

# **INSPECTION REPORT**

## **SANDHILLS COUNTY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Headington, Oxford

LEA area: Oxford

Unique reference number: 123027

Headteacher: Mr J Johnson

Reporting inspector: Mr J T Bishop  
12184

Dates of inspection: 26 – 28 June 2000

Inspection number: 190217

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior School
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Delbush Avenue Sandhills Headington Oxford
Postcode:	OX3 8EA
Telephone number:	01865 433000
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Chris Hicks
Date of previous inspection:	30 September 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
John Bishop	Registered inspector	Geography	What sort of school is it?
		History	How high are standards? a) The school's results and achievements
		Information technology	How well are pupils taught?
		Physical education	What should the school do to improve further?
Brian Sampson	Lay inspector	Equal opportunities	How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
			How well does the school care for its pupils?
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Gloria Hamilton-Peach	Team inspector	Science	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
		Art	
		Design and technology	
Brian Fletcher	Team inspector	Mathematics	How well is the school led and managed?
		Music	
		Religious education	
Peggy Waterston	Team inspector	English	N/A
		Under fives	
		Special educational needs	

The inspection contractor was:

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

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

This community primary school caters for pupils in the age range of 4 to 11 years. There are 204 pupils in the school who attend full time and in addition, there are 3 children who are not yet 5 and who attend only the afternoon sessions; the school is the same size as most primary schools. The proportion of pupils eligible for a free school meal is 8 per cent which is broadly average. Most pupils are from the white ethnic group. There are 38 per cent of pupils with special educational needs and this is above average; of these, 8 per cent have statements of special educational need and this is below average. There are five pupils who have English as an additional language which is higher than in most schools. The full range of ability is represented on intake, but assessments show that on entry to the reception class, the overall attainment of most children is just below expectation in language and literacy and in mathematics, although this varies from year to year. For the past 4 years, controversial plans to build a new school, financed by a new housing estate on part of the school site have negatively influenced the development of the school because of the long-running uncertainty of the school's future.

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

Many areas of the school's provision is satisfactory. Standards in the core subjects are broadly in line with the national average at both key stages but standards are low when compared to similar schools. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. The leadership and management of the school is satisfactory but educational direction is not always as clear as it might be, leading to some inconsistencies of provision from class to class. The school has generally maintained standards from the last inspection but the potential for raising standards amongst higher attaining pupils is not being fully exploited even though the unpublished national test results for 2000 support inspection findings that considerable improvement has been made this year. The school offers satisfactory value for money.

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

- Reading standards are a strength of the school.
- Teachers manage pupils well in this caring school.
- Pupils have good attitudes to school; they are tolerant and play well together.
- Most pupils behave well in lessons and there is an effective reward system for pupils who succeed in any activity.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good; the school promotes values of truthfulness and fairness and pupils respect the feelings and beliefs of others.
- The school has identified appropriate priorities for development including the further raising of standards.
- The quality of information offered to parents is good and the school's parent teacher association offers strong support.

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

- The attainments of the more able pupils are not as high as they could be in English, mathematics and science.
- Pupils have insufficient experience of science investigative work.
- The marking of pupils' work does not give them sufficient information of what it is they need to do to improve.
- There are weaknesses in the organisation of the curriculum for the under fives.
- The targets set for future improvement are lacking in challenge.
- There is insufficient monitoring of teaching and learning and governors are not effective in supporting special educational needs.
- The headteacher and subject co-ordinators have too little impact on school improvement.

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

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The last inspection was in 1996. Most of the key issues from that inspection have been addressed. The school development programme now clearly identifies the priorities and carefully links them to the raising of standards. The teaching staff are all fully involved in the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the school development plan. The senior management team has been extended to provide more experience and expertise; it meets too infrequently to have a strong influence on school strategies. The teaching of literacy and numeracy have been well monitored and are successfully reinforcing standards although co-ordinators of other subjects have few opportunities to do this. Standards in mathematics, English and science have fluctuated from year to year but have remained generally constant overall since 1996 with little improvement achieved until this present school year when there has been marked improvement in all three core subjects. Improvement since the last inspection has been generally satisfactory and with the measures the headteacher and staff are putting in place, the capacity for improvement is sound.

## 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	D	D	E	well above average    A above average        B Average                C below average        D well below average    E
Mathematics	C	C	D	D	
Science	C	E	E	E*	

Most of the five year olds in the current reception class enter school with achievements in language and literacy below what is normally expected. By the time they begin Year 1, many have reached the expected standards but some are disadvantaged because they attend school only in the afternoons and receive little experience of language, literacy and numeracy which is taught in the mornings.

By the age of seven, assessment results fluctuate. In 1998, writing and mathematics were well above national averages with reading in line. This declined in 1999 to being well below national averages in reading and mathematics and below in writing. By the age of eleven, standards in English and mathematics were below national averages and well below in science. There is, however, a significant number of pupils in each class who have special educational needs and these have considerable influence on the results. Inspection evidence indicates that standards in English, mathematics and science at both key stages are broadly in line with national averages and this view is supported by the recent national test results for 2000.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have good attitudes, are keen to come to school, concentrate well in most lessons and work co-operatively in small groups.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Almost all pupils behave well, respect property and generally follow the clear behaviour policy of the school.



Personal development and relationships	Personal development is good overall. Pupils respect each other as well as adults. Relationships throughout the school are good. Pupils respond well to the opportunities to take responsibility.
Attendance	Attendance is in line with the national average. The school has sound systems for dealing with non-attendance.

The school has a positive ethos with all adults in the school acting as good role models. Most pupils work willingly. No evidence was found during the inspection of bullying.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

*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.*

In 93 per cent of lessons, teaching is satisfactory or better. In 30 per cent it is good and in 7 per cent it is unsatisfactory. Pupils are willing to learn but do not always know what it is they need to do to improve. In the better lessons, objectives for learning are clear. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, behaviour control is weak. Sometimes teachers do not have sufficient assistance in the classroom for pupils who have special needs although support is good overall. Good work is often spoilt by unsatisfactory handwriting and presentational skills. The quality of teaching in English and mathematics is satisfactory but it is not always clear to pupils what it is they have to learn next.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad and relevant. Residential visits, educational trips and a good range of extra curricular activities provide practical experiences to extend the pupils' understanding of the wider world. The curriculum for the under fives lacks balance.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Work designed especially for them enables pupils with special educational needs to make satisfactory progress although, sometimes, pupils leave classes for extra support and miss the main focus of lessons.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Pupils who have English as an additional language settle well into the school and progress satisfactorily.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Pupils respect the values and feelings of others. Adults are good role models with pupils clearly knowing the difference between right and wrong. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to learn about their own and other cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school has clear child protection procedures including the monitoring and promoting of good behaviour. The school provides a safe environment.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Lines of communications between the headteacher and some parents are not as open as they should be because there are tensions relating to a dispute over the redevelopment of the school site. The headteacher supports teachers and pupils well. The subject co-ordinators know their subjects well but have insufficient time to monitor them effectively.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is well informed of the school's development but does not yet play a significant part in shaping the school's future or monitoring its progress.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has a general view of its work and has introduced detailed monitoring strategies but is not yet fully evaluating test and assessment results to identify areas in which improvement might be effected.
The strategic use of resources	Good use is made of staff, time, materials and the building. There are weaknesses in the use of the library and computers. The school applies the principles of best value satisfactorily.

The school is appropriately staffed with teachers and support assistants and this enables pupils to learn in a satisfactory manner. The school building is well cared for. The rambling nature of the buildings make outside supervision difficult. There are ample grounds containing an environmental area but uncertainty over the school's future has limited further development. The school has not yet developed a means of evaluating whether previous expenditure has been beneficial to learning.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The children like school</li> <li>• The teaching is good</li> <li>• The school is easy to approach</li> <li>• The children make good progress</li> <li>• The school expects children to work hard</li> <li>• The school is helping children to become mature and responsible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The behaviour of some pupils</li> <li>• Some parents would like more homework, others less</li> <li>• Clearer information on how children are progressing</li> <li>• School and parents working more closely together</li> <li>• Leadership and management of the school</li> <li>• A more interesting range of activities outside lessons.</li> </ul>

