but the school plans to include them within the PHSE programme in future. There is a PHSE co-ordinator with the same responsibilities and authority as other subject co-ordinators. Pupils' personal and social education is taken seriously and pupils are known well by their teachers.

33. The quality of the links with partner institutions is variable. The links with the infant school are under-developed. The co-ordinator for special educational needs has built up good links but no curriculum links have yet been established: this is a weakness. Links with the main secondary school to which the pupils go are, however, satisfactory. The local community's contribution to pupils' learning is satisfactory, mainly through visits linked with geography and history and the close links with two local churches. The school has its annual Christmas carol service at the local Catholic Church and has further links with the Church of England parish church.
34. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, overall, is good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. There is now a daily act of collective worship either in the hall or in classrooms. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Good provision for spiritual experience is provided through assemblies. Assemblies take place daily and include a time of real prayer. These are carefully prepared and reflect well the Christian leadership of the school. Assemblies provide times to reflect upon relationships, enjoy music and learn through Biblical stories, such as the Good Samaritan. Only some assemblies include a hymn, and this represents missed opportunities, especially as the school has a good choir. There are few opportunities to develop pupils' wider spiritual awareness through the curriculum, although the style of teaching and learning does give pupils time to reflect on what they are being taught. Times of joy and excitement are few during lessons and opportunities for appreciating a spiritual dimension to life reflected, for example, through poetry, literature, art and discovery are not fully taken. The nature reserve and the 'Field of Hope' in memory of a former pupil, do, however, provide opportunities to reflect upon the spiritual dimension to life.
35. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good, similar to the last inspection. The whole ethos of the school promotes their moral development well. Pupils have a very clear sense of what is right and wrong. This is promoted through a clear reward system, which includes taking on responsibilities when they are earned. Moral development is also promoted well through assemblies and through discussions in lessons such as religious education and PHSE. The school's motto, supported by the code of conduct, sets high expectations of good behaviour with all encouraged to be open and honest, with a right to be valued.
36. Provision for pupils' social development is very good. This is again promoted through assemblies and the reward system. Older pupils become house captains and prefects and carry out their duties around the school competently and with a sense of humour. The positions of head boy and girl are keenly sought after and are rotated each term. Responsibilities are given throughout the school, but increase in Year 6. The school has recently introduced a school council to give pupils a greater say in the running of the school. Pupils also have good opportunities to develop their social skills through inter-school sports, musical activities, local and residential visits and through the school's extra-curricular clubs. Few opportunities are given, however, for pupils to learn to work together collaboratively in groups during lessons although they often work well with the person sitting next to them.
37. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory which is a slight improvement on the last inspection. This is provided for well in music, is satisfactory in English, but is not strong in art. The residential visit gives some pupils an opportunity to experience another culture first hand. Whilst multicultural education is planned for in the PHSE programme, there is little evidence of the celebration of different cultures in displays around the school or through the curriculum. There is an annual visit to such places as an art gallery. Science and Roman theatre groups have acted in the school, but the school does not promote such weeks as a book or science week and has not had storytellers, poets or musicians visit the school recently. Pupils' cultural development is enhanced, however, by participating in inter-school competitions and local music festivals.
38. The school promotes equal opportunities satisfactorily. There is equal access to the

curriculum for boys and girls and for pupils of different attainment, although in the lower sets for literacy and mathematics the additional support those with special educational needs are given sometimes prevents the teacher being able to give sufficient support to others. The school has addressed the concern about the choice of books for the library made in the previous inspection report and they now reflect the school's equal opportunities policy. A weakness in equal opportunities is the work that is set for Year 6 pupils who have not been on the residential visit to France. The different experience pupils have gained during that week are not sufficiently well shared.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

39. The school has maintained the good provision for the care and support for pupils reported at the last inspection. This has a positive impact on the quality of pupils' lives at school. All staff in the school have good relationships with pupils and care for their individual needs well. There are very good systems in place for monitoring pupils' behaviour and supporting individual pupils who need to make improvements. The quality of educational and personal support and guidance is very good because teachers and staff know and care for the pupils very well.
40. Parents appreciate the pastoral care that is provided for their children. They feel that the school promotes good standards of behaviour and that it helps their children to become mature and responsible. The great majority of parents feel that the school is approachable if they have any concerns.
41. The school meets the statutory requirements for providing a safe place for pupils and adults to work in. Since the last inspection, the school has introduced a health and safety policy and there are clear procedures in place for ensuring that any possible hazards are reported and dealt with quickly. The school keeper ensures that the site is kept clean and well maintained. Some health and safety issues were noted during the inspection with regard to swimming lessons at a local pool and the school is making arrangements to address these as a matter of urgency.
42. The procedures for dealing with pupils who are unwell or who hurt themselves are very good. Staff are appropriately trained in first-aid and offer caring and sympathetic support. Midday supervisory staff have also received first-aid training and care well for pupils at lunchtime and in the playground. There are very good procedures in place for dealing with any concerns relating to child protection and pupil welfare. The school has identified the need for another training session for staff, as there are a number of staff who have come to the school since training was last organised.
43. The school has very good procedures and high expectations for the promotion of pupils' behaviour and for dealing with any isolated incidences of unsatisfactory behaviour. All staff have very clear expectations of pupils' behaviour and are consistent in their approach to any lapses. The school has been successful in including pupils who have been excluded from other schools in the locality. Crownfield Junior School claims to be a 'quiet school' and the staff reinforce this ethos at all times. Pupils say that the quiet, calm environment helps them to feel secure and safe. The consistency with which staff treat pupils has a positive impact on their behaviour. Pupils have a clear understanding of expected standards of behaviour and rarely stray from them. The use of detention acts as a considerable deterrent for pupils. Parents say that although discipline in the school is obviously very strict, they are pleased that this is the case as it helps their children to get on with their learning in a well-controlled environment.
44. Although the school sets high standards for work and behaviour, its procedures for monitoring and promoting pupils' attendance are unsatisfactory. Although there are well established systems for registration and a computerised attendance program is used to accurately record absences, the school does not monitor the large numbers of pupils who have attendance records which fall below the national expected minimum of 95 per cent. However, the level of support that the school receives from the education welfare officer is less than at the time of the last inspection and is only forthcoming when attendance drops below 85 per cent. Appropriate action is taken in these cases. However, although the school stresses to parents

the importance of regular attendance at school, there are a number of parents who authorise their child's absence and the school accepts these. As a result the level of authorised absence is high. Certificates for excellent attendance are an encouragement for some pupils to come to school regularly but insufficient use is made of the information available to set individual or class targets in order to raise overall levels of attendance.

