

INSPECTION REPORT

THORNHILL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Islington

LEA area: Islington

Unique reference number: 190224

Headteacher: Ms Nancy Traquair

Reporting inspector: Miss Savi Ramnath

Dates of inspection: 17th – 20th September 2001

Inspection number: 196148

Full 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 category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 – 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Thornhill Road
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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Max Eilenberg

Date of previous inspection: 28th October 1996

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21334	Miss Savi Ramnath	Registered inspector	Science	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements English as an additional language Equal opportunities
8933	Mr John Chapman	Lay inspector		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?
22990	Mr Chris Furniss	Team inspector	Mathematics Music	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
21171	Ms Sally Handford	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Art and design	Special educational needs
21899	Ms Gillian Lawson	Team inspector	Information and communication technology Design and technology History	
20010	Mr John Sangster	Team inspector	English Religious education	How well pupils are taught?
28071	Mr Andrew Williams	Team inspector	Physical education Geography	How well is the school led and managed?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Thornhill is a large mixed primary school of 384 pupils between the ages three and eleven. It includes a Nursery with 21 children who attend full time and nine who attend part time. A further 30 children will join the Reception class in January. Overall, there is a slightly higher proportion of girls than boys. Most pupils live in the immediate locality. Children who are admitted to the Nursery exhibit the full ability range. Attainment on entry to the Reception class is average overall; however, a minority of children has not had the benefit of Nursery provision. The school has a rich diversity of cultures, faiths and languages, which reflects the composition of the community in which it is based; 30 per cent of the pupils come from ethnic minority backgrounds. Twenty-two per cent come from homes where English is not their first language. Forty-eight of these pupils have been identified as needing additional support in English and 23 are in the early stages of learning English. This is high when compared with the national average. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, at 25 per cent, is above the national average. Twenty-five per cent of pupils are on the register of special educational needs, five of whom have statements setting out the specific provision to be made. This is above the average for schools of this size. Since the last inspection there has been a significant turnover of staff, recruitment being a problem, and a slight decrease in the number of pupils identified as having special educational needs.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school. Good teaching in Years 3 to 6 helps pupils achieve well and most pupils currently in Year 6, other than those with special educational needs, are achieving above average standards in English, mathematics and science. Pupils' good behaviour and positive attitudes contribute to an effective learning environment. The leadership and management of the school give clear and sound educational direction. All staff work well together and share a commitment to further improvement. The school provides good value for money.

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- Pupils reach above average standards in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6.
- It provides good quality teaching in Years 3 to 6 and of the youngest children, resulting in effective learning.
- The headteacher, staff and governing body share a commitment to improving educational standards.
- Pupils behave well and are keen to learn. This is reflected in the good relationships within the school.
- The school provides well for pupils' moral and social development.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- Standards in religious education at the end of Year 2
- Weaknesses in the monitoring of teaching and learning and in the use of assessment information in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Arrangements and support for pupils with special educational needs.
- Attendance and punctuality. Not all parents ensure that their children are absent or late only for good reason.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good improvement since it was last inspected in October 1996. Action has been taken on all of the key issues identified and nearly all have been dealt with well. The curriculum now meets statutory requirements. Schemes of work are in place for all subjects and provide useful guidance for planning. More opportunities are now provided for pupils to develop and apply their mathematical and scientific skills in problem solving and investigations. Although some progress has been made in strengthening the role of subject co-ordinators, many are new to their roles as well as to the school. As a result, the role of co-ordinators in monitoring teaching and learning remains underdeveloped. Overall, standards have improved in most subjects of the curriculum, particularly so in Years 3 to 6. Much work has been undertaken in assessment and the information gained is used well to plan future work in English and mathematics. The quality of teaching has improved, with a much higher proportion of good or better teaching. The headteacher is aware of the progress that still needs to be made and is in a strong position to achieve it. She has the commitment of staff and the support of governors.

STANDARDS

The table below shows the standards achieved by pupils, in 2000 at the end of Year 6, based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	B	C	B	A
Mathematics	A	A	A	A
Science	A	C	C	B

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

The performance of the pupils in Year 6, in 2000 was well above the national average in mathematics, above average in English and average in science. When compared with similar schools,¹ results are more favourable and are well above average in English and mathematics and above average in science. Results in the subjects, taken together, have been consistently above the national average for the past three years except for the dip in 1999. This was partly due to the variation from year to year in different pupils' abilities. The school has high expectations and has set challenging targets which were not quite met in English in 2000 or 2001. The school has set further challenging targets for 2002 and progress towards achieving these is good. Test results for seven year olds in 2000 were below the national average in reading and writing and average in mathematics. When compared with similar schools, results were average in reading and writing but well above in mathematics. Although test results at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 indicate that boys do not perform as well as girls, inspection evidence shows little difference in their performance. Children in the Foundation Stage² achieve well and all, with a few exceptions, are on course to attain the Early Learning Goals in language and literacy and mathematical development by the time they start Year 1. In all other areas children exceed expectations. According to inspection evidence pupils in Year 6 are achieving above the expectation in English, mathematics and science whilst those in Year 2 are at the level expected in these subjects. In religious education, standards at the end of Year 6 have improved and are now in line with recommendations of the locally agreed syllabus, but remain below expectations at the end of Year 2. In all other subjects, pupils achieve the expected standards at the end of Years 2 and 6, except in art and design where they exceed expectations, and in music at

¹ Similar schools are defined by the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals.

² Foundation Stage: education before pupils enter Year 1, i.e. in the Nursery and Reception classes

the end of Year 6 where there was insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement about standards. Pupils with special educational needs and those at the early stages of learning English achieve well and make good progress when support is provided. The school has not yet identified any pupils as gifted or talented.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy school. Most are well motivated and keen to succeed. They are interested in what they do and are proud of their achievements. Their attitudes support progress in their learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Most pupils behave consistently well in lessons, assemblies and around the school. However, in there are a few instances of inappropriate behaviour at lunchtimes. Pupils are polite, friendly and welcoming.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils have some opportunities to show initiative and take responsibility. Most work and play together in a caring and friendly way and racial harmony is very good. Pupils get on well with the staff and other pupils.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. In spite of good monitoring many pupils do not attend school regularly and are often late at the start of the day. This affects their attainment and progress. School and lessons begin and end promptly.

Most pupils show enjoyment in their schoolwork. Not all pupils have a good understanding of the impact of their actions upon others. Attendance is below the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Satisfactory	Good

The overall quality of teaching is good and has improved significantly since the last inspection. There are more examples of good and very good teaching and far fewer examples of unsatisfactory teaching. Teaching was satisfactory or better in nine out of ten lessons, good in four out of ten lessons and very good or excellent in nearly one in four lessons. A very small minority of lessons were unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching and learning varies: it is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in all other classes. The teaching of children in the Foundation Stage is good. This has a positive impact on what young children learn and prepares them well for Year 1. The implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies and the school's focus on experimental and investigative work in science have resulted in good quality teaching in English, mathematics and science especially in Years 3 to 6. Teaching of literacy and numeracy skills is not only thorough and systematic but also lively and interesting. Very good teaching is characterised by good planning with clear learning objectives, which are shared with the pupils. Tasks set are challenging and are well matched to the different abilities and needs of pupils in the class. This ensures that all pupils make good gains in new knowledge and skills and learn well. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, the purpose of the lesson is unclear. Planning and tasks take insufficient account of previous learning and the pace of the lessons is slow. As a result, learning is limited. The needs of pupils identified with special educational needs and those at the early stages of English language acquisition are being met well in lessons when support is provided. The needs of the higher attaining pupils are generally met well in English and mathematics, although the school has not established procedures for identifying and supporting pupils who are talented.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The curriculum is broad but not sufficiently balanced. Too little time is devoted to teaching religious education. Good use is made of extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors, to enrich the curriculum. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage, although satisfactory, is somewhat inadequate for children's physical development.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. Pupils who have special educational needs are identified early and are given appropriate support to help them make progress. Learning support staff make a good contribution. In some lessons, the needs of pupils are not always met when specialist help is not provided.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Overall satisfactory. Effective support leads to very good progress for pupils in the early stages of learning English as an additional language. However, not all class teachers are fully aware of the needs of these pupils and do not always make appropriate provision for them when targeted support is not available.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Satisfactory. Pupils are helped to know right from wrong and good opportunities are provided to support their social development. Satisfactory provision is made for pupils' spiritual and cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides satisfactory care and support for pupils' well-being. Although most teachers know their pupils well, the monitoring of academic progress in subjects other than English and mathematics is not fully developed to help plan the next stage of learning.

The school makes good use of outside agencies to support pupils with special educational needs. Attendance procedures are satisfactory. It has good links with parents, many of whom actively contribute to their children's learning in school. Procedures for finding out and recording how well pupils are doing in all subjects are developing.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher, ably supported by the deputy headteacher, provides satisfactory leadership. The senior management team work well together, sharing responsibilities. The impact of subject co-ordinators is limited in terms of monitoring teaching and learning.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Well. Governors have a clear sense of the school's direction, focusing on improving standards for the school. They fulfil their role well, play a full part in the school's strategic planning, and make a positive contribution to the life of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory overall. The school has begun to analyse systematically its performance and its assessment data in order to move forward. It also evaluates its performance well in a development plan and prioritises the areas for improvement. However, the monitoring of teaching and learning is underdeveloped in some subjects.
The strategic use of resources	Funding has been used well to provide sufficient and suitable teaching and non-teaching staff, and to fulfil the school's priorities for development. The principles of best value are applied well in order to make optimum use of available funding. The school provides good value for money.

The school is suitably staffed to teach the full curriculum. The accommodation provides adequate space for pupils. However, it is limited in the Reception class as there is no secure play area with large apparatus to promote children's physical development. Although learning resources are good in English, they are barely adequate in a number of subjects and unsatisfactory in music and ICT.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<p>Parents are pleased with all aspects of the school, but they are especially content that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • their children like school and their behaviour is good • their children make good progress • the school has a positive effect on their children's values and attitudes • the school helps their children to become mature and responsible • the teachers are a dedicated team • the school is approachable 	<p>A significant minority of parents expressed concerns over particular areas, especially:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the outside toilets • information on what is taught • the amount and regularity of homework given to children • the range of activities outside lessons • the way the school works with parents and handles complaints

The inspection team endorses the positive views of the parents and their concerns about the quality of the toilets and the limited information provided about the curriculum. Whilst parental involvement in the life of the school and the information provided about pupils' progress is satisfactory, the school agrees it must explore ways of improving these areas. Homework in the past has been inconsistent and the school has since addressed this. The range of extra-curricular activities is better than in most primary schools. Inspectors consider the school to be working satisfactorily with parents and that it is trying to improve the effectiveness of its links with them. The team was not able to become involved in individual parental complaints. However, a few parents are still not satisfied with the manner in which their complaints are handled by the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The last inspection in 1996 reported that standards for both seven and eleven year olds were in line with expectations in English, mathematics, science and some of the non-core subjects. Standards were below the levels expected nationally in information and communication technology (ICT), history and geography at the end of Year 6. In religious education attainment was below the level recommended in the locally agreed syllabus at the end of both Years 2 and 6. Since then initiatives have been taken to improve standards: rigorous monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning in English and mathematics; an increased emphasis on writing and on experimental and investigative work in science; greater analysis of National Curriculum test results; additional support for lower attaining pupils; and the adoption of schemes of work in all subjects. All of these have had a beneficial effect on overall standards which, when compared with the last inspection, have been maintained or have improved in all subjects except physical education at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 in which standards are now lower.
2. Attainment on entry to the school's Nursery class is quite varied but is average overall. Not all the children who start the Reception class have had Nursery provision at the school. Overall, children achieve well in the Foundation Stage¹, which covers the Nursery and Reception classes, so that by the time they are ready to start Year 1 nearly all, with a few exceptions, are well in line to achieve the Early Learning Goals. Most children are set to do better than this, especially with regard to their achievement in personal and social development, creative and physical development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Overall progress is good in both the Nursery and Reception classes. However, at times progress is limited. This is partly due to the lack of rigour in monitoring to ensure that all children experience fully the range of activities on offer.
3. In 2000, the National Curriculum tests results at the end of Year 2 show that standards, as measured by average points score², were in line with the national average in mathematics and below average in reading and writing. When results are compared with those schools with a similar proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, they were more favourable and were well above average in mathematics and average in both reading and writing. The measures introduced by the school to support low achievers in writing are slowing impacting on standards, and test results for 2001 are better in writing. They are less good in reading and in mathematics at both levels. This drop in performance was because the year group contained a higher than average percentage of pupils with special educational needs. In science, the assessments carried out by teachers showed that the proportion of pupils reaching the expected Level 2 was below average while the percentage of those reaching the higher Level 3 was well above average.

¹ Foundation Stage is the provision for children aged from three to the end of the Reception Year. QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority) has produced a set of Early Learning Goals for the end of the Foundation Stage. These goals are sets of skills, knowledge and understanding that children might be expected to achieve by the age of five. There are six areas of learning: personal, social and emotional development, language, literacy and communication, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development.

² Average points score - pupils' levels in National Curriculum tests are converted to points and used to compare a school's performance with schools nationally and with similar schools.