Only 24 per cent of the questionnaires sent out were returned. Relationships between the school and some parents have suffered because of differing stances as to whether a new school should be financed by the building of 62 houses on the school site. Some parents expressed concern at the non-availability of the headteacher before the beginning of the school day. There is a good range of extra curricular activities including residential visits. The inspection found that most pupils behaved well in and around the school but a very small number with behavioural special needs are too often unsupported in classrooms. Several parents work voluntarily in the school and the Parents' Association offers valuable financial support. There is a need for parents and the school to resolve their differences over planning issues and work more closely together for the future of the pupils. Annual reports to parents are well written. The governors' annual report is detailed and well presented but contains some minor omissions.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Children enter the reception class with a wide range of attainment. Initial assessments carried out over the last two years indicate a significant minority of children with low scores in English and mathematics on entry, with the general overall attainment level being just below that expected for the children's age. Most reception class children are acquiring a sound awareness of different forms of print and contribute well in discussions. Most recognise initial letter sounds but are less skilled in talking about books. Their counting skills are sound and they recognise simple addition. Those children who only attend school during the afternoon, are offered insufficient experience of language and literacy and mathematics and are unlikely to reach the standards generally expected for their age. For most children, attainment in all areas of learning is likely to be close to national expectations by the time they reach five.
2. At the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999, standards in English were well below those expected of seven year olds in reading and mathematics and below in writing. These results have fluctuated considerably. For example, in 1998, writing and mathematics were well above and broadly in line in reading. Over the past four years, trends over time have generally been below national average in reading and above in writing and above in mathematics. From the evidence of teacher assessments in science, pupils have achieved close to national expectation for pupils attaining level 2 and this is supported by the inspection evidence.
3. When considering the percentages of pupils achieving level 3 in reading, 27 per cent reached this level in 1999, which was close to the national average. In writing, 0 per cent achieved level 3, which was well below the national average. In mathematics, 17 per cent of pupils reached level 3 which was close to the national average. Results in 1999 compared unfavourably to schools with similar intakes in reading, writing and mathematics. Evidence gained during the inspection indicates that standards this year are broadly satisfactory and in line with national averages and this is supported by improved results in the 2000 national tests.
4. At the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999, standards in English for pupils reaching the expected level 4 was 68 per cent which was just below national average of 70 per cent. However, only 8 per cent reached level 5, which was well below the national average. In mathematics, 73 per cent of pupils reached level 4 which was 4 per cent above the national average but, again, only 8 per cent reached level 5 which was well below national average. The evidence of the inspection indicates that the standards of English and mathematics are broadly in line with expectations except that potentially higher attaining pupils are insufficiently challenged and too few reach the higher level. In Science at Key Stage 2, standards according to national assessment tests have been consistently below national averages but evidence from the inspection indicates that the decline in standards has been reversed. The unpublished national test results for 2000 supports this view although there remain weaknesses in investigative science.
5. Over the three years since the last inspection, standards in English and mathematics have remained below national averages but have followed the upward trend of nationally increased performance. This has not been so in science where standards have declined against national comparisons although this position has shown much improvement in 2000.
6. Trends over the last four years in all core subjects have established that standards are broadly in line with national figures. In 1999, standards in English and science were well below the standards achieved in schools where pupils come from similar backgrounds and were below in mathematics.
7. The school has set targets for the pupils at Key Stage 2 in English and mathematics in the national assessment tests for the next four years. These targets are insufficiently challenging and even if met, they will leave the school's standards below national averages.
8. In English, pupils at both key stages are making satisfactory progress in developing their

listening skills. They generally listen well to one another although in one class, a significant number of pupils have poor listening skills. Most pupils at Key Stage 1 understand the sounds of letters, recognise many regularly used words and willingly attempt new and unfamiliar words. At both key stages they show interest in their books and their reading is expressive, taking note of punctuation. Teachers have an effective understanding of the Literacy Hour and provide suitable opportunities for group and guided reading. The library occupies a corridor site and while it encourages pupils to enjoy and value books, pupils have insufficient access to it. At Key Stage 1, pupils are beginning to write at length, with the oldest pupils using punctuation effectively. At Key Stage 2, interesting writing is completed but pupils' handwriting and presentational skills are under-developed. Pupils also do not have sufficient experience in writing for a wide range of purposes.

9. Pupils at both key stages make sound progress in mathematics. Pupils at Key Stage 1 add and subtract to at least 20 but insufficiently use mental strategies to reinforce the effect of the Numeracy Hour. Most pupils benefit from appropriately challenging work but worksheets are excessively used; these often do not demand pupils' working to be shown and result in pupils being unsure of what they need to do to improve when answers are wrong.
10. Standards in science at Key Stage 1 are broadly in line with what is nationally expected according to inspection evidence and teachers' assessments. At the end of Key Stage 2, investigative skills are unsatisfactory, with the teacher, rather than the pupil, doing the experiments. Unsatisfactory investigative skills were a criticism in the last inspection report.
11. Pupils' attainment in information technology is generally in line with what is expected although standards should benefit from the anticipated increase in computers. There is no assessment strategy to make it clear to teachers and pupils what skills have been mastered and what it is necessary to learn next. In all other subjects, standards are satisfactory and this generally maintains the position at the time of the last inspection.

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

12. The vast majority of pupils in the school have good attitudes towards their learning. This compares well with the judgement made at the previous inspection. Generally, the pupils enjoy coming to school. There is a nucleus of very enthusiastic pupils who attend extra curricular activities such as the recorder group, the choir and the school council. Most pupils, within the school, show an encouraging interest in both their work and the various extra curricular activities provided by the school. This was very well illustrated on the Wednesday evening of the inspection, when a large group of pupils were obviously enjoying a competitive game of rounders. In another instance, during a Year 3 and 4 design and technology lesson, one boy, who had completed his pop-up card very quickly, said spontaneously to an inspector, "Look I have done mine as good as the teacher but faster!"
13. The behaviour of most pupils, both in lessons and around the school, is satisfactory although a small element of both boys and girls require firm class management from time to time. Generally, standards now compare well with the last inspection. A great majority of the pupils are very polite. They open doors ahead of each other and adults and often ask if you are lost. The school is a tidy place and there is no evidence of vandalism or graffiti. Most of the pupils are proud of their school and what it stands for.
14. The pupils have a good attitude towards bullying and there is no form of sexism or racism as was also the case at the last inspection. The school has had no exclusions within the last twelve months. The pupils have a good understanding of what they do and how it affects others.  
During a Year 5/6 discussion lesson on this very aspect, pupils were split into small groups to enact a scene from school life and to use their own interpretation. They were asked to play out how they would treat a new pupil in school. Every group portrayed sympathy with the newcomer and helped them overcome difficulties.

15. There is in the school an ethos of respect from pupils for the feelings, values and beliefs of others and this aspect matches the favourable remarks made at the last inspection. This was made most evident when a very small boy during a whole school assembly was offered a unique certificate. This was specifically for clearly explaining to other pupils his Islamic beliefs. It was also noted that the recipients had been enthralled by the knowledge gained. The school's very prominent Standards Tree in the hall is yet another good example of how pupils set themselves targets to improve their attitudes and behaviour.
16. The personal development of the pupils and also their relationships with others are both good. This aspect compares well with the school at its last inspection. The majority of the pupils get on very well together both at work and play. Several pupils, during the inspection, came up and introduced their special friend. The school has a small minority of children from other countries and they are all looked after by their contemporaries. Certain groups of pupils show positive initiative and have been given relevant responsibilities. The school has a very efficient and enthusiastic School Council, which comprises eleven pupils, taken from all classes. They are democratically elected by their classmates for one year. At a meeting attended during the inspection, one girl proudly admitted that she had just been re-elected for a second session. Meetings are efficiently chaired by the headteacher and notes taken by an elected secretary. Other older pupils act as 'buddies' in the playground, looking after younger pupils and in some cases teaching them playground games. Class volunteers put out resources before lessons and collect and deliver attendance registers, whilst some Year 6 pupils arrange equipment for assemblies.
17. Attendance at the school is satisfactory, as it was at the last inspection. The school's overall figures compare well with the national average. The school has no unexplained absence trends. The majority of the pupils come to school and into classes on time and most lessons commence promptly.
18. Overall, within the school, the pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are good and contribute significantly towards their learning.
19. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress when they are taught through well structured programmes such as additional literacy support and reading re-start. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils who are supported by primary helpers within the classroom make satisfactory gains in their learning although too much of the support assistants' time is spent working with children out of the classroom. Targets in individual education plans are sometimes too broad for teachers to set appropriate tasks or to assess progress accurately. The school has identified this as an area for improvement. Good use is made of baseline and other assessments to identify pupils who require additional support.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

### **Teaching**

20. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. It is satisfactory or better in 93 per cent of lessons, less than satisfactory in 7 per cent and 30 per cent of lessons are good. This is mirrored in the quality of pupils' learning, which is satisfactory overall.
21. The quality of teaching for children under five is satisfactory within the limits imposed by the school's organisation. It is satisfactory for those children who attend for the whole day but those who are only present during the afternoon receive an unbalanced curriculum and have little opportunity to develop early learning skills in language and literacy and mathematics. Children are encouraged to be independent and the purposeful atmosphere in the classroom promotes good learning habits for the children. There are inadequate reading, writing and number areas, which constrains children's access, imagination and skill development.
22. At both key stages, teachers have at least satisfactory subject knowledge in all subjects although there is some insecurity in information technology. Teachers have a thorough understanding of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. In their lesson plans, teachers generally identify what it is that pupils are to learn and planned activities are

appropriately matched to the intended learning objectives.

