

INSPECTION REPORT

KINGSWAY JUNIOR SCHOOL

Garston, Watford

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117168

Headteacher: Miss R Taylor

Reporting inspector: Mr R C Hancock
2715

Dates of inspection: Monday 19 June – Friday 23 June 2000

Inspection number: 190682

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7-11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Briar Road Garston Watford Hertfordshire
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Appropriate authority:	Kingsway Junior School Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Susan Tanswell
Date of previous inspection:	October 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Richard Hancock	Registered inspector	English Religious Education	The school's results and pupils' achievements
		English as an additional language Special educational needs	The quality of teaching The leadership and management of the school
Shirley Watts	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
			The school's care for pupils
			The school's work in partnership with parents
Marita Hopkinson	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Design and technology Information technology Equal opportunities	
Brian McKeon	Team inspector	Art Music History Geography Physical education	The curriculum and other opportunities offered to pupils

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Kingsway Junior School is situated in Garston, on the northern side of Watford in Hertfordshire. It caters for pupils from the ages of 7 to 11. The school is of average size for primary schools with 222 pupils on roll compared with the national average of 226. About 80 per cent of the pupils transfer to the school from the nearby infants school. After leaving the school pupils transfer to a large number of different secondary schools. The social background of the pupils is varied. Most of the children are from families living on two separate housing developments. 12 per cent of children are eligible for a free school meal which is below the national average. Approximately 5 per cent of pupils come from ethnic minority backgrounds. For 3 per cent of pupils English is an additional language. The proportion of pupils who are on the special educational needs register, 46 per cent, is above the national average. The proportion of pupils who have a statement of special educational need is also higher than average at 2.7 per cent. The attainment of pupils when they enter the school is broadly in line with the national average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The pupils at this school receive a sound education. They are well taught and reach average standards in all subjects, exceeding them in science, music and religious education. Pupils enjoy coming to school, have positive attitudes to learning and like to succeed. The curriculum is good. It has breadth and balance and is enriched by the opportunities pupils have for swimming and for out-of-school activities. The children's welfare is looked after very well. The school enjoys the support of the majority of parents. It benefits from good leadership and is well managed. It is giving satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Promotes good standards in science, religious education and music
- Provides a broad, balanced and enriched curriculum
- Looks after the welfare of pupils thoroughly and ensures good levels of attendance
- Develops good links with parents
- Makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs

What could be improved

- The achievement of pupils, especially boys and the more able, in English and mathematics
- The use of assessment in teaching
- Providing further scope for pupils to explore, research, investigate and discuss
- Tracking the progress and attainment of pupils in most subjects

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in 1996 when standards were found to be good. The school has not quite maintained this position but has successfully introduced major initiatives, which are having a positive effect on standards. The quality of education and climate for learning are still good and the school has a strong platform on which to develop further initiatives. The school responded to the key issues identified by the last inspection with an effective plan. As a result of development, the school day has been lengthened and the amount of taught time in the week is now in line with national recommendations. The school has also developed the roles and responsibilities of subject co-ordinators to include evaluation and the monitoring of standards. There is still a need for teachers to make more effective use of the school's assessment policy in order to raise standards. Pupils' attainments in design and technology and in information technology have both risen since the last inspection. Consequently, improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.

STANDARDS

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

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

In the 1999 National Curriculum tests, standards in English and mathematics were close to the national average but were below average when compared with similar schools. Performance in English has fluctuated. The performance of boys has been far less good than that of girls, especially in writing. Boys are doing less well in English than boys nationally and their attainment needs to improve. The performance of boys in mathematics is also below the national average. Standards in the 1999 science tests were above the national average and were also above average when compared with similar schools. The trend in National Curriculum test results in the core subjects is in line with the national trend and the school is meeting its targets. The attainment of pupils is above average in music and religious education as well as in science. In all other subjects, including information technology, attainment is average. In religious education, science and music pupils are achieving well but in all other subjects pupils can achieve more. This especially applies to the more able pupils in English and mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs are attaining at appropriate levels and are making satisfactory progress, as are pupils for whom English is an additional language.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning. The majority want to achieve. Some boys are less enthusiastic in lessons and their attention easily lapses.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Overall, pupils' behaviour is satisfactory in lessons although poor behaviour sometimes occurs when teaching is unsatisfactory. This was the case in some lessons in Year 5 with temporary teachers. Pupils behave well around the school reflecting the ethos of the school and the expectations of staff.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils join in a wide range of activities with enthusiasm and are encouraged to develop their independence and to take responsibility for their own actions. There are good relationships between the staff and pupils and pupils are helpful and courteous to visitors. Pupils respect each other's feelings, beliefs and differences and are willing to share with them what they have done.
Attendance	Good. Attendance is carefully monitored

The majority of pupils enjoy coming to school and are keen to learn. Some pupils, mostly boys, lose interest when work does not appeal to them. Pupils are keen to join in out of school activities.

Pupils show that they can carry out tasks well and that they are capable of taking on more responsibility. Pupils are expected to think of the consequences of their actions.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Not applicable	Not applicable	Satisfactory

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

The quality of teaching in English and mathematics is satisfactory although plenary sessions are not always well used in the literacy hour. In the school as a whole, teaching is very good in 6% of lessons, good in 38%, satisfactory in 49% and in 7% of lessons it is unsatisfactory. Its strengths are the clear objectives set in lessons, good organisation, effective use of time and good questioning skills. Teachers are good at making links between different subjects of the curriculum. Teaching is good in art, music, design and technology and religious education. A major weakness is the limited use of assessment to improve standards. In some lessons insufficient emphasis is placed on pupils' needs to solve problems, investigate, explore and discuss.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The school is putting a lot of emphasis on the teaching of literacy and numeracy which is having a positive effect on standards, but this is not at the expense of other subjects which are well planned. The school makes good use of visits, visitors and extra-curricular activities to broaden and enrich pupils' experiences.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The school provides well for pupils with special educational needs. They follow the same programmes of work as other pupils but activities are planned to meet their individual needs. They receive good support from teachers and classroom assistants and make sound progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. Progress is in line with the progress of other pupils in the school.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory. The school strongly promotes the pupils' moral and social development. There are too few opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their learning and to use initiative in lessons. In most lessons, apart from religious education, there is insufficient emphasis on developing pupils' spiritual awareness.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The arrangements to safeguard pupil's welfare and safety are good and the procedures for child protection are very good. The school staff work as a team to ensure that all the pupils have the best support and guidance that is available. Outside agencies are well used. Systems for tracking the progress and attainment of pupils are not established in all subjects.

Pupils are given equal access to a full curriculum but the school is less successful in tailoring the curriculum to meet the interests and aptitudes of boys and of providing levels of challenge for more able pupils. Acts of worship do not always comply with statutory requirements but usually provide pupils with suitable opportunities to reflect on moral and spiritual themes. Care and concern for others are promoted in daily routines and in 'circle time'. The school's links with parents are good.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher gives clear direction to the school. The school is well managed with chains of command being clear and roles and responsibilities well defined. The role of the subject co-ordinator has been very well developed. Monitoring practices are advanced but need to focus on attainment.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body supports the school well. It uses its expertise to help the school to plan long-term developments, to evaluate its performance by monitoring and assists with the organization and deployment of the school budget. It is familiar with principles of best value and is in a good position to help the school to develop effective approaches to performance management.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has valuable data about its overall performance and shares this with the governing body. It is using the data to set appropriate targets.
The strategic use of resources	Money has been well spent on key texts for work in numeracy and literacy and has been earmarked for the important developments in ICT.

The teaching staff are well qualified and appropriately deployed to meet the needs of the school. Support staff are an asset. The school, its grounds and amenities are kept clean, tidy and safe. Resources are adequate but need improving in science, music and design and technology. The library needs developing. Good use is made of outside agencies to help the school to cope with the wide range of pupils' needs. Professional development is valued and staff are keeping abreast of new developments.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> quality of care the progress of pupils the approachable nature of the school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> inconsistent use of homework levels of challenge for more able pupils the behaviour of some pupils the school working more closely with parents

The inspection team agrees with parents that homework needs to be more consistent and also that the more able pupils would benefit from more challenging work. Pupils' behaviour is satisfactory apart from some misbehaviour in Year 5. Inspectors agree that children are well cared for, that the school responds to parents' concerns and that parents are well informed about the progress of their children. The inspection team considers that the school does work closely with parents.