4. The results of the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 for 2000 show standards well above the national average in mathematics, above average in English and average in science. When compared with similar schools the picture is more favourable and standards are well above average in English and mathematics and above average in science. Since 1996 overall standards in the three subjects, when taken together, have remained above the national average except in 1999 when there was a drop in pupils' performance. Despite this the trend for the past four years has been in line with the national trend. Some of the fluctuation is attributable to difference in ability between year groups, the high number of pupils with special educational needs in the different year groups and the small but significant minority of new pupils who joined the school in the juniors. Test results for 2001 are a little less good in the proportion of pupils reaching both the expected Level 4 and the higher Level 5 except in science at the expected Level 4, which is slightly better. However, when standards are compared with those achieved by the same children in the tests they took at the age of seven, results in all three subjects indicated good progress. There has been some variation in results between boys and girls at the end of Years 2 and 6. Boys do not perform as well as girls. The school makes no overt distinction in the curriculum that would disadvantage boys and measures are being implemented to ensure that boys are encouraged to succeed. This year, test results indicate that there is little difference between the performance of boys and girls. The school has not yet identified any pupils as gifted or talented.
5. In Years 3 to 6 pupils' achievements overall are good and they are satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. Progress is good in the juniors where the quality of teaching and learning is good. As a result, pupils' current work shows that standards are above expectations in English, mathematics and science for Year 6 pupils. This is an improvement from the last inspection, when standards were average. For the current Year 2 pupils, standards in the same three subjects remain the same as reported in the last inspection, and are average. In art and design, all pupils achieve well and standards are above the level expected at the end of Years 2 and 6. In all other subjects, standards are at the level expected at the end of both Years 2 and Year 6 except in music at the end of Year 6 where there was insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement about standards. In religious education standards at the end of Year 6 have improved and are now in line with the recommendations of the locally agreed syllabus. However, they remain below recommendations at the end of Year 2 partly due to insufficient curricular time to cover all aspects of the curriculum.
6. The school analyses its test and assessment results carefully and the information is used effectively to address weaknesses. For example, the decline in standards in writing and science was addressed with additional support and focus on writing, and an emphasis on experimental and investigative work in science. As a result, standards at the end of Year 2 for 2001 have improved in writing and many pupils especially in Years 3 to 6 successfully plan and carry out investigations. The school now has appropriate systems and procedures to enable it to track pupils' progress over time. The school has challenging targets for English and mathematics for 2002 based on what is known of the prior attainment of pupils currently in Year 6. It is working hard to achieve them and indications are that pupils are on course to meet these targets. In 2000, the school met the targets for mathematics only and did not meet the targets for English and mathematics in 2001.
7. The successful introduction of both the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies is having a positive effect on pupils' progress in all subjects. Overall, pupils have sound opportunities to apply their basic literacy and numeracy skills to other subjects. Many

pupils write, speak and read very well and good opportunities are provided for them to do so. Numeracy skills develop satisfactorily through science and design and technology. Pupils use graphs and number skills well in developing their knowledge of other subjects. In the main, opportunities are lacking for pupils to develop their ICT skills in other subjects.

8. Pupils in Year 2 achieve average standards in English whilst those in Year 6 attain above average standards. Pupils' progress is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. Good progress is due in part to the positive ethos for learning, good quality teaching in many of the lessons and the implementation of the literacy hour. By the age of seven most pupils listen very well to teachers' explanations and to each other and respond appropriately to questions. Eleven year olds have a wide and expressive vocabulary, share ideas and give well-considered reasons for their views. By the age of seven, most pupils understand 'title' and 'author' while higher attaining pupils read accurately with good expression. By the age of eleven, pupils read fluently. They discuss texts critically and are able to express preferences for different types of books. Many Year 2 pupils write stories and factual accounts with increasing accuracy and clarity. Many use capital letters and full stops accurately. Pupils in Year 6 demonstrate their increasing understanding of writing for a range of audiences. Standards in spelling and handwriting are average and improving and many pupils develop a neat cursive style of writing by the end of Year 6. However, presentation of written work in other subjects is inconsistent across the school.
9. In mathematics, standards at the end of Year 2 are average and are above average at the end of Year 6. Progress is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. The focus given to numeracy and the development of mathematics planning have a positive impact on standards. As a result, many pupils by the end of Year 2 have a solid grasp of numbers. Most correctly identify the number that comes before or after a number when ordering numbers to 100 and measure accurately in centimetres. Eleven year olds are developing good ways for working things out and confidently explain their methods. Pupils have a firm understanding of place value and are able to use the four rules of number accurately.
10. Standards in science are average at the end of Year 2 and above average at the end of Year 6. Since the last inspection an increased emphasis on learning through experimentation and investigation has had a positive influence on standards of attainment. However, progress is sometimes limited because learning intentions are not always clear and teachers do not make sufficient use of the National Curriculum documents when planning. Year 2 pupils confidently investigate the properties of different materials and know that pushing and pulling are different types of forces. Many Year 6 pupils have a good understanding of how to plan and conduct an experiment. They make predictions when investigating and experimenting, while higher attaining pupils base these clearly on their scientific knowledge and understanding.
11. In ICT, standards are similar to those expected nationally at the end of Years 2 and 6. Progress overall is limited because resources are currently unsatisfactory. Seven year olds are familiar with the keyboard; they skilfully use the control keys, cursor and the mouse for selecting an icon and for moving items around the screen, for example, when creating their firework pictures. Eleven year olds save, retrieve and print their work without adult support. They successfully use search engines to find information, e-mail and set up web sites on the Internet.

12. In religious education, standards have improved since the school was last inspected and are now in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus at the end of Year 6 but remain below the expected level at the end of Year 2. Low standards are partly due to the inadequate amount of time provided for pupils to consolidate learning in order to gain a better understanding of some of the world's major faiths. Many Year 2 pupils are unclear about which religion celebrates Diwali and have limited recall of previous work. By the time pupils leave school at the end of Year 6, many recognise some of the significant similarities and differences between world faiths, such as Hinduism and Islam.
13. Throughout the school, pupils generally achieve standards in line with expectations in design and technology, history, geography and physical education at the end of Years 2 and 6 and in music at the end of Year 2. Teachers have a good understanding of these subjects and they are supported by schemes in work which provide detailed advice on how to develop pupils' skills successfully.
14. The school is socially and academically inclusive and gives the fullest encouragement to children from different backgrounds. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils from different ethnic backgrounds make similar progress to one another. Pupils for whom English is an additional language make good progress and attain standards that are comparable with other pupils in the school once they have achieved a reasonable level of competence in English. The good progress made by these pupils results from their positive attitudes to learning which are encouraged by the school's positive ethos. The collaboration between class teachers and the teacher funded through Ethnic Minority Achievement Grant (EMAG)¹ is effective in promoting the progress of these pupils. However, their needs are not always met when support is not provided because work is not sufficiently adapted. As a result learning is sometimes limited.
15. In literacy and numeracy lessons pupils with special educational needs receive mainly good support to achieve standards in line with their ability and aptitude. They are provided with work that is adapted to help them meet the targets in the individual education plans. They reach standards in line with their peers in some lessons, such as art and design. However, in other lessons teachers do not consistently plan to meet their needs and in situations where there is no additional support, pupils do not do as well.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

16. Overall, the good attitudes and behaviour of all the pupils make a substantial contribution to pupils' attainment and progress and the quality of life in the school. Comments from parents both in the questionnaire and at the meeting prior to the inspection support this view.
17. Throughout the school, pupils' attitudes towards learning are good. From the time they start school in the Nursery and Reception class children are well motivated and settle into school routines quickly and confidently. They listen to their teachers and carry out instructions with confidence. In the classroom and play areas they relate well to each other, play co-operatively and are developing a sense of right and wrong. In all other classes, pupils' attitudes to school and to their work are good. They enjoy coming to school and work hard at their tasks. They show considerable interest in their work, respond well in class and take pride in achieving good results. They settle down to work very quickly and are especially responsive to good teaching.

¹ EMAG - additional funds from the government to assist schools in their work to address underachievement and to make special provision to enable pupils from minority ethnic communities to access the curriculum.

18. Behaviour overall is good, especially in classrooms and in assemblies. In the last report behaviour was described as 'excellent', but with some unacceptable behaviour. There is some evidence of inappropriate behaviour in the playground and undue haste on staircases. Several such incidents are recorded in the 'Behaviour Book' and a few have resulted in entries in the 'Accident Book'. There were four exclusions in the last year, mainly for fighting. There is an impressive degree of harmony between pupils of different racial and ethnic backgrounds.
19. Pupils with special educational needs relate well to those who support them, and most try hard to achieve. They work well in groups with adults and their peers. Pupils mainly respond well to strategies for the modification of their behaviour. Pupils with English as an additional language are fully integrated into the life of the school. They are well settled into school activities and have positive attitudes to school life and learning.
20. Pupils' personal development is good. Many of the younger pupils are very confident when speaking to adults and virtually all of the older pupils maintain friendly and respectful relations with teachers, other members of staff and visitors. They are polite, helpful and cheerful. Relationships all round are good and often very good. Several situations were observed where pupils showed a great deal of concern and support for other pupils. When asked to perform small tasks around the school pupils are conscientious and co-operative, for example, when carrying a notice to signal time to re-enter school after breaks and in monitoring toilets.
21. Attendance at 93.7 per cent is unsatisfactory although an improvement on the 91.4 per cent rate reported at the last inspection. Unauthorised absence at 2.6 per cent is five times the national average and six times the rate at the previous inspection. Late arrival in the morning is still a major problem; far too many parents do not get their children to school on time. The incidence of lateness is very high in about half the classes. Poor attendance and persistent lateness is disruptive to pupils' education. However, the number of pupils with serious medical conditions and the effect of Year 6 absences before transfer to secondary school affect the level of the authorised absence. Registers are kept in accordance with regulations and are properly monitored. The improvement in attendance since the last inspection and the significant increase in unauthorised attendance are a reflection of a much greater emphasis on attendance and a firmer line taken to coding absences correctly.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

22. The overall quality of teaching in the school is good. It is good in the Foundation Stage, satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. This is a change from the findings of the last inspection, when teaching was consistently good in Years 1 and 2 and satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Since then there has been a considerable turnover of staff, as there is in many schools in London, but the proportion of unsatisfactory teaching throughout the school has been reduced considerably, from one in six lessons to one in 30. Unsatisfactory teaching was observed in a few instances in the infants and lower juniors, but about half the teaching in Years 1 and 2 was good or very good, and there was an even higher proportion of good and very good, and some excellent, teaching in Years 3 to 6.
23. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is good overall and in the Reception class sometimes very good. The teacher understands the needs of young children and provides a good, stimulating environment. Where teaching is very good, the focus is sharp and adult intervention is used very effectively to develop children's learning. In the Nursery,

teaching is satisfactory. The arrangement of the accommodation makes it very difficult for the teacher and the Nursery Nurse to supervise the wide range of activities provided daily. Also the lack of rigour in monitoring means that not all children are having the same good opportunities for learning, and some, especially the younger and less confident children, do not experience the same range of activities as others. In both classes, where other adults are given focused tasks to support, their input is good and helps children develop knowledge and skills. However, their contribution in whole-class activities needs to be strengthened.

24. The teaching of English is good, with lessons conducted at a good pace. Teachers use group sessions outside the literacy hour well, particularly to develop pupils' reading skills. They also take opportunities to develop literacy in other areas of the curriculum, for example when they extend pupils' vocabulary by the use of specialist terms in science or geography lessons. The teaching of mathematics is good overall; it has improved since the last inspection, particularly in Years 3 to 6, as has also the teaching of science. The teaching of ICT skills is good, and teachers make the best use of limited resources in these lessons. However, more use could be made of computers in teaching other subjects. Teaching is good in all classes in art and design and design and technology, and satisfactory in geography, history, music and physical education. The teaching of religious education is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. However, the insufficient time allocated to the subject limits the impact of teaching on pupils' learning in Years 1 and 2.
25. Throughout the school, teachers have good knowledge and understanding of their subjects. They implement the literacy and numeracy strategies well. They also manage pupils well, although sometimes sufficient support is not available to help in classes where there are pupils identified with special educational needs. Teaching methods are generally more effective in Years 3 to 6, where a greater challenge is presented to pupils. In the very good lessons teachers have high expectations of pupils, including those with special educational needs. For instance, in a Year 6 lesson, the class teacher and the support teacher worked well together to encourage pupils of all levels of attainment to distinguish clearly between fact and opinion in a text from a tourist guide. On the rare occasions when a teacher does not manage pupils well, time is wasted and pupils do not make sufficient progress in the lesson. Teachers use questions effectively to assess how well pupils have understood what they are learning, but their marking of books does not always suggest ways in which pupils can improve.
26. The quality of planning has improved since the last inspection. The school has adopted the optional national schemes of work for subjects other than English and mathematics and this has assisted the planning process and ensured an effective whole-school approach. Teachers plan together and this helps to ensure that pupils in parallel classes enjoy the same learning opportunities. This common approach has led to more consistent teaching across each year group. However, plans do not routinely identify the provision for pupils with special educational needs and those with English as additional language.
27. As a result of good teaching pupils mostly learn well. They acquire the basic skills of literacy and numeracy and generally work at a good pace in lessons, although occasionally teachers keep them sitting too long on the carpet and this leads to lack of concentration. Teachers usually make the objectives of the lesson clear, so that pupils know what they are supposed to be learning. This was particularly effective in an art and design lesson in Year 6, where the teacher's very clear explanation of the task and enthusiastic approach, together with her good organisation of the classroom, led to

pupils being well motivated to produce good work in the style of Matisse and other artists. The summary at the end of the lesson provided good opportunities for pupils to evaluate and explain their work and so enlarge their understanding. When explanations are not clear and work set is not appropriate, pupils' learning is unsatisfactory. The school is currently developing target setting in order to give pupils a greater insight into their own progress. Pupils, particularly in Years 3 to 6, now have satisfactory opportunities to develop the ability to learn independently, which is an improvement on the situation at the time of the last inspection, but opportunities to improve pupils' skills of independent enquiry are restricted by their not using the library regularly and not having satisfactory access to computers as a research tool. In design and technology pupils have good opportunities to choose their own resources.

