

INSPECTION REPORT

BOOKER HILL COMBINED SCHOOL

High Wycombe

LEA area: Buckinghamshire

Unique reference number: 110260

Headteacher: Mr. R. Seymour

Reporting inspector: Mr. R. Passant - 2728

Dates of inspection: 28th February-4th March 2000

Inspection number: 190844

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Field Road
High Wycombe
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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr. J. Huddart

Date of previous inspection: 2nd December 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr. R. Passant	Registered inspector	English, Physical education.	How high are standards? (The school's results and achievements.) How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
Mrs. E. Fraser	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with its pupils?
Dr. G. Plummer	Team inspector	Mathematics, Geography, Music, Equal Opportunities.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to the pupils?
Mrs. G. Robertson		Under-fives, Special educational needs, English as an additional language, Information and Communication Technology, History, Art.	
Mr. J. Sangster	Team inspector	Science, Design and Technology, Religious Education.	How high are standards? (Attitudes and behaviour)

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school serves an area of mixed housing to the west of High Wycombe. The area is identified as having above average levels of deprivation, when using specific criteria to make national comparisons. There are currently 204 pupils on roll, about the national average. About a third of pupils are from ethnic minority heritage cultures, above the national average. A quarter of pupils at the school speak English as an additional language which is a high proportion compared to schools nationally. A half of these pupils are at an early stage of language acquisition. A third of the school are on the register of special educational needs which is above the national average. The percentage of pupils with statements is average. Attainment on entry is well below average; a significant number of pupils have impoverished language experience on entry to the school. The school participates in a family literacy project.

At least twenty-one percent of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, about the national average, although this figure is likely to be higher. Pupil mobility is high. The school was subject to a major reorganisation resulting in a loss of staff and there have also been recent staff changes, including members of staff in senior management positions. The school has been successful in attracting industrial financial support. Since the previous inspection the percentage of pupils with special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language has increased as has the number of pupils from ethnic minority cultures.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is effective. The quality of teaching, particularly in English and mathematics is good. The school is led well. Standards are below average in mathematics and English and low in science. Overall the school provides satisfactory value for money.

There are aspects relating to the quality of relationships and the positive ethos in the school which are very effective and might be considered as offering good value.

What the school does well

- The quality of teaching, particularly in mathematics and English, is good.
- Pupils like coming to school, their behaviour is good, relationships throughout the school are very good and pupils treat each other with respect and generosity.
- There is a good range of learning opportunities.
- The provision for pupils' personal development is good. The provision for pupils' cultural development is very good.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress against the targets they are set.
- Pupils for whom English is an additional language make good progress.
- The school cares very well for all its pupils.
- The community makes a very good contribution to the life of the school.

What could be improved

- Overall standards in English and mathematics are below average.
- Standards in science are low.
- In other subjects work is not always sufficiently matched to pupils' abilities so that the level of challenge and rigour in the work, seen in mathematics and English, is missing.
- The school has in place effective procedures for assessment-these need to be embedded into teachers' working practice. There needs to be a stronger link between the accurate assessment of what pupils know and planning what they need to be taught in order for them to work to a higher level.
- The role of subject co-ordinators with particular regard to monitoring standards in the subject for which they have responsibility should be developed.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in December 1996. There has been steady improvement since the last inspection particularly in behaviour, the quality of teaching, planning for the curriculum and standards in information and communication technology. Current work in mathematics and English show significant improvement.

STANDARDS

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

The definition of similar schools is based on comparing schools with similar free school meals percentages. The percentage of pupils at the school known to be eligible for free school meals is at least 21 percent. Standards in the National curriculum tests show variation year-on-year reflecting the nature of the cohort of the pupils. Care needs to be taken in interpreting National Curriculum tests as individual pupil performance can result in a significant variation in overall percentage.

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			Similar schools
	Year 1997	Year 1998	Year 1999	Year 1999
English	E	B	E	D
Mathematics	E	C	E	D
Science	E*	E	E*	E

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

Although children have a wide range of abilities, the attainment on entry to the school reveals a high proportion of children with attainment below that expected.

National Curriculum tests at the age of seven indicate in 1999 that the percentage of pupils reaching the expected level was well below the national average in reading and mathematics. It was very low in comparison with the national average in writing. When averaged over four years the performance of pupils in reading, writing and mathematics was well below the national average.

When results at the end of Key Stage 2 are averaged over four years, pupils' performance was well below the national average in English mathematics and science. The science results in 1999 are in the lowest five percent nationally. When compared to similar schools standards of attainment in English and mathematics are below average and in science well below average.

The school has set itself realistic but demanding targets for mathematics and English in 2000. Parents and the governing body are proud of the school's achievements in the eleven plus selection process.

Standards in English and mathematics of the current cohort are below average by the age of eleven. In science standards are low.

Standards in art, history, physical education and information and communication technology are in line with expectations by the end of Year 6. In religious education standards are in line with the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Pupils make satisfactory progress in music. Progress is generally satisfactory in geography across the school, despite which standards are below expectations in the subject at the end of both key stages because of the below average attainment on entry and the large number of pupils with special needs and language difficulties. In design and technology it was not possible to make an accurate judgement.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very good attitudes to the school. They enjoy coming to school and taking part in the range of activities that are available for them both in and outside lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good. The possibility of bullying or racist behaviour is taken very seriously and pupils are very confident that no such behaviour exists in the school.
Personal development and relationships	The personal development of pupils is good. The high standards of attitude, behaviour and personal development have not only been maintained but also improved since the previous inspection.
Attendance	Attendance levels are a little below national average, but have improved since the last inspection, as has punctuality. The school follows up unexplained absences very effectively and as a result the level of unauthorised absences is below national averages.

Pupils see the school as a happy, active place, in which it is easy to make friends. They show a high level of respect for the beliefs of others and there is no trace of bullying, racism or other oppressive behaviour. Pupils are very polite and courteous around the school and play well together during breaks and lunchtimes. The school has been successful in developing a sense of responsibility in its pupils. Pupils in all years help in the 'Bully Watch' scheme, and Key Stage 2 pupils elect their own representatives on the School Council.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Overall teaching is good. Teaching is almost never less than satisfactory. It is good or better in six out of ten lessons. It is very good in over one in ten lessons. Teaching of English is good overall. There is a significant amount of very good English teaching across the school. Teaching of mathematics is good overall with a significant amount of very good teaching. The effectiveness of strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy skills is good. Learning support assistants make a good contribution to pupils' learning. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 and good progress in Key Stage 2 where the impact of teaching is greater.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum provided is adequately broad, balanced and relevant. The school makes good use of the national guidelines for the under-fives. The curriculum meets in full the statutory requirements for National Curriculum subjects and religious education.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Overall provision for pupils with special educational needs is good.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Provision for pupils with English as an additional language is good: clear structured teaching is given related to meet specific targets
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school's aims place a strong emphasis on pupils' personal development. Its cultivation of pupils' spiritual, social and moral development is good. Provision for cultural development is very good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Teachers and support staff know pupils well and are sensitive to and aware of their needs. Members of staff provide good levels of informal as well as more formal support to meet their needs.

The school gives a high priority to keeping parents well informed about all areas of school life and in providing a wide range of opportunities for parents to be involved with their children's learning. Parents and carers are very supportive of the school, the values it promotes and the welcoming family atmosphere.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school is led and managed well. The school has a clear sense of direction. Parents feel comfortable in approaching the school. The leadership effectively promotes very good relationships and a positive ethos.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is effective. It plays a good role in shaping the direction of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	There is good and careful evaluation of the school's performance.
The strategic use of resources	Resources are used well. Finance is carefully monitored. Specific grants are used well.

The senior management of the school know the pupils and their particular needs and many of the parents. They work well together. There is a positive atmosphere in the school which supports learning and which stems from the leadership. The school aims, particularly those relating to communication, friendship, trust and respect are reflected well in the daily life of the school. The school operates very smoothly on a day-to-day basis. Parents have very positive views of the school and the school works hard through its newsletters to keep them involved.

The governors apply principles of best value and meet their statutory responsibilities. The school make good use of the accommodation to support specialist teaching, such as information technology and food technology. The early years pupils do not have their own secure play-space and this limits the delivery of the full curriculum and opportunities for their physical and personal development. Accommodation is good overall. The school has made significant investment in information and communication technology facilities, which are contributing to the improvement in standards in this aspect. The school has also made considerable investment in English resources. These are used well. Overall, learning resources in the school are adequate and appropriate. Members of staff have a good range of curriculum expertise. The school effectively uses additional funding to reduce large class sizes. Overall there is an adequate match of staff to the demands of the curriculum.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school and are making good progress. • Behaviour is good. • Teaching is good. • Parents feel comfortable about approaching the school. • The school expects the pupils to work hard. • The school works closely with parents. • The school is helping their children become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of work pupils have to do at home. • Some parents at the parents' meeting felt that reports had a quality of sameness about them.

The inspection team supports parents' positive views of the school. Homework is set regularly. It may be useful for the school to re-state its homework policy. The inspection team feels that annual reports provide good information about children's progress and give specific targets for further development. Many parents of younger children make good use of the home-school book to inform staff of their children's progress or any concerns they may have. The inspection team also noted that there were good opportunities for parents to discuss their children's progress. Members of staff make themselves freely available to parents and carers at the end of the school day and at the fortnightly surgery for longer discussions.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Although children have a wide range of abilities, the assessments on entry to the school show a high proportion of children with attainment well below that expected.
2. National Curriculum tests at the age of seven indicate that in 1999 the percentage of pupils reaching the expected level was well below the national average in reading and mathematics and very low in writing. When averaged over four years the performance of pupils in reading, writing and mathematics was well below the national average.
3. National Curriculum tests at the age of eleven in 1999 indicate that the percentage of pupils reaching the expected level or above was well below the national average in English and mathematics and very low in comparison to the national average in science, in the lowest five percent of schools nationally. The low results in science are in part a reflection of pupils' language difficulties but also in part due to the high percentage of pupils with special educational needs. They are below the standards in English and mathematics because the school has given a higher priority to developments in English and mathematics. When these results are averaged over four years pupils' performance was well below the national average in all three subjects. Standards in English and mathematics of the current cohort are well below expectations at the age of seven. By eleven standards are below expectations in both subjects, although there are indications that standards are rising. The school has set itself realistic but demanding targets for mathematics and English in 2000. In science standards are low.
4. There is a very wide range of attainment across all aspects of English by the age of seven. Overall standards are appropriate given pupils' prior attainment and the high percentage of pupils with English as an additional language but are well below national expectations in all aspects. The writing of a few pupils is still at the early stages of development. Approximately two-thirds of the class are developing writing, which is organised into sentences using simple punctuation. Standards in reading by seven show a similar range of attainment. Reading is taught effectively. Higher attaining pupils read a range of texts independently with accuracy whilst other pupils demonstrate the need for more close support. By age seven standards in speaking and listening show a range of attainment. Most pupils listen to others and can give a simple account of what is said, although a few pupils tend to respond to questions with one-word answers.
5. By the end of Key Stage 2 overall standards in reading and writing are just below expectations. Standards in writing show wide variation by the age of eleven. Across the Year 6 class, work is usually presented with care but varying degrees of fluency. Higher attaining pupils present their work well with fluent, joined handwriting. Their work is thoughtful, spelling is usually accurate, and they use complex punctuation well. Pupils write in a wide range of styles for specific purposes. By Year 6 standards in reading show wide variation. High attaining pupils show understanding of a range of demanding texts and can infer and deduce aspects of the plot or motivation of characters. They have read some demanding texts, including extracts from 'Macbeth'. All pupils can use reference books and dictionaries. Throughout the key stage there is good emphasis on reading a range of texts and developing reading skills. Standards in speaking and listening by Year 6 are appropriate and in line with expectations. Most pupils talk and listen confidently and can give their opinions or describe events, particularly informally. Some pupils are less confident in more formal settings.