23. Most teachers ask questions in all subjects which help pupils to understand and extend their thinking. In a minority of lessons, as in mathematics, the over-use of published worksheets which do not require pupils to show their working, makes it difficult for teachers to understand pupils' thought processes so that they can help them improve. In other subjects, overuse of worksheets inhibits the development of presentational skills, restricting the use of ideas and initiative, making it more difficult for higher attainers to develop their thinking further. In both key stages, teachers explain ideas clearly to pupils so that they can understand and learn. Teachers know their pupils well and generally provide activities which are well matched to their learning needs. In the best lessons pupils are well challenged and teachers use resources well to make learning interesting.
24. Insufficiently high expectations by some teachers are reflected in pupils' poor presentational skills and there is a lack of challenge for higher attaining pupils. The setting of pupils in mathematics lessons causes difficulties for the self-esteem of older pupils working with much younger pupils, creating the possibility of them losing confidence and further under-achieving.
25. Generally, teachers manage pupils well. They expect pupils to behave correctly and on the occasions when a minority of pupils mis-behave, teachers are quick to react and deal appropriately with any unacceptable behaviour. On very few occasions pupils who have behavioural difficulties do not receive the necessary support in the classroom to enable the rest of the class to work in a peaceful and purposeful atmosphere.
26. The pace of most lessons is sound but sometimes slows down for those pupils who are working independently or in groups. Teachers end lessons with effective periods of reflection which consolidate pupils' learning. Resources are generally sufficient in quality and quantity but information technology is insufficiently used in some classes to fully promote learning across the curriculum.
27. Teachers listen carefully to pupils and make informal assessments of their learning. Praise is well used to encourage pupils. Written work is not always marked in such a way that pupils know and understand what it is they must learn next. There is good marking practice in some classes but there is no marking policy to share this good practice with all teachers.
28. Homework is used effectively to reinforce what is learnt in school although the approach to homework is not always consistent from class to class. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Support staff help to provide good learning opportunities for these pupils. They are particularly effective when providing support to pupils in small groups using the well structured additional literacy support programme or reading re-start. These sharply focused activities enable pupils to make good progress. Support staff are experienced, well trained, and know the pupils well. Pupils in withdrawal groups are willing to learn and try hard but they often miss vital parts of lessons and are unsure of what to do next when they return to class. Learning support assistants also help small groups of pupils with special needs in classroom activities. Progress is satisfactory when tasks are appropriate. Where teachers' planning fails to take account of the different levels of ability within the class, the set activities can be too difficult for special needs pupils and they make insufficient progress. Sometimes all pupils in the class are given the same task with the result that it is too difficult for some and not sufficiently challenging for others.
29. The last inspection report had a key issue to develop the monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning to ensure the spread of good practice to all classes. Satisfactory progress in this requirement has been made in literacy and numeracy. In other subjects, monitoring has been limited mainly to teachers' planning and, in general, co-ordinators have insufficient time available to them to further monitor their subjects.

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

30. The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets the needs of all pupils in both key stages

including those identified as having special educational needs. All subjects of the National Curriculum are taught and religious education is taught in accordance with the locally Agreed Syllabus. The school has maintained the broad curriculum that was identified in the previous inspection. However, the curriculum for children under five does not fully address their needs in literacy or in mathematics. Children under five attend school part-time in the afternoons and consequently miss the lessons in literacy and numeracy that take place in the mornings.

31. The curriculum for both key stages is effectively planned in a two-year programme of topics or study-units for each subject. The overall planning is designed to ensure that pupils make steady progress and are prepared for the next stage of their education. Where topics allow, there are close links between subjects and elsewhere subjects are taught separately. This curriculum is now being updated in preparation for the new curriculum arrangements required next term.
32. There are suitable policies for all subjects and relevant schemes of work are either in place or in the process of being drafted from the yearly planning schedule. The plans for each term are good but are not always effectively translated into good quality lesson plans. For instance, there is insufficient detail in current lesson plans to identify more rigorously the specific learning needs of the more able.
33. Suitable emphasis is placed on the teaching of English and mathematics and these subjects are allocated the most time. Literacy and numeracy lessons are taught each morning. Skills in these subjects are satisfactorily planned according to the respective National Strategies for each subject.
34. A wide range of extra-curricular activities including sport greatly enhances learning opportunities for pupils. Staff arrange many visits to museums, galleries and places of interest to link with their topic work in history, geography, science and art. Teachers take every opportunity to invite people from the community into school to talk to pupils about their experiences and interests and to share their talents. This provides a good contribution to pupils' learning. The school's links with other schools and colleges also provides good opportunities and has a positive impact on pupils' learning.
35. Sex education is effectively taught as part of the science curriculum. The school makes satisfactory provision for pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE) through the curriculum in PHSE lessons and also informally in discussion with staff. There is an effective programme planned for the teaching of awareness and misuse of drugs.
36. The school's provision for pupils' personal development and also their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. Assemblies and acts of collective worship take place daily and meet statutory requirements. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is enhanced through opportunities to reflect upon themselves and their world in acts of collective worship and also through the curriculum especially in art, poetry and music.
37. Pupils' moral development is well catered for by the good example set by teachers and its strong promotion in assemblies. Pupils know the difference between right and wrong and respond positively to the school's rules for behaviour. Many opportunities are provided for pupils' good social development as they work together in small groups and as they are encouraged to think of others in the community. Pupils' cultural development is good. It is enhanced by the many opportunities the school provides for visits to museums, art galleries, concerts and theatres. Their understanding of other cultures is increased through the very good Comenius Project that links them with schools in Portugal, Italy and Holland. It is also enhanced through subjects such as art, music and religious education and information technology is used to present music from other cultures; a recent example of this is music from the Caribbean.
38. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory across the school and the school meets statutory requirements. The pupils have full access and entitlement to the National Curriculum and are fully integrated in classes. Where withdrawal from class takes place, the content of the lessons is appropriately linked to the pupils' individual needs. Learning support is adequate but pupils' individual learning plans are not always sufficiently

sharply focused to enable teaching to build systematically on pupils' existing knowledge and understanding. In general, targets within individual education plans are not specific enough and teachers do not take sufficient account of them in their lesson planning.

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

39. The school has good child protection procedures. These procedures are a strength of the school. They are an improvement on the previous inspection when they were described as 'well secured and appropriate.' The school has a well trained and experienced 'named person'. The head teacher is also appropriately trained. They have ensured that all staff within the school have received their own relevant training. The school has adopted the Local Education Authority's recommended policy. Relevant links with the latter are very good and all staff are made aware of the right person(s) to contact. The school maintains detailed incident files, which are securely kept to ensure confidentiality.
40. There are good procedures in the school for ensuring the welfare of pupils and these compare well with the previous inspection. The school has a very detailed health and safety policy and an appropriately well trained named person. However, the school does not, at present, possess an overall coherent risk assessment document. The school has already been made aware of this deficiency and also of a small number of health and safety problems noted during the inspection. Procedures for recording and reporting accidents, medicine procedures and fire exercises are good. All pupils with specific allergies are well known to staff. The school has well trained first aid personnel. All fire-fighting, portable electrical and physical education equipment are regularly tested, either by an outside contractor or relevantly trained school staff. All escape routes from the school are accessible and well marked. The school makes very good use of outside professional people. The police visit the school regularly to talk to the pupils about 'Stranger Danger', road and site safety and criminal damage. The fire brigade also make regular visits to the school. A drugs education programme has been developed by the school in partnership with neighbouring schools, and is taught to all older pupils every Spring term. All meals are cooked, served and consumed on the premises under hygienic conditions.
41. The school's procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good and compare satisfactorily with the previous inspection. All class registers are appropriately marked in accordance with current procedures and returned to the school office for checking. Parents are well aware of their relevant responsibilities and the school maintains a clear record of absence letters. The school has a very effective lateness routine and the educational welfare officer is well used in supporting the school.
42. Procedures for monitoring and promoting positive behaviour are good and are an improvement upon the already satisfactory procedures noted at the last inspection. The school has a very detailed behaviour policy offering clear rewards and sanctions; it uses this well. Each class has its rules of which all pupils are well aware. On the rare occasions where bullying has occurred, the school has set up a contract which all participants have to sign and agree to keep. Parents are advised and the pupils involved are observed carefully. The school now has made full use of home/school agreements.
43. The school's procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress and monitoring and supporting academic progress are both sound. They compare with the judgements made at the last inspection. Pupils are well assessed when they first enter the school and regularly receive further termly assessment in English, mathematics and science. Each pupil has an independent profile in which they keep examples of moderated work. From Year 2, all pupils take the national assessment tests in core subjects including voluntary ones in years 3, 4 and 5 and also a standardised reading test. The school keeps detailed records on every pupil and pupils' achievements are well tracked. However, the school does not always use the comprehensive assessment information that it gathers to guide curricular planning. This can only be described as satisfactory in its present form and its impact has not greatly changed since the previous inspection. The school still uses home/school reading records although these are not always fully completed by parents or teachers. In addition, as commented on at the last inspection, the marking of pupils' work is still inconsistent throughout the school. Individual pupils' academic reports are well laid out and informative.



44. The procedures for monitoring and supporting personal development of the pupils is also good. The school has a detailed personal, social, health, education policy and uses it well. This will be further enhanced in September 2000 when the school is introducing teacher training on family nurturing. The recording of pupils' personal development is well detailed in their personal files and is part of the annual reports sent home to parents.
45. The school identifies pupils with special educational needs effectively and organises appropriate support. The special needs register is regularly reviewed and updated. Provision for pupils with statements of learning need is in place. The targets in pupils' individual education plans identify pupils' specific needs but are sometimes too broad for the next steps in learning to be clear and measurable. Ongoing assessment of the progress of pupils involved in specific learning programmes enables pupils to make satisfactory progress.
46. Overall the school takes good care of its pupils and this has a beneficial effect on their learning.