28. Teachers generally make satisfactory use of homework in English, mathematics, ICT and history. Pupils are, for instance, expected to read regularly at home. The inconsistency of the homework policy was an area of concern to some parents. This has been monitored and addressed.
29. Pupils with English as an additional language are well supported in their speaking and listening during lessons by mainstream class teachers. This is because they involve them in discussion and because of the patient and helpful attitudes of classmates. Teachers generally use a range of effective strategies such as questioning, modelling language and reviewing what has been learnt to develop their English competence so that they take part in the full curriculum. Targeted pupils are supported in their language development by a temporary teacher who provides a good quality of teaching. She plans closely with the class teacher and activities have clear learning objectives, which match the school's schemes of work. However, when support is not provided mainstream teachers do not always identify the language demands of the activities and no specific provision is made for these pupils.
30. Teaching support for pupils with special educational needs is provided in a variety of ways to suit the differing needs of pupils. Where special educational needs teachers and support assistants work closely with pupils, their learning is promoted well and the support is well planned. In situations where there is partnership teaching between the class teacher and the special educational needs teachers, this is very effective. In other lessons, where there is no additional support provided and teachers do not plan to meet their needs, pupils with special educational needs are not always able to achieve as well. Overall, pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. There is a significant number of pupils who need help to modify their behaviour so that they can benefit from lessons, and teachers mainly manage these pupils well and help them settle to their learning.

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

31. Thornhill offers a generally broad curriculum, which meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. However, the teaching time allocated for Years 3 to 6 is below the minimum recommended time and there is insufficient time allocated for religious education. The headteacher has already had discussions with the governing body about the need to extend the school day for the juniors and further consultations with parents and staff are needed before final decisions are made.

32. The curriculum for both the Nursery and Reception classes is appropriately linked to the nationally agreed areas of learning for children in the Foundation Stage and to the Early Learning Goals. The learning opportunities are broad and balanced, and in the Reception class, a version of the literacy and numeracy strategy is helping children develop their knowledge and skills well. Planning is appropriately based on the Early Learning Goals.
33. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been effectively implemented across the school and are already raising standards. Despite a lack of resources in ICT, in particular hardware, the curriculum is being satisfactorily delivered in that area, but lack of resources is hindering progress. Sex education and drugs education are taking place and pupils take part in 'circle time', which is an effective platform for raising and discussing issues and improving relationships, but the lack of a scheme of work means that personal, social and health education is not being taught cohesively through the school.
34. Generally the school is using the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's (QCA) schemes of work or, in the case of religious education, the local authority agreed syllabus. There is good monitoring of both planning and teaching in English and mathematics but this has not been sufficiently developed across the rest of the curriculum.
35. The curriculum is enriched by a good range of extra-curricular activities, including netball and football for both boys and girls, gymnastics, rounders, cricket, drama and a homework club. There are opportunities for pupils to play against other schools in sports. Use is made of visits to broaden the scope of experiences offered. There is a residential trip to Essex and the range of visits includes museums, art galleries, and places of worship of different religions. Some local businesses support the school; for example, a local estate agent supports the 'Thornhill Times,' a newsletter of the Thornhill School Association, and the newly begun 'Kids Only' newsletter prepared by Year 6 pupils. Examples of pupils' work have been displayed in a local church. Further enrichment comes from a variety of visitors to the school, including dancers, musicians and artists. Relationships with linked secondary schools are satisfactory and these contacts support pupils' progress well.
36. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Clear procedures are in place and the school closely follows the Code of Practice¹ on the identification and assessment of pupils. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes are closely monitored so that any special educational needs are identified early in their school career. There are individual education plans for all pupils who are at Stage 2 and above on the register of special needs. These set targets for pupils to which learning strategies are linked; however, in some cases these are too general and lack a tight focus. Pupils at Stage 5 on the register are provided with satisfactory support from support assistants who are allocated to help them but when this additional support is not available, they struggle to cope with the demands of the curriculum.
37. Provision for pupils with English as an additional language is satisfactory. It is good for those at the early stages of learning English who receive targeted support. The ethos of the school ensures equal access to the whole curriculum regardless of gender, ability or race. However, in the few cases where pupils with special educational needs are

¹ Code of Practice: this gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act.

withdrawn, generally at the same time each week, they regularly miss the lessons which the rest of the class is receiving. The school has not formally identified gifted and talented pupils.

38. Provision for collective worship meets statutory requirements through the lower school, upper school and joint school assemblies. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory but could be more effectively developed: opportunities for reflection in assemblies are somewhat perfunctory at times. Religious education lessons provide pupils with opportunities to learn about the values and beliefs of Christianity and other religious faiths.
39. Provision for social and moral development is good. Teachers provide good role models and stress the importance of positive attitudes and relationships. Circle times provide useful opportunities for pupils to think about and discuss important issues, for example when Year 6 pupils were discussing respect and occasions when they felt it important to show respect or were sad that someone had not shown respect for other people. The peer mediation group enables a group of pupils to work with peers on behaviour issues. In many lessons pupils are encouraged to work together and collaborate, listening to and helping each other. However, despite the willingness of pupils, opportunities for developing responsibility are sometimes missed, for example to help with assemblies.
40. Cultural development is satisfactory. Opportunities are provided to help develop and expand an awareness of their own and other peoples' culture through the various trips and visitors already referred to. In art, pupils have explored art forms from different artists and different cultures through painting, collage and sculpture. Although pupils' multi-cultural experiences are broadened through religious education and through some assembly themes, such as Eid, this is an area that could be further developed.
41. Overall, the school has improved the curriculum opportunities offered to pupils since the last inspection.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

42. Arrangements for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare are satisfactory. The headteacher is the nominated child protection officer and has had appropriate initial training but neither she nor any member of staff has received recent training. However, most teachers are well experienced and sensitive to the needs and circumstances of pupils and can recognise and properly respond to symptoms of abuse and maltreatment. The headteacher is also the nominated 'Looked after teacher' and a 'looked after child' has been enrolled in the school in recent months.
43. The school is generally a safe and clean place although some of the plumbing leaves much to be desired and results in smelly and leaking toilets. Parents have expressed considerable concern about these, especially the outside toilets. However, despite being somewhat smelly and poorly illuminated they cannot be considered as posing a health hazard. The surface of the playground has several defects, especially around drains and trees where insufficient care has been given to the laying of new tarmac and these can and do result in pupils tripping and falling. However, the high incidence of untied shoelaces constitutes a far greater potential hazard. Inside the school no hazards or serious defects were noted. The buildings are well maintained and cleaned, fire exits are appropriately signed, safety equipment is in place and procedures are tested. Teachers take care with materials and tools and err on the side of safety, for example, rather than being allowed to taste horseradish sauce pupils were permitted only to sniff it in a lesson on the Jewish Passover.

44. Medical arrangements are satisfactory. The school has a medical room and receives regular visits from the school nurse. Staff are given appropriate training in coping with medical conditions, for example in the use of 'epi pens' when there are pupils with serious allergies.
45. Procedures for monitoring and improving personal support and guidance are satisfactory. Attendance data is entered into a computer and analysed by both the school and the educational welfare officer. The school has sent out numerous letters to encourage parents to reduce the levels of lateness and unauthorised absences, and individual situations are followed up appropriately, but with little effect. Pupils and parents comment that there are no sanctions for lateness. There is little doubt that attendance procedures have in fact improved since the last inspection with tighter control over coding of absences and closer monitoring. Nevertheless, there remains much to do to address the poor attendance statistics.
46. The school has an effective strategy in place for promoting good behaviour and almost all members of staff implement this strategy to good effect. The procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour are sound but pupils report that many incidents are either not reported or not responded to. Where incidents are responded to the procedures ensure a swift resolution. The school now has a much clearer idea as to what constitutes good behaviour and a more realistic recognition of the need for effective strategies than before.
47. Arrangements for monitoring pupils' personal development are satisfactory. The school takes care to respond to pupils' social, personal and emotional needs in a supportive way. Staff know pupils well, which helps them to recognise patterns of behaviour and attendance that might be a cause of concern. Although there are no formal procedures for monitoring the personal development of all pupils, informal monitoring is good.
48. The school has worked hard to develop assessment and has been successful in several areas since the last inspection. Overall, there are satisfactory systems in place for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress. Procedures are good in English and mathematics, where the school has been part of a local education authority pilot project in Formative and Summative Tracking. The school has based its assessments on the results of the National Curriculum tests for seven and eleven year old pupils in English and mathematics and the optional tests for Years 3,4 and 5, together with other reliable levelling assessment tasks and tests. The data from these assessments is used with teacher assessment of work, specific set tasks and work samples to analyse information and to track pupils' progress in a systematic and statistically-based manner.
49. The emphasis on staff training in assessment and target setting has had successful results in some areas in the non-core subjects. However, a high staff turnover has meant that progress, although satisfactory, has been limited. In most subjects the school has been developing a system of planning and assessment based on learning objectives. The school is now working on a common format for recording tied into the half-termly and termly units of work using the three levels provided by the QCA 'Expectations' documents. This will help teachers to set and monitor targets in all subject areas and should have a positive impact on pupils' progress. There are no assessment procedures in place for religious education and this is unsatisfactory. At the Foundation Stage, teachers satisfactorily monitor children's progress towards the Early Learning Goals.

50. Assessment is used to support pupils' progress. It is used well in English and mathematics to track pupils' progress and set targets which inform future planning. However, in other subjects not all teachers use the information available to them sufficiently to plan work according to pupils' need. Also pupils are not involved sufficiently in their own assessment or made aware of the targets they are aiming for and how they will reach these standards.
51. Pupils who have English as an additional language are carefully assessed on entry to school so that support can be appropriately targeted. Their progress is regularly monitored and adjustments are made to the teaching programme in light of their progress. Samples of work are retained. Their performance in National Curriculum tests at the end of Years 2 and 6 has been monitored by the school and the local authority and all indications are that there are no significant differences in attainment between pupils with English as an additional language and others once the former have achieved a reasonable level of competence in English.
52. There are appropriate aims for the support of pupils with special educational needs and a positive ethos in place to provide for their needs. Targets in the individual education plans are regularly reviewed. The new co-ordinator has identified that a number of pupils have remained at the same stage for too long or may not be receiving the correct amount of support. There are plans to make a systematic review of their needs. There are consistent procedures to inform teaching assistants of the objectives, and there is good liaison between teachers and teaching assistants as well as regular meetings with the special educational needs co-ordinator.
53. The school works hard to meet the range of special needs among its pupils. It provides well for the educational and behavioural needs of pupils and a specialist in emotional and behavioural difficulties works closely with the school and provides weekly sessions for specific pupils. There are good and well-established relationships with outside agencies, such as the Learning Support Service, the Speech and Language Service and the educational psychologists.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

54. Overall, parents have a positive view of the school. They believe it to be a good school which does well by their children. They report that their children are happy and receive a good education; they comment favourably about the quality and dedication of teachers and appreciate how the school helps their children to mature. They were, however, critical about the quantity and quality of information from the school about what is taught, and also the level of homework and range of extra-curricular activities and way the school works with parents and handles their complaints. Parents were particularly critical of the toilets. Inspectors support parents' concerns about the toilets and the limited information about the curriculum. The inspection team found that the school has since addressed the inconsistency in the application of the homework policy and that the range of extra-curricular activities is better than in most primary schools. They feel the school is working well with parents and that it is trying to improve the effectiveness of its links with them. However, judged by the responses to the parents' questionnaire, parents now have a much more positive view of the school than at the time of the last inspection, when there was a high degree of dissatisfaction.
55. Liaison with parents of pupils identified with special educational needs is good. Parents are made aware of the targets set in the individual education plans and invited to help their children to meet them. Parents are involved in the regular review procedure. There are appropriate procedures in place to involve parents of children with statements of

educational needs. Wherever possible, the school involves parents of pupils with English as an additional language in discussing the additional support provided. The school has recognised that links with some parents from minority ethnic groups remain underdeveloped despite their best efforts.