6. Standards in mathematics by the age of seven are well below average. Pupils are beginning to identify simple number patterns and can count in fives to fifty. They can write two digit numbers in words and know various mathematical shapes. They are able to measure with reasonable accuracy and they are beginning to understand various units of time.

7. Standards in mathematics by the age of eleven are below expectations but rising. Pupils have a good grasp of mathematical shape. Most pupils have a firm understanding of place value to three figures and can add decimals to two places. Not all pupils can measure angles. In information and communication technology and science pupils use graphs to communicate information.

8. Science standards are low at the end of Key Stage 1. They are still well below those expected for pupils of their age at the end of Key Stage 2. The school intends to make science a focus for improvement in the summer term, 2000. At the end of Key Stage 1 pupils understand some of the different uses of electricity in the home and school. They are aware of the differences between natural and manufactured materials and know which materials act as insulation for noise. In Key Stage 2 pupils understand what makes a 'fair test' but do not devise their own investigations. They understand about the food chain and understand that changes occur when materials are heated.

9. Standards in art, history, physical education and information and communication technology are in line with expectations by the end of Year 6. In religious education standards are in line with the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Pupils make satisfactory progress in music and in geography across the school. Standards are below expectations in geography at the end of both key stages. In design and technology it was not possible to make an accurate judgement.

10. Pupils with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress in the under-fives and Key Stage 1 and, building on the early foundation, good progress in Key Stage 2. Most of these pupils are in Key Stage 1.

11. One third of the school is on the register of special educational needs. There is a wide range of need, including academic, medical and behavioural, with particularly high percentages of pupils in Years 3 and 4. Pupils in Key Stage 1 make satisfactory progress. They make good progress in Key Stage 2 in relation to their prior attainment, as a result of the additional literacy work. Individual educational plans have clear and realistic targets for pupils to make progress. Additional teaching support, in class and in separate groups, provides regular opportunities for pupils to make progress in reading and writing.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. Pupils have very good attitudes to the school. They enjoy coming to school and taking part in the range of activities that is available for them both in and outside lessons. They see the school as a happy, active place, in which it is easy to make friends. They show a high level of respect for the beliefs of others and there is no trace of bullying, racism or other oppressive behaviour. This is a direct consequence of the school's strong behaviour policy, including its 'Bully Watch', and also of the very good relationships that have been established between pupils and adults in the school. A further result is that pupils have developed a good understanding of the effects of their actions on others.

13. Behaviour is good. Pupils are very polite and courteous around the school and play well together during breaks and lunchtimes. They generally behave well during lessons and maintain their concentration, although a minority of pupils do not do so when the focus of a lesson is not clear. The school has placed a high priority on the development of good behaviour patterns and has been successful in achieving this aim. Midday supervisors confirm that behaviour has improved. The four exclusions in the school year before the inspection were for the benefit and well-being of all the pupils in the school.

14. Pupils work well together in lessons, for example sharing materials when constructing a 'composter' in a Year 6 science lesson. They also show positive attitudes to each other, for instance in circle time in Year 2 where they listen well to each other, or when celebrating each other's achievements in assembly.

15. The school has been successful in developing a sense of responsibility in its pupils. Pupils in all years help in the 'Bully Watch' scheme, and Key Stage 2 pupils elect their own representatives on the School Council. The council has taken the initiative in such matters as introducing markings in the school playground and having the water fountains repaired. Pupils also take responsibility for the school environment by acting as litter wardens. Older pupils help in the school office at lunchtime. The personal development of pupils is good. Pupils' high standards of attitudes, behaviour and personal development have been maintained and improved still further since the previous inspection.

16. Attendance levels are a little below national average, but have improved since the last inspection, as has punctuality. The school follows up unexplained absences very effectively and as a result the level of unauthorised absences is below national averages.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. Overall the quality of teaching is good. It is almost always at least satisfactory at Key Stage 1. Some good and very good teaching was seen, particularly but not exclusively in Year 2. The quality of teaching is good in Key Stage 2. It is never less than satisfactory and sometimes very good. The quality of teaching has significantly improved since the previous inspection when there was a considerable amount of unsatisfactory teaching. It has also led to overall improvements in pupils' progress since the previous inspection, particularly at Key Stage 2.

18. Overall the quality of the teaching of English is good. It is often very good and no teaching is unsatisfactory. The teachers are using the National Literacy strategy well and it is leading to improvement in standards in the work in English. English lessons are planned well. There are clear objectives, which are often shared with pupils. Teachers have good subject knowledge and an enthusiasm for the subject. The pace in lessons is usually rigorous and challenging because teachers have high expectations, use assessment information to identify pupils' level of attainment and teach ability groups effectively. Introductory sessions are used well to focus pupils' attention on the lesson objectives and to motivate their interest, as well as determine what pupils know and understand. Questioning skills are good. At the end of the lesson whole class sessions are also used well to check on what has been learnt and to give pupils a sense of success and achievement. Pupils are, however, involved in self-assessment of their own work. Very good examples of marking were seen which were not only supportive but also gave clear indications of how pupils could improve their work.

19. The quality of teaching of mathematics is good overall. There has been a significant improvement in the amount of good and very good teaching since the last report. Three quarters of the lessons observed during the inspection were good, a quarter of these were very good. The remaining lessons were satisfactory. None were unsatisfactory. Teachers have welcomed the National Numeracy Strategy and are using it well.

20. In mathematics lessons it is clear what pupils are to learn and this information is shared with pupils so they know what is expected of them in the lesson. Mathematical vocabulary is being used appropriately to support pupils' understanding of mathematical skills and knowledge and to provide strategies for solving problems. A quick pace is set in mental arithmetic sessions and challenging questions demonstrate high expectations. In the best mathematics lessons, the questions get progressively more challenging and raise the quality of pupils' learning significantly and there is also a very close match of tasks to pupils' differing abilities, giving all pupils the opportunity to make maximum progress when working independently. Whilst all teachers are making assessments of pupils, this information is not being used as well as it could be in a number of classrooms. The higher levels identified on plans are not always addressed or attained in mathematics lessons. Higher attaining pupils do not always make good progress when the teacher has not established a good working pace during independent work and pupils work at a leisurely rate. Work in books also demonstrates that some topics are being introduced at the same level in different year groups. Work is marked but pupils are not told how they could improve their knowledge or skills.

21. Overall the quality of teaching in science is satisfactory at both key stages. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and use discussion well, for instance to elicit pupils' understanding of a fair test. There is a good emphasis on the use of appropriate scientific language. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Where teaching has a weakness, it is when tasks are not matched to the differing needs of pupils. Higher attaining pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to think for themselves.

22. Teaching of religious education is good. Teachers have very good control of their classes. They use questions well to stimulate pupils' understanding, for instance of the significance of wedding celebrations in different traditions in Year 4. They plan lessons well and make good use of visitors from the Christian, Muslim and Sikh faiths. They generally have a good knowledge of the subject. In a minority of lessons, however, the religious significance of the topic is not made explicit.

23. In information technology the quality of teaching is sound across the school. It is often good at Key Stage 2.

24. In design and technology, geography and history, teaching is overall satisfactory but work does not always challenge the full range of pupils, as in design and technology. In history there is a lack of differentiated tasks and work in geography does not always challenge the higher attaining pupils. In physical education teaching is good. Teaching is satisfactory in art across the school although, possibly, some teachers lack the knowledge to promote the higher standards which some pupils are capable of achieving.

25. The teaching of pupils with English an additional language is good throughout the school. Teaching methods are used sensitively and effectively to promote progress among all pupils whose first language is not English and to allow them to access the curriculum being followed by other pupils. The management decision to use the teacher employed to raise achievement for ethnic minority pupils to teach science with older pupils requires review, given the need of many pupils in Key Stage 1. The classroom support assistant makes a very valuable contribution to the work in class and in separate small group work in Key Stage 1. She is able to intervene in the mother tongue ensuring pupils understand. The teacher responsible has identified specific support programmes for each pupil.

26. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good overall, better in Key Stage 2 than Key Stage 1. Pupils in Year 3 benefited from the extra provision of a part-time teacher. This teacher was able to provide a range of individual and group activities planned to improve pupils' reading and writing skills. The classroom support assistants make a valuable contribution to the work in the class and in separate small group work. All pupils with special educational needs receive their entitlement to the full curriculum in the school. There are good examples of teachers accommodating pupil difficulties in their lessons.

27. The quality of pupils learning mirrors the quality of teaching across the school. In English and mathematics progress is at least satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Year 2 and Key Stage 2. In these two subjects there is a pace and rigour about the teaching of skills and the work expected from pupils. Homework is set regularly for the older pupils and younger pupils are expected to learn spellings or read at home. Very young children take books home to share with parents and carers. Ability groups in these lessons are generally targeted effectively and teachers have a clear understanding of what needs to be taught to enable pupils to reach the higher levels, even if in mathematics this is not always achieved. As a generalisation these features, which enable generally good progress, are not always used in the teaching of other subjects. As a consequence, whilst overall progress is satisfactory, higher attaining pupils in some lessons in subjects other than mathematics and English are insufficiently challenged.

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

28. The quality and range of learning opportunities provided for children under five is satisfactory in promoting opportunities for higher achievement. For pupils in Key Stage 1 and 2 it is good. The curriculum provided is adequately broad, balanced and relevant. National guidance for the under-five curriculum is followed and the curriculum meets in full the statutory requirements for National Curriculum subjects and religious education. The effectiveness of strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy skills is good. Priority has been given to these subjects in the school timetable. The implementation of the National Strategies has raised the standard of teaching in both subjects and is helping to raise pupils' standards. In mathematics good use is made of extra teaching time in mathematics to reduce the size of the Year 6 teaching group and support pupils with particular needs.

29. New termly planning formats for curriculum subjects, including information technology, have been introduced, a recommendation in the last inspection report. The plans seen are good. They state clearly what is to be learnt and what needs to be assessed to guide future planning. Geography has a scheme of work but it is not yet cross-referenced to the areas of study list to support teachers' planning. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good. It is well planned and integrated into the curriculum, as with the 'Healthy Heart Programme', and promoted in assemblies. Provision for sex education and attention to drugs misuse meets requirements.