45. The school has satisfactory procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. These include the use of standardised tests in English and mathematics and regular school designed tests in science. The National Curriculum test results at Key Stage 1 determine the ability set that pupils are placed into for their work in mathematics and English when they start at the school. In English, while pupils' progress in reading is monitored well, there are not sufficient regular assessments in writing to judge pupils' progress and set individual targets for improvements.
46. End of year assessment of pupils' attainment is used to set targets for pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science at age eleven. While there are some systems in place for ongoing assessment and recording of pupils' progress, the assessment policy states that it is at the discretion of teachers how much of this information about individual progress is noted in teachers' records. The consistency of this information therefore varies. Satisfactory use is made of the information which assessment provides when planning future work for pupils. Tracking the progress of individual pupils is a focus of the current development plan.
47. The school has very good procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development from the time they start at the school to when they move on to secondary school. Very good use is made of reward systems to recognise pupils' achievements and progress. Pupils value the award of 'Crowns' to mark progress in their work, attitudes and behaviour. There are regular opportunities to share in pupils' achievements and successes in whole-school assemblies and parents particularly value the annual prize giving ceremony where pupils are rewarded for effort, improvement and achievement. The school recognises pupils' continued application to work and to the life of the school by the reward of positions of responsibility, such as prefects, and this has a positive impact on raising pupils' self-esteem. Staff in the school know the pupils very well and make good comments about their personal development and progress in their end of year reports and make constructive remarks about where they need to make improvement. The school has recently introduced a system of pupil portfolios to be kept by parents and which will contain reports, yearly learning programmes, termly targets and certificates for achievement. The portfolios are very well designed, attractively presented and help parents to gain a better picture of their child's overall academic and personal development during their time at the school.
48. The school takes very good care of pupils with special educational needs. Class teachers and the specialist teacher are fully aware of their needs, have pupils' individual educational plans to hand and show care and concern for their well-being. The only weakness is in the following up of absences, which affect pupils' progress adversely. The regular attendance of pupils with special educational needs is not always emphasised strongly enough, and as a result good progress cannot be made. Poor punctuality at the start of the day for these pupils also needs to be monitored more effectively as some miss the beginning of lessons and this adversely affects their progress.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

49. The effectiveness of the school's links with parents is very good and results in parents having very good regard for the school. Since the last inspection, the school has significantly improved the quality and presentation of the information that it sends to parents and it is now very good. Most parents make a good contribution to their child's learning at school and at home. Although the impact of parental involvement on the work of the school is satisfactory, the school recognises that this is an area which could be further developed.
50. In the questionnaires completed before the inspection and at a meeting with a very small number of parents, parents expressed very good support for the school and its work. There has been good improvement in parents' views of the school and now most parents strongly

agree with the positive statements about the school. All parents say that teaching is good and nearly all say that their children are making good progress. Almost all parents feel that their children are expected to work hard and achieve well and they say that behaviour in the school is very good. Parents are very positive about the leadership and management of the school and the improvements that have been made since the last inspection. Very few parents made any significant criticisms of the school although a few were less positive about the school's provision for homework. However, the inspection team's judgement is that the provision for homework is satisfactory and that most parents are happy with what the school provides.

51. Parents receive very good information through the school's documentation, which is clear, helpful and attractively presented. The school is currently pursuing Charter Mark status and, as part of this, has developed a range of informative leaflets about many areas of school life, such as helping your child to read or how to make a complaint. Parents receive regular information letters, for example about events in which their child is participating, and the monthly 'Crown' newsletter gives parents attractive and well presented information about school activities and achievements. After a suggestion from parents, the school has now reorganised its parent-teacher consultations so that they meet their child's "set" teacher for English and mathematics in the spring term. There are good procedures for new parents to learn about their child's new school; they are invited to attend two introductory meetings and have opportunities to meet members of the staff, including the special educational needs co-ordinator, and make a tour of the school. Pupils' end of year reports are very good and give parents a clear and detailed picture of how well their child has achieved, the effort that they have made and where they need to make improvements in both academic work and in their personal development.
52. The school shows a good commitment to partnership in its "home-school undertaking" printed inside the newly introduced pupil portfolios. It encourages parents to support their child's learning at home, for example by hearing them read and providing a suitable environment for pupils to complete their homework. Pupils' reading record diaries show that there are many parents who hear their children read regularly at home although not all take this opportunity. The school is keen to involve parents in its development and consults with them yearly through an 'Ofsted-style' questionnaire. The results of these questionnaires, and any comments made, are taken seriously by the school and as far as possible many concerns have been addressed, such as the set teacher meetings and the wearing of uniform. Parents are provided each year with ten commitments for improvement, which are linked to the school development plan. This enables them to hold the school to account when developments do not occur. At present, the school is very aware that the promised open day has not been achieved and intends to implement this in the autumn term.
53. The school provides regular opportunities for parents to come to assemblies, to see drama performances and sports matches. These are well attended by parents and grandparents. There is very good attendance at parent-teacher consultation meetings. The school has an active fundraising association which holds several social activities during the year that are well attended by parents and which raise good sums of money for the school to purchase additional resources such as computers. However, although the school asks parents for their help on visits outside school and one parent helps to run the netball club, it does not make as much use of parents' skills as it might to support pupils during the school day. There are few opportunities for informal links between teachers and parents at the beginning and end of the school day where requests for help might be made.
54. Annual reviews are carried out in line with the requirements of the Code of Practice for pupils with statements of need and parents are kept fully informed. Most take a full part in meetings with only a very small minority not responding to invitations to attend. Everything possible is done to try to involve them. Parents are kept informed of the termly or half-yearly reviews of pupils on stages 3 and 2 of the special needs register and are invited to take part in meetings once a year for these pupils.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

55. The headteacher provides very good leadership for the school. He provides a breadth of understanding and a wealth of ideas that have helped to significantly increase the proportion of pupils attaining the national average in national tests, since he was appointed. He is keenly aware of his own strengths and capabilities and uses the skills of others to very good effect. The governing body, members of staff and parents give him the credit for the improvements made in the school. Those in school represent a formidable team that has an excellent capacity to succeed in its main goals of constant evaluation of the effectiveness of its work and improving the standards and quality of the education it provides. The governors provide very good leadership. Collectively they have a very good combination of skills and experience. They hold the headteacher to account for the school's work and are particularly effective in posing questions about standards and the outcomes of pupils' and teachers' work. This was clearly shown in the discussion that took place after the disappointing National Curriculum test results in science for 1999. Subject managers' leadership skills are very good overall and although some do not have the breadth of experience to manage the large subject areas, the school's very effective subject manager development programme successfully addresses such issues. The headteacher has judged aptitudes very well and gives very positive encouragement to all those with subject manager responsibility. The subject managers' work is overseen in the first instance by the assistant headteacher who works hard to ensure that the managers are responsive to the needs of the school. Through very effective delegation, the headteacher has given managers great responsibility, often early in their careers, and has established very effective systems to maintain a watching brief on their work. Overall the school is very well led.
56. There are excellent procedures in place for appraisal and the performance management of teachers and other staff. This has improved since the last inspection, with many of the initiatives emanating from the school's participation in the "Investors in People" programme. Professional development and training has very high status in the school. All staff have professional development action plans, with clear targets which are closely matched to the individual and also to the needs of the school. As a result of this programme, teachers new to the profession very quickly acquire relevant subject management skills, which results in good leadership of the school curriculum. There are strong relationships between all staff and the headteacher's very good level of understanding of teachers' capabilities allows interesting and very effective empowerment of all members of staff. As a result the school has a great commitment to improvement and an excellent capacity to succeed.
57. The management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and leads directly to the good progress that these pupils make. Procedures for identifying and supporting pupils with special educational needs are well managed. The school has appropriate regard for the procedures recommended in the Code of Practice. The experienced special educational needs co-ordinator, works effectively with teachers on the review and drawing up of individual education plans. However, there are some weaknesses in the present provision that prevent it from being even better. The special educational needs co-ordinator does not have sufficient time to monitor teaching and learning in the classrooms and is too reliant on teachers' evaluations of pupils' progress when drawing up new individual education plans. The school uses monies provided by the local authority to employ a specialist teacher who works very closely with the statemented pupils. This procedure works extremely well and ensures that these pupils make very good progress towards the targets on their individual education plans. However, as a result of this provision, there is a lack of provision of learning support assistants in the classroom and, in particular, in the lower-ability sets for English and mathematics. As a result, not all these pupils, a high proportion of whom have special educational needs, receive appropriate support and they do not always make the progress that they are capable of.
58. The school's aims are highly appropriate and are incorporated in the school's mission statement. The statement highlights the importance of good relationships and a commitment to equality of opportunity for all pupils. Developments consistently reflect the school's mission and help to create in the school a civilised atmosphere in which pupils are valued and yet challenged daily. The school development plan is based on these aims. Most pupils can recite the shortened version that is used in assemblies and displayed around the school. The implementation of the school's aims is very good.