56. The quality of information for parents is satisfactory, as are the links between parents and the school. The annual governor's report is fully compliant with requirements and is well written and informative. Parents were critical that there was no prospectus but a draft prospectus has been produced and will fully satisfy requirements. However, the absence of a published prospectus is a weakness. A better level of attendance by parents at parents' meetings would help to improve communications. Annual reports on pupils are good. They inform parents of their children's progress and attainment and give indication of where effort needs to be focused. Detailed attendance figures are now provided as recommended in the last report. The Thornhill School Association makes a particularly valuable contribution, both in providing social activities and in raising funds for the school. Parents provide an informative weekly newsletter. Overall, little has changed since the last inspection.
57. Parents make a good contribution to the life of the school. A small group look after the library and have been particularly successful in obtaining a good stock of books. Parents come in to help with lessons, especially in the younger classes, and with other tasks around the school. They also help in accompanying pupils on school trips. Many parents assist the work of the school by providing resources at home, taking their children to places of interest and engaging private tutors. Thus pupils' general knowledge is expanded and they are helped to achieve better results in national tests. However, there are many parents who are unable to help their children in these ways, but the school manages to ensure that children are not disadvantaged.
58. Homework is regularly set and marked in some subjects. There is a considerable divergence of view between parents as to whether there is too much or too little. Inspectors concluded the balance was about right.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

59. The headteacher provides sound leadership, well supported by a very able deputy headteacher. The partnership between them is good and effective. They receive good support from two assistant heads, one responsible for co-ordinating the Foundation Stage and Years 1 and 2, the other one co-ordinating Years 3 to 6. The headteacher is increasingly delegating more responsibility to the management team and this is having a positive effect on the organisation of the school and is increasing the management experiences and opportunities of the team. Some of the team have obtained additional management qualifications and they are now more able to use their expertise to contribute to the management of the school. The headteacher and governors have chosen the right development priorities as to how the school can improve its work and governors play a full part in shaping the school's direction. The school's aims are reflected in most of its work. Major aspects of its work are satisfactorily monitored and steps are taken to put things right. It makes sound use of its resources and applies the principles of best value well.
60. The chair of the governing body is knowledgeable and is active in supporting the school's improvement. Governors have in place an appropriate range of committees, which give them a good oversight of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are well informed through their own regular visits, reports from the headteacher and

curriculum leaders, and contact with parents. They have a good understanding of their responsibilities and are active in their role of monitoring provision. They provide a very full and well-written annual report for parents but have not yet published a school prospectus. The finance committee and full governing body are pro-active in setting the budget to support the school's improvements. For instance, they have decided that all pupils in the school must learn to play a musical instrument and they have good plans for spending the surplus budget on improving the buildings for Foundation Stage children. They have successfully introduced appraisal and performance management procedures and policies that have been agreed with the staff.

61. The school improvement plan sets useful priorities for improvement over a three-year period. These priorities help channel the school's energies in the right areas. Governors are closely involved in formulating the plan and active in identifying priorities and supporting them through financial planning. The plans for English, mathematics and physical education are good and for other subjects are satisfactory. The school's ethos has a positive effect on the quality of pupils' learning, attitudes, behaviour and personal development. The school is now well placed to make further improvement.
62. Satisfactory procedures are in place for the induction of new staff into the life of the school and are well managed. New staff are paired with more established colleagues to offer appropriate support and guidance. Because of high staff turnover, the school is currently formalising its procedures for staff induction, building on a variety of existing informal systems.
63. The role of curriculum co-ordinators is developing well, except in religious education, where it is unsatisfactory. Co-ordinators are active in contributing to the school improvement plan, but continuity of the role is hampered by staff turnover. The school would do well to introduce formal co-ordinator systems so that newly appointed co-ordinators can easily see what has already been achieved and what still needs improving. Teachers receive appropriate support in their teaching from the deputy headteacher and provision is made for curriculum leaders to have time away from their class to develop their areas of responsibility. The teaching and learning policy provides sound guidance on classroom management and organisation.
64. Currently the monitoring of teaching and learning is satisfactorily carried out by the headteacher and management team, and by some curriculum co-ordinators and external agencies. Overall, the subject co-ordinators' contribution is satisfactory; several are new to their roles and lack a shared understanding of how they will monitor teaching and standards. Additional training for staff is likely to support this process to become more rigorous and further improve the good teaching in the school. There is a planned programme for reviewing pupils' work and formally assessing it. The recently introduced policy, 'Monitoring standards and quality', together with the monitoring programme is likely to help the school develop this area further.
65. The school has made good progress in implementing best value principles. It seeks several quotations for major expenditure items, such as its investment in computers, before making a choice. The computerised accounts are supplemented with help from the borough to provide the headteacher and governors with up-to-date financial statements so they have relevant information for financial decision making. The effectiveness of the decisions, such as the deployment of the deputy headteacher and co-ordinator for special needs, is to be monitored. The school seeks the views of parents and parent focus groups, for instance, the library and playground groups, to ensure that funds are put to optimum use. Taking into account the good quality of

education the school provides, the overall improving standards of attainment, pupils' good progress and the school's commitment to raising standards further, the school provides good value for money.

66. The special educational needs co-ordinator is new to the post. She is well qualified and knowledgeable. She has effectively assessed areas, which need developing, and these form the basis for a good development plan. Good and relevant training is provided for the learning support assistants. A member of the governing body takes responsibility for special educational needs. The governing body is active in clarifying and updating the policy. It meets its statutory obligations in relation to the Code of Practice.
67. Sound use is made of resources and grants to help the school achieve its priorities. Funding for a major building improvement will be spent wisely on accommodation for the youngest children. The funds allocated for specific purposes, such as support for pupils with special educational needs and those who have English as an additional language, have been properly spent. Learning support assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning, especially in English.
68. The school makes satisfactory use of computers in classrooms and for school administration. Pupils are satisfactorily developing new computer skills and these should improve further when the new computers arrive. School administration uses word processing and spreadsheets to deal efficiently with routine aspects of its work. The school is appropriately staffed to meet pupils' needs. Learning resources are good in English, with a wide range of reading material. They are barely adequate in most other subjects and are unsatisfactory in ICT. However, the school sensibly uses a local teachers' centre from which it borrows resources to make up shortfalls and as a result pupils' progress does not suffer. The school's accommodation is generally satisfactory. However, there is need to improve the state of the outside toilets and the school lacks a secure outside play area with large apparatus and wheeled toys for children in the Reception class. The Nursery is well provided for, but is unattractive. The imminent building plans will be welcomed.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

69. In order to build upon the many strengths of the school and further improve the standard of work and quality of the education provided, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- **Raise standards in religious education by:**
 - increasing the time allocated for teaching the subject throughout the school but particularly in Years 1 and 2; [paragraphs 5, 12, 24]
 - ensuring that all elements of the syllabus are taught in class lessons and that pupils have more opportunities to record what they have learned. [paragraphs 12, 163, 158]
- **Continue to develop assessment practice and procedures throughout the school, and make greater use of the information by:**
 - reviewing the current assessment procedures in the Foundation Stage to ensure that all children experience fully the wide range of well-planned activities on offer; [paragraphs 2, 23, 32, 73]
 - ensuring that the information gained is used consistently to assist planning to meet the needs of all pupils in all subjects; [paragraph 50]
 - analysing work and matching attainment against National Curriculum levels in all classes; [paragraphs 10, 114]
 - ensuring that teachers' short-term plans identify more precisely what pupils of different abilities, including those who are not fully fluent in English, are expected to learn and do by the end of the session. [paragraphs 26, 29, 111, 133]
- ***Meet the needs of pupils identified as having special educational needs by:**
 - ensuring targets in the individual education plans are sharp, focused and achievable; [paragraph 36]
 - reviewing the stages pupils are currently on to monitor their progress; [paragraph 52]
 - ensuring that all teachers plan for the needs of the pupils more consistently and in particular where there is no additional support provided, especially in the case of pupils with statements. [paragraphs 15, 30]
- ***Improve the frequency and rigour with which teaching and learning in subjects other than English and mathematics are monitored and evaluated, providing, where necessary, guidance and training for staff who are to be involved.** [paragraphs 34, 63, 64, 116, 127, 133, 138, 148, 163]
- ***Take further measures to improve pupils' attendance and punctuality by:**
 - setting specific, realistic and measurable goals and deadlines for improvements;
 - continuing to emphasise to parents the importance of regular attendance and punctuality by their children;
 - seeking the support of relevant outside agencies to work closely with families whose children have poor records of attendance and punctuality. [paragraphs 21, 45]

** These issues has already been identified by the school*

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

- The length of the school day which is below the minimum recommend time in Years 3 to 6. [paragraph 31]
- Improve the quality of the outside toilets. [paragraphs 43, 54, 68]
- Implement the school's plans to improve provision for the Foundation Stage. [paragraphs 68, 73, 85]
- The quality of teachers' marking of pupils' work so that comments encourage pupils and inform them about ways to improve their work. [paragraph 25]
- Raise teachers' expectations of the quality of presentation of pupils' work. [paragraphs 8, 111]

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	97
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	37

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	22	38	33	3	0	0
Percentage	1	23	39	34	3	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y7
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	431
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		101

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y7
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	-	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	5	109

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	96

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	15
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	27

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.7
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	2.6
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	27	33	60

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	21	20	21
	Girls	29	31	28
	Total	50	51	49
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	71 (71)	85 (76)	82 (85)
	National	84 (82)	86 (85)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	19	20	23
	Girls	29	27	31
	Total	48	47	54
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	80 (71)	78 (85)	90 (83)
	National	n/a (84)	n/a (88)	n/a (88)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	30	21	51

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	11	16	19
	Girls	24	21	27
	Total	35	37	46
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	69 (72)	73 (75)	90 (85)
	National	75 (75)	71(72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	12	17	15
	Girls	23	21	21
	Total	35	38	37
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	69 (72)	75 (72)	71 (75)
	National	n/a (70)	n/a (72)	n/a (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	12
Black – African heritage	5
Black – other	10
Indian	4
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	14
Chinese	4
White	262
Any other minority ethnic group	72

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes:

YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	19.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.9:1
Average class size	29.5

Education support staff:

YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	215

Qualified teachers and support staff: Nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	37
Number of pupils per FTE adult	13:1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	10
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	9

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	1

FTE means full-time equivalent.

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	4	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.

Financial information

Financial year	April 2000 - March 2001
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£

Total income	1056500
Total expenditure	1061245
Expenditure per pupil	2412
Balance brought forward from previous year	99459
Balance carried forward to next year	94714

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out
Number of questionnaires returned

450
58

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	64	33	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	48	41	9	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	21	71	3	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	19	31	31	13	6
The teaching is good.	40	41	0	13	6
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	22	55	19	2	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	57	40	3	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	47	40	7	0	7
The school works closely with parents.	16	54	16	9	5
The school is well led and managed.	22	53	14	5	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	24	76	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	11	44	30	0	16

Summary of parents' and carers' responses

All the issues raised by parents are included in the summary on page 11.

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

70. Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well and are likely to attain the Early Learning Goals in language and literacy and mathematical development. The majority are likely to exceed these standards in communication, personal, social and emotional development, creative development, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development. Children enter the Reception class in three groups so that at the time of the inspection some of the children had only been in school for two weeks, while many children had newly entered the Nursery in September. In the Nursery, the majority of children attend full-time, with only nine of the youngest children attending part-time – five in the morning and four in the afternoon.
71. On entry to the Nursery children display a wide range of abilities. While all the children in the Nursery enter the Reception classes, only 40 per cent of the children in the current Reception class have been to the school's Nursery. However, the majority have had pre-school experience. Children enter the Reception class in the year in which they will be five. Currently, there is only one Reception class of 25 children, these having been admitted in September. In January, another class will open to take the younger children. Baseline assessment undertaken in the previous year suggests that many children enter the Reception with attainment above the local authority average. From inspection evidence it is likely that the majority of children currently in the Reception will match the local authority average in communication, language and literacy skills and mathematical skills. It is likely that most children will exceed the average in personal, social and emotional development. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator supports this view.
72. There are a number of children in both the Nursery and Reception classes with special educational needs. Teachers and classroom assistants within the classroom setting mainly give them good support. Appropriate provision is made for children at an early stage of acquiring English and in the Nursery they are sensitively encouraged to join in. Parents and carers are encouraged to help their children settle first thing in the morning. In the Nursery parents spend time with their children and work with them for the first 15 minutes, which is particularly effective in settling the younger children. Home visits are made before children start in the Nursery and there are good procedures for the induction of children into both the Nursery and Reception classes.
73. While the accommodation is satisfactory, there are certain significant limitations. The Reception room is bright and attractive, but there is no easy access to an outdoor area, although the teacher provides children with regular supervised opportunities to work and play outside in the main playground. The Nursery provides a calm atmosphere and, despite the rather gloomy aspect, the teacher has done her best to create a bright and welcoming environment. However, the outdoor area for the Nursery has not been improved since the last inspection. It is damp and muddy and the size and shape of the area is inadequate for children to run about freely or to use wheeled vehicles safely. However, the Nursery makes good use of the main play area to promote children's physical development. Because there is limited visual access between the two rooms that compose the Nursery suite and also to see what is going on in the outside area, there are considerable difficulties in supervising the activities children choose. This seriously limits the opportunities for adults to intervene in children's play. This impacts negatively on children's social development. Also the monitoring of individual children's

experiences is not sufficiently rigorous to provide teachers with information which will help ensure that all children receive a balanced curriculum and challenge the more able.