OTHER INFORMATION

The governing body is responsible for drawing up an action plan within 40 days of receiving the inspection report, showing how the school will tackle the improvements needed. This action plan will be circulated to all parents at the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests at Key Stage 2, standards in English were close to the national average, rising above by just 3 per cent. However, they were below average when compared with those of similar schools. Over the period 1996 to 1999, pupils' performance in English was erratic with a particularly disappointing result occurring in 1998. Furthermore, throughout this time the performance of boys was far less good than that of girls, especially in writing. Overall, boys are doing less well in English than boys nationally.

2. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests at Key Stage 2, standards in mathematics were close to the national average, falling below by 2 per cent. However, they were below average when compared with those of similar schools. The number of pupils achieving Level 5 was also below the national average. Over the period 1996 to 1999, pupils' performance in mathematics was close to the national average although the performance of boys was below the national average for their age group.

3. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests at Key Stage 2, standards in science were above the national average. They were above average when the results are compared with those of similar schools. The number of pupils achieving Level 5 was close to the national average. Over the period 1996 to 1999, performance in science was close to the national average and the performance of boys was close to the national average for their age group.

4. The trend in National Curriculum results in the core subjects is in line with the national trend. The school is meeting its targets which could now be made more ambitious especially as the school has so successfully implemented the recommended structures for teaching literacy and numeracy and has such a strong basis from which to move forward.

5. On the basis of the evidence available during the inspection, the overall attainment of pupils in English is average by the time they reach the end of Key Stage 2. Standards of reading are better than those for writing. The majority of pupils can read with understanding and expression. Their attitude to books is positive. The application of research skills is limited. The majority of pupils also show that they can write in different forms and for different purposes, many with a good degree of accuracy in terms of punctuation, sentence structure and spelling. Some more able pupils are also developing a sense of style. Frequently, the written work of girls is more complete and accurate than that of boys. In the curriculum as a whole, pupils use their literacy skills to good effect in other subjects. Pupils speak readily and are confident when expressing opinions. Their listening skills are good.

6. In the lessons observed and in pupils' work, the overall attainment in mathematics is average. Progress, however, is uneven with pupils making significant gains in learning particularly in Years 4 and 6. Some pupils in Year 5 show evidence of progress having slowed considerably over the past two terms. In Year 6 many children are familiar with the four rules of number and the associated language. They know how to use brackets in calculations and have a knowledge of basic number bonds and multiplication tables. They are able to read co-ordinates with accuracy in four quadrants. Work in shape and measures is not well represented overall. The school has identified the need to develop problem solving and mathematical reasoning skills and is beginning to address these aspects. In the curriculum as a whole standards of numeracy are average and are adequate for the work pupils undertake in the application of number in other subjects.

7. Evidence from the inspection confirms the picture in science gained from national tests. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are good. Pupils make sound progress throughout the school in acquiring scientific knowledge, with marked progress in Year 6. The study of life and living things is a strength of the work of the school. In Year 6 pupils apply their knowledge of circuits to tasks in design and technology. They are knowledgeable about ecosystems in both their immediate environment and beyond. They know the role of micro-organisms in the breakdown of waste. They know about the conditions for fair testing.

8. The attainment of pupils is above average in music and religious education as well as in science. By the end of Year 6 in religious education, many pupils show good levels of understanding about different faiths and a good knowledge of religious leaders. In music many pupils can read some notation and understand, use and respond to musical terms, can appraise a piece of music, play and compose. Pupils in the after-school music club produce musical performances of a high standard. Singing is also of a high standard throughout the school.

9. In all other subjects attainment is average by the time pupils reach the end of Year 6. Pupils show a sense of chronology in history, can design and make a shop front in design and technology, produce high quality abstract work in art, have a good general knowledge of places, rivers, mountains and other geographical features of the world, and are acquiring the skills to apply information and communications technology. By the age of eleven most pupils have learnt to swim confidently and have developed effective and efficient swimming strokes.

10. Standards achieved in religious education, science and music show that pupils are capable of achieving more in other subjects. Pupils with special educational needs are attaining at appropriate levels and are making satisfactory progress, as are pupils for whom English is an additional language. Given that the attainment of pupils on entry to the school is broadly average, the majority of pupils have made satisfactory progress in subjects by the time they reach the end of Year 6 but significant numbers of pupils could achieve more. This especially applies to the more able pupils generally and to boys in English and mathematics.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES, VALUES AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

11. The majority of pupils have a positive attitude to learning. The youngest pupils in particular bring great enthusiasm to what they are doing but in general most pupils respond well and work hard. There are good opportunities in the weekly assembly for them to share their successes with the other pupils. Parents confirm that children enjoy coming to school, are generally happy and quickly settle into the activities of the classroom. They join in a wide range of activities with enthusiasm and are encouraged to develop their independence and to take responsibility for their own actions although these opportunities need developing further. Pupils feel safe in the school and are well supported by the staff. There is a range of extra-curricular activities such as gardening club, gymnastics and swimming which are well supported by the pupils.

12. Overall, pupils' behaviour is satisfactory in lessons. Pupils listen to teachers, carry out tasks responsibly, are ready to work co-operatively and to share with the class what they have learned. Particularly mature behaviour was observed in Year 6 where pupils, boys and girls alike, took a great interest in their learning in a wide range of subjects. Pupils behave well around the school reflecting its ethos and the expectations of the staff. Pupils also are aware of the impact that their actions have on others and observe classrooms rules for good conduct well. In a minority of lessons, in Year 5, the behaviour of some boys is unsatisfactory as a consequence of teaching by temporary staff which does not exercise the standards of discipline which characterize the overall style of the school. The school records incidents of unsatisfactory behaviour and these are carefully monitored. Exclusions seldom take place. The school is putting great emphasis on helping all pupils to be responsible for their own behaviour and to understand the possible consequences of their actions. This policy is working well and the school is largely an orderly community where pupils are expected to reflect and not act in haste.

13. There are good relationships between the staff and pupils. Pupils are helpful and courteous to visitors. They respect each other's feelings, beliefs and differences and are willing to share with one another how they feel. Pupils are given responsibilities that are appropriate for them and are eager to do jobs such as returning registers to the office and being a class room monitor. Older children help in a large number of ways, for example by getting out equipment for assemblies and helping the younger pupils. There is a school council with a democratic election of two pupils from each form which requires pupils to attend meetings and to make decisions. Pupils throughout the school show genuine interest in others and work hard to raise money for named charities.

14. Overall, pupils' attendance is good and any absences or lateness to school are quickly followed up. Un-authorized absence is above the national average but appropriate action has been taken by the school to prevent this growing. There is a good relationship with the Education Welfare Officer

and attendance is carefully monitored. Lessons start on time. Registers are being maintained in accordance with statutory requirements.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. In the school as a whole the quality of teaching is satisfactory. In 6% of lessons it is very good. In these lessons pupils are engrossed in learning, keen to share ideas with teachers and full of invention for new lines of enquiry or investigation. In 38% of lessons the teaching is good. It is satisfactory in 49% of lessons. In about 7% of lessons teaching is unsatisfactory. In these lessons little learning is taking place as a result of teachers being unaware of how best to interpret the subject or because they cannot control the behaviour of the class.

16. The quality of teaching of the literacy hour is satisfactory. Teachers have clear and appropriate objectives which they share with pupils. This helps everyone to have a sense of direction in lessons. Teachers are using good texts which interest the pupils, are placing appropriate emphasis on word work, and are giving specific help to groups of pupils as required by the strategy. In the best lessons they are also making use of the plenary session to find out from the pupils what they have learned. However, the use of this time is inconsistent and opportunities lost for pupils to show to teachers what they have learned. Most teachers are alert to the need to make language interesting and some lessons are exploiting this potential well. Other lessons are more routine and pupils undertake work dutifully but without the same sense of interest or excitement. Teachers are not always using learning support staff to best effect, especially in the first part of lessons when they are sometimes unsure of what role they have to play. The assessment of written work does not always stress how pupils can improve their work.