59. The school development plan is of very good quality and emanates from questionnaires sent out to parents and views from staff, pupils and governors. The format of the plan for the next three years has been further adapted to provide a better basis for planning the school's work. The annual governors' conference provides an effective forum for the evaluation of the previous year's plan and discussion, identification and agreement of the priorities for the next year. The very thorough development planning process, ensures that the priorities are the most appropriate for the school and, as a result, past developments have been instrumental in the raising of standards in English, mathematics and science, the creation of an improved computer suite and the building of a creative arts block.
60. The school has made good improvements since the previous inspection in many areas, including the raising of standards in mathematics and the increased proportion of pupils achieving at the higher levels in English and science. The setting by ability for each year in English and mathematics has successfully addressed the key issue of meeting the needs of the higher-attaining pupils. Teaching has improved considerably, with no unsatisfactory teaching observed during the inspection and a much higher proportion of very good and better teaching, which is having a very positive impact on standards. The new computer suite is being used very effectively to drive up standards, with the after-school clubs providing good opportunities for the more able pupils to develop their expertise. The new library is well furnished, well stocked and an attractive and well-used resource and has led directly to the improvement in individual pupil's study and research skills. In the previous inspection the curriculum managers planned most lessons. This system has been amended whereby one third of the lessons are planned by the managers and the rest jointly by the year teachers. This is a good initiative, which incorporates the secure planning of the manager with the very good knowledge that teachers have of their own pupils. As a result, the units of work, particularly in subjects other than English and mathematics, are better targeted to the pupils' needs.
61. The school's finances are in good order. There are secure financial systems and effective control with the headteacher and governors having a clear picture of the school's finances. They are very well supported by the financial assistant who is responsible for the day-to-day management of the budget and who keeps clear records of curriculum spending, as well as records of other funds, such as for school visits. The high level of carry-over includes the sums set aside for the developments in the computer suite and the building of a creative arts block. The general school administration is very efficient, with day-to-day routines well established, the most recent audit report had few recommendations, which have all been dealt with efficiently. Subject managers bid for funding and senior managers make appropriate decisions that take account of subject needs but also match the identified school priorities.
62. The school gives very good consideration to the principles of best value through the work of the headteacher and the finance committee. It very carefully considers its comparison with local schools, consults very well with parents and receives very good support from them, particularly in the way that the school is organised and in the high standards of behaviour expected of all pupils. The school shows very good regard to competition by very carefully ensuring that it gets the best possible deal when buying resources. This was clearly evident in the purchase of the new personal computers for the computer suite and in the building of the creative arts block. Overall the school gives good value for money.
63. The school has a good level of teaching staff who are appropriately qualified and experienced to meet the demands of the National Curriculum. However, there are not enough support staff to work alongside teachers who teach the lower-ability sets. Good use is made of the skills of the special educational needs teacher and the specialist teachers for class music and instrumental tuition. Teachers are deployed effectively and in science good use is made of the subject manager's skill when working with the Year 6 pupils. There are very good procedures for the induction, mentoring and support of newly qualified teachers and staff new to the school. There is a well-established training programme with planned release time that enables newly qualified teachers to acquire new skills and to see good classroom practice. There are very good procedures in place for the monitoring of teaching, both by the headteacher as part of the school's appraisal system and by subject managers as part of the school's procedures

for monitoring and evaluating the curriculum. Both these feed very effectively into the professional development of all teachers.

64. Overall the accommodation is good and has been improved by the new creative arts block and the new library. Since the last inspection, appropriate sized furniture has been acquired which successfully addresses an issue from the last inspection and new carpets have been laid. Classrooms are tidy, bright and well decorated. The use of photographs around the school provides a bright and attractive environment, although there is a lack of pupils' work on display outside classrooms. The newly designed reception hall is well equipped and welcoming. The school is very well maintained by the school keeper and staff. The hall is of good size for physical education but there is a lack of storage space for physical education equipment and lunchtime tables. Toilets for Years 3 and 4 are too small for the pupils and there are still some old desks, which are in need of replacement. The playground, though large, is not stimulating and does not successfully meet the play needs of the different ages of pupils. The computer suite is well designed for the needs of a whole class but lacks a large screen for the teaching of information technology skills and adequate ventilation for use in warm weather. Resources are satisfactory overall but there is a lack of artefacts for history and religious education and insufficient tuned percussion for music lessons.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- In order to improve the standards of attainment and the quality of education, the governors, headteacher and staff should:
 - Shorten morning lesson to ensure pupils make more effective use of their time.
(Paragraphs 13, 22, 27, 72 and 75)
 - Review the provision of classroom assistants to work alongside teachers taking the lower-ability sets in English and mathematics.
(Paragraphs 23, 57 and 63)
- Improve the school's attendance rate by:
 - closer monitoring of pupils' whose attendance falls below 95%;
 - stressing to parents the importance of regular attendance in school;
 - closer monitoring of parents' authorisation letters to ensure reasons for absence are acceptable;
 - introducing further incentives such as class attendance certificates to complement the existing individual attendance certificates;
 - making greater use of the expertise of education welfare support available to the school.
(Paragraphs 16 and 48)
- Improve the provision in art and design and technology by ensuring all creative aspects of the subject are taught for an appropriate amount of time each year.
(Paragraphs 8, 28, 91-100)
- In addition to the key issues above, the following minor issues should be considered for inclusion in the action plan.
 - Improve liaison between the junior and feeder infant school so that good practices may be shared.
(Paragraph 33)
 - Make greater use of the skills of parents in the daily life of the school.
(Paragraphs 49 and 53)
 - Improve the quality of the playground environment to meet the various needs of the pupils.
(Paragraph 64)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	67
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	32

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
6	19	45	30	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

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	Y R- Y7
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		340
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		59

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR - Y7
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		11
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		86

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	22
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	14

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	8.3
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	45	54	99

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	33	36	31
	Girls	41	40	32
	Total	74	76	63
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	75 (84)	77 (76)	64 (79)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	25	37	30
	Girls	35	39	33
	Total	60	76	63
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	61 (69)	77 (75)	64 (68)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	337
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR - Y7

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	14.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.8
Average class size	28.3

Education support staff: YR - Y7

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	24

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	652,201
Total expenditure	735,453
Expenditure per pupil	2,163
Balance brought forward from previous year	116,113
Balance carried forward to next year	32,861

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	340
Number of questionnaires returned	108

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	49	46	4	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	54	45	1	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	74	25	0	1	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	43	45	12	0	0
The teaching is good.	56	44	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	39	50	8	0	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	56	35	8	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	69	30	1	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	39	51	7	0	3
The school is well led and managed.	68	30	1	1	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	53	41	3	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	71	27	1	0	1