Personal, social and emotional development

74. By the end of the Reception year, the majority of children are likely to exceed the Early Learning Goals in this area. This is because the adults provide good role models and have high and consistent expectations of children's conduct. Children in the Reception class are already settled in well and many are very confident and very secure in the routines. They know what is expected of them. Many happily choose from the range of activities, showing a good degree of independence. Children have good relationships with each other and with the adults who help them. The provision of freely chosen activities is well thought out in both the Reception and the Nursery classes. Where there is close adult supervision, children behave well and concentrate well on their activities. In the Nursery at snack time and lunch-time children talk together and to adults, help to serve each other and say "thank you" without reminders.
75. Teaching in this area is good in the Reception class. Children are managed well and adults have clear expectations of their behaviour. Children have participated in making their class rules. There are regular opportunities for children to gather together and discuss their feelings, such as thinking about how to solve playground disputes. One child told how she likes to play with her brother in the playground: if he doesn't she feels "irritated with him". Children learn about the beliefs of others through, for example, preparing for different festivals. In the Nursery, teaching is mainly satisfactory. Where adults work closely with children they are able to encourage them to talk together and co-operate.

Communication, language and literacy

76. By the time children complete the Reception year it is likely that the majority will attain the Early Learning Goals in language and literacy, and that many will exceed the goals for communication. Many of the children in Reception are confident speakers and well able to communicate their needs and feelings. A small but significant number of children are less confident and have unclear speech. Most children enjoy setting up imaginative games. In the Reception they acted out the story of 'Bear hunt' using their voices well for dramatic effect. In both the Reception and the Nursery children listen well to their teacher and each other. They particularly enjoy listening to stories and many are eager to answer questions. Particular care is taken in both classes to ensure that children with special educational needs and those in the early stages of acquiring English are clear about what is expected of them.
77. The provision effectively supports the development of language and literacy skills. In the Nursery 'office area' children enjoy making telephone calls and filling in the diary. There is a good session at the beginning of the Nursery day in which parents and carers help their children identify their name cards, and then spend time reading books with them or playing games. Children experiment with writing, for example, an invitation to a teddy bear's picnic. A number of older and more able children in the Nursery are already beginning to copy their names. In the Reception, a group of children showed that they could draw the main characters from the story of 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears'. Children of average and higher ability use recognisable letters in their writing and write their own names.

78. Children in both classes know how to handle books correctly. In the Nursery, children regularly sit and 'read' books in the class library. Children visit the local library. Reception age children develop their knowledge of letter sounds: the morning routine provided the opportunity for children to sort their names so that those with the initial sound 't' separated their names from the others. Children all enjoy looking at books and they love stories. They are keen to look at books with adults, and those of average ability begin to pick up and read regularly repeated phrases.
79. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good in Reception and satisfactory in the Nursery. In Reception, adults are effectively employed to help develop speaking skills, and where there is adult support for group activities, this is also true for the Nursery class. Adults talk to children and introduce new vocabulary, for example, in the Nursery where groups worked with the Nursery Nurse to investigate autumn seeds and fruits. However, the organisation of the Nursery suite and the wide range of activities provided make it difficult for adults in the Nursery to interact successfully with children to extend their language, for example, in the role-play area. In both classes, the teachers develop the children's love of books, and good questioning encourages children to think about the events and characters. Elements of the literacy framework are well used in the Reception class. There is good attention to children learning their letter sounds, through rhymes such as 'Pat a Cake', and making cakes to put the initial letters of their names on.

Mathematical development

80. This area of learning is well provided for so that it is likely that by the end of the Reception year children will exceed the Early Learning Goals. The numeracy session has been adapted in the Reception class and gives the opportunity for children to practise their counting skills. For example, they order the five 'furry bears' and enjoy singing the number song and counting down from five with their fingers. In the playground, they re-enacted the story of 'We're going on a Bear Hunt', demonstrating position with actions – "they can't get over it – they can't get under it". In the role-play area they set out the bowls and spoons for the three bears and measured and estimated to make bibs for their bears. In both the Reception and the Nursery classes there is good provision for children to sort, classify and match.
81. Teaching in the Reception class is good and in the Nursery it is satisfactory. There are many good opportunities for children to develop mathematical awareness through the provision of well thought-out activities, especially where adult support is planned. The teacher in Reception gave children the opportunity to taste different breakfast cereals so that they could make a chart to illustrate their favourite cereal. In the Nursery children can sort and classify seeds and conkers and some children are able to count to 15. In both classes, children have the opportunity to explore sand and water activities. They learn about shape through making collage. Learning is reinforced with number rhymes and songs.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

82. Children enter the Nursery with a basic understanding of the world, which is well developed through the planned provision. This is well built on in the Reception class so that it is likely that the majority of children will exceed the Early Learning Goals by the end of the year. Children learn about the natural environment through visiting a local nature reserve and children in the Nursery learn about their area on a walk to the local library. In both classes children are studying the autumn nuts and fruits. Reception children plant conkers. They can identify acorns, conkers and sycamore spinners and know that, in time, they will grow into trees.

83. Children in both classes can select appropriate materials to make three-dimensional models, and in the Reception they use construction kits to make effective models of Goldilock's house. They learn about 'ourselves'. In the Nursery they paint their portraits and in the Reception class they use a mirror to draw their faces, showing a very good attention to detail and likeness. In both classes, children use the computer independently. They use the mouse to click and drag icons. For example, children in the Reception can arrange bowls on a table and add spoons. They know how to print their work.
84. Teaching in the Reception class is very good because of the provision of well-selected activities. In the Nursery the provision is good and well thought out, but the difficulties of supervising all the activities mean that they are not always successfully developing children's learning, especially that of the younger children. In both classes, where adults are involved, they ask well-focused questions to develop children's thinking and assess their learning. There is already the basis for developing children's understanding of time passing in the attractive photographic displays of children on the entry to the classes. Regular visits are planned, so that children visit the local farm, the Museum of Childhood, a Hindu Temple and a mosque.

Physical development

85. Despite the limitations on outdoor play facilities in the Foundation Stage, it is likely that by the end of the year, children will exceed the Early Learning Goals. This is because there are planned opportunities for children to have lessons in physical development in the school hall. Additionally, Reception children have the opportunity to develop their climbing and balancing skills by having timetabled sessions in the main outdoor playground and using the large equipment.
86. Children in the Reception work hard in their physical development lessons. They listen well to instructions, follow commands and try hard to improve their performance. They behave very well, and pay good attention to space, moving without bumping into others. They run, skip, hop, jump and develop control by balancing on the balls of their feet. They develop their skills of throwing and catching using beanbags. However, children in the Reception class have no access to a secure play area with large apparatus to develop their climbing skills. In the Nursery, children develop their skills of climbing on the large apparatus in the classroom and when using the apparatus in the small outdoor area. It was not possible to observe children working with their teacher in the hall.
87. Teaching in the Reception is sometimes very good. The teacher helps children develop their skills through a structured approach to learning and the use of good demonstration. Time is given for children to warm up and cool down. There is good encouragement to children and praise for their efforts and challenge to improve.

Creative development

88. There is a good emphasis on creative development in the Reception and Nursery planning, so that it is likely that children will exceed the Early Learning Goals by the end of the Reception year. The children experiment with colour and texture to create paintings. In both the Nursery and Reception classes they explore a range of media. They cut out shapes using plasticine and playdough and make collages using natural material. In the Nursery children apply paint to leaves very carefully to make good prints. In the Reception children work equally carefully to use wax crayons to make leaf rubbings. They used a computer paint program to fill in the features on a circle to make a bear's face.

89. In the Reception class the role-play area provides for good stimulating play. Children arranged the three bears' table and acted out the story. Children in both classes set up imaginative games, using the tracks, construction material, dolls and soft toys. Reception children sing rhymes and songs and make shakers to enhance the rhythm of the music. Nursery children can beat drums to the rhythm of the songs they sing.
90. The quality of teaching and learning is good in the Reception and in the Nursery. Creative development is promoted through all areas of learning as well as through specifically focused activities. In both classes it is better where adults give support to creative play. Provision of equipment, paint, collage and modelling materials is good and children are encouraged to experiment. The role-play area in the Reception is well equipped and matches the current classroom topic. Although the school has invested heavily on resources in the Nursery many are well worn and in need of replacement.

ENGLISH

91. In the National Curriculum tests in 2000, pupils aged seven achieved results in reading and writing which were below the national average for their age, although they were average for pupils from schools with a similar social background. In the tests for eleven year olds, results were above the national average and well above those for pupils from similar schools. In the tests in 2001, results for seven year olds have shown an improvement, but those for eleven year olds have gone down, largely because of the high number of pupils with special educational needs in the year group taking the tests. The evidence of the inspection suggests that the standards achieved by pupils currently in Year 2 are as expected for their age in reading and writing, but pupils in Year 6 are achieving standards above those expected. This is because of the effective steps the school has taken to improve, in particular, the quality of pupils' writing. Test results indicate that girls are achieving better than boys at the end of Years 2 and 6; the school has already taken steps to improve the range of books available for boys and plans are in hand to develop boys' writing.
92. Standards of speaking and listening are good throughout the school. In whole-class sessions pupils generally listen well and work well together when teachers give them the opportunity to work in pairs. They express their opinions well, as in a Year 2 lesson on library skills, when pupils gave detailed descriptions of what they found funny in an illustration. Pupils listen well to the teacher when he or she is reading or speaking, and in a Year 4 lesson they contributed well to a discussion of an imaginary incident in the school, which they were then to write up as a newspaper report. In Year 5 they developed their ideas about life in 1840 thoughtfully, as they spoke and listened to others talking about it. Pupils also make good use of opportunities to speak in other lessons, such as religious education and art, where in a Year 6 lesson, for example, pupils with special educational needs talked well about their own painting and collage work. Pupils of all ages also talk enthusiastically about the books they are reading.
93. Pupils in Year 2 achieve the standards in reading which are expected for their age. Most pupils understand what is meant by the title and author of a book. The majority do not yet use their understanding of sounds fully to help them read new words. Only the higher attaining pupils are confident in their reading and read with good expression; they also know how to use the index of a book. Pupils make good progress in reading in Key Stage 2 and by the time they are in Year 6 they all read fluently, are able to locate books in the school library and use contents and index pages to locate information. Higher attaining pupils are able to read with good understanding, retell the story and say which parts they like best. They read a range of authors. Standards are above average in Year 6.

94. Standards of writing achieved by pupils in Year 2 are as expected for their age. Pupils of average attainment write with a style of handwriting which is regular but not yet joined. They use joining words such as 'and' and 'or', but sometimes put in a full stop where it is not needed. They write poetry, such as a Food Poem, but spelling is not always accurate. Lower attaining pupils have not understood linking words such as 'but' and their handwriting is not yet regular, but they can write a series of instructions, for instance, for making a cup of tea. Higher attaining pupils use punctuation such as commas and exclamation marks well and are able to complete a series of commands. They are able to use the past tense when writing, and can write about topics such as 'Why I am special.' By the time they reach Year 3, pupils are writing neatly, with a reasonable proportion using a joined-up and fluent style.
95. Pupils in Year 6 achieve standards in writing above those expected for their age. They have written very effectively in the style of a newspaper reporter about the terrorist attacks in New York. Higher attaining pupils have effectively converted headlines into an opening sentence for the report. They have written good poetry using personification, for instance, about an 'Angry Television'. They are able to identify elements of metaphor and simile in writing. Average pupils have written in a report style about the eating habits of dinosaurs. Lower attaining pupils have identified fact and fiction in a newspaper article, and also completed personification poems, but some of their work is unfinished and capital letters are not always used appropriately. The work of last year's Year 6 pupils shows that a good range of writing is produced, including autobiography and persuasive writing, as well as instructions for making a sandwich!
96. As a result of the teaching they receive, pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2 and good progress in Years 3 to 6, where a good proportion of pupils are able to achieve a level which is higher than expected. The overall quality of teaching is good. It is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, but there are also examples of good and very good teaching. It is good in Years 3 to 6. No unsatisfactory teaching of English was observed during the inspection.
97. In Years 1 and 2 teachers are confident in their subject knowledge and involve pupils well, for instance, in a shared writing session in Year 1, when they were writing a story together in the style of 'Handa's Surprise'. In a good lesson in Year 2 the teacher worked well together with a classroom assistant to help pupils identify the different sounds in a word. She also taught them effectively to recognise question forms by asking 'silly questions'. Sometimes, however, pupils have to stay too long on the carpet at the beginning of a lesson and begin to lose interest, or teachers do not vary the pace and tone of their voice sufficiently to engage pupils fully in what they are doing. Sometimes also there is not sufficient support to enable the teacher to include a pupil with special educational needs appropriately in what the rest of the class are doing.
98. In Years 3 to 6 teachers plan lessons well, following the national strategy but using it flexibly to meet the needs of their pupils. Lessons are generally conducted at a good pace, so that pupils do not lose interest, and teachers work effectively with classroom assistants and support teachers to ensure that the needs of all pupils are met. Teachers have established very good relationships with pupils, which means that pupils are eager to learn. They also use 'English group' sessions outside the literacy hour well to develop a range of skills, including reading and writing, as well as using the computer in the classroom to access information.
99. Pupils' attitudes to English are good. They enjoy reading and are eager to participate in shared reading and writing sessions. They work well together in pairs with 'speaking partners' when they are asked to suggest examples to one another. Older pupils work well together in groups and contribute effectively to whole-class discussion.