17. The quality of teaching in the numeracy hour is satisfactory. It is good in Years 4 and 6. Teachers work hard and are committed to improving standards. They are consistent in writing clear learning objectives and sharing these with pupils. In some classes these are used to evaluate learning. There is an appropriate focus on developing vocabulary which is identified in planning. In some lessons this is a strong feature with teachers evaluating pupils' understanding and providing clear explanations. There were examples of good quality teaching where all pupils were challenged appropriately by the teacher's questions, good use was made of demonstration and teacher time was well targeted. Clear strategies were taught which enabled the pupils to compute more efficiently. Pupils were encouraged to explain their strategies and were given good feedback in many instances. In these lessons the plenary was well used to reinforce objectives. Teachers' use of assessment to assess prior knowledge and to ensure taught strategies are being applied was not sufficiently in evidence.

18. The teaching of science is satisfactory overall with teachers displaying good levels of scientific knowledge. Teaching is generally good in Year 6. In the best lessons all pupils are challenged appropriately by the teacher's questions. A good balance of teacher input is combined with pupil involvement. Good use is made of demonstration. Pupils are encouraged to explain their thinking and are given good feedback in many instances. In some lessons there was over-direction by the teacher which restricted pupils' involvement, and opportunities for assessing pupils' prior knowledge were missed.

19. Overall, the strengths of the teaching are the clear objectives set in lessons, good organisation, effective use of time and good questioning skills. Teaching is especially good in art, music, design and technology and religious education. The major weaknesses of teaching lie in the lack of emphasis on ensuring that all pupils strive to reach the highest possible standards, the limited use of assessment to improve standards and in the lack of challenge especially for the more able pupils, and for boys in particular. In some lessons pupils do not get enough scope to use their own initiative to solve problems, to carry out investigations and to explore and discuss. Although homework is being used by some teachers, it is not being systematically used to raise the attainment of pupils or to ensure their progress.

20. Pupils with special educational needs are satisfactorily taught. Their needs are carefully identified and teachers and learning support staff focus on areas where they need to improve. On some occasions the teaching is rather mundane and does not strongly motivate pupils.

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

21 The curriculum is broadly based and includes all the subjects of the National Curriculum. Religious education complies well with the requirements of the local Agreed Syllabus. The school allocates appropriate time for the teaching of literacy and numeracy. The school's strategy for teaching literacy adheres well to the recommended approach in the National Framework. The daily, structured literacy hour is having a positive effect on standards in classrooms. The implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy is having a similar effect. There is an emphasis on the teaching of basic skills and on the application of these skills in other subjects. Teachers are especially good at seeing the links between different subjects of the curriculum which prevents it from being interpreted in a narrow manner.

22. Although the school is putting a lot of emphasis on the teaching of literacy and numeracy, this is not at the expense of other subjects which are adding both breadth and balance to the curriculum as a whole. For instance, pupils are able to use information communications technology frequently, they have excellent opportunities to swim which extends their physical education and in 'circle time' they explore their thoughts and feelings which aids their personal development.

23. The school provides well for pupils with special educational needs and for those pupils who are learning to use English as an additional language. They follow the same programmes of work as other pupils but specific activities are planned to meet their individual needs. They receive good levels of support from teachers and from classroom assistants and they make satisfactory progress. The school is less successful in tailoring the curriculum to meet the particular interests and aptitudes of boys, for instance by ensuring that there is full scope for them to express opinions, to solve problems in different ways, or to exploit their particular interests in reading. On some occasions more able pupils are not being given adequate levels of challenge because the curriculum does not demand enough.

24. There are clear policies and schemes of work for each National Curriculum subject which helps to ensure that skills, knowledge and understanding are being systematically and effectively built up by pupils over time. There are appropriate long-term, medium-term and short-term curriculum plans which have been prepared to a consistent set of principles. This is helping to give coherence to the curriculum. Clear learning objectives are now a significant feature of teachers' planning and are frequently shared with pupils at the beginning of lessons so that they know what they are expected to be learning.

25. Pupils are given equal access to, and equal opportunity to benefit from, the full curriculum. Through its ethos and through its response to the individual needs of pupils, the school is preparing them for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of adult life. The governing body has approved a policy for sex education and through the school's programmes for science and for health education, pupils are made aware of the effects of tobacco and other drugs on their health. The school has yet to formalise its provision for personal, social and health education but this has been identified as a priority in the current school development plan.

26. The school makes good use of visits to place of educational interest. Visitors are also well used to add interest and depth to the curriculum. A residential trip is organised annually for Year 6 pupils which broadens their experience. The school also provides enrichment through a wide range of extra-curricular activities. These currently include clubs for music, badminton, drama and football. There is also a gardening club which runs throughout the year. Their current task is to work on 'The Millennium Garden', a project which involves pupils, staff, parents, governors and members of the local community in developing the courtyard area of the school. The garden will have specific features such as a Mediterranean section and an alpine section. There will also be a flowing water feature which can be used to illustrate geographical work on rivers. The garden will become a rich resource for many other subjects. Sound links with local businesses have been established in the fund raising initiatives connected with this project.

27. The school's provision for pupils' personal development is satisfactory overall, although there are too few opportunities provided for pupils to take responsibility for their learning and use their initiative in lessons. Acts of worship largely comply with statutory requirements and provide pupils with suitable opportunities to reflect on moral and spiritual themes but in some assemblies there is no

reflective element In religious education lessons, pupils learn about the significance of religion in peoples' lives and they also learn to respect for the feelings and values of others. In most other subjects, however, insufficient emphasis is given to developing pupils' spiritual awareness.

28. Through its policies, procedures and practices, the school strongly promotes both the social and moral aspects of pupils' development. Pupils are taught the difference between right and wrong and are encouraged to reflect on their behaviour and its impact on others. All staff act as good role models by seeking and valuing pupils' contributions in lessons, and by fostering good relationships. Care and concern for others are promoted in daily routines and in 'circle time'. In preparation for their forthcoming trip, pupils in Year 6 made use of 'circle time' to explore the theme of 'loneliness'. In lessons pupils are encouraged to work co-operatively and are taught explicitly to respond to others' needs constructively and with fairness.

29. The provision made for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. By studying contrasting localities in geography, pupils learn about lifestyles in different countries and climatic conditions. In music and in art, pupils are taught to appraise compositions from a variety of cultures. In religious education, pupils learn about major world faiths and become familiar with the stories and traditions central to each faith. Other stories and poems draw upon cultural influences locally and from a world perspective. Through visits to places of geographical, historical and cultural interest, pupils develop a sound understanding of their own cultural heritage.

30. The school recognises its role in the community and pupils are encouraged to value their environment. The school has links with other schools in the area but opportunities for pupils to mix with others in sporting and musical activities are infrequent. Weekly teaching time is in line with the recommended hours. This is an improvement since the last inspection when insufficient time was being allocated to teaching.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

31. The arrangements made by the school to safeguard pupils' welfare and safety are good. Audits relating to health and safety matters are carried out regularly by the school staff and members of the governing body. Significant issues are identified and then prioritised and included in the school development plan. Minor issues are dealt with promptly.

32. Responsibilities are clearly designated, for example the administration of medicines and the testing of the hygiene for the swimming pool. The school's aims are built around the pupils' safety and well-being. The kitchen provides special meals for children on diets or for religious reasons. A choice of food is given to the pupils. The procedures for child protection are very good and are being well monitored. The school works as a team to ensure that all the pupils have the best support and guidance that is available. Peripatetic staff, such as the speech therapist, visit regularly and the school leaves no stone unturned in ensuring that it makes best possible use of the most appropriate specialist agency to support the individual needs of pupils.

33. Procedures for monitoring school attendance are good and effective use is being made of information technology to record and store relevant data. There is close liaison with the Education Welfare Officer where the good working relationship enables the school to keep a close grip on attendance issues. The school works especially closely with parents in this area.