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

ENGLISH

65. Attainment at the end of the key stage in the 1999 national curriculum tests was broadly in line with the national average, with a greater percentage of pupils attaining the higher level than is found nationally. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection report where meeting the needs of higher-attaining pupils was identified as a key issue for action. Attainment in 1999 was also in line with similar schools. Attainment in reading was better than in writing. Although girls' attainment is higher than that of boys, this disparity is less than is found nationally. The provisional results for present Year 6 cohort indicate that these pupils have achieved well and that standards have been maintained. Attainment based on evidence seen during the course of the inspection is also in line with what is found nationally.
66. Pupils have good speaking and listening skills. They respond well to the opportunity to discuss and explain their ideas and do so clearly and confidently. For example, a group of lower-attaining pupils discussing the form of the limerick were able to explain clearly how they enjoy the humour and predictable rhythm of these poems and made good progress in the use of discussion to support their knowledge and understanding. Pupils listen carefully to the ideas of others and discussions involve most members of the class.
67. The standard of reading is good. Most pupils across the attainment range read accurately, fluently and with developing expression. When they find a word difficult they are frequently able to work this out for themselves, using a number of strategies. Pupils use their reading skills both as a leisure activity and in order to extend and check their knowledge and understanding; for example, pupils examining the topic of rest homes for horses used promotional articles produced by a charity in order to justify their opinions. Most pupils have decided tastes in their reading material and are able to explain these. Pupils have competent research skills and make good use of the computerised classification system in the library to locate information. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection report, when pupils were seen to have few opportunities to use research skills.
68. Pupils' writing is in line with national averages. They write for an appropriate range of purposes and audiences in both their English lessons and other subjects of the curriculum. The basic punctuation and spelling of most pupils is accurate and consistent, although all pupils including those with higher attainment have difficulty in using paragraphs to make their work more structured and organised. Pupils try hard with their spelling and use dictionaries regularly. The vocabulary of most pupils is reasonably wide and they use a range of descriptive words and phrases in order to make their work more vivid and interesting. Pupils' written response to literature is thoughtful and sensitive.
69. Handwriting is usually neat, well-formed and is in a joined style, although not all pupils hold their pens or pencils in a grip which supports neat writing at speed. Presentation is neat and follows the basic conventions of underlining and use of margins.
70. Good use is made of literacy skills in other areas of the curriculum to record and review knowledge and understanding. In history, pupils use both their skills of creative writing and their knowledge of history to write from the point of view of people living in a number of historical periods. In art, pupils write observant and thoughtful responses to work by a range of well-known artists. In geography they use a factual style to record statistical and technical facts, for example when writing about the course of a river.
71. In lessons, pupils listen carefully, work very quietly and maintain good levels of concentration. However, some English lessons are very long and some pupils tend to adopt a leisurely pace, knowing that there is plenty of time in which to complete their tasks. They respond well to skilled questioning, which encourages them to think hard and to persevere until they understand. The range of reading with which pupils are presented is wide and, sometimes, very demanding such as the poetry of William Blake but they respond with interest and

commitment.

72. The attitude and behaviour of pupils is good overall and in a third of lessons observed it was excellent. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection report, when some pupils were judged not to listen well in some lessons. Pupils know they are in lessons to work and they do their best to participate constructively in all activities and to make the most of the opportunities offered to them. The whole-class sessions at the end of lessons are particularly useful in consolidating knowledge and understanding because pupils listen carefully to what others have achieved during the lesson and make sensible contributions.
73. Teaching is good overall: in almost a quarter of lessons teaching was very good and in one lesson it was excellent. Teachers have good overall subject knowledge but there are some individual weaknesses in spelling and use of grammar. There has been a considerable improvement since the last inspection when teaching ranged from very good to poor. Teachers plan their lessons thoroughly and they have clear objectives for what they want pupils to learn, which are shared explicitly with the pupils themselves. Good use is made of discussion and questioning to both encourage pupils to extend their thinking and understanding and to assess pupils' progress. Teachers present pupils with a wide range of reading material which is selected to be of interest and relevance and pupils respond well to this by their eagerness to offer their ideas and opinions. There is little planning for a range of tasks to meet the different abilities of pupils; this results in some pupils being given work that is not always appropriate to their needs. The marking of work is regular, clear and supportive, although targets for improvement or advice on how to achieve these are not usually given. Pupils with special educational needs are generally well supported in their lower-ability sets and make good overall progress towards the literacy targets on their individual education plans. However, some work set is too demanding for these pupils and results in them not having enough time to practise the skills they have just been taught.
74. The National Literacy Strategy has been appropriately introduced, with longer than average time devoted to literacy lessons. All pupils have regular opportunities to read with their teachers, although the length of lessons means that those not reading have an extended period in which to work on writing tasks. Insufficient use of the "tracking" of individual pupil's progress means that high potential or possible under-achievement is not precisely identified. Writing is not assessed regularly enough nor in a sufficiently structured manner to allow pupils' progress and potential to be accurately measured. As a result, teachers do not have a clear, measurable picture of pupils' progress; for example, in 1999 the school underestimated pupils' potential attainment whilst this year the demanding targets set for the end of key stage National Curriculum tests have not been met. Resources are generally appropriate and there is a selection of fiction for pupils' use in each classroom. Although each classroom has a good supply of dictionaries, these are not always sufficiently advanced to meet the demands of their literacy lessons and pupils are frustrated by attempting to look up words which do not appear in their dictionaries. Good progress has been made in library provision since the last inspection. There is a light and airy library which has recently had much old and out-of-date stock removed and a range of new books added. Although this means that the library stock is quite restricted, all books are now relevant, up to date and in good condition. This does much to encourage regular reading habits. There are well advanced plans to offer library lessons to each class on a regular basis, with a scheme of library lessons drawn up by the co-ordinator.

MATHEMATICS

75. The standards reached in mathematics are a particular strength of the school. Pupils' attainment at the end of the Key Stage in the 1999 National Curriculum tests was above the national average at Level 4 and well above at Level 5. Pupils' attainment was above the average in comparison with similar schools. Taking the last four years together, pupils' performance has also been above the national average. Standards rose sharply in 1998 and remained similar in 1999, when national standards improved. Standards have improved greatly since the last inspection. In three of the last four years, boys have reached slightly higher standards than girls. Overall, boys have reached well above average and girls above average standards.

76. By the end of the key stage, pupils' attainment, as seen during the inspection, is above average and pupils' achievement is very good. This is confirmed by provisional results from this year's national curriculum tests. The improvement in attainment between Years 3 and 4 is particularly noticeable in the higher-attaining sets. The progress pupils make across the school is very good, with some pupils who only reach Level 1 when they come to the school, leaving with Level 4 or 5. Setting provides particularly well for higher-attaining pupils who regularly reach standards well above average and, sometimes, very high standards. Pupils in middle-attaining sets achieve average standards except in Year 4 where they reach above average standards. Pupils in lower-attaining sets reach below average standards except in Year 4 and sometimes in Year 6 when they reach average standards. A particular strength of the subject is in investigative work. Pupils are competent in this and enjoy the challenges set. A weakness is in the pace of mental recall, particularly in some average and lower-attaining sets. Higher-attaining pupils in Year 6 are excited by the challenges set, have very good number skills and successfully explore such operations as the simplification of equations. All attainment targets are covered sufficiently and in Year 6, higher-attaining pupils show a good understanding of, for example, equivalent fractions, inverse operations, investigations using four digit numbers or factors, probability and a knowledge of bar, scatter, line and frequency graphs. They have studied modes, medians and averages and co-ordinates in four quadrants. Tests show that some pupils are working at Levels 5 and 6. Pupils in the middle Year 6 set are encouraged to think mathematically, for example, when they consider tests for divisibility of a number. Some pupils in this set achieve Level 5 in problem solving as a result of good teaching and the methodical way they present their work. The presentation of their work is excellent. The lower-attaining set often reaches average standards. Their work is very well presented and where pupils have difficulties the teacher's written comments are detailed and constructive and help them to improve.
77. Pupils' behaviour is good in Years 3 and 5 and often exemplary in Years 4 and 6. As a result, their learning is satisfactory in Year 3 and good in other years. Pupils show high degrees of concentration and interest in the subject and are very well motivated. The presentation of their work across the school is of a high standard.
78. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and as a result, progress in relation to their previous attainment is good. Setting in mathematics is mainly successful, meeting the needs of all pupils, although the lack of extra classroom support in the lower-attaining, sometimes large, sets means that the extra time given to supporting those with special educational needs sometimes leaves other pupils working for too long on their own. The teaching of pupils with statements of special educational need is excellent. It clearly matches the needs of the pupils and promotes their understanding well.
79. The quality of teaching, overall, is good. This is similar, overall, to the last inspection. It is especially strong in Years 4 and 6. In the higher-attaining Year 6 class the teacher is particularly good at leading the pupils from the unknown to the known, building on pupils' previous learning. In all lessons teachers plan well and teach to clear learning objectives which are shared with the pupils. The school has implemented the numeracy strategy successfully but the pace of mental recall is emphasised insufficiently in the middle and lower sets in Years 3 and 5. Equipment to aid this work, as used now in many schools, is not used or available. Teachers have good subject knowledge although only the subject manager has specialist knowledge. Planning is effective, the management of pupils is very good and teachers regularly assess pupils through end-of-topic or end-of-term tests. Averages are worked out for each set and for the year group. Pupils' annual reports show both the year average and their own attainment. Teachers use assessment very well in the planning of their daily lessons and for moving pupils, if necessary, from one set to another.
80. The management of the subject is very good. The subject manager was previously a mathematics advisory teacher, is one of the local authority's leading mathematics teachers and has a very good understanding of the subject. Monitoring of teachers' planning, of teaching and learning and of pupils' books is very good. Assessment data is used well to place pupils in sets and this is reviewed regularly. The headteacher and subject manager monitor the progress of individual pupils carefully as they progress through the years. This data is used