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

47. Parents' views of the school, as a whole, are satisfactory. Evidence from the pre-inspection meeting and returned questionnaires shows that a majority of parents really do appreciate the way that the school educates and looks after their children. They believe that the school to be at least good. They consider that their children like the school and receive good teaching from teachers who expect their children to work hard and become mature and responsible adults. This same majority, maintain that they are comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems. However, a significant minority of parents are concerned about their child receiving the right amount of homework and not being informed about how their child is getting on at school. The inspection findings would agree that purposeful homework is set but inconsistently throughout the school. However, the second point on pupil progress cannot be substantiated by inspection. The school does provide good information on pupils' progress. Some parents also queried whether the school was well led and managed and whether it worked closely with parents. It is felt that some parental views of the school have become somewhat influenced by the current debate concerning the building of a new school and that tensions have developed between the headteacher and a group of parents and this has adversely affected relationships.
48. Overall, the effectiveness of the school's links with its parents is satisfactory. The quality of the information provided for parents, particularly about pupils' progress is good. All parents receive an up-dated prospectus and an annual governors' report. Both of these documents currently have some statutory omissions of which the school is now aware. The annual pupils' academic reports to parents are good. They contain all necessary information to parents. There are regular newsletters home and most parents, in co-operation with their children, have now signed a home/school agreement. The school uses home/school reading diaries which allow a good two way communication although these are under used. Parents have easy access to teachers at any time and there are more formal, 'meet the teacher' evenings every term and specific class ones in September. Sensitive arrangement are made for parents and children first starting school and also for those parents whose children are transferring to secondary education.
49. The impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school is good. This compares with the last report where parents were said to be very supportive of the life and work of the school. The contribution of parents to children's learning is at least satisfactory. Several parents come into school and help with the pupils' work. During the inspection, three parents came in to organise the school library, as they do every week. Another small group of parents help with the internet. Others help with sporting events and trips out. Recently parents and staff combined to help produce a Millenium Tapestry. At Christmas time, many parents become involved in designing and making costumes for the school pantomime. The majority of parents with children having special educational needs are involved with their children's individual education plans. The school appreciates its energetic and well-focused Parent Teachers

Association, which raises substantial funding for the school.

50. The school keeps parents well informed about procedures for the identification of and provision for, pupils with special educational needs through the school's prospectus and the annual governors' report to parents. Parents receive early notification of their children's needs and are kept fully informed. Regular meetings are held to ensure that parents are kept aware of all aspects of their children's learning and are encouraged to be fully involved in their learning.
51. Generally, the school works satisfactorily in partnership with its parents and this promotes satisfactory standards and quality in the pupils' learning.

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

52. On a day-to-day basis the school is soundly led and managed. All staff work hard to ensure that the school meets its basic aims of providing an enriching environment for teaching and learning and of creating a community where everyone feels equally valued. Most pupils are happy and content. They enjoy learning and are on good terms with their teachers. In recent years, the long-term vision for the school's development has been obscured by a preoccupation with the debate concerning the redevelopment of the area. This has caused some tension between the headteacher, the governing body and the parents and has had an adverse effect on relationships. Lines of communication are not as open as they should be and this has led to some misunderstandings. Although the headteacher is generally accessible to the staff, parents and pupils, he is not always available before the beginning of the school day to discuss their concerns. During the day he is available and acts promptly and sympathetically in support of the teachers and pupils.
53. The school has made satisfactory progress in responding to the key issues for management set out in the previous inspection report. The senior management team (SMT) has been enlarged and now provides more experience and expertise representing whole school interests. However, management roles still lack clear definition and the SMT does not meet often enough to ensure an integrated planning approach to the school's development. Consequently, for example, systems for behaviour management do not sufficiently consider the role of the learning support assistants which sometimes have the effect of isolating the teacher in the classroom. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning in mathematics provides a good model for the whole school but is not yet general practice except in literacy and numeracy. Subject co-ordinators are not given time to monitor colleagues' work directly and consequently there is too little sharing of good practice. Weaknesses in teaching and learning are not corporately addressed.
54. Since the previous inspection, the school development plan has been comprehensively extended. The headline priorities for development are clearly set out and are appropriate to the present needs of the school. Governors and staff have been involved in the preparation of the plan and costs are shown against the indicative budget. It is intended that the plan should be regularly reviewed and, where necessary, modified to accommodate changes as they occur. The complex detail of the present plan will make monitoring unnecessarily difficult. The process for setting and subsequently monitoring the budget is satisfactory. Alternatives are considered when allocating funds based on the priorities of the development plan and the governing body questions decisions appropriately before agreement is reached. Best value is sought when

deciding how funds will be spent. Routine financial controls and school administration are efficient and effective although the appointment of a school bursar for only 3 hours a week does little to ease the workload on the school secretary.

55. The governing body satisfactorily supports the school and its teachers. It has two major committees, management and curriculum, which meet regularly to discuss present plans. The governing body is kept well informed of the school's development by the headteacher but does not yet play a significant part in shaping the school's future and has not yet developed a means of evaluating whether expenditure has been beneficial to the learning process. The chair of the

governing body is a regular visitor to the school and is aware of the school's strengths and weaknesses. He is sensitive to the present debate about the development of the local area and sensitively mediates alternative views. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties although there are minor omissions in the annual report to parents, more importantly there is no governor with responsibility for special educational needs.

56. The school's strategy for performance management is good. All teachers have an annual appraisal interview with the headteacher and deputy at which progress is reviewed and developmental targets are set. Training needs are established and included in the school development plan. The results of pupils' statutory tests are carefully analysed so that rational decisions about future provision can be made. As a direct result of this procedure, setting in mathematics was introduced throughout the school. Gender differences in performance are properly addressed. Based on this information, targets are set for pupil performance in English and mathematics and progress towards their achievement is monitored, particularly well in mathematics. The management of special educational needs is good. The co-ordinator ensures that school routines meet the recommendations of the national code of practice. She liaises well with other teachers and with the learning support assistants to achieve a consistency of policy and approach. Increasingly effective use of information technology is improving and refining the school's monitoring systems and promoting better levels of support.
57. The school is fully staffed with appropriately qualified teachers who offer a good blend of youth and experience. There is a satisfactory range of subject qualifications and expertise across the curriculum. Learning support assistants provide valuable support in the classroom and work closely with the class teacher. An experienced teacher provides good support for the newly qualified teacher. Visiting teachers of music extend the learning opportunities for pupils with musical talents. All who work at the school do so in the best interests of the pupils.
58. The accommodation is adequate and is set in spacious grounds, which are well maintained. All areas in the school are bright and stimulating and impact positively upon the quality of learning. Care is needed to negotiate the undulating playground, which is in need of renovation and some areas of the school, for example, the play area outside the reception class, are not as tidy as they might be. Teachers do well to overcome the inadequacies of the accommodation; for example, the library is accommodated in the main corridor which does not provide an appropriately peaceful 'library' atmosphere.
59. Overall, the quality and quantity of learning resources are good, except for the under-fives where there is too little to stimulate early development and in information technology where there is a shortage of up-to-date computers, although this is soon to be rectified. Resources are well used and well maintained, except in English where some books are the worse for wear and require replacement.

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

60. The governing body should include the following specific matters as key issues in its post-inspection action plan.

### **Further raise standards of attainment in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, particularly for higher attaining pupils by –**

#### **In English**

- Providing more opportunities for pupils to write for a wider range of purposes.
- Identifying and planning to teach the knowledge and skills that will encourage pupils to attain the higher levels at the ages of seven and eleven.

**(See paragraphs 2,3,4,8,75,77.)**

#### **In Mathematics**

- Providing opportunities for pupils to explain their thinking and apply their knowledge and skills to the solutions of problems.
- Matching work more appropriately to the needs of higher attaining pupils.

**(See paragraphs 4,9,32,84,87.)**

#### **In Science**

- Setting clearer objectives for pupils' learning in teachers' planning so there is progression in the skills knowledge and understanding they are expected to acquire.
- Ensuring all pupils have enough time to experience practical activities so they improve their investigative skills.

**(See paragraphs 10,91,92.)**

### **Improve the quality of education for under fives by:**

- Reviewing the curriculum experiences of children aged under five in the reception class so that they experience a balanced provision.

**(See paragraphs 1,21,61,62.)**

### **Improve the quality of leadership and management by:**

- Increasing the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning and ensuring that the good practice identified is shared amongst all teachers.
- Ensuring that governors are aware of their responsibilities in the area of special educational needs.

**(See paragraphs 27,29,54,56,77.)**

### **Improve the quality of teaching and learning by:**

- Marking work in such a way that pupils understand what it is they need to do next to improve.
- Increasing the use of information technology in supporting subjects across the curriculum.
- Improving the handwriting and presentational skills of pupils.
- Raising teachers' expectations of what pupils might achieve.

**(See paragraphs 2,7,8,24,28,60,71,76,77,86,92,113.)**

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	43
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	33

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	0	33	60	7	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	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	204
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	15

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	76

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	5

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	11

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.4
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	1999	18	12	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	9	13	14
	Girls	11	11	11
	Total	20	24	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	67 (57)	80 (100)	83 (100)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	13	14
	Girls	11	11	11
	Total	24	24	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (86)	80 (88)	83 (100)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	1999	13	24	37

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	11	9
	Girls	17	16	14
	Total	25	27	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	68 (54)	73 (54)	62 (48)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	2	7	7
	Girls	15	14	15
	Total	17	21	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	46 (51)	57 (60)	59 (66)
	National	68 (63)	69 (64)	75 (69)

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

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

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	3
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	6
Indian	2
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	195
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.*

There were no exclusions

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

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26.0
Average class size	29.7

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

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	85

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1999
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	£
Total income	378173
Total expenditure	386335
Expenditure per pupil	1922
Balance brought forward from previous year	5205
Balance carried forward to next year	-2957

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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	290
Number of questionnaires returned	71

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

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	39	48	11	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	31	52	15	1	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	17	54	17	4	8
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	14	56	27	3	0
The teaching is good.	31	51	7	4	7
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	17	52	21	7	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	37	51	10	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	34	62	3	1	0
The school works closely with parents.	15	52	28	1	3
The school is well led and managed.	13	44	30	11	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	20	63	13	1	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	8	54	23	6	10



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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