34. The records maintained by the school on the overall progress of pupils are satisfactory. However, they do vary from subject to subject. They are good in religious education and art but are insufficiently developed in geography, history, music and PE where the school requires more information to detail their progress made by pupils. In some literacy lessons opportunities are lost to find out what progress has been by pupils and the guidance to pupils on how they might improve their written work is also sometimes scant. The use of assessment in mathematics is limited which means that pupils are not always given the guidance they need on how they might best improve.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

35. Overall, the parents' views of the school are positive. The majority of parents feel that the school cares for the pupils. On admission to the school, the parent, school and pupil enter into a written

agreement, which provides a firm foundation for a healthy relationship between school and home. The school's links with parents are good. Parents know they can contact the school at any time and the school keeps them well informed over any concerns or issues regarding their children.

36. The impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school is good. Parents help in the school through supporting children in their reading development, the organization of the library, the creation of the garden, swimming and information technology. The School Association works hard and is effective in raising significant sums of money for school projects, at present for new computers, through social activities, approaching local businesses and sponsorship events.

37. The quality and frequency of information sent out regularly to parents by the school is good. The prospectus is easily read and can be updated as appropriate. The annual report of the governing body allows parents to have a full view of the working of the school. The school's reports on pupils are good but need to include future expectations and targets. Termly meetings for parents allow for a more direct and extended dialogue about their children. Special evenings are organised as appropriate on educational matters such as the changing nature of the curriculum.

38. Some parents expressed concern over the inconsistent use of homework. Homework is often being set by teachers and is making a contribution to pupils' achievements but it is uneven and a more consistent approach to homework would be advantageous to both pupils and parents.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

39. The headteacher is providing good leadership and is giving the school a very clear sense of direction. A well-devised development plan points the way forward, its appropriate priorities being evident for all to see. The school is well managed. Chains of command are clear and roles and responsibilities fully defined. The role of the subject co-ordinator has been especially well developed since the last inspection. Monitoring practices are advanced. Whilst the monitoring reports are thorough and detailed, their stress on pupils' attainment is insufficiently emphasised. The school has done especially well to introduce the numeracy and literacy strategies so completely. It also puts great emphasis on in-service training and the professional development of all staff and is working now to ensure that staff training has an impact on pupils' learning and attainment in the classroom.

40. The governing body is supporting the school well. It uses its expertise to assist the school to plan long term developments, such as the new ICT suite, helps the school to evaluate its performance by monitoring e.g. in literacy, and assists with the organization and deployment of the school budget. It is broadly familiar with the principles of best value and is in a good position to help the school to develop effective approaches to performance management where good strategies are already in place, especially for monitoring.

41. The school is accumulating valuable data about its overall performance and is sharing this with the governing body. It is using the data to set appropriate targets. It is not yet using the data systematically to evaluate its performance on a year by year basis.

42. The teaching staff are well qualified and appropriately deployed to meet the needs of the school. Good use is being made of information technology to help the school to run efficiently. Support staff are an asset. The clerical and administrative support are versatile, flexible and efficient. Learning support staff are committed and reliable but need more guidance on how they can best contribute to pupils' learning in the first part of the literacy hour. Professional development is valued and staff are keeping abreast of new developments well. This also extends to support staff.

43. The school and its grounds and amenities are kept clean, tidy and safe. The school uses its resources well and ensures that it gets good value for money from its purchases. It plans effectively, taking into account the resource implications of new developments e.g. the purchase of new texts for the literacy hour and the costings for the new ICT suite. Grants to support pupils with special educational needs, or for special environmental initiatives, such as the garden, are well used.

44. Whilst resources are adequate, some are lacklustre and need to be more vibrant. Money has been well spent on key texts for work in numeracy and literacy and has been earmarked for the important developments in ICT. The school is not rich in artefacts to inspire interest and curiosity. The

library needs further promotion so that it makes a more effective contribution to pupils' independent reading and their opportunities for research and investigation. More instruments from other countries and cultures are needed for music. Globes need to be more accessible in geography. The gaps in resources for food technology need to be filled and more resources are required in science for investigative work.

45. The quality of the overall management of the school has been largely maintained since the last inspection and a number of very good developments have been effectively introduced, including the Investors in People Initiative, the staff induction programme and the school council. Close attention now needs to be given to ensuring that at all points teaching and learning are making the most effective use of the school's assessment policy to raise attainment, a need identified in the last inspection.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

To improve the quality of education further, the headteacher, staff and governing body now need to continue to work together to address the following issues, a number of which have already been identified as priorities in the school development plan:

1. Raise attainment in English and mathematics with particular reference to improving the achievements of boys and of the more able pupils [paragraphs 46, 47, 48, 50, 55, 57, 63]
2. Make more effective use of assessment in teaching to raise standards in all subjects [paragraphs 16, 17, 18, 54, 63, 71]
3. Provide more opportunities in lessons for pupils to reflect, discuss, explore, research and investigate [paragraphs 47, 69, 71, 78, 86, 91]
4. Track the attainment and progress of pupils in all subjects, including information and communications technology [paragraphs 65, 84, 86, 93, 99, 107, 113]

The following less significant aspects should also be considered by the school to improve the quality of education it provides:

- The development of the school library [paragraphs 47, 56]
- Ensuring that collective worship always meets statutory requirements [paragraph 27]
- Ensuring that the use of the plenary session is always effective in the literacy hour [paragraph 54]
- Ensuring that the use of the learning support assistants is fully effective [paragraphs 51, 72]
- Ensuring that homework is used more consistently to raise attainment [paragraph 19, 38]
- Placing more emphasis on pupils' attainment when monitoring lessons [paragraph 39]

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	56
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	39

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	6	38	49	7	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/a	222
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	N/a	26

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/a	6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/a	102

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	7

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	13

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	1999	24	27	51

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	13	16	22
	Girls	25	17	25
	Total	38	33	47
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	[48] 73	[63] 67	[80] 90
	National	[64] 70	[59] 69	[73] 78

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	16	11	15
	Girls	21	18	21
	Total	37	29	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	[58] 67	[66] 58	[76] 72
	National	[n/a] [n/a]	[n/a] [n/a]	[n/a] [n/a]

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	2
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0

Indian	5
Pakistani	2
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	2
White	210
Any other minority ethnic group	1

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y3 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27
Average class size	27

Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	75

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	N/a
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	N/a

Total number of education support staff	N/a
Total aggregate hours worked per week	N/a

Number of pupils per FTE adult	N/a
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	1	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	1999-2000
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	£
Total income	427462
Total expenditure	462505
Expenditure per pupil	1945
Balance brought forward from previous year	58986
Balance carried forward to next year	28344

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	220
Number of questionnaires returned	68

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	51	42	4	3	0
My child is making good progress in school.	36	57	3	1	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	25	46	22	3	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	21	36	25	18	0
The teaching is good.	33	45	14	2	6
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	28	43	21	6	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	43	49	6	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	51	37	7	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	21	49	29	9	1
The school is well led and managed.	26	54	13	4	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	31	56	6	1	6
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	25	51	10	7	6

Other issues raised by parents

No other issues were raised by significant numbers of parents other than those identified in the summary report.

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

ENGLISH

46. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests at Key Stage 2, standards in English were close to the national average, rising above them by just 3 per cent. They were below average when compared with similar schools. Over the period 1996 to 1999 performance in English was erratic with a particularly disappointing result occurring in 1998. Throughout this time the performance of boys has been far less good than that of girls, especially in writing. Boys are doing less well in English than boys nationally.

47. In the work observed in lessons, and in additional samples from each year group, pupils' overall attainment in English is average. The majority of pupils read with understanding and a good degree of expression. They have a positive view of books and most of them like to read. By the end of Year 6, some pupils are able to read 'between the lines' and most are able to express a clear opinion on what they have read and can support their views by drawing on references to their texts. Little evidence was seen of pupils applying their reading skills to research and investigation to show that they were in touch with the higher levels of the National Curriculum.