100. The school has a good range of books, both fiction and non-fiction, both in classrooms and the library. It is introducing lessons on library skills, so that pupils can make better use of the library than they do at present. It has also invited authors, such as Jacqueline Wilson and Anthony Horowitz, to the school, to discuss their books with pupils and so foster their love of reading. The new co-ordinator has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school's provision. She has devised good strategies to improve writing and phonic skills, which staff are implementing well. Teachers are also encouraging pupils to take books home to read, in order to maintain and improve standards in this area. The recently appointed literacy governor is also well informed and is taking a positive interest in developments. The school uses the information from tests well to analyse its provision and set targets for improvement. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.

MATHEMATICS

101. Lessons observed and written work show that by the end of Year 2 most pupils are attaining the expected standards for their age in all four areas of the mathematics curriculum, (number, algebra, space and shape, and data handling) and this is in line with the national test results for the years 2000 and 2001. In 2000 the number of pupils achieving the higher levels in the national tests was higher than for similar schools. Results for 2001 show that the proportion of pupils obtaining the higher Level 2 and Level 3 scores was lower than in the previous year. This must be balanced against the fact that the number of pupils with special educational needs in the 2001 cohort was significantly higher. The general trend since 1999 is that more pupils are attaining the higher Level 2 and Level 3 in mathematics.

102. By the end of Year 6 standards are above the national average in number, algebra and space and shape and in line with national expectations in data handling. National test results in 2000 showed that the number of pupils attaining the expected Level 4 or above was broadly in line with the national average but the number achieving the higher Level 5 was well above the national average. Compared to schools in a similar context, the number of pupils achieving Level 4 and above, and Level 5, was above and well above average respectively.

103. Almost all pupils in Year 1 can describe two-dimensional shapes correctly and the features of a triangle, square, circle and rectangle. About half can describe a hexagon and a pentagon accurately. They are able to pick out the correct shapes by the description and many are able to explain clearly that the difference between a square and a rectangle is that "a square has all four sides the same but a rectangle has two long and two shorter sides". They know that a circle "has only one side but it's curved". Year 2 pupils were seen looking at time and using, investigating and estimating units of time. They know the months of the year, how many days in a week and the number of hours in a day. Many of them are able to think in terms of shorter units of time, such as minutes and seconds. They make estimates such as, in one second I can "blink", "scratch my nose", and "clap my hands". In one minute "I can write my name ten times or count to one hundred in my head", in ten minutes "I can..." and so on. They think about 'more than' and 'less than'. Nine out of ten pupils, when given a number up to 101 can quickly give the number that comes immediately before or after it. A few still get confused when a number crosses from one ten to another, for example, one fewer than 30 or one more than 49. When they were measuring using ten-centimetre strips and metre sticks they understood why it is a good idea to use a ten-centimetre strip to measure a book but not to measure one of the pupils: "he's too big", and "it would take too long". Most are able to use either a ruler or a metre-stick as appropriate to correctly measure books, pencil cases, desks, doors, or a computer.

104. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have a positive attitude to work and generally listen well and settle down quickly and sensibly, keeping on task and working well individually or in pairs and groups. There are a few examples of silly behaviour and some pupils take longer to settle down. Even when pupils are involved in the work it tends to be rather noisy and this has an unsettling effect on some of the pupils. However, overall behaviour is never less than satisfactory and often good. Presentation is often rather scrappy.
105. Pupils in Year 3 adding together groups of two, three or four numbers could explain the strategy they used to get the answers. They counted backwards and forwards in tens and found small differences by counting on or back. Year 4 pupils confidently count up and down in tens, hundreds and thousands. They were learning to partition four-digit numbers, though many were still a little confused, trying to decide which sets of two or three-digit numbers would add to match another number. Pupils in Year 5 were seen working on fraction/decimal equivalents. By the end of the lessons almost all were able to place decimals, fractions and percentages in the correct places on a large number line. In Year 6 many pupils successfully tackle word problems. They showed a good grasp of the strategies involved and talked confidently about 'keywords', which 'units' they were looking for and the 'processes' and 'operations' to be used. They are able to apply the strategies they have been taught to problems which involve a range of mathematical skills, including addition, subtraction, multiplication and division and usually a combination of two or more, in a range of units. Thus they are able to find the cost of a range of items or the amount of change they will expect. For example, they were able to calculate the number of cards of buttons needed, recognising that they cannot buy 'part' cards.
106. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 have positive attitudes. They listen well and take sensible part in discussions. Behaviour is never less than satisfactory and is more often good or even very good, even when they are having trouble understanding what to do. They settle down quickly to work and keep on task, working together well.
107. In the 16 lessons observed, teaching ranged from unsatisfactory to very good, with the majority of lessons being good or very good, particularly in Years 5 and 6 where all lessons seen were at least good and most were very good. Planning is good and is done collaboratively. Most teachers have clear objectives, which they share with the pupils. In the most successful lessons management skills are good, and teachers have a range of behaviour strategies. Teachers know their pupils well and in the best lessons use this knowledge and their assessment of pupils' past work to prepare work suited to their needs. In a few cases the work was not at the appropriate level, which caused confusion and lack of learning. In some lessons the work is at the appropriate level but does not go on to extend the pupils sufficiently so that they can move on to the next stage. Relationships are good among pupils, and between teachers and pupils, and this contributes to a positive ethos in and out of lessons. There is no difference between the performance of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as additional language generally receive suitable support from teachers and learning support assistants.
108. There is clear and effective leadership and a shared commitment and desire to improve. The results of national tests have been analysed, and effective assessment procedures and systems to help pinpoint problem areas put in place, so that pupils with difficulties can be more effectively helped. Homework club, booster classes and springboard classes are all continuing to be used to raise standards further. The numeracy strategy is in place and is being implemented effectively by all members of staff. The ongoing staff training is good, with several teachers giving up weekends to

attend. Future staff training plans are also good. There has been positive co-operation between the co-ordinator and headteacher and the local authority mathematics advisor, with effective monitoring of both the planning and delivery of lessons. There has been good improvement since the last inspection. Standards have risen and targets set for the future are appropriate.

SCIENCE

109. At the time of the last inspection standards were in line with the national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6. Findings from this inspection show that standards at the end of Year 2 are in line with those expected nationally but have improved at the end of Year 6, and are now above the expected level. Improving standards in Years 3 to 6 are partly due to good quality teaching in many classes, a revision of the science curriculum and a greater focus on experimental and investigative science. There is no significant variation in attainment between pupils of different gender or background. Pupils with special educational needs achieve standards that are appropriate for their ages while those with English as an additional language make good progress when support is provided.
110. In 2000, the results of teachers' assessments of seven year olds were below average for the proportion of pupils reaching the expected Level 2 and well above the national average at the higher Level 3 when compared with all and similar schools. Test results for eleven year olds were average when compared with all schools and well above those achieved in similar schools. The performance of girls was higher than that of boys, which mirrors the national picture. In 2001, results at the end of Year 2 dipped at the higher level but improved slightly at the average Level 4 at the end of Year 6. The trend since 1998 has been in line with the national trend.
111. By the age of seven most pupils successfully identify and name the different parts of the human body and a plant. They know that changes in the human body take place over time and understand that some features of appearance can change while others are more stable. Previous work shows that by the end of Year 2 they confidently investigate how sound travels. Many know that it is caused by vibrations and some know that a sound becomes fainter the further we move away from it. Pupils build on their earlier knowledge of materials and know that some materials are better suited for specific purposes, for example, plastic for a raincoat because it is waterproof. Younger pupils in the infants are beginning to use scientific vocabulary with increasing confidence and understanding. They know the five senses and the different part of the body that they see, hear, touch and taste with. Many have a clear understanding of the differences between living and non-living objects and know that living things grow and move. However, overall attainment is just in line with national expectations because work is not always well matched to the National Curriculum. It is not always sufficiently challenging to meet the needs of higher attaining pupils and is sometimes insufficiently adapted to meet the needs of pupils with English as an additional language. In addition, the standards of handwriting and presentation are unsatisfactory.
112. By the age of eleven all aspects of science are given due consideration. Scrutiny of pupils' previous work shows that there is above average attainment in some strands of science as well as good examples of experimental and investigative science tasks. This has a positive effect on pupils' attainment. The youngest pupils in the juniors understand the importance of a fair test and predict, test and refine their investigations into the absorbency of different types of paper. Many pupils in Year 4 confidently describe the main functions of the skeleton and know the names of some of the muscles, such as biceps and triceps, and how they work. They set up experiments with

pulse rates at rest and after moderate exercise and know that exercise affects the pulse rate. Pupils in Year 5 can monitor the rate of evaporation if the container is put in different places, for example, near to the window and the radiator. They are able to explain clearly what they think will happen and why. Year 6 pupils have undertaken experiments with materials and know that some dissolve and some do not. They know that sand does not dissolve and that stirring speeds up the dissolving process. During lessons, they look carefully and record their findings systematically and understand why the test must be fair and that, if certain parts of the experiment were to change, then their results would be different. There is good evidence that work in science has contributed to pupils' literacy skills through writing and to their numeracy skills in the use of tables to present findings and graphs to display information

113. The quality of teaching and learning, including that for pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. Teaching is good in Years 3 to 6 and impacts positively on the quality of learning. During the inspection some very good as well as less than satisfactory practice was observed. In the best practice learning intentions are clearly identified and these are regularly reviewed with pupils to help keep them focused. Most teachers have secure and confident subject knowledge, which is used effectively to develop pupils' understanding and ideas. This was particularly evident in a Year 6 lesson on testing the saturation points of different volumes of water, where the teacher led a lively and profitable discussion, taking care to involve all pupils. Good opportunities were provided for pupils to make predictions and to explain why some things work the way they do. Activities are stimulating, maintaining pupils' interest and learning through the whole lesson. There is good use of lesson time, with a balance between practical investigation and direct teaching. Through probing questions teachers help pupils recall and consolidate their knowledge and understanding and to challenge them to think for themselves. This, for example, led to an interesting discussion in Year 4 when pupils were engaged in finding out about the effect of exercise on the heart. Support staff are very well deployed and have a significant impact on the learning and the generally good progress that the lower attainers make, as demonstrated in Year 2 lesson on changes in the body. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, lessons are not well planned and objectives do not build on pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. In these lessons, teachers' subject knowledge is insecure, introductions are too long and pupils are not involved in practical activities. Learning objectives are not clearly explained or met during the session and work is not sufficiently matched to the differing needs of pupils. As a result, pupils' concentration is not sustained, time is wasted and the lesson loses its science focus.
114. Although planning in all classes follows the QCA scheme of work, it is not matched sufficiently to the National Curriculum and rarely identifies the level at which pupils are expected to work. As a result, teaching does not sufficiently develop and extend higher attaining pupils. Neither the medium nor the short-term planning states clearly what pupils of different abilities, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, will learn by the end of a lesson or a series of lessons.
115. Nearly all pupils are interested in their work and concentrate well for extended periods. They show interest in and enjoyment of science activities particularly when they have the opportunity to engage in purposeful scientific investigation and to take some responsibility for their learning. This was evident, for example, in a Year 6 class during experiments to investigate the saturation point of water. There was a palpable buzz of excitement and evident enjoyment. Behaviour in lessons is always satisfactory and often good. Pupils listen well to instructions and explanations and most are confident in asking questions if they are unsure what they are required to do. This contributes

well to their attainment and progress. They contribute willingly to discussions making many thoughtful and informed observations as in a Year 4 lesson on monitoring the effect of exercise on the heart.

116. The co-ordinator gives good leadership in the subject and is enthusiastic and keen to raise standards. However, her role is insufficiently developed in terms of monitoring and evaluating provision and teaching. A helpful policy and a recently implemented scheme of work support teachers' planning satisfactorily in each year group and ensure good coverage of all the attainment targets. However, not enough reference is made to the National Curriculum when planning. An audit of the subject has been completed and a detailed action plan for its development has been produced. Sufficient and appropriate emphasis is placed on experimental and investigative science following the school's recent focus to develop this aspect of the curriculum. However, National Curriculum test results needs to be more thoroughly analysed in relation to pupils' performance in the different attainment targets. Due to the school emphasis on the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies science is not a focus of development in the school and as a result there has been no recent monitoring of the quality of teaching or learning in science. Although pupils' progress is assessed at the end of the topic there is no ongoing monitoring of attainment and progress to allow effective use in future planning. Marking of work is of variable quality, ranging from a few ticks to useful comments which extend pupils' learning. Homework is not sufficiently used to support the good teaching in science found in Years 3 to 6. Regular and well-planned educational visits and visitors reinforce and consolidate pupils' learning well. Resources are barely satisfactory in quality and quantity and opportunities are limited for the use of ICT to support work or to improve presentation.