30. The school's provision for equality of access and opportunity for all pupils is satisfactory overall with good aspects. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good overall and meets the Code of Practice requirements. Pupils' individual educational plans are good and are agreed jointly by the class teacher and the teacher for special educational needs. Realistic, achievable targets are set and termly review dates planned. Parents and support assistants are also involved in the review process. Groups of pupils are regularly withdrawn from class for effective support teaching. Pupils receive good curriculum support from experienced special educational needs assistants. Provision and progress in Key Stage 1 are satisfactory. Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs in Key Stage 2. It ensures they have full access to the curriculum. Pupils are supported effectively in classrooms and when withdrawn. The quality of their learning is good.

31. In subjects other than mathematics and literacy, provision for higher attaining pupils is less satisfactory. Expectations are not always sufficiently high. More advanced skills are not always planned and developed in lessons to ensure the needs of the higher attaining pupils are met.

32. Provision for pupils with English as an additional language is good; clear structured teaching is given related to specific targets. There is a separate school policy and provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language. Provision is made for a teacher to give in class support and small group work across the school.

33. The planning and content of the curriculum take sufficient account of the needs of pupils, for whom English is an additional language, including those bilingual pupils with special educational needs.

34. The school provides a satisfactory level of enrichment to its curriculum through its range of extra-curricular activities. Pupils are keen to attend table tennis and canoeing activities. The site manager, who is highly committed to the school, successfully runs these. Other sports include football and netball. Opportunities for involvement in competitive sport are adequate. The recorder club is popular, as are drama performances.

35. Very good use is made of resources within the community to provide a wide range of planned activities, all of which contribute positively to pupils' learning. Speakers representing a range of different religions impact positively on pupils' religious understanding and tolerance. Musical events

raise standards in music. Visits to the Swan Theatre to see Twelfth Night and to Burdford Wildlife Park, Mop End Environmental Study Centre and the Museum of Childhood are adding extra breadth to the curriculum. There are many other links including the involvement of Year 5 in a business and numeracy link.

36. Constructive relationships are firmly established with partner institutions allowing for the satisfactory transfer of pupils and documentation between schools. The school is a member of a partnership of local schools which share training days, sports day and professional football coaching. It has close social links with the neighbouring nursery school and the main secondary schools. These schools provide help with the school's numerous drama performances and the activities week, as well as with subject expertise.

37. The school aims place a strong emphasis on pupils' personal development. Its cultivation of pupils' spiritual, social and moral development is good. Provision for cultural development is very good. Acts of collective worship meet statutory requirements, though opportunities for reflection in assemblies are limited. Whilst Christian values are well promoted through songs such as 'The Love of Jesus' and visiting speakers from the Church Army and Youth for Christ, the school also promotes stories from all religions. Religious tolerance is developed within the curriculum as seen in Year 5's work on 'I had a dream ...' Feelings are actively explored particularly in pupils' response to music and drama, as seen in the reactions of Year 2 and Year 6 pupils to 'The Planet Suite'. Year 6 pupils have made a CD of poems and carols expressing feelings. Spirituality is developed well through personal and social education. Pupils wish 'poor people to have some money' and discuss how it feels being helpful and helped.

38. The school aims to develop pupils' self discipline. Pupils are helped to develop a sense of the difference between right and wrong through notices displayed around the school, for example, 'Don't forget to say "sorry" if you have bumped into someone'. They are also involved in deciding the school's bullying policy along with parents and staff. The School Council has initiated 'Bully Watch'. Moral issues are built into the curriculum for discussion. Year 4 express rules for behaviour and working: 'We will line up properly and not talk'. Good behaviour is praised and rewards given by the school. Assemblies address moral issues. The story of David and Goliath is used as an illustration of the hurt and damage of name-calling. Other themes have been kindness and selfishness. Staff act as good role models in the respectful and fair way they treat pupils.

39. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop a sense of responsibility within the school and community. Their social development is cultivated through monitoring roles in the classroom and school duties during wet play and lunchtime. Older pupils support younger pupils and take part in shared reading. Pupils make up the School Council, which considers matters of concern to pupils. In the upper school pupils organise their own bring and buy sales for charities such as Oxfam, Blue Peter, research into genetic illnesses in children, and to raise funds for the school. Support is given to senior citizens invited in for Harvest Assembly and Christmas tea and carols where pupils, staff, and parents distribute food gifts.

40. The school cultivates pupils' cultural development well in areas such as poetry and musical performances. Pupils are introduced to a range of music from visiting musicians. They have presented a number of music and drama performances; the most recent is 'Energise' to be performed at the Swan Theatre. The promotion of a multi-cultural dimension to pupils' education is very good. A wide range of events is organised within the school curriculum, which celebrate other cultures. For instance, African artifacts are displayed in the school, as well as pupils' work on Aztec Art. Also displayed are photographs of dress, food and greetings relating to a talk given by a Japanese visitor. Younger pupils have taken part in the Caribbean carnival and the Chinese New Year was part of assembly. During the inspection, Year 4 pupils were introduced to a Muslim wedding by a Muslim parent.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

41. Teachers and support staff know pupils well and are sensitive to their needs. Members of staff provide good levels of informal, as well as more formal, support to meet their needs. Parents appreciate the extra help given to individuals and groups of children giving them confidence to succeed. They feel that the focus on special education needs has had an impact on support and guidance generally.

42. The school has established a good range of assessment systems to record pupils' achievements, particularly in the core curriculum but many systems have only recently been introduced and there are some inconsistencies in how teachers measure the levels pupils are reaching. Teachers are not yet making effective use of assessment to inform planning of lessons for different groups of pupils, except in mathematics and literacy sessions. Annual reports give good information about pupils' progress and also give specific targets for further development. Voluntary National Curriculum tests are used to monitor progress in English and mathematics. These are used as the basis for setting targets. The headteacher analyses National Curriculum tests carefully and compares performance against the achievements in Key Stage 1 to determine the value that the school is adding to pupil attainment. Reading tests are used to monitor progress in reading. The school is introducing a software package to track individual pupil progress. Pupils in Year 6 are involved in the process of setting targets which are displayed and they are engaged in evaluating their own work. Teachers have a good knowledge of individual pupils.

43. Since the last inspection there has been a focus on developing positive strategies for managing inappropriate behaviour, promoting positive attitudes and raising pupils' self-esteem. Teachers and support staff respond to pupils in a positive way which raises self-esteem and they expect good standards of behaviour and politeness. The school has effective links with appropriate agencies and specialist staff to support pupils and parents where there are behavioural and emotional difficulties and all incidents of serious behaviour problems are logged and monitored.

44. The school has been most effective in promoting a strong anti-bullying and anti-racist culture. Pupils feel safe in school and are confident staff will deal with concerns effectively. The school's anti-bullying policy is thought out well and pupils are fully involved in and supportive of the 'Bully Watch' scheme, which came about as a result of suggestions from the School Council. This results in a very positive and supportive climate in the school. Parents value the speed with which the school notes and deals with any concerns.

45. Since the last inspection the school has given priority to improving levels of attendance, and reducing unauthorised absences and poor punctuality. A member of the support team is responsible for monitoring the registers and following up unexplained absences or concerns about punctuality and this has been effective in improving standards. The school promotes good attendance by regularly reminding parents and carers of their responsibilities in newsletters and by individual letter. Good attendance is rewarded with stickers. The school works effectively with the Education Welfare Service where there are particular problems.

46. Arrangements and procedures for dealing with sick and injured pupils are very good. Responsible members of staff have first-aid qualifications, a very good attitude to their responsibilities and an awareness of pupils' needs. There is a well-organised duty rota ensuring appropriate levels of cover throughout the day including the lunch hour. The arrangements for dealing with sick and hurt children at lunchtime are particularly effective. Injuries and treatments given are skilfully dealt with and carefully recorded and monitored; appropriate members of staff discuss concerns with the school nurse and school medical service. The working environment is safe

and pupils are well supervised at work, at play and on trips. The Year 1 class geography walk in the locality was supervised well by a good number of adult helpers and children were reminded of road safety codes before and during the enjoyable trip. Arrangements for supervision at lunchtime are good. The mid-day assistants work very effectively as a team to supervise the pupils in the dining hall and playground. They take their role and responsibilities very seriously. They meet regularly with the deputy head to discuss their roles and arrangements and have received training to develop their contribution to the school behaviour policy and the promotion of pupils' safety and well-being.

47. The school's arrangements for child protection are good and comply with the local Area Child Protection Committee procedures. The school liases closely with other agencies where there are concerns. The school cares very effectively for pupils who need particular attention because of medical problems or other difficulties, providing support within school or arranging specialist help and liasing as appropriate. The personal and social education programme is delivered through circle time, topic work and through the science curriculum and this helps pupils to become more knowledgeable about themselves and to learn about healthy and safe living.

48. The school has addressed the concerns about some areas of Health and Safety noted in the previous inspection, and is working with the police service to reduce the potentially hazardous congestion in the road outside school at the beginning and end of the day.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

49. The school gives a high priority to keeping parents well informed about all areas of school life and providing a wide range of opportunities for parents to be involved with their children's learning. Parents and carers are very supportive of the school, the values it promotes and the welcoming family atmosphere. They value the good information they receive from the school about events and activities, through letters home, school newsletters, displays and regular information about areas to be covered in each subject. The quality of written information, such as the prospectus and annual report to parents, is very good, and the school is grateful for the help and sponsorship they receive in illustrating and producing this documentation. Parents are confident about approaching the school and are made to feel welcome. They find individual staff approachable and supportive. They value the quality of the induction programme, including the strong links with the adjacent nursery school, which helps children to settle quickly in school.

50. The school provides a good range of informal and formal opportunities for parents to be involved in the life and work of the school and their children's learning and development. The school has a concern about the lack of support received from the parents of a significant minority of pupils, including a number with special education needs.

51. The school makes very good use of bi-lingual support staff in school and visiting specialist teachers to encourage parents from minority ethnic backgrounds, especially those who do not speak English as a first language, to support their children's learning at home and to be drawn into school activities and events. The school also provides valuable help for parents and carers by supporting a family literacy project in the school.

52. Pupils' annual reports provide good information about children's progress and give specific targets for further development. Parents are positive about the advice they receive on helping pupils with reading at home. In Key Stage 1 many make good use of the home school folder book to inform staff of their children's progress or any concerns they may have. Attendance at the consultation evenings is good and members of staff make themselves freely available to parents and carers at the end of the school day and at the fortnightly surgery for longer discussions. Members of staff make good use of these regular surgeries to follow up any concerns they may have and to establish contact with parents they have not seen for a while.

53. There are both formal and informal opportunities to discuss the progress of pupils with special educational needs. The individual education plans of pupils with special educational needs are well maintained and reviewed regularly with parents. At the top end of Key Stage 2 the pupils are also involved in the process.