48. Although standards of writing are not as good as those for reading they are satisfactory. Pupils are writing in a wide variety of forms and with different sorts of reader in mind. They are learning how to draft out their ideas before working them up into finished form. They understand the need to be accurate and take care to spell words properly. By the end of Year 6 their written standards are at least average and in a significant number of cases, especially where girls are concerned, are better than this. Although some boys do produce very good written work, the gap between the attainment of girls and that of boys is very marked and the writing of boys generally is less accurate and complete.

49. By the end of Year 6, pupils' standards of spoken English, both for boys and girls, are good. Many children are confident and fluent and are able to express opinions clearly. They are ready and often eager to communicate. They listen well. The standard of handwriting is good throughout the school. In other subjects pupils use their literacy skills to good effect with particularly effective use being made of pupils' facility with writing in history.

50. The majority of pupils make satisfactory progress and in some cases the progress is good. The work being undertaken by pupils in Year 6 is often demanding and yet the pupils rise to the challenge and produce written work which is often extended, well organised and constructed and accurately presented. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make satisfactory progress, especially when they are encouraged to think things out for themselves. Scope for extension work is limited in most lessons and the more able pupils are capable of reaching higher standards. Pupils for whom English is an additional language make satisfactory progress. In the majority of lessons behaviour is good and many pupils enjoy this subject. Sometimes behaviour is less good, especially in the case of boys, if they are expected to listen for too long or activities are of little interest to them and the classroom management skills of teachers are weak.

51. For the most part, English is satisfactorily taught with some teaching in Years 4 and 6 being good. In the literacy hour teachers set out their objectives with clarity, sharing these with pupils so that everyone has a clear sense of direction in the lesson. Teachers make good use of models so that the pupils have something to emulate, for instance before writing their own haiku, pupils in Year 4 were given a valuable opportunity to look at some authentic versions and to analyse how they were constructed. Similarly, in Year 6 pupils studying 'Carries War' were being helped to see how an established author uses simile and metaphor for effect. In each instance the benefits of this approach were clearly evident in the pupils' own subsequent writing. On some occasions learning support assistants are not as well used as they need to be and more thought needs to be given to how they can be most effectively involved in learning, especially in the first part of the literacy hour.

52. Good attention is being paid to work at word level as recommended by the National Literacy Strategy, for instance pupils in Year 5 are being helped to spell accurately commonly confused words, such as *stationery* and *stationary* through the use of simple mnemonics, some of which they are

devising for themselves. This strong focus on words is helping pupils to know more about how their own language works and to use language themselves more deliberately.

53. The reading and writing needs of individual pupils are being well addressed through the effective use of group work. In the best lessons very good use is also being made of the last part of the lesson, the so-called 'plenary session', for pupils to feed back to teachers what they have learned. In some lessons teachers are especially good at bringing out points about language use through the use of dramatic techniques. A good example occurred in Year 3 when the teacher 'in role' used inappropriate forms of language to greet the pupils when she entered the room to demonstrate the difference between formal and informal language. Not only did the pupils enjoy the experience but they were also able to see very clearly how the use of language is very dependent on context.

54. In some lessons teaching is less effective because teachers are trying to meet too many objectives and the learning becomes diffuse. In some lessons the plenary session is not being well used to inform the teacher what the pupils have learned but becomes more of a sharing session which has more limited value. In other lessons teachers are not making best use of opportunities for pupils to develop their own ideas or responses, to marshal information in ways they think are best or to present ideas in different forms. This is especially limiting the attainment of more able pupils in all years. Some use is being made of information and communications technology [ICT] especially to develop fluency in writing but some use of ICT is not related to the work in hand. The marking of pupils' work is uneven. Some very good use is being made of guidance to show pupils what they have to do to improve but this is not always the case as some marking provides little by way of feedback to pupils.

55. The implementation of the literacy hour has been very well managed. Training has been thorough. Monitoring has been extensive. The result is a strong structure throughout the school which will stand it in good stead in the drive to raise literacy standards. Pupils are becoming used to working towards specific literacy targets and this is helping to raise attainment. Monitoring reports are detailed but need to place more emphasis on what the pupils are actually attaining in lessons and whether the standard is high enough in relation to the demands of the National Curriculum. Strategies for raising the attainment of boys are being used but they are piecemeal and lack rigour. There is a strong need for the school to have a concerted approach to this issue if the problem is to be addressed. The gap between the achievement of boys and that of girls has grown; otherwise, the overall standards described at the time of the last inspection have been maintained.

56. The school has purchased many new books to focus on in the literacy hour. These have been well chosen and will play a valuable role in helping the development of pupils' literacy skills. Although the school library has some good stock it needs to be revitalised and strongly promoted so that the organised reading in the literacy hour is more powerfully underpinned by a stronger provision for private and independent reading, especially by boys.

MATHEMATICS

57. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests at Key Stage 2, standards in mathematics were close to the national average, falling below by just 2 per cent. They were below average when compared with similar schools. The number of pupils achieving Level 5 was also below. Over the period 1996 to 1999, performance in mathematics was close to the national average but the performance of boys was below the national average for their age group.

58. Observations of pupils' work in lessons and in samples collected by the school indicate that pupils' overall attainment is average and that the standards described in the last inspection report have been maintained. The school is implementing the Numeracy Strategy satisfactorily and the three part lesson structure is well embedded in classroom practice. Together with target setting, this is beginning to have a positive effect on standards and the school anticipates this year's targets being met. Pupils are provided with a balanced programme of work, which has a strong emphasis on numeracy and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. There is evidence of progress being uneven with pupils making significant gains in learning particularly in Years 4 and 6. Some pupils in Year 5 show evidence of progress having slowed considerably over the past two terms. Pupils with special educational needs make appropriate progress.

59. In Year 3 many pupils know number bonds, doubles and near doubles. They know the language of addition and subtraction and the more able recognise the inverse operation of these. Pupils in Year 4 are taught that division is the inverse operation of multiplication. They know their two, five and ten times tables. In Year 5, pupils are taught how to construct a line graph for temperature and how to read and interpret graphs. Older pupils show ability and confidence. In Year 6 many children are familiar with the four rules of number and the associated language. They know how to use brackets in calculations and are secure in their knowledge of basic number bonds and multiplication tables. They are able to read co-ordinates with accuracy in four quadrants.

60. The standard of work in most other aspects of mathematics is broadly in line with national expectations. Many pupils in Year 3 can make simple measurements of length and time. They can identify a number of two and three dimensional shapes. Tally charts are used to produce information for graphs. Pupils develop their knowledge of fractions and by Year 6 can use these to calculate in number and measurement. They know how to record calculations in money using appropriate signs and can calculate differences in time. They have learned about mean, median and mode but work on graphs and their interpretation is limited. Work in shape and measures is not well represented overall. The school has identified the need to develop problem-solving and mathematical reasoning skills and is beginning to address these aspects. On the whole pupils' standards of numeracy are adequate enough for them to be able to use number successfully in other subjects of the curriculum.

61. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. It is generally good in Years 4 and 6. Teachers work hard and are committed to improving standards. Weekly planning is undertaken for the three-part lesson and there is a common framework applied consistently across the school. Teachers are consistent in writing clear learning objectives and sharing these with pupils. In some classes these are used to evaluate learning. There is an appropriate focus on developing vocabulary which is identified in planning. In some lessons this is strong feature with teachers evaluating pupils' understanding and providing clear explanations.

62. There are examples of good quality teaching where all pupils are challenged appropriately by the teacher's questions, good use is made of demonstration and teacher time is well targeted. Clear strategies are taught which enable pupils to compute more efficiently. Children are encouraged to explain their strategies and are given good feedback in many instances. In these lessons the plenary session is well used to reinforce objectives.

63. Teachers' use of assessment to find out the prior knowledge of pupils and to build on this is not fully developed. In some classes there was inconsistency of expectations. For example, in one Year 3 class pupils were applying the associative law of multiplication with the seven times tables and in the other class in the year group pupils were focusing on the four times tables. The needs of the more able pupils were not sufficiently taken into account in many of the lessons observed.