well to evaluate the methods used. For example, setting was used in Years 5 and 6 only, but when it was found to be successful, it was introduced into Years 3 and 4. Data is also used to track pupils and set individual targets. Resources for mathematics are satisfactory, but they are not sufficient to increase the speed of pupils' mental recall or, for example, teach the telling of time successfully. Number lines are often poorly placed and sometimes too small for pupils, particularly lower-attainers, to refer to quickly. The school has identified the need to improve information technology resources in the subject and is introducing new programs in the next academic year. Displays are used well to promote the subject in every classroom and in corridors. There is evidence of information technology being used for mathematical purposes in these displays. Calculators are used appropriately in classes, such as to check a partner's answers.

SCIENCE

81. In 1999 pupils' results in the National Curriculum tests at age eleven fell to levels below those normally achieved by pupils at the school. Pupils' overall standards were well below both those achieved nationally and those in similar schools. The percentage of pupils attaining Level 4 in the tests was well below average and the proportion gaining the higher Level 5 was below average.
82. During the current school year the school has been very proactive and very successful in addressing this dip in standards, for example, by developing setting for science in Year 6, and, by holding science booster classes after school. Evidence from pupils' books, lesson observations and pupils' results in the tests show that those pupils currently in Year 6 have made consistently good progress in science throughout the year. The vast majority of these pupils are now attaining at least the expected Level 4, and a good proportion, around a third of all pupils, are attaining at the higher Level 5. This represents a significant improvement in the standards since the previous year and also demonstrates that for these pupils overall progress in science since starting at the school is good.
83. By the age of 11, the pupils have a good knowledge and understanding across all areas of the science curriculum. Pupils demonstrate good knowledge of life processes and living things. They have good knowledge of the properties of materials and can classify substances into solids, liquids and gases. They know that some materials can change from one state to another and that some of these processes are reversible and others are not. Pupils have a clear understanding of physical processes and understand, for example, what happens when more than one force is in action. Pupils demonstrate good skills in experimental and investigative science. This is evident both from lesson observations when pupils were designing and making burglar alarms and from work in pupils' books which shows clear evidence that pupils regularly devise, carry out and evaluate their own experiments.
84. Pupil's progress across the rest of the school is satisfactory. Work samples and lesson observations show that pupils of all prior attainment levels make sound overall progress across the various strands of the curriculum. Pupils' response to their science work is good. They are interested in their work and have good attitudes to learning. They show particular interest and concentration when working on tasks and practical activities as is evident for example in Year 6 classes when pupils were making burglar alarms and in some lessons when pupils had to research information about animals. On these occasions, pupils collaborated well both in pairs or in groups and shared equipment sensitively. In some lessons, pupils' concentration sometimes lapses when they are expected to listen for too long, but their interest is quickly restored when the teacher changes the activity. Pupils are keen to answer questions and to make suggestions. Behaviour in lessons is very good.
85. Science teaching was seen in three-quarters of all classes. The overall quality of teaching seen is satisfactory and ranges from satisfactory to very good. Teaching in the lessons seen in Year 6 is very good and what makes it particularly successful is the teachers' subject knowledge and the very high expectations of pupils of all prior attainment levels. Throughout the school there is also some good teaching in which lessons proceed at a good pace. Although most teachers have satisfactory subject knowledge, some teachers are less secure. There were some

occasions in lessons when teachers gave pupils incorrect scientific information and others when teachers' lack of confidence led them to dismiss pupils' questions and observations. Teachers' planning and preparation of lessons is good and learning objectives are clear and are shared with pupils helping them to understand the purpose of lessons. Tasks and activities are explained well and teachers' questioning is good and is effective in extending pupils' understanding and checking their progress throughout, and at the end of lessons. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and this is successful in creating an orderly environment in which pupils can learn. However, in a number of lessons seen, teachers are overly concerned about the amount of noise they perceive pupils to be making when they are asked to discuss their thoughts and ideas with their partners. This detracts from the teaching and learning and sets unrealistic expectations of pupils who are sometimes expected to talk and carry out practical activities without making noise.

86. While there is evidence of good and very regular opportunities for pupils in Year 6 to devise and carry out experiments independently, in other year groups this is not the case. Opportunities are not as frequently provided as they should be, or as often as teachers' planning and the school's science policy would indicate. For example, in some lessons during the inspection, while learning objectives suggest that pupils will be carrying out investigation, in practice, this sometimes means pupils carry out observations, not investigations. In addition sometimes only the teacher or a small group of pupils set up and carry out the experiments. This approach also varies from class to class within year groups. For example, in one Year 5 class, all pupils had the opportunity to plant seeds, while in another only a small group of pupils did. Providing more practical experiences would also encourage pupils to think for themselves and would challenge the higher-attaining pupils in particular. Currently, tasks and recording of findings tend to be too teacher-directed. It is possible that for this reason teachers have to put so much additional work and effort into boosting attainment at the end of the key stage to ensure that pupils' attainment matches their potential by the time they leave the school. A strength of all teaching is that teachers regularly reflect on and evaluate their own work and consider how it can be improved.
87. The curriculum plans for science have recently been updated. They follow the most recent national guidance and work covered each year builds progressively on pupils' prior attainment. The co-ordinator plans a third of all lessons and these are of good quality and emphasise practical work and investigations. Assessment procedures are satisfactory although they do not include periodic assessment of pupils' progress in planning or carrying out experiments and investigations. There are some examples of pupils developing and applying literacy and numeracy skills through work in science but the incorporation of information technology into the curriculum is limited. Overall, resources are satisfactory.
88. The science co-ordinator has worked very hard to improve the subject since taking up the post at the beginning of the year. He has very good subject knowledge and has been very effective in steering the school's priority of raising standards. He has had the opportunity to monitor the teaching and learning in some of the classes. In view of the higher-than-average proportion of teachers in their first few years of teaching and the overall lack of initial qualifications in science, it would be of benefit for him to have more time to monitor and support teachers in class. There is also at present, not enough time for some whole-school staff training in science teaching to raise teachers' confidence and improve their subject knowledge.
89. As a result of the national emphasis on literacy and numeracy, in line with many schools, science has not been a whole-school focus during the past few years. Nevertheless, the school has made satisfactory improvements to its work in science since the last inspection and has been successful in raising standards, especially the attainment levels of older, potentially higher-attaining pupils; a weakness identified in the last inspection report.