54. A small number of parents and friends of the school are able to help regularly during the school day and their commitment and contribution is much appreciated and valued. The school and pupils also greatly appreciate the work of the industry reading-partners who give up their lunchtimes to work with individual pupils and who often establish a very effective rapport and friendship with them. A large number of parents and friends of the school generously give their time helping with specific activities and events, such as activity week and with school productions and concerts. A stalwart band of helpers provides refreshments at consultation evenings and workshops. The school greatly appreciates the support of parents who help the school celebrate cultural diversity, for example, through cooking food for special occasions with the children and providing a great feast of produce for bazaars and events. During the inspection in a religious education lesson, pupils greatly enjoyed hearing a first hand account of her wedding from a mother of one of the pupils and seeing her wedding finery and photographs. Parents are very supportive of activities which involve their children, such as class assemblies, productions and events. They contribute generously to pupils' charitable fund-raising, but there is more limited support for curriculum information meetings. The committed parent teacher association organises social events and raises valuable funds for the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

55. The school is led and managed well. The previous report noted that the headteacher and the senior management team had a good understanding of the needs of the school and its pupils and this remains the case. The senior management of the school know the pupils and their particular needs and many of the parents. They work well together. The headteacher has developed the community's confidence in the school. There are good links with the adjacent nursery, local schools and the nearby secondary school. The questionnaire returns indicate the parents have confidence in the leadership of the school, consider that their child is making good progress and find the school very approachable. There is a positive atmosphere in the school which supports learning and which stems from the leadership. Pupils have very good attitudes to school and the behaviour is good. The headteacher and other members of staff monitor behaviour very well and there is no oppressive or racist behaviour. The school aims, particularly those relating to communication, friendship, trust and respect, are reflected well in the daily life of the school. The school operates very smoothly on a day-to-day basis.

56. The headteacher monitors the daily work of the school, including the quality of teaching both formally and in an informal manner. There have been staff changes since the previous inspection but overall the quality of teaching has shown significant improvement. Teamwork, shared values, and commitment to improvement are developing amongst the staff, some of whom have only recently joined the school. The headteacher teaches, works in classes and is often around the school. Parents appreciated the fact that he spends time on the playground at the beginning and end of the day. He has a good understanding of the strengths of the school and the aspects on which to focus for improvement through analysis of the National Curriculum tests and other assessment information. He considers carefully whether pupils are making appropriate progress.

57. The school development plan has improving standards as its focus and provides a clear sense of direction. Success indicators within the plan are directly related to improvement in standards. The role of staff with management responsibilities for particular subject requires further development. Members of staff fulfil their informal advisory and consultative role well. Their role with regard to the monitoring of the standards in a subject and identifying specific aspects for development requires further development and formalisation.

58. The budget is considered very carefully and managed skilfully. Good use is made of strategic grants to reduce class sizes and to teach ability groups. The school successfully attracted additional funding from industry. The deployment of the teacher for English as an additional language for occasional class teaching should be reviewed given the need in Key Stage 1. Learning support assistants make a good contribution to pupils' learning and there is a good range of expertise on the staff.

59. The governing body is effective. It brings a range of expertise to school governance, it is committed to, and very supportive of, the school and has a clear understanding of the challenges which the school faces. It is prepared to act as critical friend. The governing body keeps itself well informed about what is happening in the school. The budget is monitored and managed well. The governors apply principles of best value and meet their statutory responsibilities.

60. The co-ordination and management of pupils with special educational needs is good. There is an effective special educational needs team in the school, consisting of a designated governor, the headteacher, co-ordinator, class teachers and support assistants. Special educational needs are managed well in the school. Class teachers have a good understanding of specific need and good examples were seen where the class teacher positively reinforced the individual pupil's education plan. Less clear is the inclusion of specific needs in planning. Currently there are few opportunities for the special educational needs co-ordinator to observe pupils withdrawn, for example, for additional literacy support, at work, to monitor teaching, or to look at pupils' work within the classroom setting and discuss progress with a knowledge of the context. Funds for pupils with special educational needs are appropriately deployed to provide additional assistant support.

61. The senior management of the school recognises the linguistic and cultural diversity of pupils whose first language is not English. It successfully promotes their progress within the school.
62. The school makes good use of the accommodation to support specialist teaching, such as information technology and food technology. The school hall is of a very good size and can support whole school activities and productions as well as indoor physical education. The entrance area and adjacent library are welcoming and spacious, with displays that give a good flavour of the school and celebrate pupils' work and achievement. Throughout the school display is generally well used in both corridors and classrooms to brighten up some rather dingy areas that are in need of redecoration.
63. The early years pupils do not have their own secure play-space and this limits the delivery of the full curriculum and opportunities for their physical and personal development.
64. The school grounds are extensive, with some mature planting providing shade and seating for quieter activities. The School Council has suggested how the hard play areas can be improved with new markings and this is due to be implemented soon. The grounds are generally well maintained and litter free, but the condition of some of the paving is poor and some of the grass banks are eroded. The condition of perimeter fence, which was a cause for concern at the last inspection, is still poor, and the wooden fence at the front of the school is broken.
65. The school has made significant investment in information and communication technology facilities, which is contributing to the improvement in standards in information and communication technology. The school has also made considerable investment in English resources. These are used well. Overall, learning resources in the school are adequate and appropriate. Members of staff bring a good range of curriculum and other expertise. Additional funding is used well to target the large class sizes in the upper school. Overall staffing is adequate to meet the demands of the curriculum.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

66. To build on the many strengths of the school the headteacher, staff and governing body should continue to focus on raising standards by:

1. ensuring that
 - raising standards in English and mathematics is a key feature of the school development plan;
 - pupil progress in these two subjects is tracked carefully and internal targets for pupil attainment are set for specific year groups; (paragraphs 2, 3)
2. addressing standards in science by
 - analysing pupils' performance in National curriculum science tests to inform the school about strengths and weaknesses in the science provision;
 - reviewing the science curriculum in the light of the National Curriculum changes;
 - developing investigative and practical work in science;
 - ensuring that the school has a scheme of work which gives support for teacher planning and which ensures that science skills are taught in a progressive manner;
 - auditing teacher knowledge of, and confidence in, teaching the science curriculum and providing appropriate professional development and support;
 - tracking pupil progress in science and setting internal targets for each year group;
 - setting challenging internal targets for pupil attainment in National Curriculum tests in science; (paragraphs 2,3,118-125)
3. reviewing
 - the teaching approaches adopted in the teaching of literacy and numeracy to see what application they have to teaching foundation subjects; (paragraph 28)
4. using
 - assessment information in mathematics and foundation subjects to ensure that work is matched to pupils' abilities and higher attaining pupils are challenged appropriately;
 - assessment information to inform teachers of what they need to plan in order to take pupils to a higher level; (paragraph 44)
5. developing
 - the role of subject co-ordinators with regard to monitoring standards in their subject; (paragraph 59)
6. providing
 - opportunities on a prioritised basis for subject co-ordinators to observe the teaching of their subject;
 - opportunities for the special needs co-ordinator to view the work of pupils in a teaching context, monitor the teaching of special needs and to track pupil progress; (paragraph 62)
7. building on
 - the regular prioritised timetabled opportunities for subject co-ordinator to lead staff discussions on standards and progress in specific subjects based on evidence drawn from a whole school survey of written or produced work in that subject.
 - the reflective culture which continues to seek improvement and one which has a sharp focus on pupil learning and standards of achievement.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

67. Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	60
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	31

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	15	45	38	2	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	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		204
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		43

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		64

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	52

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	24
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	26

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	7.2
National comparative data	6.2

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.3
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	13	17	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	6	7	10
	Girls	13	10	13
	Total	19	17	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	63 (65)	57 (57)	77 (70)
	National	82 (81)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	7	9	9
	Girls	14	14	14
	Total	21	23	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	70 (72)	77 (73)	77 (54)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	18	11	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	12	9
	Girls	4	5	4
	Total	14	17	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	48 (71)	59 (56)	45 (56)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	12	12
	Girls	6	5	6
	Total	16	17	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	57 (62)	59 (62)	64 (62)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

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

68. Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils*
Black – Caribbean heritage	19
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	1
Pakistani	38
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	1
White	137
Any other minority ethnic group	

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.
196 entered

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Average class size	25

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	92

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	1	
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani	1	
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White	2	
Other minority ethnic groups		

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	1998-99
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	£
Total income	323123
Total expenditure	346732
Expenditure per pupil	1562
Balance brought forward from previous year	10000
Balance carried forward to next year	-13609

69. Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	170
Number of questionnaires returned	37

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	65	30	3		3
My child is making good progress in school.	62	38			
Behaviour in the school is good.	35	59	3		
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	35	38	16	8	3
The teaching is good.	46	54			
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	62	32	5		
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	81	16	3		
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	57	41	3		
The school works closely with parents.	51	41	3		
The school is well led and managed.	65	30	5		
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	59	38	3		
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	41	43	8	3	5

Other issues raised by parents

The inspection supports parents' positive views of the school.

Homework is set regularly. It may be useful for the school to re-state its homework policy. At the parents' meeting there was a feeling expressed that reports had a sameness about them. The inspection team feel that annual reports provide good information about children's progress and give specific targets for further development. Many parents of younger children make good use of the home-school book to inform staff of their children's progress or any concerns they may have. The inspection team also noted that there were good opportunities for parents to discuss their child's progress. Members of staff make themselves freely available to parents and carers at the end of the school day and at the fortnightly surgery for longer discussions.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

70. The quality of education for children under 5 is satisfactory and provides them with a sound basis for their next stage of education. Children enter the reception class at the beginning of the term in which they are five, on a part-time basis only.

71. The school provides a sound programme of induction that includes talks about the school to the parents and visits to the reception class by the children during the school working day. If necessary the information parents need is translated or interpreted. Educational professionals give further explanations in the mother tongue when necessary. The children and parents receive a thorough introduction to the school.

72. Although children have a wide range of abilities, the assessments on entry to the school reveal higher than average proportions of children with attainment below that expected for children of this age. The baseline assessment carried out within the first weeks of the reception class reflects the findings of informal assessments within the nursery, which show attainment well below the level expected. The results are shared with parents and they are involved in supporting their children's learning from the first day of school.

73. Overall, children make sound progress including those with special educational needs and those with English an additional language. All children benefit from the caring supportive environment and the structured learning opportunities provided. Children make good progress in their personal and social development and they are given the necessary skills and attitudes for learning. Even so, by the time children are five years old, attainment in most areas of learning, namely language and literacy, fine motor skills of physical development, knowledge and understanding of the world and cultural development is still below that expected nationally. It provides an indication of the context within which the school works.

74. The curriculum offered is satisfactory. It is broad and balanced, based on the national guidelines for the under-fives and includes parts of the literacy and numeracy strategies.

Personal and Social Development

75. Children make good progress in personal and social development. By the time they are five, most attain national expectations. Children are generally well behaved, learn to take turns and share resources. Teaching of this aspect is good. The members of staff establish a supportive caring ethos and the establishment of routines helps to promote independence. Children have a growing awareness of the difference between right and wrong. They were overheard on many occasions prompting their friends when they had forgotten to put books on teacher's table, and not to spill the water when working at the water tray. When preparing for physical education children quickly undress and put their clothes in a fairly neat pile and try afterwards to dress themselves. Tying up their shoelaces proves to be the most complex task.