64. Behaviour is generally well managed although in a few instances where the teacher has to work to gain pupils' attention this has the effect of slowing the pace of the lesson. Relationships in class are good and pupils have very positive attitudes to their work. They are keen to discuss their work and contribute well in plenary sessions. The use of whiteboards in some classes enables pupils to be actively involved in the oral/mental starters. Pupils' work is well presented in most classes. Marking is broadly in line with school policy but lacks the level of feedback needed to help individual pupils meet their targets.

65. The subject is led by the co-ordinator who is also the school's assessment co-ordinator. Time has been allocated to observe, monitor and feedback on lessons. This is beginning to have an impact on school practice. An action plan details specific tasks to guide the work of the co-ordinator and links well with the school development plan. There is a good system for setting annual targets for pupils and reviewing them on a termly basis. Some teachers are beginning to use this process to identify rates of progress. The co-ordinator has yet to gain an overview of this to assist the school in identifying strengths and areas for improvement.

66. Resources are generally adequate. The co-ordinator has a budget allocation and there is an audit planned before the end of term, which will take account of some gaps in provision. A new published scheme is being added to current resources.

67. ICT links are being developed and examples of computers being used to support lesson objectives were observed in some classes. The school building and grounds provide good opportunities for investigations though their use is not widespread.

SCIENCE

68. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests for Key Stage 2, standards in science were above the national average. They were above average when compared with similar schools. The number of pupils achieving Level 5 was close to the national average. Over the period 1996 to 1999, performance in science was close to the national average and the performance of boys was close to the national average for their age group.

69. Evidence from the inspection confirms the picture gained from national tests. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are good. Pupils are provided with a programme of work, which has a strong emphasis on knowledge acquisition. Pupils make sound progress throughout the school in acquiring scientific knowledge, with marked progress in Year 6. The study of life and living things is a strength of the work of the school. There is little evidence of pupil-led systematic enquiry and some aspects of physical processes are not well represented in work seen.

70. In Year 3 many pupils learn about materials and changes, sound and pitch, plants, and human growth. They learn about primary and secondary teeth and the function of molar, incisor and canine teeth. In Year 4 they learn about water and life cycles and the role of producers. They can describe and record simple food chains. In Year 5 they learn about forces and the effects of wind and friction. Pupils make use of ICT to record temperatures in the school environment and use data handling skills to present this information. In Year 6 pupils apply their knowledge of circuits to tasks in design and technology lessons. They are knowledgeable about ecosystems in both their immediate environment and beyond. They know the role of micro-organisms in the breakdown of waste. They know about the conditions for fair testing.

71. The quality of teaching observed was satisfactory overall with teachers displaying good level of scientific knowledge. Teaching is generally good in Year 6. In the best lessons, all pupils are challenged appropriately by the teacher's questions. A good balance is being struck between presentation from the teacher and contributions from the pupils. Good use is made of demonstration. Pupils are encouraged to explain their thinking and were given good feedback in many instances. In some lessons there is over-direction by the teacher which restricts pupils' involvement and opportunities for assessing pupils' prior knowledge were missed.

72. Relationships in class are generally good and pupils have very positive attitudes. They are keen to discuss their work and contribute well in lessons. They respond well to questioning and in Year 6 are able to pose their own problem for investigation. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in some classes by learning support assistants who discuss and clarify tasks. In one class, due to the high level of teacher direction and the overall organisation, learning support time was not well used at the beginning of the lesson. Behaviour is generally well managed. Pupils' presentation of work is satisfactory overall.

73. There has been some monitoring of work through work sampling but this has yet to be fed back to staff. This work will need to be strengthened to ensure standards are maintained. Resources are generally adequate but there are deficiencies, particularly in provision for experimental and investigative work, which the current budget allocation will not meet. An action plan details specific tasks to guide the work of the co-ordinator as science is not a high priority in the school development plan. There is a good system for setting and reviewing annual targets. This has yet to make a full impact in terms of the school's overall analysis of its strengths and areas for specific improvement. Tests are used to assess pupils and are linked to coverage of the attainment targets. ICT links are being developed and examples of computers being used to support lesson objectives were observed in one class. The school building and grounds provide good opportunities for investigations and the planned millennium garden will strengthen these resources.

ART

74. Attainment in art is in line with national expectations. Skills, processes and techniques are systematically and progressively developed in investigating and making, and in acquiring knowledge and understanding. Pupils of all abilities make sound progress and show a steadily increasing confidence in working with a variety of materials including pencil, pastel, paint, fabric and clay.

75. Pupils learn to develop their ideas and feelings by using visual sources for inspiration. A good example of this was seen in Year 4, where pupils were making good use of magnifiers to examine the intricate patterns on some plants. Their subsequent observational drawings were carried out with care and attention to detail. Many of these pupils could explain why they had used particular shadings or techniques, and some of them were using sketchbooks well to make preliminary drawings.

76. Skills in painting are developed well and pupils use a satisfactory range of techniques. They learn about composition, colour and tone by studying and reproducing the style of artists such as Van Gogh, Picasso and Georgia O'Keefe. Pupils are also developing a good knowledge of the work of other artists from a range of periods and cultures and show real interest in learning about their approaches and methods. Information technology is sometimes used effectively to produce an additional dimension for art but pupils have not yet had the opportunity to explore the potential of the digital camera in their artwork.

77. The school makes appropriate use of its pottery kiln and pupils are given many opportunities to develop their skills in working with clay. Good examples of thumb pots and ceramic tiles are on display in the school. Throughout the school, there are many colourful displays of children's art work, including painting, collage, drawing, batik, and clay tiles and pots. Some of this work is linked to other subjects. In Year 4, for example, there are 'Tudor' portraits. In Year 5, there are drawings and vases which relate to Ancient Greece. Other work has been based on a variety of themes. The 'warm colours' display by pupils in Year 3 has been influenced by African art. The high quality abstract work by Year 6 has been based on a study of paintings by Pablo Picasso.

78. Pupils are encouraged to select appropriate materials and to reflect on their work and evaluate it. Their ability to experiment with a range of tools and techniques, however, is sometimes constrained by over-directive teaching. Nonetheless, the quality of teaching is good. It is well planned with learning objectives clearly stated. Activities are well organised and teachers have good subject knowledge. They interact appropriately with pupils giving praise, encouragement and constructive feedback. Assessments of pupils' progress are made by observing them during lessons and also by evaluating samples of work kept in individual pupil portfolios. This approach is consistent across the school. Pupils enjoy art and attitudes are positive. They are conscientious, enthusiastic, and keen to talk about their work. They help each other by offering opinions and making suggestions. Most show good levels of concentration.

79. The co-ordinator works hard, provides good leadership and gives effective support to her colleagues. She has devised a monitoring schedule which sets out when each aspect of the subject will be monitored. Resources for the subject are satisfactory, overall, and they are effectively and efficiently organised and used. Since the last inspection the school has been effective in increasing the range of activities offered to pupils and teacher expertise has improved in some areas. In order to improve further, the co-ordinator now needs to enable pupils to make greater use of 'new' technology in their artwork. She should also ensure that more opportunities are provided for pupils to experiment with materials and follow up their own ideas.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

80. Standards of attainment are in line with expectations and pupils are making satisfactory progress, an improved picture from the last inspection report. Two lessons were observed during the inspection. Judgements are based on these, a review of planning, work sampling and discussions with the co-ordinator and with pupils about their work.

81. Pupils have experience of working with a variety of materials including food, construction kits for gears and pulleys, card, malleable materials such as *papier mache* and clay and resistant materials such as wood. In Year 3, pupils work on levers and joints and this work is developed in Year 5 with more complex movements leading to the production of stringed puppets. More recent work on 'buggies' in Year 5 enabled pupils to use their joining skills to create a frame which they used to assemble and test a balloon driven 'buggy'. Work on pneumatics in Year 4 produced some good quality work. In Year 6 pupils had the opportunity to design and make a shop front, integrating work done on switches e.g. membrane, reed, flapper and pressure pads, to design and make the most appropriate for turning on a light or setting off an alarm. Earlier work included the opportunity to design a flyer which would encourage parents to come and help with ICT in school. Outcomes were imaginative and well executed. Overall, the progress of pupils, including those with special needs, is satisfactory and by the end of Year 6 their knowledge and skills are in line with what is expected of pupils at this age.