ART AND DESIGN

117. Standards by the end of Year 6 are better than expected nationally and better than seen in the last inspection. Although it was possible to see only one lesson in the infants, pupils' work in books and displays around the school indicate that standards are also good by the time pupils reach the end of Year 2. Pupils make good progress in their art and design lessons in developing their knowledge and skills. This is because the curriculum is broad and balanced and provides pupils with a wide range of experiences, including working with malleable materials. Pupils enjoy their lessons. Those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are given the same opportunities as their classmates and learn well.
118. By the end of Year 2 pupils have experienced a variety of media and styles. In Year 1, a classical portrait by the 18th century artist Le Brun is used to stimulate pupils to experiment with different ways of showing textures in fabrics. Pupils use different kinds of pencil marks and paint effects successfully and develop these skills well. In the one lesson seen, pupils carefully mixed paint to create subtle skin shades as a prelude to making life-size self-portraits. Pupils who were in Year 2 last year described how they had worked with Year 6 pupils to produce the large abstract canvases which are framed and displayed in the school. They talked about how they had agreed the designs with their Year 6 partners, which they then transferred to the canvas with chalks or pencil before using poster paint. Year 1 pupils had the opportunity to work with a visiting artist to produce clay relief models for the playground wall.
119. The skills acquired in Years 1 and 2 are successfully built on and developed in Years 3 to 6. Pupils make good use of use sketchbooks, for example in Year 3 to plan and design sculptures, and in Year 5 to practise shading in order to improve their close

observation drawings of domestic objects. In two lessons in Year 6, pupils built on the skills they had acquired in illustrating movement in moving figures. This was done through an analysis of the Matisse painting of Icarus from 'Jazz, 1947', in which pupils in both classes showed they were beginning to successfully identify the effect and composition of the image, and the process the artist had used to create it. From this observation, they built up their own collage images, making decisions about form, composition and materials very effectively to produce good results. The work of known artists, photographers and craftspeople is used well to stimulate pupils to experiment with different styles and effects. Observing different photographed portraits promoted pupils in Year 4 to make their own portraits from different angles and perspectives.

120. Pupils work hard during their art lessons and show a high level of motivation. Younger pupils work carefully and follow instructions to produce good results. Older pupils in Year 6 show that they can appreciate different styles and express well thought-out opinions. One pupil said that he found analysing paintings difficult at first, but, "It's getting easier". Throughout the school, pupils co-operate well, share tools and materials, and advise and help each other. They are particularly respectful of each other's opinions and celebrate the successes of their classmates.
121. Teaching is mainly good or better. In Year 6, the teaching was good with some excellent practice. Teachers have good subject knowledge and are supported by good planning. Visual resources are used well to stimulate pupils' artistic eye and a good selection of media and materials enables pupils to achieve good results. Teachers pay good attention to demonstrating skills, as in Year 4 when the teacher showed pupils the different ways they could use a viewfinder. Teachers' instructions are clear and provide good guidance to pupils during lessons. Lessons are well structured to give time for pupils to review their previous learning, and teachers carefully lead them into the new learning. There are high expectations of all pupils. In one Year 6 lesson there was particularly good support for pupils with special educational needs, so that they were given key vocabulary to help them fill in their analysis of the Matisse painting. The school environment and visits are used effectively to stimulate work; for example, the Year 4 residential visit last year is used as an opportunity for pupils to study symbols in art and to produce very effective imaginary maps.
122. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge. She has adapted the scheme of work based on national guidance, and themes are well selected to give pupils a wide range of experiences. There are good plans in place to develop assessment in the subject and produce a portfolio of work to provide better evidence of the range of ability. There is a good emphasis on providing a wide cultural basis, for example, looking at Islamic and African art and studying how people express their faith through art. Pupils have the opportunity to visit galleries and museums, such as the National Portrait Gallery. Parents volunteer their expertise and support in the classroom, and visiting artists have worked with pupils to enhance the outdoor environment with clay and mosaic decorations. There are good links with other curriculum areas such as history, geography and science.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

123. Standards are at the level expected nationally at the end of Years 2 and 6. Discussions with teachers and pupils and work on display and in folders show that the pupils undertake a satisfactory range of activities in which they design, make and evaluate products. The school has effectively maintained standards since the last inspection and has made sound improvement, particularly in developing a broader

range of opportunities for older pupils which has had an impact on their learning. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, achieve well.

124. By the age of seven, pupils understand and can describe clearly how they design and make products. They create designs that are clearly labelled, indicating the materials they are going to use and pay good attention to the associated technical vocabulary. For example, in Year 2 pupils investigate many different types of commercial puppets. They use words like 'join', 'select', 'assemble' and 'template' when explaining their work. When they design their own puppets they record a list of preferred materials. Pupils have a good understanding of several methods of joining, which they show in design notes recording the best way of joining the puppet's body. In both Year 2 lessons seen, pupils were developing good skills in using templates and in cutting, sticking, pinning and sewing their puppets. The teachers' enthusiasm in these lessons and the invaluable help of learning support assistants and volunteer parents promoted the pupils' interest and their attention to detail. They talked knowledgeably and enthusiastically about their designs and how they intended to finish and embellish their puppets. Higher attaining pupils prepared good designs and worked independently. They evaluated their work in simple terms and could explain why some designs, materials and stitches work better than others. Pupils with special educational needs made good progress in developing their designs and their making skills with some support from the learning support assistant.
125. By the age of eleven most pupils create detailed, labelled plans of what they are going to make, with accompanying explanations of the equipment they are going to use. For example, Year 3 pupils design and make wooden picture frames. They work with a range of materials and tools with due regard to safety and awareness of the properties of the materials used. When working with wood they mark, cut, join, strengthen and assemble with increasing precision. Older pupils in the key stage evaluate their products carefully and make adjustments and corrections to their original designs and record clear explanations for their changes. Pupils in Year 6 were buzzing with enthusiasm as they related a project where they had investigated and designed new packaging for chocolate biscuits. They were proud of the products they had made in lessons and had kept them on display at home. They explained in detail the processes they had used to design and make moving vehicles. They recognised design faults and were very aware of the need to fit design to the purpose of the object.
126. Teaching is good. Recent whole-school attention to planning and teaching techniques has had an impact on teaching and learning and over time is likely to have a greater impact on standards. In most lessons learning intentions are clear, and teachers use succinct, clear explanations so that pupils know exactly what they have to do. Teachers' sound subject knowledge and use of a wide range of techniques give them confidence in demonstrations, and pupils respond with enthusiasm. The pace of lessons is appropriate and expectations of behaviour and routines are well established. In response, pupils listen intently, behave well and try hard to do their work. Teachers give pupils good opportunities to choose their own resources and this promotes their independence well. End-of-session discussions are particularly well used to reinforce learning and encourage self-evaluation. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are well supported by learning support assistants. Throughout lessons there is evidence of good relationships between pupils and they share resources and help each other with their work.

127. The co-ordinator is very new to the post but is committed to improving standards in the subject. Currently there is no monitoring of teaching and learning. The subject has a sound development plan and since the last inspection the school has adopted the QCA scheme of work. Medium-term planning is good and provides a secure framework for the development of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. Resources are adequate, although a wider range of tools and materials would provide more challenge for pupils and raise standards.

GEOGRAPHY

128. Standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 are in line with those expected nationally. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when standards in Year 6 were below expectation.

129. Pupils in Year 1 successfully surveyed the class on aspects of leisure in Islington and were able to say what they prefer. Most correctly placed the swimming pool, park and other features on a simple map showing the places in relation to the school. Several pupils expressed their concern at people not using the swimming pool. "The pool will dry up," was a common comment. Year 2 pupils add to their geography knowledge of distant places with the aid of Barnaby Bear and compare some aspects of Islington with areas of the Caribbean when they learn about distant places.

130. Pupils in Year 3 develop satisfactorily their understanding of maps and locality when they explore the environment around the school, and were able to show satisfactory progress when they marked residential, business and leisure areas on an Ordnance Survey map. In a very good Year 6 lesson pupils learned that tourism can have both negative and positive effects and showed very good progress when they were able to articulate some of the arguments for and against in a sensible and sensitive manner, listening carefully to each other's point of view. When studying mountainous areas of the world they make satisfactory use of computer-aided learning.

131. Teaching standards are satisfactory overall, with examples of satisfactory and very good teaching seen. Where it is very good there are good links with other subjects, teachers use skilled and challenging questioning, and the lessons are conducted at a very brisk pace. Pupils have a good attitude to the subject and are keen to learn.

132. Pupils show satisfactory knowledge of areas beyond the United Kingdom and make satisfactory progress in their cultural and good progress in their social development with the good programme of visits to places locally and further afield, including a residential trip to the Cardfields Centre in Essex. The visits programme is supplemented by, for example, parents from other regions of the world talking to pupils about those areas; the visits and talks make a significant impact on pupils' learning. Pupils make good progress, and because of appropriate support from their teachers and classroom assistants, pupils with English as an additional language and those with statements of special educational need make satisfactory progress.

133. The co-ordination of geography is satisfactory and the action plan has relevant priorities. The school has recently adopted the schemes of work of the QCA from which teachers plan their lessons. The planning for pupils for whom English is an additional language and pupils with statements of special educational needs is not yet fully developed. The monitoring of teaching carried out by the headteacher and co-ordinator is not yet sufficiently rigorous. Assessment of pupils' learning is satisfactory, and the school has plans to improve this aspect. Resources are barely adequate to teach geography using the new scheme of work, but the school sensibly supplements its own resources by borrowing from the local teachers' centre

HISTORY

134. Standards in history are in line with national expectations and are better now than when the school was last inspected. Teaching has improved through an emphasis within the school on tighter planning and a greater focus on learning objectives. The school has adopted the QCA scheme of work and has focused on the progression of concepts and skills as well as factual knowledge and an emphasis on historical interpretation and evidence-based inquiry. Pupils' achievements are broadly typical of children their age nationally. Those with special educational needs and with English as an additional language also achieve satisfactorily when they receive targeted support in lessons.
135. By the age of seven, pupils develop their knowledge and understanding of the past and are beginning to develop a sense of chronology. Pupils in Year 2 demonstrated a detailed knowledge of Guy Fawkes, using a time line to mark key events in his life and reasons why he is remembered. Pupils' learning is particularly good when the teacher uses a mixture of questions, prompts and clear explanations to direct pupils towards sources of evidence. Pupils find 'clues' from pictures to establish differences in living long ago and features of a different age. For example, pupils pointed out that swords rather than guns were used and candles and lanterns rather than electricity because neither had been invented 400 years ago. They understand some of the changes that have taken place over time and know that things were different in the past.
136. By eleven, many pupils have a sound knowledge of key events and dates in British history. They learn to recognise when evidence is from a first-hand source. For example, in response to a project on the Second World War, many pupils interviewed their grandparents and great grandparents and collected a range of artefacts from the 1940s, including photographs, books and a toilet roll holder. Pupils' sense of chronology and the passage of time continues to develop soundly. In Years 3 to 6 for example, most pupils know that the Tudors came before the Victorians. They have a good understanding of the everyday life of the ancient Romans and use this knowledge well to make comparisons with their own lives and between the past and present. They use pictorial evidence to draw conclusions about life in ancient civilisations and recognise the ways in which historians gain their evidence. Older pupils compare and contrast the lives of Victorian children and those living today. They have a good understanding of life in industrial Britain. In Year 5, pupils as 'mill owners' or 'reformers' debated with relish the advantages and disadvantages of the Factory Act of 1833. The teacher skilfully placed emphasis on health and safety aspects of the Bill, a section of the course only recently covered. This enabled some facts to be rehearsed and new learning to take place. Pupils gained a good understanding of the opposition to reformers and the courage of those who changed children's working conditions. They recognised the importance of great reformers such as Lord Shaftesbury, and how individuals can change aspects of society. This work was successful with pupils because the teacher had good subject knowledge and the lesson was well planned. Useful questioning techniques encouraged pupils to think more deeply about different perspectives on the changes brought about by reformers in the 19th century.
137. Teaching is generally satisfactory and it was good in just under half lessons observed. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. In the best lessons the pupils' high levels of interest in and enthusiasm for history are encouraged and extended by lively and motivating activities and good planning. The pace of the lesson is brisk and the teachers' expectations of both effort and behaviour are high. Pupils respond with energy and co-operation and make significant progress. When teachers make good

use of prompts and differentiated activities they provide a helpful framework for lower attaining pupils and those who are at the early stages of English language acquisition. On occasions the pace of the lesson is slower and work is not differentiated and then pupils make insufficient progress. Teachers encourage pupils to work in pairs or in groups and usually they respond sensibly and thoughtfully. They listen to and encourage each other and achieve good results.