Language and Literacy

76. Language and literacy on entry is well below that expected for children of their age, particularly in conversational skills, vocabulary depth and hand control for writing. The activities provided foster children's language and literacy skills. Children are encouraged to listen attentively and enjoy story time. Imaginative, spontaneous play is encouraged by staff, who carefully intervene to ensure that language is developed and children's vocabulary is increased. Children were seen as nurses and doctors in a role-play hospital using language to give injections and take patients' temperatures. Teachers give children opportunities to talk about their experiences and interests

throughout the day. Children are encouraged to recognise and write their own names. They are taught the skills necessary for reading in a structured way. Parts of the literacy hour strategy are taught. All children enjoy the Big Books and listen attentively, although their attention can wander if the length of time the children sit is too long. Parents are involved in the learning process from the time children come into the school. Children are given a book to take home and enjoy with their parents. This is a good feature of the Under 5's. Children make good progress; however the majority are still below the nationally expected level by the time they enter Year 1.

77. The teaching is always at least satisfactory. Well-prepared activities and good questions are asked to encourage children to think for themselves. This has a positive effect on children's progress.

Mathematics

78. Mathematical development on entry is well below that expected for children of their age.

79. Teachers support learning in mathematics with a wide variety of resources. Children make progress in counting skills, number recognition and mathematical language. They are able to count further than five. Some children can count to fifteen, but the majority has difficulty in counting numbers further than ten. They know the names of common shapes – square, triangle and circle. Sand and water play reinforce understanding of capacity and volume well.

80. Children make satisfactory progress, but they do not reach the nationally expected levels by the time they are five. The teaching is satisfactory.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

81. Children's attainment in this area of learning is extremely low on entry.

82. Many good opportunities are provided for children's knowledge and understanding of the world to be developed. Lunch-breaks are used as an opportunity to talk about family, home and past and present activities in their lives. Children show limited understanding of some of the wider features of their community, such as local shops. Children are learning to explore their world. They investigate the roots, leaves and flowers of a hyacinth. They learn about the wider world through visitors, for example, the Japanese student explains the tea ceremony and brings Japanese soup and rice cakes for them to taste, promoting wonder, curiosity and a keen interest in the world around them. Children have experience of using technology. They freely use the computer and demonstrate how to make Pod-a computer image-fly, jump and smile.

83. Although progress is steady, by the time the children reach the age of five their attainment is still well below the nationally expected level. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers are constantly giving children the opportunity to understand their world through creative activities that stimulate the children's senses.

Creative Development

84. Children's attainment is below that expected nationally on entry.

85. Children explore sound, they sing in assembly and join in with action songs in the class. In a range of creative activities, children show developing skills and evident enjoyment. They explore a wide range of materials including sand, paint, crayons and glue. There are opportunities for children to experience role play and they do so imaginatively often reflecting nursery rhymes they know such as Hickory Dickory Dock.

86. The teachers link this area of learning very closely to the topic and give children imaginative tasks to complete. The teaching of this aspect is sound and pupils make satisfactory progress. Attainment is still below nationally expected levels by the age of five.

Physical Development

87. Reception children do not have immediate access to outdoor play. They join Key Stage 1 pupils at playtime and complete a programme of physical education in the school hall. The outside playtime is always well supervised. By the time they are five, most reach the expected standards in body control, but not in fine hand control, which is necessary for writing and the creative sector of the curriculum. Children move confidently inside and outside the school. They are aware of space and do not bump into each other. Children use a good range of small equipment such as scissors, paintbrushes, crayons and pencils. Some show reasonable control of the small equipment. Members of staff provide daily opportunities for children to develop these skills but, although progress and teaching is satisfactory, levels of attainment by the age of five are below national expectations.

Special Educational Needs and English As An Additional Language

88. Children with special educational needs and children who do not speak English make satisfactory progress. Children with special educational needs are identified quickly and assessment of need is then made. This is discussed with the special educational needs co-ordinator and parents. Children who are from homes where English is not spoken are very well supported by additional staff who speak to them in the mother tongue, building confidence and security. Members of staff encourage parents to observe notices and labels in the mother tongue and these are seen throughout the school.

Teaching

89. Overall, teaching is satisfactory and occasionally very good. It is effective in enabling children to make satisfactory progress. There are very good working relationships between staff and children. Members of staff provide good role models and have suitable expectations of children's work and behaviour. Activities are planned and tasks appropriately matched to the needs of the children. Assessments are used effectively to identify individual targets and inform planning. Weekly activity plans have clear learning objectives that build well on what children already know and can do. The teachers and learning support assistants work very effectively as a team and this promotes children's learning. They have a sound understanding of how young children learn. Children's confidence and independence are promoted. A satisfactory range of resources is available and used effectively. Teaching promotes the national guidance for the under-fives and provides a sound foundation for the National Curriculum.

ENGLISH

90. National Curriculum tests show that standards in English are well below the national average in both key stages. The school is addressing this positively. The National Literacy strategy has been implemented well and challenging targets have been set for 2000.

91. The children enter school with the attainment well below those expected for their age, particularly in conversational skills, depth of vocabulary and hand control for writing. Whilst they make steady progress in the early years, standards in literacy are still below expectations by the time they start the early stages of the National Curriculum. Most of the pupils for whom English is an additional language are in Key Stage 1. They make steady progress.

92. The results of the National Curriculum tests in 1999 indicate that standards in reading were well below the national average in the percentage of pupils reaching the expected level or above in reading and writing. Standards are well below average when compared to similar schools.

93. Currently by the end of Key Stage 1 there is a very wide spectrum of attainment in the class across all aspects of English. Standards are appropriate given pupils' prior attainment but are, overall, well below national expectations in reading, writing, speaking and listening. Progress in each aspect varies with individual pupils but, overall, is at least satisfactory. The writing of a few pupils is still at the early stages of development. Approximately two-thirds of the class are developing writing which is organised into sentences using simple punctuation. For example one pupil, using pictures to prompt a story based on his reading book, wrote;

‘One day Kipper did not want to go to school. ‘Yes’-said Dad. So he went to school.’

94. The work of higher attaining pupils, approximately a third of the class, is neatly presented and they are beginning to express themselves with greater clarity and accuracy. For example:

‘We know about the Great fire of London because in 1666 Samuel Pepys was writing a diary. The fire started at a bakery.’

95. Standards in reading by age seven show a similar range of attainment. All pupils enjoy reading along with the teacher. In Year 1, for example, pupils identify the rhyme within the text ‘Ten for a Hen’ and respond to the teacher’s puppet’s questions about the text. In Year 2 pupils read ‘their’ class poem with enthusiasm and some are developing a critical awareness about how to improve it. Reading is taught effectively. Higher attaining pupils read a range of texts independently with accuracy, whilst other pupils demonstrate the need for more close support. Adults are used particularly effectively in group reading sessions. For example, a community language support teacher worked with a group looking at nursery rhymes and encouraged the group to learn ‘Humpty Dumpty’ using English and Punjabi. In another lesson the teacher worked intensively with a small group of lower attaining pupils, coincidentally also looking at specific rhyming words, whilst the teacher for English as an additional language focussed on another group of bi-lingual pupils.

96. By the age of seven, standards in speaking and listening show a spectrum of attainment. Most pupils listen to others and can give a simple account of their trip to school, for example, although a few pupils tend to respond with one-word answers to questions. The majority of pupils, not simply those pupils for whom English is an additional language, lack a broad vocabulary. Equally there are pupils who are confident enough to express extended answers to questions and hold a conversation with a visitor.

97. Pupils' attitudes to English are very good in Year 2. They are more variable in Year 1, particularly in a whole class situation, but are at least satisfactory. Pupils in this class need adult support otherwise they become distracted. Older pupils are generally very keen and have particularly positive attitudes to learning. They show manifest enjoyment, for example in reading their poem aloud, and are able to concentrate for long periods on their work.

98. The National Curriculum tests for eleven year olds in English in 1999 show that the percentage of pupils reaching the expected level was well below the national average. A similar result is obtained when the results are averaged over time and compared to similar schools. The results are average however when the English scores are compared to those schools where results at Key Stage 1 in English showed similar low levels of attainment and the cohort made satisfactory progress over time when compared to this prior attainment.

99. Standards of the current Year 6 pupils are, overall, just below expectations but rising. There is a broad spectrum of ability within the class. Just over half the class is working in line with expectations for age eleven. Approximately one-fifth of the class is working at levels which are above expectations. During the inspection the pupils currently achieving close to expectations were being specifically targeted to raise their level of attainment. Of the year group there are five pupils on the special educational needs register for moderate learning difficulties and a further three pupils on the register with emotional and behavioural difficulties. These pupils are making good progress against their targets. Across the key stage all pupils make at least steady and sometimes good progress over time in reading, writing, speaking and listening.

100. Standards in writing show wide variation. Across the Year 6 class, work is usually presented with care but with varying degrees of fluency. Higher attaining pupils present their work well with fluent, joined handwriting. Their work is thoughtful, spelling is usually accurate, and they use complex punctuation well. Pupils write in a wide range of styles for specific purposes. For example, one pupil wrote an article about cycling in a breathless, racy magazine style whilst another in her story immediately captured the reader's attention:

'Slowly and painfully he reached out towards the windows to look out...There was a growing sense of deep panic and shock.'

Drafting of written work is very evident in Year 5. The school has timetabled additional sessions to work at extended writing. For example Year 6 pupils discussed questioning techniques prior to interviewing each other in an assumed role which led to biographical writing. Work on developing the range of pupils' vocabulary is evident throughout the school. Handwriting is developed through regular practice. Pupils in Year 3 have daily handwriting sessions and almost all pupils write in a joined style. There is good progress in pupils' understanding of punctuation throughout the school. In Year 4 the teacher asked 'what other way can a sentence end?' and the class responded with exclamation and question marks and the use of an apostrophe for contraction.

101. By Year 6 standards in reading show wide variation. High attaining pupils show understanding of a range of demanding texts and can infer and deduce aspects of the plot or motivation of characters. They have read some difficult texts, including extracts from 'Macbeth'. All pupils can use reference books and dictionaries. Throughout the Key Stage there is good emphasis on reading a range of texts and developing reading skills. For example in Year 3 pupils read and understand the structure of Haiku poems. In Year 4 as part of their work on an imaginary world they follow the teacher reading 'Jess and the Unicorn' with enthusiasm. Year 5 pupils read their favourite poems aloud and have a clear understanding of simile and metaphor. Pupils have reading diaries but they are used inconsistently.

102. Standards in speaking and listening by Year 6 are in line with expectations. Most pupils talk and listen confidently and can give their opinions or describe events, particularly in an informal setting. Some pupils are less confident in more formal settings. Throughout the key stage teachers work hard to develop pupils' confidence and speaking and listening opportunities are built into all lessons and used to develop skills in reading or writing.

103. Pupils' attitudes to the subject are good. They are often very good and show improvement as they move through the key stage. By Year 6 there is a rigorous work ethic. They focus well on the task, are interested in the work and can work independently.

104. Overall the quality of teaching is good. It is at least satisfactory in Key Stage 1. Very good teaching occurs in Year 2. In Key Stage 2 teaching is good. It is often very good and no teaching is unsatisfactory. The teachers are using the National Literacy strategy well. It is leading to improvement in standards in the work in English.