61. At the time of the inspection there were three children under five years old in the reception/Year 1 class. Most children start school part time in the term during which they are five and attend full time in the term after their fifth birthday. A significant proportion of children are not admitted until they reach compulsory school age and go straight into a Year 1 class in September. At the time of the inspection there were eleven children attending full time, three attending part time and another nine expected in September. Part time children come to school on four afternoons a week and all day on Fridays. Children under five sometimes attend irregularly. Provision for children under five is unsatisfactory because literacy and numeracy are taught in the mornings and they are only present on one morning a week. Initial assessments are carried out within a month of entry to the school whether pupils enter full time or part time. The results for the last two years indicate considerable differences in the attainment of pupils on entry and between cohorts but in general, they are just below what might be expected for children of this age. Most children are likely to meet expected learning outcomes by the age of five. Good records are kept of children's progress and achievements, with assessments being made on an ongoing basis. It is not possible to make a judgement on improvement as no reference was made to children in the foundation stage in the last inspection report.
62. The quality of teaching of the class is satisfactory overall. Children are introduced into the routines and expectations of the school in a warm and sensitive manner. The teacher and learning support assistant work well together and generally provide experiences and activities which are appropriate for children in the foundation stage. However, although the whole class is taught together while activities are introduced, reception pupils spend much of their time with a learning support assistant who lacks the experience and training to take the learning of these young children forward. Provision for children in the foundation stage is not, therefore, always satisfactory. Outline plans indicate that lessons for reception children take the accepted learning areas into account. However, the plans have insufficiently clear lesson objectives and lack the detail to ensure that curriculum coverage over time is well balanced. Children under five follow the same curriculum as reception pupils during the time in which they are in school but they are rarely present for literacy or numeracy lessons which are taught in the mornings. The school involves parents in their children's learning from an early stage by regularly sending reading books home to share and by encouraging them to keep good quality, constructive records of their child's reading development through the home/ school record.
63. The inside accommodation for the reception/Year 1 class is spacious but much of it is split up into small sections which make supervision difficult. A large carpet area forms the base for whole class teaching. This space contains attractive displays and includes a good selection of books. The art area is spacious and well stocked with materials and equipment. Resources for mathematics, early reading activities and role play are out of date and inadequate, with the result that younger pupils in particular, have insufficient opportunities to extend their speaking and listening skills and to develop visual discrimination. The lack of appropriate resources also means that the range of group activities is very restricted. During the inspection, the paved area of the outside courtyard was seen being used for sand and water play and for a group lesson on initial letter sounds. The recent addition of an attractive garden enhances the area and could contribute to children's learning in the future. However, the courtyard is not secure although plans are in place to rectify this, nor is it large enough for wheeled toys and climbing apparatus to be used; this places restrictions on opportunities for physical development.

#### **Personal and social development**

64. The personal and social development of most children meets expectations by the time they are five. Children have good relationships within the classroom with their peers and with adults. They listen to instructions and to each other and co-operate well, for example when they are working in groups around the art tables. Children's concentration is satisfactory and they treat

property appropriately. Opportunities for role play are rare and this limits children in the development of their social skills.

### **Language and literacy**

65. Children who attend school full time meet the expected standard in language and literacy and some have above average speaking skills. They listen attentively, enjoying rhymes and books. Many children recognise a good range of words and are beginning to recognise letters of the alphabet by shape and sound. They know that words and pictures carry meaning and are starting to convey their understanding of this by using pictures, letters and words which they write with growing control of pencils and crayons.

### **Mathematics**

66. Progress in mathematics is sound for those attending full time. Children recognise and use numbers to ten and are familiar with larger numbers, for example when the number of children is counted when the register is taken. They sort and count everyday objects, learn number rhymes and songs and are beginning to develop a mathematical vocabulary.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

67. Children are provided with a range of experiences and this helps them make sound progress to meet the expected standards. The children have been learning about where animals and insects live and they understand the life cycle of the butterfly. They understand that some animals live in the sea, some under the ground and some stay on the ground. When making a model caterpillar, children begin to select appropriate materials for the purpose and to use the skills of cutting and joining. Children become familiar with the computer and are learning the appropriate terminology. Standards are satisfactory.

### **Physical development**

68. Children reach the standards expected by the time they are five. They handle tools such as scissors, pencils, pastels and the computer competently and are able to mould malleable materials into caterpillar and butterfly shapes. They move confidently around the classroom and the playground, showing an awareness of space and of others. At present there is no secure play area or opportunities for children to use large equipment or wheeled toys. In an educational dance lesson, children used stretching, twisting, and pulling movements and a variety of methods to move round the hall, including slithering, sliding and jumping. They respond well to instructions.

### **Creative development**

69. Children's creative development is satisfactory although they have too few opportunities to use their imagination in role play. Children sing tunefully in assemblies and enjoy responding to music. They make creative movements in response to taped instructions in a dance lesson. During an art lesson children explored mixing two colours in order to make a third, working with care in pastels and paints. When colouring pictures of animals and insects for their topic the children often use appropriate colours and are careful not to colour outside the lines. The expected standards are met.

## **ENGLISH**

70. In 1999, at the end of Key Stage 1, the percentage of pupils achieving the average standard, Level 2, was well below national averages in reading and below in writing. Standards in both reading and writing were well below those in similar schools. The results in 2000 indicate that standards in both reading and writing have improved. Standards in English in 1999, at the end of Key Stage 2, were 2 per cent below the standards achieved nationally; 68 per cent of the school's pupils achieved Level 4 which is the average standard, compared with 70 per cent in the country as a whole. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher level, Level 5, was well below national averages. Standards in English were well below those of similar schools.

Nationally, the trend over the last four years has been a gradual improvement in English standards by the end of Key Stage 2. The fluctuations in the size of the school's year groups, and variations in the average attainment of pupils on entry to the school, make detailed comparisons unreliable. However, when considered in conjunction with inspection evidence, the indications are that standards are generally sound. There are no significant differences in the results of boys and girls in either key stage. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans when the targets are well focused and when additional support is given by specialist staff. Progress slows when pupils are required to work on their own or in unsupported groups. Pupils who have English as an additional language settle well into the school and progress satisfactorily.

71. The last inspection found that standards of work in English were sound overall. Standards have been maintained. The school's adoption of the National Literacy Strategy has, to some extent, addressed the identified need to develop a scheme of work to secure effective progression. However, the weaknesses in handwriting and presentation have not been dealt with and the range of purposes for which pupils write has narrowed.
72. Inspection evidence indicates that standards of attainment throughout the school are broadly in line with national averages. The school exceeded its target of 62 per cent of pupils achieving Level 4 and above in the year 2000 according to recently received results. The school has adopted the National Literacy Strategy as the basis for its curriculum for English. This is having a positive impact on the standards of reading, particularly in Key Stage 1. However, the development of writing is rather limited in both key stages and there are too few opportunities for pupils to write at any length. The detailed guidance in the Literacy Framework is used to inform curriculum planning but there is considerable variation between classes in both medium and short term planning. There is no common approach by the school to evaluate and modify current practice in order to ensure consistency, coherence and balance in its approach to the teaching of English. Reading is well developed throughout the school but the raising of standards is not furthered by inconsistent approaches to group and guided reading and with insufficient time available for writing.
73. In both key stages, pupils listen attentively to their teachers and to the comments of their peers. Some teachers use good questioning skills to enable pupils to develop their answers but in some lessons pupils have little opportunity to do more than give brief responses. When they have the chance, pupils are keen to contribute their ideas. Pupils were seen co-operating well in a Key Stage 2 design and technology lesson but pupils have too few opportunities to work collaboratively. This restricts the development of speaking and listening skills. Most pupils' skills are similar to those expected for their age but a significant minority of pupils are very articulate and have skills above what is expected nationally.
74. Teachers place an appropriate emphasis on reading development in both key stages and, as a result, many pupils become competent readers. In Key Stage 1, shared reading sessions in the Literacy Hour are having a positive impact on standards and phonic awareness is appropriately developed. Texts are well chosen for the ability of the pupils, who generally show a keen interest. Older pupils are able to discuss what they have read, express preferences about authors and compare one book with another. They read widely for pleasure and for information. Throughout the school, pupils show enthusiasm for reading and pupils of all ages make use of the local library to extend their experiences further. The school is fortunate to have a number of volunteers willing to run the school library and to listen to reading; they make a significant contribution to pupils' learning. Home/school reading records are not as well used as they might be and have a tendency to be mislaid. Pupils benefit when teachers and parents are able to exchange information about their progress. Standards in reading at the end of each key stage are close to those expected nationally, with a significant proportion of pupils achieving above average levels in the national tests at the end of both key stages.
75. Pupils' writing skills and the range of purposes for which they write are not being developed to the extent that the National Curriculum programmes of study for both key stages recommend. Occasionally, extended writing is included in other subject areas but pupils' experiences vary from class to class and year to year. In both key stages, standards in writing are below those expected nationally. This is because pupils have insufficient time and opportunity to write at length. At the upper end of Key Stage 2, pupils have experience of writing for a variety of purposes. In a Year 5/6 class, for example, pupils compared two books, identifying similarities

and differences in the two texts and considering the strengths and weakness of the narrative. Persuasive writing has been a focus for older pupils and they have developed arguments for and against foxhunting, vivisection and a new school. They have also written poems using the Haiku and Kennings format. Pupils do not often have the opportunity to focus on particular aspects of writing, for example, letter writing, for a sustained period in order to consolidate their learning and develop their skills further. Worksheets are widely used in both key stages, particularly with the younger pupils. This means that they have few opportunities to set out their work neatly.