82. In both the lessons observed, the quality of teaching was good mainly due to subject knowledge, clarity of expectations and instruction. Pupils worked diligently using cutting tools effectively and showed the ability to evaluate the strengths and shortcomings of their outcomes. Good questioning skills enabled pupils to refine their thinking. Behaviour was very good and was well managed. Pupils clearly enjoy their work and show sustained interest and motivation. High degrees of satisfaction were observed as pupils succeeded in achieving their desired outcomes.

83. The co-ordinator for design technology is keen and enthusiastic. She has worked with staff to implement training following the last inspection and this has been successful in addressing specific skills and increasing teachers' awareness of expectations. The new policy and scheme of work relate well to the National Curriculum. Expectations for each year are charted in an outline curriculum map which ensures that all aspects of the subject are covered. Progress since the last inspection has been satisfactory. Further work on the progression of skills is needed linked to a system for recording pupil progress.

84. Many resources are stored centrally and are well labelled. There is a good range of consumables including wheels. A mobile trolley stores a range of tools and all classrooms have a basic toolkit. There is a small number of teacher resource books. There are gaps in resource provision particularly in food technology and construction which the co-ordinator plans to address. In order to improve the standards in design and technology the school should improve resources, especially for food technology and construction, and monitor standards across the school to ensure that all pupils receive an appropriate curriculum and develop their skill progressively.

GEOGRAPHY

85. Standards of attainment in geography are in line with national expectations. Pupils make sound progress in developing their geographical knowledge and skills. Many of them can use previously gained knowledge to help them to interpret new sources of information. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well and they make sound progress. By the age of eleven, pupils use appropriate geographical vocabulary and make confident use of secondary sources of evidence, such as photographs, books and maps. For example, pupils in Year 3 used aerial photographs and Ordnance Survey maps of the locality to determine land use patterns. They can locate specific features such as a cinema, a football stadium, a church and schools. A few pupils were able to suggest reasons for the location of some of these features. Using the correct terminology, they could also identify and describe areas used for housing, industry and recreation. In studying a contrasting locality in the United Kingdom, pupils in Year 4 clearly understood the impact of situation and location on human activities. They made perceptive comparisons about travelling and shopping in Stanton-in-Peak and in Watford. By the end of the key stage most pupils have a good general knowledge of places, rivers, mountains and other geographical features of the world.

86. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers are secure in their knowledge of the subject and planning is good, setting out clearly what pupils are intended to learn. Evidence from these curriculum plans, from pupils' work and from wall displays, shows that all aspects of the subject are given appropriate emphasis. Learning objectives are shared with pupils and all lessons have a clear structure. The content of each lesson provides appropriate levels of challenge for most pupils, with work well matched to their prior attainment. Although there is evidence of the use of enquiry and

investigation in the work seen, avenues for exploration tend to be identified primarily by teachers. Pupils have too few opportunities to raise their own geographical questions or to work independently on research tasks. There was evidence during the inspection that the subject not only contributes well to the development of pupils' literacy and numeracy skills, but also to their cultural development through the study of different localities and countries. The school makes effective use of educational visits, including a residential visit by Year 6, to bring the subject to life and to enhance pupils' learning. Although teachers are assessing pupils' progress and a portfolio of pupils' work has been compiled, assessment procedures need to be more rigorous so that pupils' achievements in the subject can be more effectively tracked and recorded.

87. Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and show real interest and enthusiasm. They are supportive of each other and show a capacity for sustained concentration. They are keen to make contributions to lessons by offering opinions and answering questions. They use resources confidently and responsibly.

88. The co-ordinator is very enthusiastic about her role. She gives a very positive lead and she has plans for the further development of geography in the school. She is well organised and she supports colleagues very well. She monitors planning, analyses and evaluates subject data and has good knowledge of standards across the school. Resources are sufficient but some items such as globes, should be more easily accessible for pupils. The school has maintained the sound standards which were demonstrated in the last inspection. In order for the subject to improve further, the co-ordinator now needs to establish a more effective system for tracking and recording pupils' progress.

HISTORY

89. As a result of timetabling arrangements, only one history lesson with a temporary teacher could be observed during the inspection. Further evidence was gathered from teachers' planning, from a scrutiny of pupils' work, from displays and from discussions with teachers and with pupils.

90. Sufficient information was gleaned in these ways to indicate that standards throughout the school are in line with national expectations. Pupils make satisfactory progress overall and by the age of eleven show a good sense of chronology and can describe some of the main events of periods in history. They have a sound knowledge of the periods covered and can make comparisons between them. They can also use appropriate vocabulary and they have a good understanding of how to interpret primary and secondary sources of evidence. Some Year 6 pupils have been using the Internet to study the Victorians and transport. CD-ROM technology has also been used by pupils to access historical information. The school has not yet, however, fully exploited the potential of these sources of evidence. The quality of pupils' writing is a particular strength in history and shows good appreciation of the features of the periods studied. When relating to significant features in people's lives in the past, many pupils demonstrate understanding and empathy. Pupils with special educational needs make sound progress towards the targets set for them.

91. Too little teaching was seen on which to base a secure judgement about the quality of teaching. However, the quantity and quality of work seen indicates that the subject is well established in the school and taught with genuine interest and enthusiasm. Planning is detailed and lesson objectives are clearly stated. The subject content is appropriately covered and there is progression in terms of both factual knowledge and enquiry skills. Evidence from pupils' books, however, suggests that some lessons are, at times, over-prescriptive with insufficient opportunities provided for independent research. Displays showing pupils' work are of good quality and have a high profile in the school. The work by pupils in Year 4 in their study of the Tudors, for example, has given rise to a good display of portraits and model houses of that period.

92. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. Pupils show great interest in history and they are keen to learn. In their written work, the quality of handwriting and presentation is good and reflects the enjoyment and enthusiasm they show for the subject.

93. The co-ordinator shows a great deal of enthusiasm for the subject. She gives clear and positive guidance to staff. She monitors their planning and collects samples of work from each class. Assessment procedures are not firmly established and neither is there an effective system for tracking and recording pupils' progress. There is a policy for history and also a scheme of work and these provide useful guidance for maintaining and improving standards. Resources for the subject are adequate with supplementary artefacts and materials acquired when necessary.

94. The school has maintained the satisfactory standards achieved at the last inspection. In order to improve further the co-ordinator now needs to establish a systematic approach to assessing, tracking and recording pupils' progress. The use of information and communications technology in the subject should also be further developed.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY [ICT]

95. Standards of attainment in information and communication technology [ICT] are in line with expectations and pupils are making satisfactory overall progress in acquiring basic skills, an improved picture from the last inspection. Little direct teaching was seen, with only one lesson where ICT skills were being directly taught observed during the inspection. In other lessons, ICT was observed in use by pupils working predominately in pairs. Many of these pairs were single gender. Judgements are based on these observations, a review of planning, work sampling and discussions with the co-ordinator and with pupils about their work.

96. Pupils have experience of working with a variety of programs including word processing and databases. In Year 3, pupils were observed working in pairs on a writing task. They showed a good awareness of procedures for loading and running the program though they were less secure in saving procedures. 'Roamer' was also used with a small number of pupils who could key in instructions

accurately. In Year 4, pupils used a mathematics program to reinforce and practise their multiplication skills. In Year 5 pupils were engaged in reading line graphs which had been constructed from information about temperatures gathered on the school site. In Year 6 pupils had the opportunity to work on a simulation program. They were also familiar with *Logo*, the use of sensors for data-logging and the use of email and the Internet. Internet access has recently been secured and the school has been enterprising in ensuring that all Year 6 pupils have access to it. They benefit from the support of a parent-volunteer who guides and supports their work in pairs, following teachers' objectives. Year 6 pupils have a good knowledge of their own abilities and know from whom and how to get help when required. Some have enjoyed the benefit of a computer club and were able to describe specific details on how this helped their skills.