105. In the lessons seen the quality of learning is overall satisfactory in Key Stage 1. It is good in Year 2. It is good in Key Stage 2 where the impact of teaching on pupils' learning is greater. Across the school lessons are planned well. There are clear objectives often shared with pupils. Teachers have good subject knowledge and an enthusiasm for the subject. The pace in lessons is usually rigorous and challenging. Teachers have high expectations and a good understanding of individual pupils' abilities and work is matched well. Teachers manage the work of the ability groups well. They target specific groups effectively and ensure their time is used well. Introductory sessions are effectively used to focus pupils' attention on the lesson objectives and to motivate their interest, as well as determine what pupils know and understand. Questioning skills are good. At the end of the lesson whole class sessions are also used well to check what has been learnt and to give pupils a sense of success and achievement. There are very positive relationships between teachers and pupils throughout the school and teachers usually manage classroom organisation and pupil behaviour very well. Pupils' very positive attitudes to the subject are forged through the consistent challenge of interesting work and the warmth and enthusiasm of the way it is presented.

106. Lower attaining pupils, pupils with special educational needs and pupils with English as an additional language are supported well. Often, as in Year 2, there is very good teamwork with the adults working in the class. Learning support assistants work effectively in classrooms supporting the work. In Year 6 individual pupils have specific literacy targets that are displayed well. They are involved in their own learning in English but might be in a better position to remember their targets if they referred to them on a day-to-day basis. Pupils are involved in self-assessment of their own work. Very good examples of marking were seen which were not only supportive but also gave clear indications how pupils could improve their work. Linking the marking to the pupil targets is a possible further development.

107. Comparison with the previous inspection report is difficult because the report focused on standards and there has been a significant change in the nature of the cohort since then. There has been a significant improvement in the quality of teaching, particularly in the amount of good and very good teaching. The Literacy Strategy is effectively in place. The Deputy Headteacher is the subject co-ordinator and has a clear idea of what needs to be done to raise standards. Additional funding is used effectively to target additional literacy support to specific classes. The school has made significant and effective investment in English resources.

MATHEMATICS

108. National tests results in mathematics over time show the school's standards are well below national averages at the end of both Key Stages. The school is taking positive steps to address this situation and has set itself a challenging yet achievable target to raise standards in the Year 2000.

109. Base line data shows many pupils enter the school with a very low understanding of mathematics and the school is making satisfactory progress in raising the standards achieved.

110. In the 1999 national test for seven-year olds the school's standards were well below the national average. The number of pupils attaining the higher levels was very low. Compared with those of similar schools, the results are well below average. At the time of the inspection standards were well below national expectations. By the end of Year 2 most pupils doing number work can record two digit numbers in words, for instance seventy-three. Mentally they count forward in fives to fifty. Higher attaining pupils also count back. Pupils can add in tens successfully, though the place value of a ten is not fully understood. They are beginning to identify simple number patterns but pupils' explanations are weak, sometimes because of poor linguistic skills. In work on shape, space and measurement, pupils classify rectangles and record lines of symmetry successfully. Centimetre units are used with reasonable accuracy to measure straight lines. Units of time and related changes in months and seasons are partially understood.

111. National test results in mathematics for the eleven-year olds in 1999 were well below the national average and those of similar schools. At the time of the inspections standards are below expectations but rising. There is in the class a broad range of ability. Most pupils have a firm understanding of place value to three figures and can add decimals to two places by the end of Key Stage 2. Understanding of the relationship between fractions and decimals is less secure. Whilst half the pupils can calculate equivalent fractions and order fractions and decimals, others struggle. Higher attaining pupils confidently convert decimals and percentages. Work on shape and space demonstrates pupils' good grasp of the properties of regular shapes, such as number of sides and angles. Measured angles reveal inconsistencies in accuracy. Pupils use graphs appropriately to communicate information as seen in information technology and science work. Pupils' ability to spot a pattern or identify a rule is under-developed across the school.

112. Across the school pupils show positive attitudes to mathematics and in some instances it is very good. Most pupils are confident answering mental arithmetic questions. Year 2 pupils give their full attention to counting in fives. Addition and subtraction skills are enthusiastically demonstrated by Year 3 pupils and an eagerness to demonstrate knowledge of the six times tables is seen in Year 4. The Year 6 higher attainers mentally calculate percentages with certainty. This raises the standards they achieve. Working independently a significant proportion of pupils' work hard, showing good levels of perseverance. Less confident pupils, particularly in Key Stage 2, show minor off-task behaviour that is slowing down the amount of progress they are making. Most pupils behave well.

113. The quality of teaching of mathematics is good overall. There has been a significant improvement in the amount of good and very good teaching since the last report. Three quarters of the lessons are good, a quarter of these are very good. The remaining lessons are satisfactory. None are unsatisfactory. Teachers have welcomed the National Numeracy Strategy and are using it well. This has led to an improvement in standards in number work and mental arithmetic skills across the school, another improvement since the last inspection.

114. In the lessons seen the quality of learning is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good or very good in Key Stage 2. Here the impact of teaching on pupils' learning is greater. During the inspection lessons are well planned. It is clear what pupils are to learn: 'to add 10 to 2 digit numbers' (Year 2), to 'use, read and write standard metric units of measure' (Year 6). This information is shared with pupils so they know what is expected of them in the lesson. Mathematical vocabulary is being used appropriately to support pupils' understanding of mathematical skills and knowledge and provide strategies for solving problems. Year 5 pupils are encouraged to 'estimate', 'partition', 'round-off'. Pupils' understanding of such underlying concepts is partial and they need constant reinforcement. For instance, Year 2 though introduced to the word 'unit' cannot recall it.

115. A quick pace is set in mental arithmetic sessions and challenging questions demonstrate high expectations: 'I'm going to take £7 off. What percentage is it?' These along with good use of praise motivate pupils to want to succeed. In the best lessons the questions get progressively more challenging and raise the quality of pupils' learning significantly: 'what will be next ... and next?' There is also a very close match of tasks to pupils' differing abilities giving all pupils the opportunity to make maximum progress when working independently. Pupils in Year 3 are able to make very good progress in working out patterns in sequences of numbers of varying levels of difficulty requiring them to determine what to add or take away. Many pupils rely heavily on their fingers to count. Very good progress is also seen in Year 4 where pupils are given the task of partitioning two or three digit numbers when multiplying them by units. Pupils understand what they are doing; the task is demanding but know they can do it. The teacher ensures the higher attainers are working at the appropriate level and supports the lower attaining pupils. Lower attaining pupils and pupils with special educational needs are well supported in all classes and all teachers manage pupils' behaviour well.

116. Whilst all teachers are making assessments of pupils, this information is not being used as well as it could be in a number of classrooms. The higher levels identified on plans are not always addressed or attained in lessons. Higher attaining pupils do not always make good progress where the teacher has not established a good working pace during independent work and pupils' work at a leisurely rate. Work is marked but does not always indicate how they could improve their knowledge or skills. A few good examples are seen in Year 6.

117. Strategies in place for numeracy are good. The co-ordinator, who is the headteacher, has a clear view of what needs doing and a determination to raise standards. The school has extra funding and support to raise standards. This is being used effectively on smaller teaching groups in Year 6 and the provision of extra teaching support for the lower attaining pupils. Strengths and weaknesses have been audited and action plans drawn up. The school has improved pupils' mental arithmetic skills and is at present focusing on improving pupils' problem solving techniques and their perseverance. The contribution made by other subjects to pupils' competence in numeracy is satisfactory. A good example was seen in physical education where pupils curl and stretch in response to given percentages.

SCIENCE

118. Standards of attainment in science are low at the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. In the 1999 National Curriculum teacher assessments the percentage of pupils achieving the expected level at Key Stage 1 was well below the national average. In the Key Stage 2 tests the number of pupils achieving the expected level was very low, amongst the lowest five percent nationally. The number achieving the higher level was well below the national average. These results were also very low when compared with similar schools. Pupils achieved lower results in science than in mathematics and in English.

119. The evidence of the inspection confirmed that standards are low at the end of Key Stage 1. They are still well below those expected for pupils of their age at the end of Key Stage 2. Because the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with a significant proportion of good teaching, pupils make steady progress across the school, albeit that they do not achieve the level expected for their age. Attainment by the end of both key stages is low because of the difficulties many pupils have in understanding the English language and the above average percentage of pupils with special needs. As a result many pupils have difficulty in hypothesising and in understanding scientific vocabulary. The school has also been giving a higher priority to English and mathematics in the light of recent government initiatives but intends to give science a much greater priority in the immediate future.

120. At the end of Key Stage 1 pupils understand some of the different uses of electricity in the home and school. They are aware of the differences between natural and manufactured materials; higher attaining pupils understand some of the changes which occur in materials, such as when water boils or freezes. In Year 1 pupils know about sounds and have investigated materials which keep out sounds. Pupils do not, however, record their observations using tables nor predict the outcome of their investigations. In Key Stage 2 pupils develop well their understanding of a fair test but they do not yet devise their own investigations or appropriate methods for recording. They have a sound understanding of different habitats and also know about food chains. Higher attaining pupils write in greater detail, for instance about the functions of different parts of the body. They know about the differences between solids, liquids and gases and understand about changes that occur when materials are heated. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are able to sort materials into different types. Pupils in Year 5 show some ability to predict the outcome of an investigation, for instance of the forces necessary to move a box, but not all of them understand the difference between balanced and unbalanced forces.

121. At the time of the previous inspection the results in National Curriculum assessments and tests were below the national average, although that inspection found that attainment was in line with national expectations. There was, however, a concern about the development of pupils' investigative skills, and this has not been fully addressed, although some opportunities are being offered to pupils in both key stages. Higher attaining pupils do not develop independent learning skills, for instance in devising and setting up their own investigations. The previous inspection also found that there was no use of information technology in science. Its use is still very limited.

122. The school has identified the need to raise attainment in science.

123. Overall the quality of teaching is satisfactory at both key stages. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and use discussion well, for instance to elicit pupils' understanding of a fair test. Good links are made with other areas of the curriculum, for example with movement in physical education when discussing forces in Year 1. There is a good emphasis on the use of appropriate scientific language. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour. Where teaching has a weakness, it is when tasks are not matched to the differing needs of pupils. The analysis of pupils' work at Key Stage 2 also showed few occasions when different tasks were set for pupils of differing ability. Higher attaining pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to think for themselves. Teachers and classroom assistants provide good support for lower attaining pupils and pupils with special educational needs enabling them to make good progress against their targets.

124. Pupils' attitudes to science are good. There are good relations between teachers and pupils, and pupils work well together, for instance when making a 'composter' out of lemonade bottles in Year 6. They cooperate well in sharing materials and generally maintain their concentration well, although a minority of younger pupils find it difficult to do so when the introduction to a lesson is too long.

125. The co-ordinator has had little opportunity to monitor provision in the subject. The school does not make sufficient use of information from national tests and other assessments to identify the weaknesses in its provision. Although the co-ordinator has provided some ideas for investigative activities, science has not been a priority and the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection have not been addressed.