76. Standards of handwriting and presentation are below average and by the end of Key Stage 2 many pupils are still printing. There are a variety of writing implements in use. There is no systematic teaching of handwriting, nor is there a school handwriting policy to support teachers. Pupils' attitudes to learning are generally sound but they take insufficient pride in their written work. As a result, standards are below what is expected. Pupils learn spellings regularly at home and phonics, spelling and vocabulary are often taught during the Literacy Hour; as a result, standards in spelling are improving. However, planning for the development of spelling and phonics requires greater consistency. .
77. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in both key stages and it is sometimes good. In the best lessons, teachers use good questioning skills to help pupils develop ideas and they ensure that all pupils are actively involved in the lesson. They set tasks matched to pupils' attainment, share lesson objectives with pupils and sum up at the end of lessons to assess whether objectives have been met. This good practice is insufficiently shared. Sharing a text with the whole class is often used effectively, especially when the text is accessible to all and the teacher uses good questioning to draw pupils of all abilities into the lesson. However, when pupils are working independently or in groups, they are often given the same task, which may be too easy for some pupils and too difficult for others. More differentiation of tasks is required so that all levels of ability are taught appropriately. The range of ability within each class is wide and the needs of the more able pupils and those with special educational needs, are not always met. Teachers' planning is not sufficiently detailed and school specific to further raise standards by indicating clear objectives for lessons so that it is possible to use informal assessment to ascertain whether pupils have learned what was intended. In some classes, marking is carefully done and includes supportive comments as well as developmental points to take pupils' learning forward. There is no agreed whole school marking policy to ensure all pupils benefit from this good practice.
78. The school has good assessment procedures. Pupils' written work is assessed half termly, standardized reading tests are administered annually from Year 2 onwards and pupils complete the optional standard assessment tests in Years 3,4 and 5. This information is used to track individual progress and to identify and monitor the progress of pupils with special educational needs. It is not well used to inform curriculum planning. This data enables the school to target pupils in booster classes, so that more pupils are able to achieve level 4 at the end of Key Stage 2 and this has proved to be very successful according to the unpublished national test results for 2000 which show a marked improvement. Support for pupils with special educational needs is good where the school provides a well structured programme such as reading re-start, phonological awareness training or additional literacy support. The learning support assistants are committed, know the pupils well and make a positive contribution to pupils' learning. Support within the classroom is good when a learning support assistant is available but teachers do not always provide appropriate tasks to address the needs of lower ability pupils. The amount of withdrawal taking place is sometimes disruptive of the main lesson and means pupils return to class having missed a significant part of the lesson and are unsure how to become involved. The balance of withdrawal and in-class support often leaves pupils unsupported in the classroom, which is particularly important when there are pupils with behavioural special needs.
79. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has worked hard to ensure that appropriate and adequate resources are available for use in the Literacy Hour. The school's stock of books for independent reading and for research is showing signs of wear. Attractive book areas are not in evidence in some classes although space is adequate. The school library is awkwardly located in the main corridor and pupils' research and retrieval skills are restricted by the lack of access to the library other than when their class is timetabled to change books midweek. Facilities for the development of independent learning are therefore inadequate in this respect. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning and has had opportunities to

monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the implementation of the Literacy Strategy. Results of the statutory tests at the end of Key Stage 2 are analysed and are beginning to be used to inform curriculum planning. Overall the Literacy Strategy is helping to improve standards in English but some aspects of current planning and practice do not ensure continuity and progression throughout the school. Pupils use their literacy skills to produce interesting work in other subjects such as history and geography.

## MATHEMATICS

80. The results of the National Curriculum tests for seven year olds taken in 1999 at the end of Key Stage 1, show that the proportion of pupils who attained the national target of Level 2 was below the national average and that the proportion that attained the higher Level 3 standard was close to the national average. When compared with the results of schools with similar intakes, pupils' attainment in mathematics in 1999 was well below average. Over the last three years the trend in results has fluctuated from well *above* to well *below* the national averages. The unpublished results for 2000 show that the downward trend, apparent in 1999, has been reversed and that a good proportion of pupils have attained the higher grade. The inspection findings confirm the unpublished results. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is broadly in line with the national standard.
81. The results of the National tests for eleven year olds taken in 1999 at the end of Key Stage 2, show that the proportion of pupils who attained the national target of Level 4 was close to the national average and that the proportion that attained the higher Level 5 standard was well below the national average. When compared with the results of similar schools, pupils' attainment was below average. The test results of the last four years have followed the national trend although remaining slightly below the national standard. The unpublished National test results for 2000 show a marked improvement in attainment, particularly in the proportion of pupils obtaining the higher grade. The inspection findings confirm these results. Attainment is generally in line with the national standard.
82. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils know how to add and subtract simple numbers although they have too little opportunity to use this in simple problem solving exercises. Pupils' knowledge and recall of the multiplication tables is not always secure and this leads to inaccuracies in oral and written work. Pupils practise their understanding of place value using a number line but not all are confident in three digit numbers. They learn how to round up numbers to the nearest ten or hundred. Pupils apply their knowledge of number to counting out coins to a given amount and by telling the time to the nearest quarter-hour. They know about simple regular shapes and their properties, correctly counting edges, faces and sides. Some pupils are able to name the shape from its description. Pupils measure distances by using non-standard units such as the hand span and compare the result with a measurement in centimetres. Pupils are beginning to use the language of mathematics and apply it to familiar objects. For example, they know that the table top is a rectangle and a sugar lump is a cube.
83. Pupils' knowledge of multiplication tables is more secure in Key Stage 2 and some pupils are able to recall and apply number facts to simple problem solving. Pupils understand factors and multiples. They understand simple fractions and, for example, correctly shade  $\frac{7}{8}$  of a circle. They estimate and round up numbers. Many pupils are able to measure accurately and some have confidence in their use of metric units. Pupils find the pattern in a set of numbers and correctly predict the next in the sequence. A group of senior pupils use mirrors to check and draw the symmetry of plane shapes and some demonstrate a capacity to think through a problem. An inspection of workbooks shows that older pupils know how to use co-ordinates to draw shapes and find area and perimeter by counting and calculation. Pupils know about probability and games of chance and some are able to assess the chance of winning the National Lottery! Other pupils collect information of the colours pupils like best and illustrate their findings on pie charts and bar graphs.
84. Pupils make sound progress overall. Progress is enhanced by daily practice in mental calculation and the revision of number facts. Sometimes, pupils are asked to explain their thinking and in so doing confirm their learning. Pupils with special educational needs are given satisfactory support to meet their targets. Lack of a learning support assistance in some

classes means that these pupils are not always able to get support when they most need it. High attaining pupils are not always identified and given work that is matched to their need. Sometimes, these pupils spend time repeating work in which they are already competent.

85. Mathematical skills are used satisfactorily in other areas of the curriculum. In history, pupils use a timeline to chronicle events. In science, pupils use their skills to measure and record the results of an experiment. In music they count the beats in a bar and in geography they use co-ordinates to find features on a map. Corridor displays of mathematics and art show that the connection is firmly established. There are good examples of paper weaving, linking shapes to form a pattern and curved stitch patterns.
86. Teaching is nearly always satisfactory and it has some good features. It is more consistent than at the last inspection. There is now no poor teaching but there is still an over-reliance on worksheets, which leads to poor presentation. In Key Stage 1, of the four lessons observed, three were satisfactory or better with one unsatisfactory lesson. In Key Stage 2, two-fifths of the teaching was good; the remainder was satisfactory. Most lessons are satisfactorily planned and based firmly upon the National Numeracy Strategy that is now fully in place. Lesson objectives are shared with the pupils and this helps pupils to understand what they have to do. In some lessons, the oral 'starter' exercises lack the necessary pace to fire the pupils' imagination and prepare them for work later in the lesson. Teachers manage their classes very well and deal firmly with the few pupils who find it hard to concentrate and who sometimes spoil the learning opportunities for other pupils. Wherever possible, teachers ensure that pupils get the help that they need. Teachers teach with good humour and are generous in their praise and encouragement. They are patient with those who need extra help. This improves pupils' confidence. The best teaching is clear and sequential. In these lessons, the pupils understand what is required of them and respond well. Teachers make good use of time and resources. Some lessons include a good share of practical work, which generates enthusiasm and enjoyment. In the one unsatisfactory lesson, the behaviour of some pupils disturbed the class and distracted the teacher. Boundaries for behaviour were not set clearly enough and there was no learning support assistant. Consequently, most pupils did not engage with the lesson. Pupils are tested satisfactorily and attainment levels are known and recorded. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. Too little regular and planned use is made of computers in the classroom to promote and enhance learning.
87. The mathematics curriculum is satisfactorily balanced and meets the statutory requirement, although pupils have too little opportunity to apply what they know to solving simple problems. The subject is well led and managed. The subject co-ordinator monitors the plans and teaching of her colleagues and provides sensitive and effective feedback. Resources are good and are well used to support learning. Pupils are arranged in teaching groups based on prior learning. This has improved attainment but needs to be subject to rigorous assessment if pupils are not to repeat work unnecessarily and the self-esteem of older pupils working with much younger ones is not to suffer. The school has set modest targets for next year that are based on pupils' present performance but these are insufficiently challenging. There are good displays of pupils' work in classrooms that enhance learning and improve motivation.