ART

90. It was possible to see very few art lessons during the course of the inspection and judgements are based on a careful scrutiny of work produced over the past two years and of teachers' planning and school documentation.

91. Due to no painting being allowed in the classrooms this year, pupils have had very limited experience of this subject for all but the final three weeks of the current term, when specialist art accommodation became available with the completion of the creative arts building. The very restricted curriculum offered during the majority of this year has resulted in pupils making generally unsatisfactory progress in art. However, progress in the main areas they have studied, including pencil sketching and the work of well-known artists, is satisfactory.
92. Pupils make satisfactory progress in using pencil to sketch from life and to draw portraits. They use shading and detailed patterns to add depth and texture to their work, although since sketching is nearly always done in pencil, with limited use of charcoal and no use of pastels or oil pastels, the range of effects which pupils are able to achieve is limited. Older pupils have worked on perspective in which they have made satisfactory progress. Pupils using paint for the first time in almost a year, lacked confidence in mixing colours when copying Monet's techniques. Pupils make satisfactory progress in understanding the work of well-known artists and write vivid accounts of their response to this. Pupils who were planning the design of tribal masks showed good understanding of the purpose of these and were very perceptive about the materials and methods used in the examples they were given to examine. In the last inspection report attainment in art was described as uneven, a situation which continued for this year because of the restrictions placed upon the curriculum.
93. In the lessons observed pupils' response was at least good and often very good. They show their enthusiasm for the subject by the eagerness with which they answer questions, offer their opinions and volunteer to show their work to the rest of the class. The younger pupils respond positively to the opportunity to discuss each other's work and can make sensible suggestions. Although excited by the opportunity to work in a medium with which they had become unfamiliar, the younger pupils were very sensible and did their best to follow their teacher's instructions despite being hampered by lack of confidence and lack of recent experience. Pupils in Year 6 responded well to their teacher's challenging questions and made good progress in understanding the purposes behind the design of tribal masks.
94. Teaching is good overall. Teachers plan their lessons in detail and make good use of the resource packs which are available for topics studied and of additional resources which they have provided to capture pupils' interests, for example a collection of familiar household items to be viewed from an unfamiliar angle. When teachers make effective use of questioning pupils respond by thinking hard about their work and make resulting good progress. Good use is made by teachers of examples of the pupils' work to emphasise lesson objectives and to encourage pupils to form their own opinions and tastes.
95. There is a policy and scheme of work which makes progress in the acquisition of skills a priority and which specifies a full range of activities and media. However, much of this scheme of work has not been used during the course of the current academic year and pupils have concentrated far too heavily on one area of the art curriculum. In addition to the scheme of work, there is a series of "resource packs" for the topics studied, including examples of well-known art. Art is now taught in a purpose-built and well resourced art room, which has been designed to allow pupils to experience the full range of the art curriculum. The purchase of paints in only primary colours and black and white will mean that, now that paint is being used again, pupils will have the opportunity to develop the skill and excitement of mixing their own colours.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

96. The school has a policy of not carrying out messy activities within the classrooms and therefore allocates a separate classroom to be used for design and technology. The room previously used for work in design and technology has been converted into a library and a new building was planned. Due to the long delay in completion of a new art and design technology building, there has been no design technology taught throughout the current year until very recently. As a result, the quality and range of pupils' learning opportunities have been poor and their progress throughout the current year has been unsatisfactory. There is insufficient evidence to form a judgement about standards either now or in the past, as the school does not keep evidence of pupils' finished work. However, it is clear from talking with pupils that in

previous years they have had opportunities to design and make products.

97. During the inspection two design and technology lessons were seen in the now newly opened design and technology and art room. The focus of these two lessons was to evaluate finished products, which pupils were able to do satisfactorily. There were, however, no opportunities to make judgements about pupils' skills in planning and designing.
98. Teaching in the two lessons seen was satisfactory. Strengths include good preparation, clear demonstration and explanations and some good questioning to make pupils focus on the specific and pertinent design features of the products. For example, one teacher used questioning well to ascertain the benefits of different types of purses and methods of fastening. In another lesson the teacher demonstrated how a violin is constructed by disassembling a model of a violin. There are some weaknesses in lesson planning; learning objectives are not sufficiently precise and planned activities do not focus enough on the practical aspects of the subject. In the lessons seen pupils spent far too much time listening to the teacher and on recording their observations with very little time involved in "hands on" activity. This restricts their progress and also means pupils' interest dwindles. Teachers have good management of pupils and pupils behave very well. This is a very positive feature of teaching. However, in the lessons seen teachers were overly concerned about the amount of noise pupils made when they were working in pairs and groups. As a result they tended to interrupt pupils' work to emphasise the need for pupils to talk and work quietly. The curriculum is gradually being updated by the co-ordinator in line with current national guidance. Resources are satisfactory.

GEOGRAPHY

99. Only a small number of lessons were observed during the inspection; judgements are based on these, a thorough analysis of work previously completed and the scrutiny of teachers' planning and school documentation. Based on this evidence, pupils make good progress in geography and this shows an improvement since the last inspection. By the end of the key stage, pupils have a secure knowledge of a range of geographical locations and topics and the geographical skills necessary to interpret and record their understanding. Good progress is made in topics, such as weather, which are covered more than once, when the earlier knowledge and understanding is used as a basis for further progress.
100. Pupils have a good knowledge of a wide range of locations in their immediate area, this country and a number of countries abroad. They understand that while some aspects of life remain the same regardless of location, differences in weather and physical features have a profound impact on lifestyle. They understand how to measure and record weather and are able to explain why differences in climate result in differences in ways of life, housing and employment. Pupils develop a good knowledge of rivers and the rainforest and make good progress in the development of subject-related vocabulary with which to discuss these features, such as "erosion" and "canopy". There is good development in map skills such as the use of keys, points of the compass and grid references and in methods of geographical research; for example, Year 3 pupils drew up and conducted a good quality shopping questionnaire in Romford market. Pupils who went on the residential trip to France make good use of their personal observations in their subsequent study of that country.
101. In lessons, pupils' attitudes to their work and behaviour were good. Their great curiosity about places and ways of life other than their own has a very positive impact on their progress. They work hard, both individually and in small groups, to discover as much about their topics as they can. Pupils are eager to share their ideas with others and to hypothesise and in this way their progress is enhanced by learning from others; for example, pupils in Year 4 were able to draw appropriate conclusions about the effects of tourism on the environment by sharing ideas in pairs. Pupils maintain good levels of concentration and at the end of lessons have a clear idea of what they have learned.
102. In the lessons observed, teaching was good. Planning is in appropriate detail with clear objectives for pupils' learning. Teachers make good use of questioning to encourage pupils to draw their own conclusions and work out the answers themselves. Alongside this level of challenge there is good support for those pupils with special educational needs, either through

helpful intervention or by offering tasks matched to their needs. The marking of work is regular and supportive, although it rarely gives explicit advice on what pupils need to do to improve their work.

103. The scheme of work builds well from the long-term plan. Pupils have regular geography lessons throughout the year and progression in the acquisition of geographical skills is a priority in the planning. The selection of locations to be studied has been made to offer a broad range of contrasts with pupils' own localities and does much to stimulate pupils' curiosity. There is a satisfactory range of resources, although the availability of atlases and globes is rather restricted. Good use is made of an appropriate programme of visits to a number of locations to enable pupils to gain a more comprehensive understanding of some of the areas they study. The previous inspection report identified a need for the school to offer more opportunities for field studies and the school has successfully addressed this weakness.