ART

126. Attainment is in line with the national average at both key stages, an improvement since the last inspection. Throughout the school the various art displays are of a sound standard, with many good examples of work which celebrate pupils' achievements in art. Pupils throughout the school make sound progress in developing skills, knowledge and understanding. They are given opportunities to draw, paint, make and print using a wide range of tools and materials. Pupils learn about the work of famous artists and are beginning to appreciate different styles in art.

127. At Key Stage 1, pupils use artists' pencils and a range of interesting media for observational drawings and paintings. They have experimented with colour-mixing and creating successfully. Year 2 pupils study the work of Miro, learn the importance of design and experimentation, and are encouraged to be bold and creative. The pupils soon realise that when working in collage materials to create a three-dimensional picture the design must not be too complex. At Key Stage 2, effective use is made of important artists, such as Rousseau and Monet to inform pupils' own work and extend drawing and painting skills. Pupils use previous learning to support the acquisition of new skills, particularly in the use of tools and techniques in drawing and painting. In Year 5 pupils were taught to make detailed observations of daffodils in a container and in sharply observed drawings of pupils' footwear.

128. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They are enthusiastic and enjoy learning. Lessons are relaxed and purposeful with pupils on task and sustaining concentration in completing their work.

129. The quality of teaching is always at least satisfactory. It is sometimes very good. In very good lessons, there is a whole class teaching, which is planned well. Teachers give clear explanations and demonstrate techniques and processes at each stage of the lesson in order to help pupils improve their skills. In all lessons, there is effective use of well-chosen and well-selected resources. Teachers give feedback and encouragement to develop pupil confidence. Some teachers, however, lack knowledge of the subject to promote higher standards, which some pupils are capable of achieving.

130. Teachers display a good range of pupils' artwork, ensuring that the pupils feel their work is valued.

131. Art makes a positive contribution to the whole curriculum of the school. Throughout the classrooms and corridors there are displays of work. In Year 1 there are action packed pictures of 'sound' taught in science: for example, the drawing of pupils listening to a tuning fork. In Year 3 historical portraits of the famous kings and queens 'watch' pupils walking down the corridor. In Year 4 the drawings to illustrate friction in science and those of the Anglo Saxons to support historical study are of a high standard. The Year 6 observational work in the entrance hall through their geographical study of Africa entices visitors to look, admire and 'feel' the continent.

132. Art makes an important contribution to pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development. It creates an immediate visual impact using pupils' work, including collections of three-dimensional artefacts, both natural and manufactured. These serve both to celebrate the school's artistic achievements and to enhance the appearance of the buildings.

133. There is an art and display policy and all the programmes of study are covered. At present there is no identified co-ordinator to ensure the learning is continuously progressive and new skills and styles taught consistently. The school has a basic range of resources.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

134. There were few opportunities to observe design and technology being taught during the inspection. The lessons observed were all linked to food technology. There was also no evidence of previous work in Year 6 and only limited evidence from other year groups. It was therefore not possible to form a clear view of standards or progress in the subject. The coordinator has only recently taken over responsibility for the subject.

135. In the part of the lesson observed in Key Stage 1 pupils were making biscuits in small groups. They did not have any choice in what they were making and their understanding of the time it would take for the biscuits to cook varied widely. Previous work from Year 1 pupils showed that they had made houses from a range of materials including construction kits. In Key Stage 2 pupils in Year 3 show a good understanding of the importance of hygiene in the preparation of food. In Year 5 pupils are well aware of the importance of the design of packaging in the marketing of food. They also make good use of information technology in processing the results of their survey of the taste of different types of biscuits. Previous work by these pupils included, in one class the design and making of a *shaduf*, which was linked to their topic on the Egyptians; and in another class the design of a puppet, which they did not have the opportunity to make.

136. Pupils have good attitudes in lessons. They behave well and mostly maintain their concentration. In the lessons seen teaching was satisfactory. Teachers give clear instructions, control classes well and develop good relationships with pupils. Where teaching has a weakness, it is when the task set does not fully challenge all pupils. There is no overall planning for the development of skills. This is a weakness identified at the previous inspection which has not yet been addressed. The new co-ordinator has a clear view of what is required and a determination to carry it out. As yet she has had no opportunity to monitor or evaluate the work being done. She is also aware of the desirability of retaining evidence of previous work, both to help with assessment and provide exemplars.

GEOGRAPHY

137. By the time pupils reach the age of five their knowledge and understanding of the world is extremely low. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning of geography across the school. The quality of their knowledge and understanding of the subject is well below that expected at the end of Key Stage 1 but below national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2.

138. In Key Stage 1 pupils develop their geographical skills and knowledge of localities. Year 1 can express what they find attractive and unattractive in the local area and use terms such as 'detached' and 'bungalow' to describe house types. By the end of Year 2 pupils use geographical questions and maps to identify features of different kinds of islands. Whilst most can give a definition what an island is 'a little bit in the sea', their understanding is limited as is revealed in their drawings. The pupils are not aware they live on an island. Though a map of the United Kingdom has been coloured the previous lesson, pupils have difficulty recognising it. In work on holidays around the world, Year 3 pupils responded well to geographical questions relating to human features about dress, location and temperature. Year 5 pupils can use a key to identify symbols on an Ordnance Survey map though they have no understanding of the word 'reservoir'. By the end of Year 6 pupils know factual information about where water comes from and goes to and how it affects the landscape. Terms like 'source', 'confluence' and 'channel' are used to describe physical features and pupils can name and locate the River Wye on a map.

139. In the few lessons seen, attitudes are satisfactory. All pupils behave well though many lack an awareness of the importance of learning time. It is this and a small amount of off-task social talk which partly prevents older pupils making good progress. The presentation of work is at least satisfactory, an improvement since the last inspection.

140. It was not possible to see sufficient lessons in geography to make a judgement on the quality of teaching. However, the few lessons seen, along with an analysis of pupils' work over the year demonstrate that teaching in geography is satisfactory overall. Teachers make clear to pupils what they are to learn in lessons and, in doing so, inform them of what is important. In Year 2 pupils are to learn 'how an island is different from the mainland'. In Year 5 they are 'to interpret symbols on a map and to use compass directions and co-ordinates'. Lessons are well structured to support pupils in learning about these features. Informal assessments are used appropriately to establish what pupils already know. 'Where have you seen this?' No one remembered and the teacher, therefore, reviewed the earlier work. Questions are used well to challenge pupils' thinking- 'how would you stop a flood?'- and to focus pupils on the task, as in Year 5 where pupils interpret map symbols, distance and direction. Teachers manage pupils well and provide positive working environments. Pupils respond well and disruptions are quickly dealt with. Lower attaining pupils and pupils with special educational needs are well supported by teachers and learning assistants. They are able to complete tasks. Occasionally the over-emphasis on literacy skills restricts the geographical skills pupils are intended to acquire.

141. When pupils work independently the pace of lessons is left to them. Higher attaining pupils often work at a slow pace, for instance colouring neatly. Their work does not reflect their ability as they are insufficiently challenged to attain higher level skills. Pupils' work books illustrate that teachers across the school are not planning higher level skills even though they may give groups of pupils different tasks. There is a scheme of work but it is not yet cross-referenced to the themes being studied. The system of continuous assessment in place to inform planning within and across year groups is not fully established. Medium-term plans are inconsistent in their completion and the skills to be developed are not always clear.

142. In some years there is a heavy reliance on work sheets, some of which are dated, and colouring which does not add to pupils' understanding, knowledge or skill. There has been an improvement in skills teaching since the last inspection but this needs further development. Work is marked but there are no targets for improvement.

143. The new co-ordinator for geography has a clear understanding of the areas that need developing and has already drawn up a useful action plan. The role of the co-ordinator with regard to monitoring geography work across the school to raise standards requires further development.

HISTORY

144. Pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress in history in both key stages and attainment is in line with the national averages at the end of both key stages. The presentation of pupils' work has improved since the last inspection and inspectors' comments about the amount of work completed using laborious tasks of writing or copying out passages and completion of worksheets has been largely addressed.

145. In Key Stage 1 pupils gain a sound understanding of historical events, social conditions and people. For example in their work books they described the Great Fire of London. They knew fire engines would have been ineffective due to the closeness of the wooden houses. The importance of Samuel Pepys' diary in giving a real life account is captured in one pupil's writing:

‘Samuel Pepys house burnt, he saved his cheese and wine and all his papers. He then went to his friend’s and slept with his pants on.’

They use time-lines to identify important milestones in history. They can tell a story sequentially, for example the life of Guy Fawkes. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils can identify events on a time-line and have a sound understanding of life in Britain in previous times. They identify a range of different sources, evaluate how useful and reliable they are and make good use of secondary sources such as pictures and texts. In Key Stage 2 Year 6 pupils talk about basic characteristics of life in overseas hospitals during the Crimean War. They use Benwell’s painting of ‘Florence Nightingale at Scutari’ to research conditions. Most pupils deduced that the long open corridors and closeness of the beds would cause infections to be transmitted easily. They recalled their science lesson on the way in which micro-organisms travel. In Year 3 pupils are able to make comparisons with life in Elizabethan times and modern times when studying The Globe Theatre of Shakespeare. History came alive for one Year 4 pupil when she wrote to her Roman friend:

‘Today I went to the Forum, again I joined in with the jugglers.’

Year 5 pupils through their literacy work on King Arthur begin to have a growing awareness that the reporting of historical events can show bias.

146. Pupils’ attitudes to history are positive. They listen well and respond with interest and enjoyment. Their behaviour is good and they work effectively together. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers try to make history come alive. Teachers use their knowledge well, lesson content is adequately planned but there is a lack of differentiated tasks for all pupils. Lessons have clear learning objectives and teachers focus on advancing pupils’ understanding of history. Pupils are encouraged appropriately to give reasons to support their views when answering questions. Classroom assistants are deployed well and effectively support the work set. There are strong links between the teaching of history, English, science and mathematics. There is a sound policy but the scheme of work lacks detail of how skills progress. The recently appointed co-ordinator has already had a positive influence on this subject.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

147. The school has made good improvements since the previous inspection when standards were below national expectations and improvement in the subject was a key issue. The subject is still developing but standards of attainment are broadly at the expected level at the end of both key stages. Pupils show a wide range of understanding and attainment within the year groups. Overall progress throughout the school is sound.

148. In Key Stage 1 pupils have the skill and understanding to control the mouse for picture and number programs. They are able, for example, to assemble the vowels for building up words. The pupils have the keyboard skills to enter text and use simple commands, so that word processing is sound. They are also able to design and produce simple art pictures using several features of a painting program. There is less evidence of work involving the opening and closing of programs or in entering and retrieving information confidently. They use tape recorders with confidence, competently using the control keys.