## SCIENCE

88. Standards in science at Key Stage 1 are in line with expectations. At Key Stage 2, standards are improving in all aspects except scientific investigation. In the previous inspection, standards were judged to be broadly in line with the national averages in both key stages.
89. In the 1999 teachers' assessments at Key Stage 1, pupils' results were broadly in line with expectations. In the standardised tests at Key Stage 2, pupils' results were well below average. There has been a gradual decline in standards in Key Stage 2 over the past two years although substantial improvement has been indicated by the unpublished National test results for the year 2000.
90. Through a well-planned topic approach, pupils in Key Stage 1 know how to classify animals according to their characteristics. They use simple criteria for sorting animals into large sets and can explain the differences between them. From their visits to a nature reserve and the study of their own school pond, pupils understand the need for plants in a pond and that many insects begin their life in water. They can explain the stages in the life cycle of a butterfly or a frog. When questioned they know the names of many of the young animals and can describe cast skins of insects they have found. As part of a literacy lesson, pupils display good knowledge when they consider the need to care and provide for different sorts of pets. Pupils recognise that materials have a range of uses and that some are better at maintaining hot or cold temperatures than others. They know that light travels from a range of sources and that shadows are created when the light is blocked.
91. Key Stage 2 pupils continue to make effective use of the school grounds to build on their knowledge of habitats. They collect information and from direct experience understand that animals and plants differ according to their environment. Pupils know that plants derive water and minerals from the soil and that they need sufficient light to survive. Year 4 pupils ably answer questions as to the best conditions necessary for healthy plants to flourish. Year 3 pupils can describe food chains and pupils in the Year 5 / 6 class know that micro-organisms can be also beneficial as well as harmful. They display knowledge of the main functions of the heart and in their study of keeping fit they know the importance of exercise and which foods to eat to maintain a healthy body. However, their skills in setting tests and investigations are less well developed. In past work, pupils show knowledge of series and parallel circuits, materials that they have tested to ascertain how well they conduct or insulate electrical circuits and representational diagrams of the solar system. However, past work is of variable quality and in the main is poorly presented.
92. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and occasionally it is good. Teachers are well organised and form good relationships with their pupils. However, lessons planned provide insufficient opportunities for pupils to perform investigations and test their own hypotheses and in this respect they are weak. The overall curriculum for science is well planned although the shorter term planning is insufficiently detailed and inconsistent across the school with learning objectives insufficiently clear. Assessment tasks each term or at the end of a topic are good but the use of information from this assessment to help in planning future lessons is less well developed. Different tasks for less able pupils were provided in lessons observed but fewer lessons provided different tasks for higher attainers and frequently they were unchallenged as a result. In marking of past work, teachers' expectations were insufficiently high and comments in books failed to tell pupils how they might improve upon their work and also were at times excessive in offering praise. There is no time allocated to the co-ordinator for monitoring the delivery of the curriculum in lessons. This fact inhibits the identification and sharing of good practice in the subject. There are appropriate cross-curricular elements concerning health education, drug awareness and sex education.
93. The co-ordinator has analysed results of recent standardised tests in Key Stage 2. Weaknesses have been discussed with staff and consequently, in an effort to raise standards in the subject, some points have received more focused teaching, also improved materials for revision have been set in place. These are the main factors that have enabled the school to make improvements in pupils' learning in science recently. The school's predictions for the current years' tests results are closer to the national average than formerly. This assessment is supported by evidence during the inspection and has been confirmed by the unpublished

## **ART**

94. Pupils make good progress in art. Standards are satisfactory by the end of Key Stage 1 and at the end of Key Stage 2 are generally above those expected for their age. These judgements are similar to those found in the previous inspection.
95. Throughout the school, pupils have experiences in working with a wide range of differing media. From the start they are taught to mix their colours and to observe carefully how colour is used in the world around them. In Key Stage 1, pupils use pastel and paint to effect in representational drawings of trees and animals. In their life drawings they show good development of skill in line and tone. They are beginning to develop a satisfactory appreciation of pattern and texture and use this well to create pictures from their collection of feathers, leaves, cones and seeds from the nature reserve.
96. Key Stage 2 pupils have good opportunities for appraising the work of other artists and using this knowledge in their own work. Some very good and excellent work in portraits and work in the style of other artists was observed from the Year 3/4 class. However, this very good progress is not sufficiently built on at the end of the key stage. Pupils confidently discuss their work with their teachers and improve upon it to obtain the desired effect. This was observed in the Year 4/5 class as pupils discussed their work on observational paintings of flowers. Pupils were keen to maximise impact by an increasingly delicate use of colour. Work in mixing colour in paint and pastel is of a high standard, as was observed in some representational work on musical instruments in a Year 5/6 class. Wall hangings using rope, hessian and natural materials and work in batik act as a stimulus and also provide good examples of past work.
97. The quality of teaching in the few lessons observed during the inspection was satisfactory. Teachers provide good resources to stimulate pupils' creativity although there is an insufficiently wide range of sketching pencils. A strength in the subject is the very good use that all teachers make of opportunities in the local environment and museums to provide first hand experiences for pupils wherever possible. They monitor the quality of pupils' work well, moving from one group to another, providing encouragement and advice. A wide range of artists' work is used, including work from other cultures and also works completed earlier by pupils in the school. The co-ordinator has a positive impact on the curriculum by inviting artists in residence to spend time working with pupils. A key feature also is the exhibition of pupils' work that is arranged each year for the local community. This serves as an example of the standards of work in the school and also enhances pupils' self esteem. There is currently no systematic assessment by which pupil progress can be measured.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

98. Standards of work in both key stages are satisfactory. It was not possible to observe many lessons in design and technology so judgements on standards are also based on a scrutiny of pupils' past work, photographs of previous work, talking to teachers and teachers' planning. Standards are similar to those judged in the previous inspection in 1996.
99. In conjunction with their topic on animals, pupils in Key Stage 1 study the need for animals to have suitable homes. The youngest pupils design and make homes for the 'Three Little Pigs'. They discuss the use of different materials and their suitability. They consider and compare materials used in their own homes. Pupils in Year 1 and 2 design and make a home for an animal, taking into account the needs of that particular animal.



100. Year 3/4 pupils use cutting and fixing skills well when making costumes for a history display. They study story books and pop-up designs to gain knowledge on how levers, hinges and sliders are constructed. Their own finished exemplars are of a high standard. They understand how simple mechanisms can facilitate movement. Year 5/6 pupils study the needs of a community as part of the geography curriculum. Working in groups, they design a facility that will be required by a community. Pupils plan their design taking needs into account. Models are made to scale with appropriately proportioned buildings and followed through to the finished product. Pupils choose appropriate materials and finishing techniques. They display safe use of tools. They discuss their work and identify strengths and weaknesses.
101. The quality of teaching in lessons observed was good. Emphasis is given to the teaching of skills. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to develop their skills in designing and making their own products. Teachers motivate pupils well and have high expectations for behaviour. Resources are carefully managed. The curriculum is based on a series of units that support other topic work in each class. The co-ordinator provides good support to teachers in their overall planning and choice of activities.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

102. No lessons were observed at either key stage in geography. Evidence is gathered from studying pupils' work, wall displays and teachers' planning.
103. Overall in both key stages, attainment is what might be expected for pupils of a similar age. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. At Key Stage 1, pupils are learning about the differences between localities and have compared the Risinghurst estate with the B BONT nature reserve area. They have planned routes to school and have drawn maps of their classrooms. Learning has been supplemented by visits to places such as the Cotswold Wild Life Park. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have created an effective Treasure Island map and use this to consider map work. They have surveyed the local area and have a good understanding of where and why people live where they do. Years 5 and 6 have compared Sandhills with Risinghurst and Horley village. They are knowledgeable about rivers and have thought about the impact of local environmental change. Higher attaining pupils understand how high and low land is represented on a physical map. The use of geographical vocabulary is developing soundly although geographical elements are not always clearly identified for all pupils.
104. Pupils have good attitudes and have developed a good understanding of environmental issues. Teachers do not have the benefit of a school marking policy and opportunities are missed to encourage pupils to improve their work and to do better. This leaves the quality of learning as satisfactory rather than good.
105. The co-ordinator is temporary owing to maternity relief but she has a good understanding of the geography curriculum. She monitors planning and up-dates resources. There is a rolling plan of topics to be covered which develops into a helpful scheme of work to guide teachers. There is no formal action plan for the development of geography over the next year but the co-ordinator has analysed what resources are required to meet a changing curriculum and there has been no evaluation of the effects of previous resource spending on standards. The monitoring of teaching and pupils' work is under-developed. Resources are satisfactory and CD Roms are well used to support learning.

## **HISTORY**

106. No lessons were observed in history during the inspection. There was no work available for scrutiny at Key Stage 1 so it is not possible to make a judgement on standards. At Key Stage 2, evidence to support judgements is taken from looking at pupils' work, talking to pupils and

looking at teachers' planning. The findings of these activities indicate that pupils at Key Stage 2 attain the standard expected for their age. This maintains the standard achieved at the time

of the last inspection.

107. Teachers' planning indicates an appropriate coverage at Key Stage 1 and the subject is approached mainly through the family and through local history. Pupils are also introduced, through stories, to famous people or events such as the Great Fire of London. Pupils at Key Stage 2 have made detailed studies of the Tudor times. Pupils have a sound knowledge of Tudor costume and the good ship Mary Rose. Other aspects of Tudor life are well depicted in topic books made by pupils. These cover Tudor kings and queens, Henry the Eighth, Spanish Armada, Sebastain Cabot the explorer and empathetic work on Tudor children. They have enhanced their knowledge of World War Two by using photographic evidence to glean information. History makes a sound contribution to writing when empathetic work is carried out but an insufficient use of time lines reduces pupils' understanding of chronology
108. The co-ordinator for history is acting in the post due to maternity leave. She is enthusiastic and is introducing a new and widely recommended scheme of work from September. She monitors planning each term to ensure consistency of approach and check that the appropriate objectives for learning historical skills are included. Resources are satisfactory, well kept and accessible. CD-Roms are widely used to access information but the school's reference library is only timetabled for use once per week, which is too limiting to fully develop pupils' research skills. Homework is sometimes used to research topics. There is no formal plan of action for the development of history this year but the subject co-ordinator is working with the Local Education Authority adviser to introduce an effective system of assessment.