HISTORY

104. Pupils make good progress during the course of the key stage and by the end they have secure knowledge and understanding of a wide range of historical periods, personalities and situations and can use a wide range of historical skills. This represents an improvement since the last inspection, when pupils' attainment was seen to be broadly in line with national expectations.
105. Pupils understand that events occur in a certain order, and have both causes and effects; for example, Year 6 pupils understand that the Second World War had its roots in the First World War and the depression that followed it. Pupils locate events on a time line and the youngest pupils understand the difference between AD and BC. Pupils understand that in looking at the past we use a range of information and younger pupils understand how historical discoveries are made and interpreted. This was well reinforced by pupils studying the work of the archaeologist Howard Carter in Egypt. Good progress is made in the use of source material so that by Year 6, pupils use photographs and cartoons in order to make hypotheses about past events and to come to balanced opinions about events and historical figures. Good progress is made in the historical skill of looking at events from a number of viewpoints and pupils make effective use of their literacy skills in order to write from the perspective of people living in a variety of historical periods. Pupils develop a range of methods for recording their findings; for example, by independent writing and use of charts and maps.
106. Pupils show good levels of concentration and hard work in lessons. They are keen to show what they have remembered and to discuss their knowledge and understanding, listening carefully to the contributions of others. They settle to work quickly and are generally industrious, although for younger pupils the lessons are quite long and their concentration tends to slip towards the end of sessions. Older pupils complete an impressive amount of work during lessons and maintain good levels of concentration, remaining alert and enthusiastic during the closing whole-class discussion.

107. Teaching is good overall and sometimes very good. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection when all teaching was judged satisfactory. Lessons and longer-term learning are planned in appropriate detail and in some lessons work is set to meet a range of levels of attainment with, for older pupils, the opportunity to choose which task they undertake. Good use is made of questioning to make pupils think hard and to support them to work answers out for themselves. Teachers have good relationships with their pupils and these assist in supporting pupils to do their best. Good support is given to pupils with special educational needs resulting in these pupils making good progress in lessons. Marking is regular and supportive but does not give pupils explicit advice on what they need to do to improve their work. Good use is made of the plenary session at the end of lessons to offer pupils the opportunity to talk about what they have achieved and to consolidate learning.
108. There is a subject policy, a scheme of work and long-term planning which takes an overview of progression in historical understanding and skills as pupils pass through the school. What is studied by each year group has been carefully planned, with some long topics spread over two years and provision for progress to be made when a topic is covered more than once during a pupil's time in school. The scheme of work is a combination of topics published by a national educational body and activities planned by teachers in the school. Effective use is made of the lessons planned for each year group by the co-ordinator. There is no planned structure for the regular assessment and recording of pupils' progress. Resources are adequate, although there are insufficient artefacts, with many of those used, provided through the initiative of teachers themselves. Satisfactory use is made of the local and wider environment to provide a programme of visits for pupils, and good use is made of local residents to talk to pupils about their experiences, such as life during the Second World War.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

109. Pupils' attainment by the age of 11 is in line with national expectations and the use of information technology across the curriculum has improved since the last inspection.
110. By the age of 11, pupils have good confidence using the various programs. They open a file, amend work, print off and save. They have good skills in the communications aspect of the subject and are making increasing use of the internet to support their learning in different subjects. For example, pupils found information about the Blitz, which they then turned into a newspaper front page as part of their history topic. Pupils are developing good evaluative skills and this is being used well by the school to create their own web site. For this, pupils have been visiting the web sites of other junior schools and using agreed criteria to judge the strengths and weaknesses of these sites. This information will be used when the school creates its own site next term. Pupils have good skills in data handling and use the information to create various graphs in both two and three dimensions. In control and modelling, pupils have satisfactory skills.
111. Through the school pupils make good progress in all aspects of the subject. This is due to a well-organised curriculum and the teachers' good subject knowledge, which has been improved since the last inspection. Lessons are carefully planned and benefit from the key lessons from the subject leader, which set high standards. Throughout the school pupils have good quality word processing skills and the weekly timetabled lesson for using these skills has been a key feature in this improvement. However, too many pupils type with one finger and often with the keyboard in front of the partner they are working with. As a result, pupils are not learning good keyboard skills and take a long time to input information. Pupils have a good awareness of audience, clearly seen in the Year 3 "I saw" poems and in the "My poems" from Year 4. Pupils make good progress in their work on databases, understand key words, such as "cell" and "field", with older pupils using information to work out the best value for different chocolate bars. There are some good links with other subjects, for example Year 3 pupils use a composing program which complements the work undertaken in music lessons. Higher-achieving pupils

throughout the school take advantage of two extra-curricular clubs where high quality work takes place. During the inspection, two older pupils were designing their own Pokemon web sites, with both fixed and moving images imported from other internet web sites.

112. Teaching is good overall and ranges from satisfactory to very good. Teachers use pupils' good collaborative skills well and, when working in pairs, pupils support each other sensitively. In this way pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress. All lessons have good pace and the teaching of skills is good. However, in areas other than word processing, pupils have to wait a whole week before they come back to the computer suite to reinforce these skills. This particular problem is being overcome by the placement of a networked personal computer in each classroom before the beginning of next term. Teachers make particularly good use of questioning, with the best teaching building well on pupils' previous knowledge. However, the small computer screens are not sufficiently large for whole-class teaching. The school is aware of this and has ordered a large teaching screen for next term.
113. Pupils are really enthusiastic about the subject and have a very clear understanding of how it can help and support their learning. Teachers build well on this enthusiasm in lessons. The teachers' management of the pupils is very good and, as a result, pupils behave very well, work hard and make good use of their computer time.
114. The new computer suite is used particularly well to support pupils' learning. Throughout the day, it is in full use and this careful timetabling has very successfully addressed one of the issues from the last inspection. However, the room is poorly ventilated and in warm weather conditions become uncomfortably hot for pupils to work in. The co-ordinator has worked hard and successfully to introduce a new scheme of work that ensures all elements of the subject are taught thoroughly and skills acquired are effectively built upon and developed. At present, the recording of work is not carried out systematically and evidence of pupils' finished work is kept in the back of an art and design and technology booklet. This is not satisfactory and a discrete record for the subject would help the school to follow pupils' progress far more closely. Whilst the planning of the curriculum is good, the planning of built-in assessments to ensure the curriculum has been taught effectively is, at present, unsatisfactory.

MUSIC

115. By the age of 11, pupils have made good progress in the subject and are achieving standards above national expectations. These standards show an improvement on the last inspection.
116. Pupils really enjoy music. They concentrate well during lessons, enjoy the challenge of new musical experiences and work very hard to improve their performance. Particularly impressive is the good quality of singing in all classes. Pupils have clear diction, sing tunefully and show a good understanding of dynamics. The pupils' very good ability to work collaboratively is used very well by the teacher, particularly amongst the older pupils and this results in Year 6 pupils having above average skills in their composing and performing work. This was particularly evident in their work based on the rondo. In this, as a result of pupils' very good collaborative skills and building on each other's ideas, high standards were achieved that were enhanced by pupils' use of musical terminology such as "phrasing, ostinato, dynamics" when discussing their performance. These pupils use their knowledge of composers well; for example, they related their work to Bach's Rondo that they had listened to previously.
117. The quality of teaching is good overall and ranges from satisfactory to excellent. The school is fortunate to have the services of an experienced, specialist teacher who works regularly with the pupils. Her enthusiasm, excellent subject knowledge and very good relationships with the pupils, results in them having very positive attitudes to the subject and working hard during lessons. Pupils' good behaviour results in good use of time, although some pupils do find the one-hour lessons too long a period for them to sustain full concentration and when this occurs, their output drops and they do not make as much progress as they should. The regular teaching of musical vocabulary enables pupils to critically assess each other's performance and this leads to tangible improvements during lessons. The enthusiasm for music was clearly

evident in the end-of-year concert, where the high quality of singing and instrumental playing was greatly enjoyed by parents and pupils.