97. The digital camera has brought a new dimension to the work in some subjects and the recent whole school initiative on monitoring has had a beneficial effect on pupils' learning and an increased awareness of how computers support investigations. The school is currently working to improve basic keyboarding skills across the age range. Although this is still at an early stage for sound evaluation, Year 6 pupils describe specific benefits including better knowledge of home keys and faster, two-handed inputting skills. Pupils show a high level of interest and positive attitudes to their work. Overall, the progress of pupils, including those with special needs, is satisfactory and by the end of Year 6 their knowledge and skills are in line with what is expected of children at this age.

98. Direct teaching of ICT is undertaken weekly to whole classes although this is not currently reflected in timetables. In the lesson observed, the quality of teaching was satisfactory. Clarity of expectations, guidance and instructions enabled pupils to work successfully independently. On a small number of occasions, work on the computer did not directly relate to the lesson objectives and pupils missed the main teaching and plenary of these lessons. This was judged to have a detrimental effect on their learning.

99. The co-ordinator for information and communication technology is highly motivated and has successfully pursued her own development through a range of in-service training and other provision. She has worked with both teaching and non-teaching staff to increase confidence and to implement training following the last inspection and this has been successful in addressing specific skills and increasing awareness of expectations. The policy is comprehensive and the outline scheme of work relates well to the National Curriculum. Good progress has been made from the last inspection. Further work on the progression of skills is needed linked to a system for recording pupil progress.

100. Resources include a machine in each classroom with a range of software to support literacy and numeracy in particular. Plans are underway to secure the provision of a computer suite but these are closely tied to a plan to extend floor space. Fund raising including donations from the school's parents' association is targeted to the securing of twelve new machines.

101. In order to improve the standards in information and communication technology, the school should ensure that programs used in literacy and numeracy lessons relate to the planned objectives, secure a system for recording pupil achievement so that year on year progress can be tracked and monitored, reflect teaching time in the timetable and maintain an action plan.

MUSIC

102. Standards in music are above national expectations and pupils make good progress. By the age of eleven, many pupils can read some notation and understand, use and respond to musical terms such as 'ostinato' and 'pitch'. They can appraise a piece of music in terms of its structure, identifying, for example, repeating sections. Most pupils can play a number of pitched and non-pitched instruments well and they can compose and arrange short pieces of music with good attention to tempo and dynamics. They can also sing a large repertoire of songs. In a lesson in Year 4, pupils were able to improvise rhythmic ideas well, organising and combining sounds effectively. They were able to maintain independent instrumental lines and they showed a good awareness of other performers.

103. Some pupils receive tuition in instrumental groups where they learn to play such instruments such as the guitar, the recorder and the violin. Pupils in the after-school music club produce musical performances of a high standard. Singing is also of a high standard throughout the school.

104. The quality of music teaching in the school is good. Lessons are well planned and pupils are made aware of what it is they have to achieve. Expectations are generally high and most teachers are knowledgeable and understand the requirements of the subject. All teachers give appropriate time and attention to music and pupils are given a variety of opportunities in assemblies and lessons to listen to and develop an understanding of music from different times and places. The visiting instrumental teachers make a good contribution to the high standards of music in the school. Although teachers do assess children's musical achievements, they do not always track pupils' progress with sufficient rigour.

105. The music curriculum meets statutory requirements and is broadly based covering performing, composing, listening and appraising. Recently, links between music and literacy have been established and there are plans to explore links with other subjects including information and communications technology. The musical life of the school is enriched by a range of musical events including regular concerts and musical plays. Pupils are given regular opportunities to perform for others and occasionally they get the chance to hear other performers. A good example of this was seen during the inspection week when the pupils in the music club visited the Purcell School of Music to hear the orchestra perform.

106. The pupils have very good attitudes to music. They enjoy music making, they respond enthusiastically and they are keen to improve their knowledge and skills. Pupils perform well individually, as a small group and as part of the whole class. Most pupils listen well and are confident enough to contribute ideas and opinions to discussions about music.

107. Resources for music are satisfactory, although the range of equipment needs to include more instruments from other countries and cultures. The school makes effective use of its music room. The music co-ordinator is very enthusiastic and provides effective leadership. She monitors curriculum plans and has worked alongside colleagues to provide ideas, support and guidance. The high standards in music achieved in the last inspection have been maintained. In order to improve further, the co-ordinator now needs to establish a more effective system for tracking pupils' progress.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION [PE]

108. Standards of attainment are broadly in line with national expectations with some high achievement in swimming. Pupils of all abilities make sound progress and develop their skills across a broad range of activities. They generally perform tasks with confidence and competence and are well aware of the need for safety in what they do. Pupils are able to use aiming, throwing and catching skills with increasing accuracy. This was evident in a Year 6 lesson where pupils were progressively developing these skills in small team games of stool-ball. During that lesson there was a strong competitive element with pupils showing a real desire to improve and to win.

109. Pupils are capable of sustaining energetic activity well and they have a sound understanding of how their bodies are affected by exercise. An example of this was seen in an athletics lesson in Year 4. At the end of the lesson when pupils were performing stretching exercises, they became aware that with their muscles warm they could stretch further than they could at the start of the lesson when their muscles were cold. By the age of eleven most pupils have learnt to swim confidently and they have developed effective and efficient swimming strokes on the front and on the back. Most pupils make good progress in swimming.

110. Gymnastics, dance and outdoor and adventurous activities were not observed during the inspection but evidence in planning documents shows that the PE curriculum is broadly based and fulfils the requirements of the National Curriculum. Extra-curricular sporting activities enhance the provision and the school has derived benefit from the involvement of local sporting clubs and agencies. There are infrequent opportunities, however, for pupils to test their skills against pupils from other local schools. The school makes very good use of its swimming pool with an intensive programme of lessons for all pupils in the summer term. Safety procedures are well established.

111. Pupils' response in lessons is very good throughout the school. They work hard and they are enthusiastic and interested. They show perseverance and commitment in practising their skills. They collaborate well and they can also work well independently. Behaviour is very good and pupils handle equipment responsibly and safely.

112. Teaching throughout the school is sound overall. Teachers have a positive approach to the subject and lessons are well planned with clear learning objectives. No formal records are kept of pupils' progress although teachers do note which pupils have particular aptitudes or specific needs. Most teachers have high expectations about pupils' behaviour and routines are well established. Teachers are very supportive to the children giving them encouragement and praising them for good effort. Lessons are well paced and they are delivered enthusiastically. Pupils are given challenging tasks and there are opportunities for them to demonstrate, evaluate and improve their work.

113. Resources are satisfactory overall and they are well maintained and effectively managed. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and gives a very positive lead in the subject. She has identified priorities for improvement, offers advice to colleagues and monitors and evaluates teachers' planning. The school has maintained the satisfactory standards achieved at the last inspection. In order to improve the subject further, the co-ordinator now needs to establish a more effective system for assessing and recording pupils' progress.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

114. The attainment of pupils is above average. By the end of the key stage the majority show that they are able to explore the allegorical meanings of stories, and have a good knowledge of the significance of symbolism, religious leaders and world faiths. They are aware that religion has a part to play in their own lives and show that they can reflect in mature ways on aspects of their own lives.

115. Pupils in all years show good attitudes to this subject and are eager to take part in discussion. Pupils with special educational needs take a good deal of interest in this subject and reach satisfactory standards. Much of pupils' written work shows a good ability to consider issues at some length and in some detail. Many pupils, both boys and girls, respond well. Behaviour is good.

116. The quality of teaching is mostly good. Teachers are skilled at bringing out the deeper meanings of narratives. They use a wide range of imaginative techniques, including drama and cartoon strips, to make the subject interesting. In the best lessons they question pupils in such a way as to get the pupils to think for themselves. They respect the contributions the pupils make to discussion.

117. The subject is being very well co-ordinated. The match with the local Agreed Syllabus is very good. The range of experiences provided for pupils is broad with a strong emphasis on making religious education relevant to pupils' lives. The co-ordinator moderates the standards of pupils' work in order to reach accurate judgements about their achievement. Further work is now being undertaken to integrate assessment with schemes of work. Resources show little improvement since the last inspection because there are still too few artefacts for pupils to handle but teaching has improved and pupils' attainment is now higher.