## **INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY**

109. Pupils' attainment is broadly in line with standards achieved nationally in both key stages. However, by the end of Key Stage 2, standards are not as high as they might be. This is due to the limited progress which has been made since the last inspection. Expenditure on hardware has been low and the school now has only five up-to-date computers although this is about to be rectified as the school joins the government sponsored scheme National Grid for Learning. At present, the ratio of pupils to computers is unsatisfactory.
110. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils use a keyboard and mouse. They use a word processing program to record text, using upper and lower case letters and they print with assistance. They produce pictures using the 'Colour Magic' program, selecting colours and different methods of applying them. They use simple programs to develop their numeracy skills and to help with their reading.
111. At Key Stage 2, pupils further develop their ability to communicate and by the end of the key stage, most can change the size of letters and page layout. They incorporate illustrations into their text and print their work without help. They increase their accuracy when word processing. The Internet is available but, as yet, use of this has been too limited. CD Roms are well used to access information and pictures for topic work. They are also well used in enabling pupils to make presentations in music from other cultures, for example, from South-East Asia and the Caribbean. However, if the new resources entering the school are managed appropriately, there could quickly be an improvement in the way in which information technology is used to support learning in the other subjects of the curriculum.
112. Pupils' attitudes are very positive. They are keen to use computers at both key stages. Throughout the school, pupils work sensibly and they are happy to take turns and help each other.
113. The quality of teaching is sound overall but is variable throughout the school and computers are too often not in use in some classrooms. However, teachers have sufficient knowledge to teach effectively at both key stages and they will be receiving further in-service training when the National Grid for Learning becomes effective. Teachers lack the support of an assessment scheme to monitor the skills that have been learnt but they do have the benefits of a wide range of CD Roms and other software. When teachers explain to pupils how to use a new program, they do so clearly and there are good examples of teachers using pupils to teach each other.

## MUSIC

114. Since the previous inspection, music has maintained its strong contribution to the life of the school. The school offers a large range of extra-curricular activities and many opportunities for the pupils to make and enjoy music. During the inspection week, for example, a ten-year old pupil was presented with a certificate to mark her solo clarinet performance in Dorchester Abbey in front of an audience of 1000 people. Many pupils learn to play the guitar, the recorder and a selection of string, woodwind and brass instruments. Music has a high profile, as it did at the previous inspection and the extra-curricular activities continue to be a strength of the school. Playing and singing are also greatly enjoyed by the pupils throughout the year and this helps to maintain a good sense of community.
115. In the classroom, pupils make satisfactory progress at both key stages. During the inspection week, pupils were observed listening to, appraising and performing music. Composing was not observed but there is adequate provision in the planning for this activity.
116. Pupils in Key Stage 1 were observed singing action songs together. They sing energetically and enthusiastically, entering into the spirit of the *Train Ride* with good humour and eager anticipation of the next stop along the way. Pupils sing the words clearly and accompany their singing with vigorous actions that demonstrate their rhythmic skills. They enjoy singing together.
117. In Key Stage 2, pupils imitate the 4-bar vocal sounds of a professionally produced tape very well. They were more cautious in creating their own phrases and produced rhythms that are familiar on football terraces! Pupils play a wide selection of percussion instruments and know how the different sounds are made. The lesson ends with a rousing performance from an impromptu percussion band. Older pupils listen to different kinds of music and describe how it makes them feel using such words as *lonely* and *sad*. For some, the excitement of music is too much and their behaviour disturbs the rest of the class. The senior class prepares a presentation of music from South East Asia using the computer and CD-Rom. Pupils talk about the different instruments and sounds created and evoke the mood of the music very well. Previously, a group had presented music from the Caribbean. Next week it is the turn of the African continent; this makes a positive contribution to the pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development due to their enjoyment of singing, music from different cultures and the effective collaborative work in performances.
118. Teaching throughout the school is sound with good features. Pupils are managed well and the creative spirit is given space to emerge. Music is seen as a practical activity and all pupils are encouraged to contribute. Resources are plentiful and well used. Classroom instruments make the music come alive. Imaginative use is made of the new technology. There is no formal assessment of pupils' skills but teachers are well aware of what pupils know, understand and can do and use this knowledge to plan future lessons. There is insufficient planned development of pupils' skills in appraising the music they listen to.
119. The subject is well managed. Music is well used in assembly and there was a particularly effective and moving rendition of '*I close my eyes*' by the whole school to supplement the action-story of Joseph. The school enters local musical festivals and often leads the way. This year the school is taking part in the National Festival of Voices to be held at Wembley Stadium. There are regular concerts and productions that are well supported by the parents. Each term a music cup is awarded, in memory of a former teacher, to a pupil or small group of pupils, who have progressed well in music and who are enjoying it. This typifies the school's present approach to music: participation and enjoyment.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

120. Pupils' achievements are of a satisfactory standard at the end of both key stages and they make reasonable progress in the learning of new skills. Six lessons were seen, three at each

of the key stages. Aspects of physical education seen covered dance and games. Pupils work purposefully at suitable warm-up activities and follow instructions promptly. Pupils have good catching skills and use space well. They are enterprising when finding original ways of travelling around a room. They respond well to music and adapt movements to a changing rhythm or beat. They accurately mirror one another's movements and endeavour to improve or modify their actions.

121. Pupils generally behave well in lessons and usually have good attitudes to learning. This helps them to make sound progress. They co-operate sensibly when working in pairs and watch patiently when another pupil is asked to demonstrate. Pupils are keen to demonstrate what they can do. Most pupils follow instructions carefully and apply themselves with enthusiasm and interest. They put out equipment efficiently and take turns in a sporting manner.
122. At Key Stage 1, teaching ranged from good to unsatisfactory and at Key Stage 2, lessons were satisfactory to good. The good teaching engages pupils' attention quickly and holds it, involving all throughout the lesson. Instructions are clear and purposeful and pupils know what they have to do. The best teaching asks pupils to think about what they have done before and to link it to what they are doing now. It also challenges pupils to improve on what they did last time by using pupils to demonstrate their newly learnt skills. Good organisation is apparent in most lessons and there is effective use of paired work, which helps pupils to operate as a small team. Teaching is less effective when discipline is weak, with the teacher not insisting on prompt responses. Lessons are also less successful when pupils are not grouped according to the skills that they have previously achieved. This was illustrated in a cricket lesson when good batsmen and bowlers were offered insufficient challenge by other pupils whose skills were less developed.
123. The physical education co-ordinator has a good grasp of the subject and what is needed to improve it although the subject has no formal plan of action which would make this clearer to colleagues. The curriculum is broad and balanced, sufficient time is allocated to it and a range of extra curricular activities are offered in support; these include country and Maypole dancing, gymnastics, rounders, netball, athletics, tag rugby and fun fitness. The co-ordinator has attended in-service training with other schools in the area and the head of the physical education department at the local high school has visited the school to offer training support. The co-ordinator evaluates teachers' planning to ensure the subject progresses through the years and has prepared guidelines to meet the challenges of curriculum change from September 2000. Resources are good and well kept. The school hall, playground and playing field provide very good facilities to support activities in this subject.
124. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. The local partnership of schools is planning an assessment of skills scheme to raise standards through progression.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

125. By the end of each key stage, pupils' attainment in religious education meets the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. The satisfactory standards identified in the previous inspection report have been maintained and some improvement is evident. Pupils are taught religious education from a multi-faith perspective and this helps them to understand the differences and the similarities in world religions.
126. Pupils make sound progress at both key stages and their understanding of the religious dimension grows steadily. In lessons where pupils' learning is supported by the opportunity to see and touch the artefacts of different world faiths, such as a prayer mat or a holy book,

progress is good. Classroom teaching is supported in assembly and, in particular, by weekly visits from the local clergy. Pupils are taught the practical applications of religious beliefs which helps to create a sense of community where pupils feel safe and secure.

127. Pupils in Key Stage 1 learn about the practices of Islam and a Muslim boy in the class tells of his experiences. Pupils see and touch a prayer mat and hear how prayer can form an

important part in people's lives. Pupils also learn the stories of the Bible, including the story of Jonah and the Whale. This leads to an interesting discussion about how people feel when the good things they do are not immediately recognised!

128. At Key Stage 2, pupils engage in a mature discussion about the Hindu death customs and they learn about the culture of other countries. Pupils ask many questions and make their own comparisons between different practices across the world. In another lesson, pupils discuss the Easter Story and give their own thoughts about the Resurrection. They begin to see the significance of religious belief.
129. Teaching is always satisfactory and it has good features. It is better than at the previous inspection because teachers make good use of a wider range of artefacts. Pupils are managed sensitively and encouraged to ask questions and to give their views. For older pupils, this creates the right climate for open debate so that pupils may test their opinions on others. Teachers listen to and respect the views of their pupils and this gives them the confidence to speak. Open discussion is too much for some pupils who sometimes spoil the lesson for others. There is no formal assessment of pupils' progress although teachers set clear and measurable objectives.
130. The subject is managed well and there is a clear plan for its development. The school has provided an in-service training day for religious education; this has increased teachers' confidence in teaching it. The subject has a firm place in the school curriculum and contributes well to the all round development of the pupils.