118. Keen musicians benefit from individual music tuition from outside teachers for brass, strings and woodwind. The thriving choir, with a good mix of boys and girls, meets as an extra-curricular activity and sings regularly at festivals, in the community and for the school's concerts. The new music room was used for the first time during the inspection and provides a first-rate facility for practical music making. The subject leader has created a good curriculum that develops pupils' skills and knowledge well as they move through the years. The subject is satisfactorily resourced, although there is a shortage of tuned percussion instruments and facilities for recording pupils' work on to tape; as a result, pupils' progress in their composing work cannot be tracked and opportunities are missed for recorded singing to accompany pupils in assemblies in the absence of a pianist.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

119. Since the last inspection good improvements have been made in teaching and to the provision of extra-curricular sporting activities.
120. Pupils make good progress in lessons and pupils' attainment by the age of 11 is in line with national expectations, with some attainment in Year 6 above average. One swimming lesson taught by instructors was also observed. The progress which pupils of all prior attainment levels made in the lessons seen is at least satisfactory and is good or better in the most instances.
121. The overall quality of teaching is good with one lesson being very good. All lessons are well planned and prepared. Many of the lessons had been prepared by the co-ordinator as part of his subject support work. This gives good guidance to new teachers and those who do not have particular expertise in the subject. Teachers make good use of pupils' performance in lessons to check their progress and to illustrate how others can improve their work. This was seen, for example, in Year 3 when pupils learnt from others that throwing too high makes it hard to catch a beanbag. Teachers pay very good attention to pupils' safety in all aspects of their teaching and ensure pupils understand the importance of warm ups, being aware of others and using space effectively. Where teaching is very good subject knowledge is particularly well used and the teacher has high expectations of pupils' performance. This allows a very confident delivery of the lesson, which moves at a swift pace enabling pupils to make very good progress.
122. Pupils' response in lessons is very good overall. Pupils enjoy lessons and work hard. They behave very well and work well in groups; sharing apparatus and waiting their turn. They respect each other's contributions and are particularly pleased when their classmates achieve well or make progress. This is evident in the spontaneous applause given to one pupil who managed to swim 10 metres for the first time.
123. The curriculum is satisfactory and is being gradually updated and improved, in line with the latest national guidance. Good attention is given to ensuring that pupils' learning experiences cover all strands of the subject and that work each term and in each year group builds on pupils' previous learning. The curriculum time allocated to the teaching of the subject, one hour per week, is below that recommended. In addition the fact that all classes have only the one lesson each week means pupils do not have enough regular opportunities for physical activity.
124. The subject is enthusiastically led by the co-ordinator who, like several other teachers, give very generously of their own time to run after-school sporting activities. This gives many pupils the opportunity to improve their skills and to take part in "friendly" competitions with other schools. Pupils have achieved well in football five-a-side and seven-a-side tournaments, netball and rounders leagues and the Hornchurch athletics league. The range of clubs on offer is impressive with many boys and girls taking part. In this way, the subject makes an excellent contribution to pupils' social development.

125. The school benefits from having its own playing field and a fairly large playground. Good use is made of the outdoor accommodation for lessons and for extra-curricular activities. The school however does not make full use of the swimming time available to it. Only those pupils in Year 6 have lessons and each class has only ten lessons. This is insufficient to ensure that all pupils attain the minimum recommended level; being able to swim 25 metres by the time they leave primary school. In addition the school is paying the cost of a coach each week which has a good number of empty seats and the cost of swimming instructors who take only thirty pupils when they normally teach up to sixty pupils.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

126. Pupils' attainment at the end of the key stage has improved since the last inspection and is now slightly above average. In Year 3, pupils learn about the importance of Guru Nanak's birthday to Sikhs, and display satisfactory knowledge of the Sikh religion: such as the name of the founder, of the Holy book the Guru Granth Sahib, the five Ks, arranged marriages and of a Sikh wedding. Pupils gain a good understanding of subject-related vocabulary through the study of texts. The use of black and white photocopied sheets with poor quality reproductions of photographs, however, does not inspire pupils. In Year 4, pupils develop an awareness of the Jewish faith, which includes the teaching of Old Testament stories. Stories are used well to help pupils relate what they learn to their own lives, such as when a pupil is put in the 'hot seat' describing what it felt like to be Daniel and how they would react if taunted. The discussion following the story and the prayers they write show a deeper understanding of the subject than is often seen. Pupils also learn about the Bar Mitzvah, the synagogue and Jewish festivals such as Hanukah. In Year 5, the emphasis is on the life of Christ and the teaching of the New Testament. There is a strong link between religious education and pupils' personal and health education. During the inspection, pupils debated Sunday trading, having been led well to see both sides of the argument by their teacher. Very good standards were reached in one class and good standards in the other observed. Where standards were very good, the length of the lesson was longer and pupils gained a good understanding of debate. One pupil in particular learned the importance of empathy with the subject matter and the importance of thinking beyond his own viewpoint. During both lessons, pupils gained concepts and knowledge that they did not have at the start of the lesson and progress was therefore good.
127. By the age of 11, pupils have a very good knowledge of Bible stories and the life of Jesus and know how Christianity has influenced the lives of people such as Florence Nightingale and Mother Theresa. They also relate well what they discuss to their own lives. Religious education makes a strong contribution to pupils' personal development. For example, Year 6 pupils' books show that they have a good understanding of how one's own actions affect other people. By the time the pupils leave the school, their understanding of Christianity and Judaism is above expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and their understanding of the Sikh religion is satisfactory.
128. Pupils' learning is good overall as seen in the pupils' books, and very good in the short lessons observed. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes are very good and their writing is often thoughtful. They listen very well indeed, many responding well to questioning and they begin the writing sessions quickly. The ability to take part in real debate is variable between classes. Pupils' books show that the range of ways in which pupils record is variable across the school. In Year 3, the range is very good, but in Year 5 there is little variety. The good link between literacy and religious education lessons is evident in Year 6 and the presentation of pupils' work is good throughout the school.
129. The quality of teaching is good within the limited amount of time given to the subject. An analysis of the pupils' books shows that there is a good coverage of the agreed syllabus. Evidence in lessons shows that coverage is good as the subject is taught in a very academic way. Lessons tend to concentrate on debate and question and answer sessions, however, rather than a wider range of activities. As a result those who enjoy debate thrive, but the subject does not appeal to the majority of pupils. A wider range of activities and stimuli should hold pupils' interest better and would provide them with more experiential activities and experiences on which they could begin to form judgements. Because of the short length of

lessons there is little time to have any meaningful group-work or activities such as drama in which the pupils could put into practice what they discuss, for example, resolving an argument. Teaching methods are at present mainly effective within a limited amount of time and learning styles, but there is lack of time and resources, and tasks are seldom planned to pupils' different attainment, which results in some pupils, and particularly those with special educational needs, continually producing unfinished work. Marking, however, is mainly good. Teachers write helpful comments at the end of a piece of work, which help pupils to improve.

130. The management of the subject is satisfactory. The subject manager, who is a religious education specialist, has only recently taken on the subject manager's role. Already she has received evaluations of lessons from teachers, which she has started to use to revise the medium- and short-term plans of work. These are generally good but teachers find that some of the tasks are repetitive, that they assume knowledge the pupils do not have and teachers are expected to cover too much in a lesson. Many lessons are for only half an hour a week and when swimming comes before the lesson they can be as short as a quarter of an hour. Lessons therefore often lack creative opportunities. No use is made of homework to build on what has been learned in these lessons. The school has a very good selection of religious education books in the library. Other resources are unsatisfactory. There are very few videos, and there are not enough detailed teachers' reference books to inform the non-specialist. The lack of artefacts, posters and pictures makes more imaginative teaching difficult and learning less interesting and informative than it could be.