138. The co-ordinator, although relatively new to the post, has a good development plan and a strong commitment to improvement by raising standards. She monitors teachers' planning but has had no opportunity for classroom observation. Her monitoring of pupils' work is done on an informal basis by looking at books, displays in classrooms and around the school. Sharing good practice in teaching through more rigorous monitoring would be likely to have a positive effect on pupils' standards and achievement. The subject is enhanced by visits to local museums and places of historical interest and by the use of good quality artefacts loaned by the local resource centre.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

139. Standards of attainment in information and communication technology (ICT) for pupils throughout the school are broadly in line with those expected for their age. Overall pupils' achievement is satisfactory at the end of Years 2 and 6. There has been sound improvement in teaching since the last inspection. It is now good and some pupils make good progress in lessons but, for the majority, progress is limited by the lack of resources. At present there is one new personal computer in each classroom and one in the library. This means that time is lost and the pace of learning slows down while pupils wait for their turn. The school is aware of this and is about to install a new computer suite of 15 personal computers, which will enable all pupils to have more time to work at the keyboard. The rolling programme of ICT training has resulted in an improvement in both competence and confidence in teachers; this has had a subsequent positive impact on pupils' learning. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make sound progress in ICT.
140. By the age of seven pupils become familiar with the keyboard, develop stronger manipulative skills and are becoming increasingly confident users of ICT. They log on and off machines, control the mouse and work well together. They show their understanding of control by giving a series of instructions to plan specific routes. Pupils enjoy demonstrating their skills and teachers make certain that pupils explain exactly what they are doing and why. For example, Year 2 pupils, in describing how they produced a picture representing fireworks, used words like 'select', 'icon', 'control key' and 'tool bar' and clearly outlined the process which enabled them to use different menus to achieve the desired effects. Younger pupils in the infants understand that information can be presented in text, pictures and sounds on the computer. They follow a lively commercial program reading instructions on the monitor and are beginning to recognise how information presented in this way is particularly useful in a variety of circumstances. They use word processing to assemble text and incorporate pictures. They clearly understand that text can be entered into a computer and printed out and are delighted with their finished work.
141. By the age of eleven many pupils confidently use e-mail, use search engines to find information, and set up web sites on the Internet. They save, retrieve and print their work using a range of programs, and extend their use of the correct subject-specific language. When they use word processing pupils are able to change font style, size and colour and combine pictures with the text. Pupils understand what a basic

spreadsheet does and appreciate how it can save time. They are easily able to switch between different programs and menus on the same program. In a Year 5 lesson pupils made a detailed, labelled plan of their ideal rooms and moved furniture around, and reversed, duplicated and rotated objects until the room was exactly as required. The teacher's high expectations, good level of expertise and careful planning ensured that all pupils were effectively involved. Even though there was only one computer available, pupils were patient and absorbed in the problems they were asked to solve and everyone had a turn to use the computer. In another good lesson in the juniors, careful organisation and effective questioning by the teacher enabled pupils to show their knowledge and skills well. Pupils searched for information in books and on the Internet. They could explain clearly the processes they had been through and were clear about their audience. Year 6 pupils explained how they used the Internet and e-mail. They are confident in collecting and displaying data and they can explain clearly the processes they use. On the whole pupils show remarkable patience and good humour in sharing resources and in taking turns on the computer but this undoubtedly slows the pace of learning and has a subsequent impact on achievement.

142. Overall, teaching is good and sometimes very good. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. All teachers are able to teach the basic skills of ICT although some are less confident than others. In the best lessons teachers are competent and knowledgeable. They plan lessons well and provide opportunities that are exciting and challenging, making the very best use of limited resources by skilful planning and organisation. Pupils are inspired by the teaching to have confidence in their own ability. Some have computers at home and supplement the work in school by careful research and good quality word processing. The programme of training in ICT has meant that, despite staff changes, all teachers have had some training and are computer literate. Therefore they are more confident in using computers in their classrooms with pupils. However, because of restricted resources, too little use is made of computer programs to support and enrich pupils' learning in subjects. Some pupils use CD-ROMs and the Internet to search for information in history and geography and they improve the presentation of their work by word processing. Younger pupils use a graphics program to display work in mathematics. The school has just acquired new software to enable pupils to develop skills in monitoring physical data and controlling events, which will support work in science and geography.
143. The subject co-ordinator has been in post for two terms and is committed to improving standards. At present, within the time constraints, he is working with teachers to develop skills and monitor the teaching of ICT. The subject development plan is centred on the need for more resources and the building of a new computer suite, which should take place at the end of this year. Assessment procedures have been recorded by checklist but the school is moving to a more comprehensive assessment system, which will enable teachers to track pupils' progress more successfully and to target more precisely areas which need development. The hardware the school has, though limited in number of machines, is modern and functions well. Software which supports pupils' learning in other subjects is also limited but the school is aware of this and is gradually developing these resources. If the new computer suite once installed, is to be used in the most efficient way with every class, it will be vital to appoint a technician to assist the co-ordinator in managing resources and supporting learning.

MUSIC

144. From the limited number of lessons it was possible to observe, from planning documents and after discussions with pupils, it is clear that pupils throughout the school enjoy music. At the end of Year 2 pupils are achieving the expected level. In Years 3, 4 and 5 they are achieving the expected level and sometimes better. It was not possible to observe any lessons with Year 6 and there is insufficient evidence to form a judgement on their level of attainment. However, documentation and lesson planning seen indicate that they are covering all elements of the National Curriculum for music.
145. By the age of seven most pupils confidently use a variety of instruments, such as maracas, chime bars and bells, and pupils showed good listening and collaborative skills as they worked in groups to produce a range of soft and loud sounds, responding to a 'conductor'. Younger pupils in the infants were observed singing and clapping to the rhythm of various songs, such as 'Baa baa, black sheep' and 'One potato, two potato...' They were able to vary the pace and the rhythm.
146. In the juniors, younger pupils were further developing their understanding and use of rhythm, learning an ostinato linked to syllables, for example, 'spi-der, grass-hopper'. Later they developed their own ostinato rhythms, such as 'ca-ter-pillar, spi-der' or 'grass-hopper, ca-ter-pi-llar'. They understood the terminology used. Year 4 are all learning to play the recorder and were seen in groups playing tunes based primarily on the notes B, A and G. They showed good understanding of musical terms such as 'crotchet', 'minim', 'beat', 'rhythm', and 'bar'. They are learning the correct techniques of holding the instrument, fingering, posture and breathing and are able to read simple musical notation and play a tune. When Year 5 were learning a song for a play, 'The Plague of Hamelin Town' they showed awareness of mood, rhythm, tempo, timbre and dynamics, learned the song and sang well.
147. All the teaching seen was at least satisfactory and sometimes good. In the best lessons seen, teachers have a very secure knowledge of the subject and make very good use of time and resources. They use classroom management to very good effect to create a stimulating and highly motivating learning environment. Pace and content is brisk and this challenges pupils of all abilities and keeps them focused. There is some need for staff development to give some staff more confidence but on the whole there is sufficient expertise in the school. The newly appointed subject co-ordinator has very good subject knowledge, used to good effect, and several other members of staff have musical ability. A pianist supports the singing for some special assemblies. Year 3 pupils produced lyrics to the music of 'Peter and the Wolf' that was adapted by the pianist. This work is now in the process of publication. Music in the school is further enhanced by visits by other musicians. Each term there is a production which includes music, and music is often used when there is a class assembly. Sadly there was no evidence of music being regularly used as part of school assemblies.
148. Although the co-ordinator is newly appointed, she has a good grasp of the needs of the subject and has already produced a list of priorities. She has not yet had time to monitor planning and teaching but recognises that this needs to be done when possible. There is much potential but there is a need to further raise the profile of music in the school so that the subject becomes dynamic and thriving. Resources are inadequate, given the geography of the school and the difficulties of moving instruments from one floor to another.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

149. The whole range of the physical education programme was not seen during the inspection. What was seen and discussion with teachers and pupils, show that satisfactory standards are attained by the end of Years 2 and 6. This is a decline in standards since the last report.
150. Pupils begin their statutory education with sound physical skills. In Years 1 and 2 these are satisfactorily developed. For example, in a Year 1 dance lesson pupils were well co-ordinated, used the space available wisely and safely and refined their performance through practice. They made satisfactory progress in their rhythmic response to music and their use of contrasting direction and level. They understood the importance of warming up before exercise and worked with enjoyment as they moved imaginatively to the music.
151. Pupils in Year 3 know how to warm up properly before the lesson. In discussion with them about the value of warm-up before exercise one boy said, "It warms up the muscles and gets your heart pumping," and of cooling down after exercise he said, "It helps relax the muscles and makes you calmer." Pupils work well in pairs to practise their sequence of movements and the teacher makes good use of pupils' efforts by encouraging them to evaluate their own performance and those of others. This they do well with great sensitivity, first saying what is good about the performance and then indicating how it may be improved.
152. A good Year 6 games lesson allowed pupils to practise and develop well their skills of feinting and dodging so as to mislead an opponent. This they did with enthusiasm and obvious enjoyment and demonstrated the good progress they had made when they linked the new skills and techniques they had learned in playing Scoutball. The cool-down session, well led by the teacher, allowed pupils to leave the hall in a calm and orderly manner. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall, and those who have English as an additional language and those with statements of special educational need are supported and encouraged appropriately by their peers, which allows them to make satisfactory progress as well.
153. Teaching is satisfactory overall. In the best practice pupils do their best and work enthusiastically, a brisk pace is maintained throughout the lesson, pupils know what is expected of them and they have a clear focus on what skills they are improving. Most teachers and pupils dress appropriately for the lessons. All teachers stress the importance of safety whilst doing physical educational activities. Where it is unsatisfactory there is insufficient pace during the lesson, poor control of pupils and time wasted; in such lesson pupils do not make progress.
154. The school makes satisfactory provision for swimming for all pupils in Years 3 to 6 by using the local swimming pool throughout the year in termly blocks. Pupils achieve high standards with almost all pupils being able to swim at least 25 metres before they leave Year 6.
155. The school's good extra-curricular programme includes football coaching, netball, cricket and gym club; opportunities pupils have to play in competitive matches against other schools and the chance some pupils get to represent the borough, make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning and good contribution to their social education.
156. Accommodation for physical education is satisfactory and the two of three halls are used well for lessons. There is a small hard area for outdoor games, a climbing wall and satisfactory use is made of a small fenced area, known by pupils as 'the cage' for ball games. Good use is made of a local sports field for special events. Resources for

physical education are satisfactory with a suitable range of large and small equipment. The action plan correctly identifies that several gym mats need replacing, together with additional resources, and these have been well planned for over a three-year period.

157. The co-ordination of physical education is good and the three-year improvement plan has priorities clearly identified and action points to achieve the improvement. There is a recently introduced policy and scheme of work from which teachers plan their lessons. Teachers' planning for pupils for whom English is an additional language and those with statements of special educational needs is currently underdeveloped. Teachers' assessments of pupils' achievements are satisfactory, as is pupils' assessment of their own performances.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

158. The standards achieved by pupils in Year 2 are below those expected for their age by the local authority's requirements, 'the agreed syllabus', for religious education, but by the time they are in Year 6 pupils are achieving acceptable levels of knowledge and understanding. Pupils keep little recorded work by which their progress can be judged; however, during the inspection discussions were held with pupils and lessons observed in all age groups.

159. In Years 1 and 2 the time allocated to religious education is well below that recommended by the agreed syllabus; furthermore lessons usually take place at the end of the afternoon, after playtime, when pupils' concentration is at its lowest and they are looking forward to going home! In the lessons observed, pupils in Year 1 understood that festivals are a characteristic of more than one religion, but had little understanding of the religious significance of harvest festival in either the Christian or Jewish traditions. In discussion Year 2 pupils knew about lighting divas but were not able to identify the religion with which the festival of Diwali is associated. They could not recall any stories about Jesus, except for a minority of pupils who had learned about them out of school.

160. In Years 3 to 6 the time allocated is still below the agreed syllabus recommendation, but it is supplemented usefully in literacy sessions, when, for instance, pupils read a book about Buddhism or sequence events in the life of Muhammad. In discussion, pupils in Year 6 show a knowledge of the full range of religious traditions required by the agreed syllabus, although their understanding of Judaism is limited; for instance, they do not understand that the Jewish holy day is Saturday. They are familiar with stories about Jesus' death and resurrection, but are not clear about their significance to a Christian or their celebration in Christian festivals. Many Year 6 pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of Islam and know, for instance, about the Muslim practice of prayer. They know about the range of gods in Hinduism and also understand something of the doctrine of reincarnation. Some higher attaining pupils also have an understanding of Buddhism from their reading; they know that Buddhists do not believe in a god but have a belief in reincarnation. In the lessons observed in Year 6, pupils were able to draw lessons from two stories about Muhammad and the example he set to Muslims, and apply them to their own lives in their concern for others and the world.

161. The quality of teaching is good overall. Teachers generally plan lessons well and maintain a good pace in lessons, but the effectiveness of their teaching is limited by the amount of time available. They are constantly remarking to classes that there is very little time, and in two lessons in Year 4 the teachers wisely decided not to extend pupils' thinking to the symbolism of light in other religious traditions, when they were

considering Diwali, as their written plans had indicated they would. Teachers manage pupils well, although some difficulties were caused in a lesson in Year 1 when the teacher did not have sufficient support to deal with pupils with special educational needs. Teachers have a good understanding of the subject and use resources well, such as the divas which pupils had made themselves. Sometimes an opportunity is missed to extend pupils' learning when a perceptive comment by a pupil is not picked up, as for instance when a pupil in Year 6 described a prophet as "someone who speaks God's words".

162. Pupils have good attitudes towards religious education. Younger pupils show concern for each other in lessons, but find it difficult to work independently without adult supervision. Older pupils work well together in pairs or groups to discuss issues, for instance, arising out of stories which they have heard.
163. The school maintains that it delivers some of its religious education curriculum through assemblies, but this is not effective because of the wide age range of pupils in assemblies and the lack of opportunities to follow up what is said. The school has no systems in place to check what pupils know and have understood, to help teachers plan the next stages of pupils' learning. The school has now developed a long-term plan for religious education which covers the units which are not dealt with in assemblies, but at the time of the inspection there was confusion about who was leading the subject, and this unsatisfactory situation does not facilitate good management. Religious education provides pupils with good opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills and also provides an understanding of the range of beliefs represented in their own society, thereby contributing effectively to their spiritual, social and cultural development. The school makes good use of visits to a mosque and a Hindu temple to extend pupils' understanding.
164. Although some progress has been made since the last inspection, it has not been sufficient. The school now follows the local authority's agreed syllabus, which it did not at the time of the last inspection, when there was not enough identifiable religious education taught. The time allocation is still not enough to enable pupils to achieve the high standards of which they are capable. Due to recent staff changes there is no co-ordinator for the subject at the moment.