149. Pupils in Key Stage 2 use computer equipment and software with increasing confidence. They are able to open up a program, choose fonts and change the style of text. They have sound editing skills, though some pupils are slow at finding letters on the keyboard. Many pupils are competent in saving and printing their work. Pupils can enter data and retrieve information. They

have opportunities to use art and graphics programmes, which are often linked to work in other subjects. The skills for modelling and control are less well developed, although pupils in Year 4 help each other to use the Roamer confidently. Pupils are making more definite gains in routine word processing and information handling tasks. For example, very good use was made in the ten minutes at the end of a morning when pupils practised their typing skills on a paper keyboard. Progress in modelling and control is less secure.

150. The majority of pupils in both key stages quickly become interested in the tasks and want to join in. Most concentrate well. They usually collaborate well, taking turns to enter information and sharing ideas. At times one partner is passive for too long while the other is working. Pupils respond well to a good level of challenge and most work independently. The pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good overall throughout the school when using information technology.

151. Overall the quality of teaching is good. Most teaching of information technology is undertaken in the computer room. Here, the pupils are given specific information technology skills teaching. When computers are used in the classroom however pupils are often supervised from a distance and teachers provide only occasional, brief direct teaching. There are a few examples of good practice in Key Stage 2 where teachers prepare tasks directly onto the screen for pupils and follow this up with focused teaching. A few tasks in each key stage are planned carefully to integrate with other subjects and teachers show sound understanding in these instances. This helps give purpose to the work and supports pupils' understanding and also their routine word processing and information retrieval skills. Limited work supporting mathematics and science was observed in the work scrutiny or on display throughout the school. Assessment procedures for the whole school in the subject are under-developed, but individual class teachers monitor pupils' access and specific use of the computer.

152. The co-ordinator understands the role well and provides good support for colleagues. All strands of the programmes of study are included in the planning for the subject but there was less immediate evidence of modelling and control at the time of the inspection. Overall provision for the subject has significantly improved but current resources are of mixed quality and limit some experiences. The school has appropriately identified information communication technology as a subject for continuing development.

MUSIC

153. In the few music lessons seen pupils' progress was satisfactory overall. Progress was good in the last inspection report. The co-ordinator who worked with pupils across the school and had good skills and knowledge recently left. In the lessons and assemblies the quality of pupils' listening and appreciation of music is at the expected level for their ages. The quality of singing of the older pupils is above the expected level of attainment as their CD of carols and poems demonstrates. Pupils sing in tune and show good levels of control. Good progress is made in improving timing in hymn practice. Little evidence was seen of pupils performing and composing.

154. The quality of pupils' learning over time is satisfactory. Year 1 pupils can identify simple sounds made by percussion instruments such as pluck, scrape, bang. By the time pupils reach Year 2 a range of musical instruments including a drum, violin and trombone can be drawn and named. When listening to music pupils recognise basic changes: 'it gets louder', 'different instruments' are used. Viewpoints are expressed readily: 'sounds like war', 'sounds like someone hurt'. Year 4 pupils name types of instruments in an orchestra: 'strings', 'woodwind', 'percussion'. Having listened to Vivaldi's Four Seasons one pupil expresses the feeling that 'it makes me think of the swan dance'. By the end of Year 6 pupils use emotive language well 'very dramatic', 'ferocious'. Their ability to recognise specific instruments in a piece of music is not so well developed. Significant improvements have been made of pupils' awareness of emotions and music since the last inspection.

155. Pupils' response to music lessons is satisfactory overall. In assemblies pupils respond positively to opportunities to sing. In the three lessons seen responses ranged from very good to unsatisfactory. Young pupils were very restless. Whilst they followed instructions 'clap', 'stop' and selected instruments appropriately a significant number demonstrate little self-control when using their instrument despite the teacher's demonstration and emphasis on not making the loudest noise possible. In contrast Year 2 pupils' response is very good. Pupils listen silently, follow instructions well and demonstrate very good behaviour during a lengthy piece of music. Though pupils in Year 6 listen quietly through two lengthy pieces of music they lose concentration. When individual pupils feedback their interpretations of music the others do not give their full attention. Nevertheless they behave well.

156. Too little teaching was seen to judge the overall quality of teaching. In the lessons seen teaching ranged from good to unsatisfactory. One lesson was unsatisfactory. All lessons are planned well and it is clear what pupils are to do. In Year 2 pupils are to 'listen for changes in the music and identify the instruments' in a piece from 'The Planets Suite'. Using the same music Year 6's focus is to 'identify how the mood is communicated'. These learning intentions are shared with the pupils enabling them to understand what is expected of them. In Year 2 pupils are asked to listen and appreciate the music for a purpose, to use it in a forthcoming dance lesson. This significantly increases their motivation. In Year 6 positive praise is used to acknowledge success and promote a positive response, 'you have some good adjectives for moods and feelings'. This is effective as the pieces of music listened to prove too demanding for a significant proportion of pupils' listening abilities. In the good lesson questions are well structured 'How did it change?' 'Tell me about the sounds', 'What instruments can you hear now?' There are also well-established rules and pupils know they cannot speak when listening to music. In the unsatisfactory lesson the pace of the lessons is much too slow to hold the pupils' attention. Also, the informal structure of the arrangements for literacy support means that the lesson is frequently disrupted by pupil withdrawal. Teachers are not using assessments of individuals to guide pupils towards the next step of their learning or to plan future lessons effectively.

157. During the inspection week there was little opportunity for pupils to perform and compose either in lessons or assemblies. Pupils in both key stages have, however, been involved in school performances such as 'Hosanna Rock' and 'Old Time Music Hall'. They have attended concerts at the local arts centre and visiting musicians have worked with the school. Year 6 have taken part in a drum workshop and performed. Year 3 has also presented a performing musical assembly. Record club is well attended by older pupils and there is an opportunity for learning the violin with a visiting specialist teacher.

158. The new music co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and supports teachers in Key Stage 1 and pupils in assemblies. She is aware of the lack of a music specialist in Key Stage 2. Development plans however focus mainly on resources and at present there is no monitoring or structured support for teachers.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

159. Standards in physical education are broadly in line with expectations at the end of both key stages. Overall, the quality of teaching is good across the school. It is always at least satisfactory and occasionally very good. This consistency of good teaching ensures that, overall, pupils make good progress across the school. A significant number of pupils in Year 5 have never visited a swimming pool. They make good progress and most of the pupils are able to swim 25 metres by the end of Year 6. There has been significant improvement in the quality of teaching of physical education since the previous inspection.

160. By the age of seven pupils are able to play 'traffic lights', dodging in and out, making good use of space. They are also able to 'mirror' each other and develop the early skills of partner and group work and exploring and developing concepts of pathways and types of travel.

161. By eleven pupils effectively create a sequence with a partner. In one lesson initially the sequences were presented hesitantly. Through demonstration and effective side-coaching the timing, movement vocabulary and flair all showed signs of improvement. This was principally because the teacher has a clear idea of what quality work looks like has high expectations and knows how to set about improving it. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate their work. Good use is made of technical language and fractions and percentages were reinforced in determining degrees of effort or curl. Pupils in Year 3 show particularly imaginative approaches to their floor work and demonstrate with considerable flair.

162. Pupils' attitudes are satisfactory at seven. They demonstrate a good work rate but can get very excited. They are very interested and engaged by the work. They can show good levels of co-operation as in Year 1 putting out the benches. Pupils' attitudes by eleven are good. They are keen and enthusiastic and want to do well. They work at a good rate and are enthusiastic. Pupils show good levels of co-operation. They work sensibly within a cramped space. Pupils in other years show similar good behaviour but often this depends on the skills of the teachers at managing the sometimes over excited behaviour of the class. Pupils are generous to the skills of others as in Class 3 when the class applauded the success of a girl managing a particular individual skill. The quality of learning across the key stage is good as a direct result of the overall good quality teaching. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Teachers reinforce individual education plans particularly relating to behaviour well.

163. Where teaching is good in Key stage 1 the teacher has clear objectives and skills are taught in a progressive manner. The teacher has a clear idea of what she wants the pupils to learn. Questioning is effective and elicits for example in one lesson the term 'zigzag' as well as encouraging evaluation. In the lessons seen good use was made of personal and pupil demonstration for example to explore 'short sharp straight' travel or in Year 1 when a pupil demonstrated her work along a bench. In the lessons observed there was clear planning which ensures a good progression within the lesson. Year 1 pupils, for example, worked on the theme of 'rocking and rolling' developing the theme well. At Key Stage 2 teachers have good class management and control and ensure lessons progress at a good rate. There is consistent good awareness of health and safety issues, an improvement on the previous inspection. Across the school, teachers develop pupil confidence, self-esteem and quality of thinking. Praise is used well to reinforce positively good behaviour. Teachers have high expectations and a good understanding of what constitutes quality work.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

164. Standards in religious education meet the requirements of the local Agreed Syllabus at the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. At the end of Key Stage 1 pupils understand the significance of religious festivals such as Eid and Christmas. They know about some of the special foods associated with festivals and also have a basic understanding of the significance of fasting to both Christians and Muslims. They are familiar with stories from the Christian tradition, such as the parable of the Good Samaritan, and are beginning to apply them to their own experience. At the end of Key Stage 2 pupils know about the five pillars of Islam and have a deeper understanding of the significance of religious observance to a believer, for instance during the festival of Eid. They appreciate the role played by religious leaders such as Jesus, Muhammad and Guru Nanak. They also

show a good understanding of some of the moral and social issues arising out of religious belief, as for instance when pupils in Year 5 discuss racism in the light of the leadership provided by Martin Luther King. Pupils of all abilities make good progress in developing their knowledge and understanding of the range of religious belief and its significance to a believer. They make satisfactory progress in the evaluation of religious and moral issues. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support in lessons, enabling them to make good progress.

165. Pupils have good attitudes. They are interested in lessons, behave well and maintain their concentration. They show a high level of respect for the beliefs of others. Younger pupils in Key Stage 2 contributed well to a discussion about the care of animals and pupils in Year 5 listened well to each other when they were discussing their 'dream'. These attitudes are promoted by the good relationships which exist between pupils and between teachers and pupils. There was no opportunity during the inspection to observe religious education being taught in Year 6.

166. The overall quality of teaching is good, and no unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the inspection. Teachers have very good control of their classes. They use questions well to stimulate pupils' understanding, for instance of the significance of wedding celebrations in different traditions in Year 4. They plan lessons well and make good use of visitors from the Christian, Muslim and Sikh faiths. They generally have a good knowledge of the subject. In a minority of lessons, however, the religious significance of the study is not made explicit, as for instance when Year 1 pupils listen to a story about trees as part of the theme of the natural world. When Year 3 pupils discussed the care of pets there was no reference to the specific teaching of different religious traditions on the place of animals in creation. Some sessions in Year 4 are too short for pupils to develop their ideas and pursue the questions they would like to.

167. Religious education makes a very good contribution to pupils' understanding of the diversity of cultures represented both within the school and in the society in which they live. The school has not yet developed systems to assess pupils' knowledge and understanding against the attainment targets of the agreed syllabus, which would assist teachers in planning the next stage of pupils' work. The co-ordinator has limited opportunities to monitor provision in the subject but shows a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses. The school has made satisfactory progress in maintaining standards since the previous inspection. The time allocated for the subject is now used for that purpose-this was an area of criticism in the previous report.